

The Danish **PEFC Certification Scheme** for sustainable forest management

The 5th revision
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1. Introduction

Forestry is a long-term process and the result of different management decisions can often only become visible after decades. A PEFC-certification provides the forest owners with an opportunity to document that their forest management full fills PEFC's sustainability benchmark and makes it possible to sell their timber as PEFC certified. As consumers, businesses and government become more concerned with their environmental footprint markets for certified paper and wood continue to grow. By getting certified the forest owners can comply with the increasing demands.

The purpose of the certification of sustainable forestry is thus to guide owners to an economical, ecological and socially sustainable management and use of the forest through market driven incentives.

The Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certifications schemes - PEFC Council was founded in 1999. PEFC is a private sector initiative. The purpose of PEFC is to establish an internationally credible framework for forest certification systems promoting sustainable forestry. The purpose is to supply the market with certified forest-based products through credible third party certification.

PEFC Denmark was founded in 1999. The first Danish PEFC scheme was approved in 2002 and was later revised in 2007. This version is the result of the second mandatory periodic revision, which takes place every 5 year.

This document describes the structure of the Danish PEFC certification system for sustainable forest management (in the following mentioned as "the Danish scheme").

This document replaces "The Danish PEFC certification scheme for sustainable forest management – 4th revision".

2. Scope

The purpose of the Danish scheme is to document and promote sustainable management of the forests and to ensure the traceability of the certified timber through the entire product chain from the forest to the end-user.

PEFC Denmark is responsible for the development, administration and maintenance of the Danish scheme, including a total review of the scheme in the light of new scientific knowledge and practical experience at least every 5 years.

3. References

The Danish scheme is based on requirements and guidelines laid down by PEFC Council. For both dated and undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendment) applies. (PEFC ST – www.pefc.org)

1. Sustainable forest management - requirements (PEFC ST 1003:2010)
2. Group Forest Management Certification - requirements (PEFC ST 1002: 2010)
3. Annex 6 to PEFC Technical document – Certification and Accreditation Procedures
4. Chain of custody of forest based products - requirements (PEFC ST 2002: 2010)
5. PEFC Logo Usage Rules (PEFC ST 2001:2008 v2)
6. Requirements for Certification Bodies operating Certification against the PEFC International Chain of Custody Standard (PEFC ST 2003:2012)

The Danish Forest Management Standard is based upon actual conditions for Danish forestry, the last 10 years experience with certification as well as new knowledge in forestry. It is ensured that the Danish Forest Management Standard complies with PEFC Council's requirements for sustainable forestry. Likewise the Danish Requirements for group certification of sustainable forest management build upon experiences and actual conditions for Danish forestry and comply with PEFC Councils requirements for group certification of sustainable forestry.

The Danish Requirements for certification and accreditation procedures also build on experiences and the requirements put forward by PEFC Council to certification and accreditation procedures.

Chain of custody certification within the framework of the Danish scheme is carried out in accordance with the requirements of the international standard for Chain of custody; PEFC ST 2002:2010: Chain of custody of forest based products. The same applies to the requirements for use of PEFC logo and for requirements for Certification Bodies operating Certification against the PEFC International Chain of Custody Standard.

4. Definitions

For the purposes of the Danish scheme, the relevant definitions given in “*Terms and definitions - PEFC DK 007-2*” apply.

5. Danish forestry – Facts, institutional framework and legislation

As an introduction to the elaboration of the Danish scheme, the forestry in Denmark is briefly described below.

5.1 STRUCTURE OF THE DANISH FOREST PROPERTIES

The Danish forest area comprises about 580 000 ha, making up approximately 13 % of the land area. 68 % of the area is privately owned or owned by companies, 4 % is owned by foundations etc. and 23 % is state owned or owned by other public institutions.

There are close to 29 000 forest owners in Denmark, where of, few own a big area, while there at the same time are many small properties. A survey from Statistics Denmark from 2000 shows, that properties less than 20 ha in size, make up about 91 % of properties but only cover 20 % of the entire forest area.

Distribution of the forest properties in Denmark (Danmarks Statistik 2000)

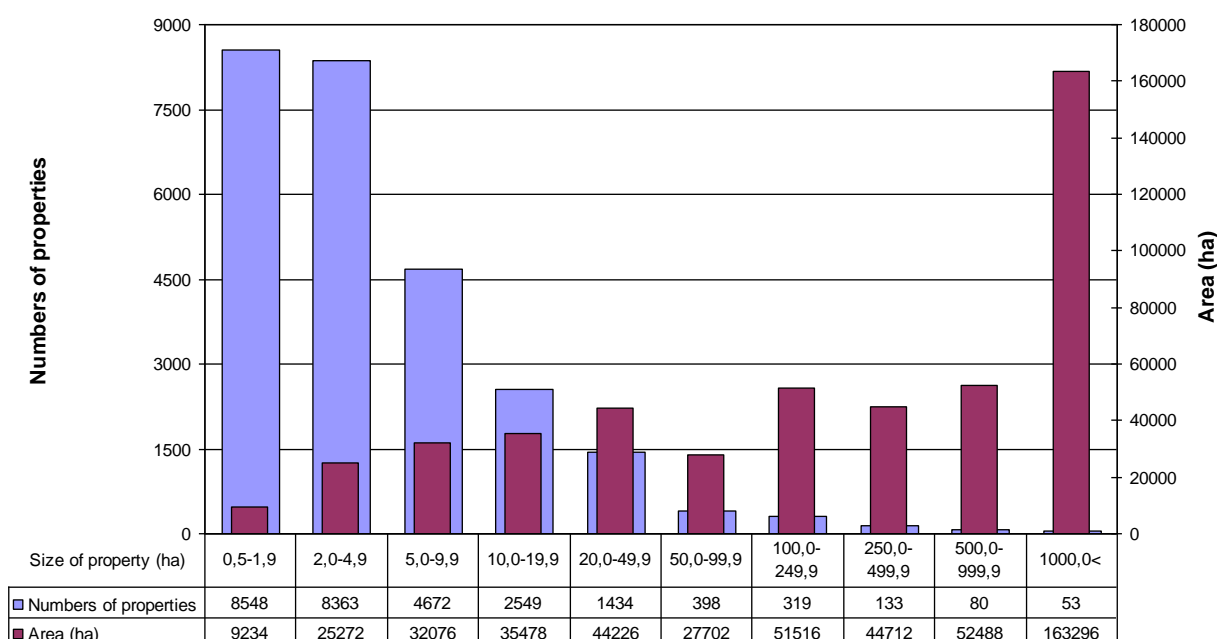


Figure 5.1: Distribution of the forest area in relation to the number of properties and property size.

The majority of the small properties are in fact agricultural holdings in which forestry does not make up an independent operational branch due to the forests size and lack of profitability. However, the timber production from these minor forests plays an important role as owners join forces in jointly managed larger units, thereby seeking to diminish the disadvantages of scale.

5.2 THE LEGAL BASIS FOR FORESTRY IN DENMARK

In general, in Denmark rather detailed rules and guidelines regulate the activities which any given forest owner is allowed to undertake on his/her forest property. The Forest Act is the primary law. The Forest Act defines which areas are permanently reserved for forest (forest reserves) and the requirements for the management of these areas. In some cases it also delineates requirement for forests not designated as forest reserve. More than 90 % of the forest area is registered as forest reserve and is thereby covered by the Forest Act. Forest reserves cannot be converted to other land use without specific permission and establishment of compensation forest in an alternative location. The first major Danish forestry regulation was issued in 1805. The present Forest Act from 2004, has promotion of sustainable forest management as primary objective

The purpose of the Forest Act has to a large extent been based on the primary objective of preserving the forest resource and its production potential. It reflects the historical background, which was a severe degradation of the forest resource that culminated in the end of the 17th century. From 1989, an additional objective of the Act has been to promote multiple-use of the forests, i.e. incorporation of nature protection, cultural heritage and recreational considerations in addition to the production interests. In the latest revision of the Forest Act the demand for sustainability has been incorporated as an objective. The Danish Forest Act is based on the principle of “freedom with responsibility”. The forest owners are given a set of rules under which the forest owner is responsible to plan and conduct forest management. The act has a number of requirements for the use of areas designated as forest reserve land, which among other things means that the forest area shall be stocked with trees, with the potential to form, a closed canopy forest of high-boled trees, logging, except thinning, may not be carried out before the stand or the individual tree has reached the rotation age and livestock farming is prohibited. In addition are number of exceptions, which gives the owner a possibility to use coppice forest management and forest grazing, have areas with intensive production of for example Christmas trees or other special management regimes each up to 10% of the total area.

The Act also establishes specific protection of oak thickets and other particular valuable nature types (bogs, lakes, etc.). The act describes possibilities for public grant schemes for forest activities. It provides an opportunity for the state to develop grants to promotion of sustainable forest management in existing forests.

Forest habitats covered by the Nature 2000 protection are also protected through the forest act. National planning is made by the Ministry of environment and the government are obliged to make agreements with forest owners to secure the protection of these habitats. In designated Nature 2000 areas a notification system exist, where the forest owners is obliged to notify clearcutting of deciduous forest, promotion of conifers in deciduous forest etc. before the owner can commencement the activity.

The Nature Protection Act is another law of high significance. Its primary objectives are a general protection of a number of different nature types above a certain size, securing public access to the natural environment – including the Danish forests, and to set up conditions for conservation of larger areas or particularly vulnerable nature.

The water framework directive is implemented in “miljømålsloven” (environmental objective act), which contains general provisions for water districts, authorities responsibility, targets for achieving the objective of the directive, planning, monitoring etc.

5.3 THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR FORESTRY IN DENMARK

In Denmark, the forest sector is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Environment. The responsibility has been delegated to the Danish Nature Agency. The Danish Nature Agency consists of a central head office and 21 local districts distributed within 3 regions. The Danish Nature Agency manages the 18 % of the forest area in Denmark, which is owned by the State. The local districts are responsible for supervision of the private forest districts to ensure compliance with the act, which is done at appropriate intervals – generally, at a maximum interval of 6-10 years. Furthermore, the local districts are responsible for administration of the grant schemes related to private forestry.

Private forest owners are well organised in various local and national associations. Danish Forest Association is the private forest owners’ trade organisation. Moreover up to 6 000 small forest owners are organized in local forest management associations, which offers contracting and management

services and represent the political interests of these private forest owners. In a similar way many forest owners cooperate with HedeDanmark and other forestry consultants. A wide range of NGOs is active in the national forest debate, for instance WWF Denmark, the Danish Society for Nature Conservation, the Danish Outdoor Council, the Federation of Building, Construction and Wood Workers' Unions and the environmental organisation Forests of the World. Furthermore some other organisations have special interest in the Danish forest, like the Danish Hunters Society and the Danish Ornithological Society.

5.4 FOREST MANAGEMENT PLANNING

The Danish Nature Agency is responsible for implementation of national and international forest policy and thus account for the overall planning of forest management at national level.

The Danish forest act does not include requirement for forest management planning at the individual forest property, which is a little atypical compared to other countries in Europe. Forest owners neither are required to get logging permits nor notify the authorities before logging activities can be carried out.

In connection with the Rio Conference on biodiversity, the ensuing ministerial conferences on sustainable forest management (the Helsinki process) and the indicators and operational guidelines decided on in Lisbon, the Agency has drafted strategies for sustainable forest management, for conservation of natural forest and a comprehensive national forest programme. The national forest programme has since 2002 defined the national forest policy goals. In 2011 a broadly composed committee (Forest Political Committee) discussed the future of Danish forestry and made recommendations, from an overall assessment, to how society's interests in private and public forests can be met. Implementation of the specific recommendations made by the committee will now be up to the ministers. The political initiatives are being actively implemented through legalisation and by economic incentives such as national grant schemes, which forest owners can apply.

5.5 FOREST MONITORING AND ADVICE

Minister for the Environment is responsible for monitoring the state of forests and development in collaboration with other national and international authorities and institutions. In Denmark, the monitoring task is delegated to Forest and Landscape, University of Copenhagen. Monitoring includes the state of forests and forestry development with the aim of:

- follow changes in forest growth and condition and relate this to anthropogenic as well as natural influences
- monitor the Danish forest resources and production
- provide the knowledge base for operational as well as natural and environmental strategic decisions
- provide national and international reports.

The monitoring includes area, tree species, timber production, biodiversity, forest health, recreation and forest ecological processes, including air pollution and climate change.

Status and development of forests are part of the monitoring documented in the Danish forest statistics (NFI). The purpose of the Forest statistics is:

- to provide the knowledge base for operational as well as natural and environmental strategic decisions,
- to provide national and international reports, and
- to monitor changes in forest growth and condition and put these in relation to anthropogenic as well as natural impacts are

A large part of the monitoring results will be published in the publication "Forests and Plantations". Highlights are published annually and every 5 years a comprehensive report is published.

The Minister is also committed to guide and inform about forest and forestry industry, like the Minister may undertake research and development on forestry professional issues.

Advice on forestry in sustainable forest management can be found in publications from The Danish Nature Agency, the Danish Forest and Landscape institute and from various national and local organizations.

6 Structure of the documents

The Danish scheme is structured with a number of guidelines and normative documents, which define the requirements for certification under the Danish scheme. The structure of the documents is illustrated in figure 6.1.

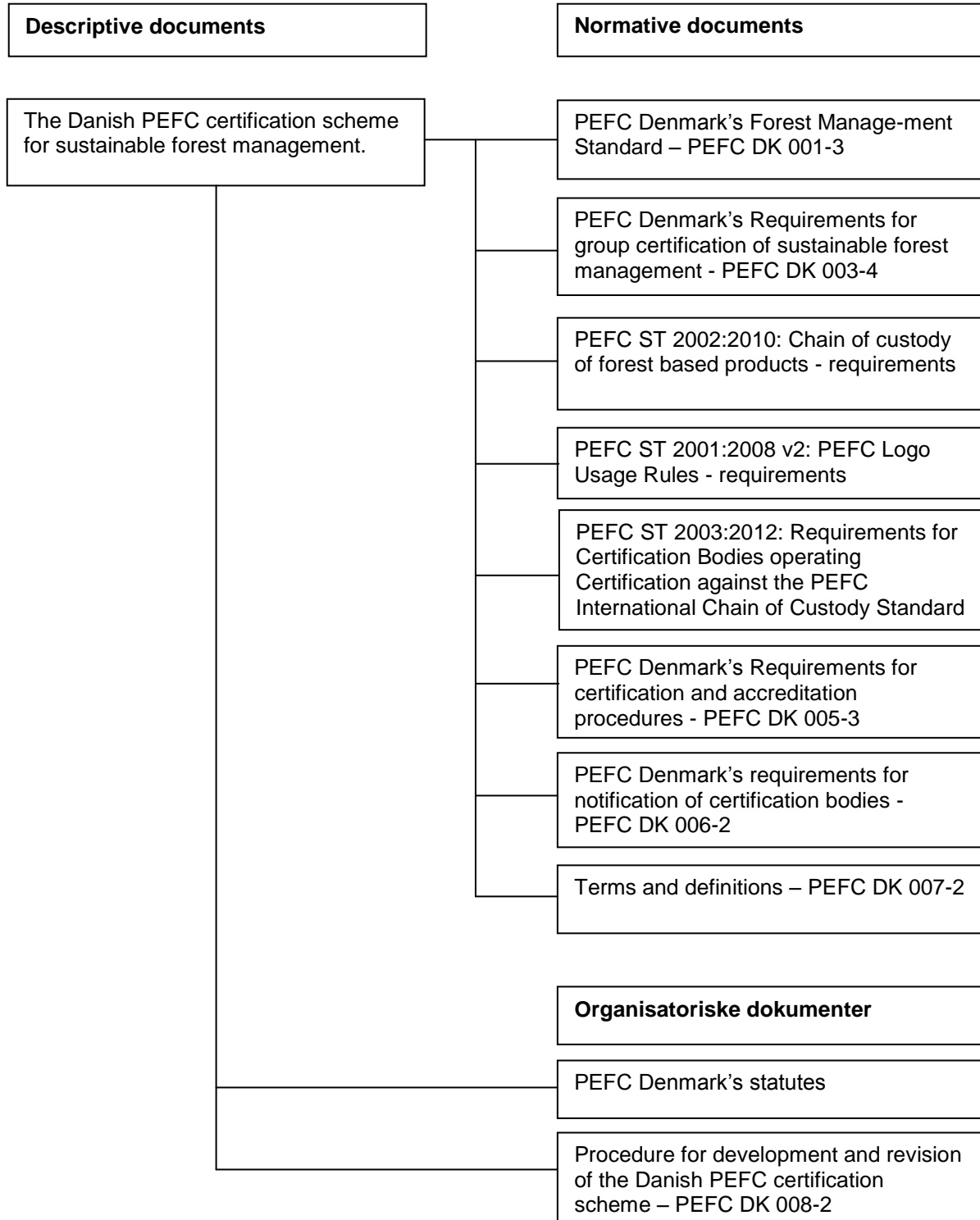


Figure 6.1 Structure of the Danish scheme

7. The Danish Scheme - Organisation

7.1 PEFC DENMARK

PEFC Denmark is a membership-based, self-governing and legally independent association, which owns and is responsible for the development, administration and maintenance of the Danish scheme. PEFC Denmark is organised with a board, a secretariat and an annual general assembly as illustrated in fig. 7.1. Temporary working groups can be settled if required for example in connection with review of the scheme.

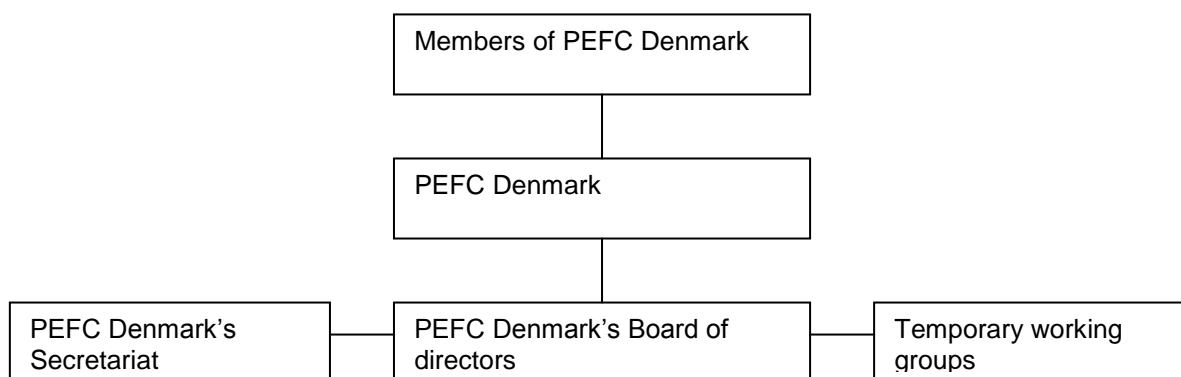


Figure 7.1: Organisation of PEFC Denmark

The objectives for PEFC Denmark:

- To promote PEFC Denmark's Forest Management Standard as the standard for certification of forestry in Denmark.
- To promote PEFC Councils international standard for chain of custody as the standard of chain of custody certification in Denmark.
- To ensure that the Danish system of PEFC certification for sustainable forestry is a credible, cost-effective and user-friendly system of certification that can be applied by the whole spectrum of forest owners and forest types in Denmark.
- To meet the criteria and indicators for participation within an internationally recognised network for forest certification.
- To continuously develop and improve the Danish scheme through response to new knowledge, including scientific research and changed demands.

The tasks for PEFC Denmark:

PEFC Denmark is operated by PEFC Denmark's secretariat in cooperation with PEFC Denmark's Board of directors.

PEFC Denmark has the following tasks:

- Developing and reviewing the Danish scheme to be in step with continuous improvement and changed demands
- Promoting the Danish scheme
- Maintaining a database with information on certified forests, wood industries and groups
- PEFC notification of certification bodies
- Issuing PEFC logo licenses
- Maintaining contact with PEFC Council and communicating information
- Maintaining a register of accredited certification bodies in Denmark
- Maintaining PEFC Denmark's homepage – www.pefc.dk
- Appointment of an appeal committee for dealing with disputes and complaints arising from forest management or chain of custody scheme implementation and interpretation that cannot be addressed in the dispute settlement procedures of the relevant certification or accreditation body

7.2 ACCREDITATION AND CERTIFICATION BODY

Accreditation body

PEFC is based on independent accreditation of certification organizations. Therefore it is an explicit requirement that all certification audits carried out under the Danish scheme must be carried out by third-party independent and PEFC notified certification bodies accredited by DANAK or other national European-based accreditation bodies which are members of the European Cooperation for Accreditation (EA) and/or the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and have signed the agreement of mutual recognition.

Certification body

Certification bodies are independent and approved third parties, who have gained PEFC notification and carry out PEFC certification in accordance with the rules laid down by PEFC Denmark. The certification body issues certificates to the applicant and controls the use of certificates. Certification bodies are not allowed to be directly involved in standard setting or revision.

Procedures and requirements for accreditation and PEFC notification of certification bodies to carry out certification of forest management and group certification, is stated in *“PEFC Denmark’s Requirements for certification and accreditation procedures - PEFC DK 005-3”* and *“PEFC Denmark’s requirements for notification of certification bodies - PEFC DK 006-2”*

Requirements for certification bodies operating PEFC chain of custody certification is defined in *“Requirements for Certification Bodies operating Certification against the PEFC International Chain of Custody Standard (PEFC ST 2003:2012)”*

7.3 GROUP CERTIFICATION – GROUP LEADERS

In this context a group leader is a company, which offers and administers group certification of forest management. Group certification implies issuing individual forest management evidence to forest owners, who have established a group of forest owners seeking certification under a group leader.

The requirements for certification of group leaders are stated in *“PEFC Denmark’s Requirements for group certification of sustainable forest management - PEFC DK 003-4”*.

7.4 DISTRIBUTION OF AUTHORITY BETWEEN THE DIFFERENT ORGANIZATIONS

The distribution of authority between the different agents involved in certification in Denmark is summarised in figure 7.2.

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Target group</u>
PEFC Denmark	Owens, administers and maintains the scheme and notifies	Certification bodies
National accreditation body	Accredits	Certification bodies to carry out certification under the Danish scheme.
Certification body	Certifies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Major forest owners who want to achieve individual certification. Issues forest management certificates. 2. Wood industries that want to achieve individual certification. Issues Chain of Custody certificates. 3. Group leaders to administer group certification. Issues group certificates.
Group leader	Administers	Group certification of minor forest properties. Issues forest management proofs.

Figure 7.2: Distribution of authority between the different organizations

8. Certification levels

Two options are available for forest certification under the Danish PEFC certification system for sustainable forestry:

- Individual certification or
- Group certification

The group certification is implemented through a group leader, certified for this.

Certification of chain of custody within the framework of the Danish scheme, is describes in the international standard for Chain of custody.

8.1 CERTIFICATION OF FOREST PROPERTIES

Individual certification

Individual forest owners can seek certification for the forest they own. Individual certification is accessible for any size and type of forest. However individual certification may be particularly appropriate or the preferred option for larger management units with own administration.

Individual certification of forest management is carried out according to “*PEFC Denmark’s Forest Management Standard PEFC DK 001-3*”. The forest management certificate is issued to the forest owner.

Group certification

The rationale for group certification is to spread the costs of certification across a number of owners, for whom the costs of being certified individually might otherwise have been disproportionate to the benefits due to the scale of their forest. The premise for this potential cost reduction is that only a sample of the forest areas within the group needs to be audited each year by the certification body. In addition the group leader has the option to provide advice and in other ways secure compliance with requirements.

All the forest owners in a group shall individually fulfil the requirement in “*PEFC Denmark’s Forest Management Standard PEFC DK 001-3*”.

Administration, policies and forest management planning that are relevant for the whole group may be implemented by the group leader to gain additional cost reductions.

8.2 CERTIFICATION OF GROUPS

Group leaders wishing to administer group certification of forest management shall apply for certification of their activities in this field.

Certification of group leaders is carried out according to “*PEFC Denmark’s Requirements for group certification of sustainable forest management PEFC DK 003-4*” and for the forest participating in the group “*PEFC Denmark’s Forest Management Standard PEFC DK 001-3*”. A group certificate is issued to the group leader.

9 Use of the PEFC Logo

All use of the PEFC logo, trademark or any associated claims made in connection with forest management certification under the Danish scheme will be carried out in accordance with “*PEFC Logo Usage Rules – PEFC ST 2001:2008 v2*”.

Usage will be licensed and controlled exclusively by PEFC Denmark on behalf of, and subject to a contractual agreement with, the PEFC Council. Control of use of logo is carried out by the certification body during audits.

10. Appeals, complaints and disputes

Appeals, complaints and disputes relating to issuance and withdrawal of certificates shall be brought before and handled by the certification body's own procedures.

An appeal committee appointed by PEFC Denmark ("*Statutes of PEFC Denmark*", §7) shall deal with other complaints and disputes arising from implementation and interpretation of the Danish scheme that cannot be addressed in the dispute settlement procedures of the relevant certification or accreditation body.

Upon receipt of the complaint and disputes, the board of directors of PEFC Denmark shall:

- acknowledge receipt of the complaint/dispute to the complainant,
- gather and verify all necessary information to validate the complaint/dispute
- appoint an impartial appeal committee with the necessary expertise to impartially and objectively evaluate the complaint/dispute (jf PEFC Denmark's Statutes §7).
- Based on the recommendation from the appeal committee decide on the appeal
- Formally announce the result and information about the complaint procedure to the complainant

Decisions on disputes or complaints settled by accreditation bodies, certification bodies and PEFC Denmark's appeal committee shall be complied with by PEFC Denmark and certificate holders. Experiences shall be used at future revisions processes of the Danish system.

11. Implementation of changes – transition period

Unless specified otherwise in the standards under the Danish scheme, the transition period for implementation of changes to standards under the Danish scheme are one year from the time the standard has been approved by PEFC Council.

New certificates issued after the 1st of June 2013 shall be issued according to the revised standards.