

Requirements for certification and accreditation procedures



PEFC
Normative
document

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1. Introduction

This document is a part of the Danish PEFC certification system for sustainable forest management (referred to below as “the Danish scheme”).

The requirements are normative for certification bodies that perform certification of sustainable forest management and/or group certification of sustainable forest management pursuant to the Danish PEFC scheme.

For requirements for certification bodies performing PEFC chain of custody certification in Denmark in accordance with international chain of custody certification requirements, please see the international requirements for this purpose: *Requirements for Certification Bodies Operating Certification against the PEFC International Chain of Custody Standard – PEFC ST 2003:2020*

This document replaces *PEFC Denmark’s requirements for certification and accreditation procedures 005-3*.

2. Scope

This document defines requirements for auditors and certification bodies that perform PEFC certification pursuant to the Danish scheme and defines requirements for certification and accreditation procedures.

This standard must be applied in accordance with the Danish PEFC system, covering:

- Certification of sustainable forest management according to *PEFC Denmark’s Forest Management Standard – PEFC DK 001-4*
- Group certification of sustainable forest management according to *PEFC Denmark’s requirements for group certification of sustainable forest management – PEFC DK 003-5* and
- Use of PEFC trademarks in accordance with international standard *PEFC Trademarks Rules – Requirements – PEFC ST 2001:2020*

3. References

Reference is made to the following:

- PEFC Denmark’s Forest Management Standard – PEFC DK 001-4
- PEFC Denmark’s requirements for group certification of sustainable forest management – PEFC DK 003-5
- PEFC Denmark’s guidance on notification of certification bodies – PEFC DK 006-4
- Terms and definitions – PEFC DK 007-3
- PEFC Trademarks Rules – Requirements – PEFC ST 2001:2020
- PEFC Information and Registration System – Data Requirements – PEFC GD 1008:2019
- PEFC Requirements for Certification Bodies operating Forest Management Certification, PEFC ST 1004:2014 – Enquiry Draft
- DS/EN ISO/IEC 17021-3:2018: Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems
- DS/EN ISO 19011:2018: Guidance for auditing management systems
- IAF MD 1:2018: IAF Mandatory Document for the Audit and Certification of a Management System Operated by a Multi-Site Organization
- IAF MD 2:2017: IAF Mandatory Document for the Transfer of Accredited Certification of Management Systems

4. Definitions

Definitions given in *Terms and definitions – PEFC DK 007-3* are used for the purposes of this standard.

5. Requirements for auditors

5.1 Certification of sustainable forest management – including group certification

The requirements for auditors performing in connection with certification of sustainable forest management and group certification of sustainable forest management are based on the general guidelines for auditing of management systems, supplemented with expertise in the sector. This is applicable when performing certification audits, follow-up audits and re-certification.

The auditor must:

1. Meet the general requirements for auditors defined in *Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems (DS/EN ISO/IEC 17021-3:2018)*
2. Meet the general requirements for auditors defined in *Guidelines for auditing management systems (DS/EN ISO 19011:2018)*
3. Have a good knowledge of the Danish PEFC certification scheme as regards sustainable forest management
4. Have an in-depth knowledge of Danish forest management and forest administration and the other elements included in *PEFC Denmark's Forest Management Standard – PEFC DK ST 001-4*
5. Regularly maintain their qualifications by means of recognised courses

Auditing must involve at least one forest management expert with professional expertise in forest management and the environmental impact of forest management, and with at least three years of practical experience of Danish forest management. The three-year period can be reduced to two years if the auditor has participated in four audits together with a qualified auditor. Furthermore, audits must include at least one person with experience of certification procedures. This may be one and the same person. Gender equality should be given priority when recruiting and training auditors.

NOTE: Professional expertise in forest management and the environmental impact of forest management can be documented by staff who have relevant training and professional experience in forest management in relation to forest management. Master of Forestry, Forest and Landscape Engineer, Biologist, Forest technician or similar are all potentially relevant programmes.

6. Requirements for certification bodies

6.1 Accreditation

Certification bodies that perform certification of sustainable forest management and/or group certification of sustainable forest management must be accredited for this purpose. The Danish Accreditation and Metrology Fund, DANAK or a similarly recognised accreditation body that has signed the multilateral agreement on mutual recognition of accreditation bodies developed by the European co-operation for Accreditation (EA) and is a member of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) may be in charge of accreditation.

6.2 PEFC notification

Certification bodies that perform certification of sustainable forest management and/or group certification of sustainable forest management pursuant to the Danish scheme must be PEFC-notified by PEFC Denmark in accordance with *Guidance on notification of certification bodies – PEFC DK 006-4*

6.3 Certification of sustainable forest management, including group certification

The requirements for certification bodies performing certification audits of sustainable forest management and group certification of sustainable forest management are based on *Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems (DS/EN ISO/IEC 17021-3:2018)* supplemented with specified requirements from PEFC Denmark and expertise in the sector.

The certification body must:

1. Meet, as appropriate, the general criteria defined in *Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems (DS/EN ISO/IEC 17021-3:2018)* as well as supplementary requirements on this defined in this standard
2. Use a documented method according to which forest management can be audited and certified (certification procedure)
3. Have a good knowledge of the Danish PEFC certification scheme as regards sustainable forest management
4. Have technical expertise in forest management which covers economic, social and environmental impact on forest management

6.4 Supplementary requirements in relation to bodies performing audits and certification of management systems

PEFC Denmark's supplementary requirements for certification bodies performing certification of sustainable forest management and group certification of sustainable forest management pursuant to the Danish scheme in relation to *Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems (DS/EN ISO/IEC 17021-3:2018)* are specified below.

6.4.1 Registrations and information

The certification body must notify PEFC Denmark of all certificates issued pursuant to the Danish PEFC scheme and amendments to the validity and scope of these certificates. In this context, the certification body must maintain and update a register of the forest properties and group leaders that are certified by them pursuant to the Danish scheme.

The register must include the following information as a minimum:

- **About individually certified forest properties**
 - Owner details
 - Name of the organisation (forest district)
 - Certified area (hectares)
 - Address
 - Postcode
 - Town/city
 - Telephone
 - Email
 - First and last name of a contact person
 - Certificate number
 - Date of issue of the certificate
 - Certificate expiry date

- **About certified group leaders**
 - Name of the organisation
 - First and last name of a contact person
 - Address (contact person)
 - Postcode (contact person)
 - Town/city (contact person)
 - Phone (contact person)
 - Email (contact person)
 - Certificate number
 - Date of issue of the certificate
 - Certificate expiry date
 - Total certified area

Information to be sent to PEFC Denmark is described in *PEFC Information and Registration System – Data Requirements – PEFC GD 1008:2019*.

6.4.2 Period of validity

A certificate may be valid for no more than five years.

6.4.3 Termination of certificates

The holder of the certificate may terminate the certificate in writing at any time during the period of validity. The termination shall take effect on the date on which the certification body receives the written termination.

6.4.4 Suspension and withdrawal of certificates

The certification body must notify PEFC Denmark immediately if a forest management certificate or group certificate is suspended or withdrawn.

6.4.5 Supplementary for the certification process

The certification procedures described in section 6.5 meet the requirements in *Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems (DS/EN ISO/IEC 17021-3:2018)*, with the following supplementary requirements:

In section 6.5.3: **Public consultation**. Before assessing compliance with *PEFC Denmark's Forest Management Standard – PEFC DK 001-4*, relevant stakeholders must be consulted with a time limit of at least 14 days. As a minimum, the consultation must be undertaken by means of an announcement on the certification body's website. Relevant information from external parties must then be included in the assessment.

In section 6.5.4: The certification report must include:

- Summary of the public consultation
- Summary of the report, including:
 - Master data
 - Management objectives, see 5.1 of *PEFC Denmark's Forest Management Standard – PEFC DK 001-4* (for individually certified forest properties)
 - Any non-conformances

Confidential business and personal data may be omitted in the summary of the report. Similarly, other information may be omitted in order to protect cultural values or delicate habitats

The certification body must make the summary of the certification report available to the general public.

6.5 Certification and auditing procedure for certification of sustainable forest management, including group certification

The certification body must establish internal procedures for the certification and auditing of sustainable forest management, including group certification of sustainable forest management pursuant to the Danish scheme.

This procedure must meet the requirements in *Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems* (DS/EN ISO/IEC 17021-3:2018).

The certification process includes the following phases:

1. Agreement on certification
2. Assessment of documentation and preparation of the certification audit
3. Certification audit (including a voluntary pre-audit, where applicable)
4. Certification report
5. Decision on certification
6. Information to PEFC Denmark
7. Follow-up audit
8. Re-certification

6.5.1 Agreement on certification

A written agreement on certification must be concluded.

6.5.2 Assessment of documentation and preparation of the certification audit

The certification body must prepare a plan for further assessment. The plan is submitted to the forest owner/group leader, who undertakes to continue the process.

An audit team is then put together in order to perform the further audit. When using external technical experts, these must be independent of the forest owner/group leader, and the names and affiliations of experts must be noted in the certification report.

6.5.3 Certification audit – main audit

The certification audit must include the following phases:

1. **Public consultation.** Before assessing compliance with *PEFC Denmark's Forest Management Standard – PEFC DK 001-4*, relevant stakeholders must be consulted with a time limit of at least 14 days. As a minimum, the consultation must be undertaken by means of an announcement on the certification body's website. Relevant information from external parties must then be included in the assessment
2. **Initial meeting**
3. **Collection of audit evidence.** The applicant's forest management/business operations must be audited against applicable standard(s). The audit team must collect the necessary audit evidence so as to assess whether the forest management/group leader meets the defined requirements. Assessment of compliance with the requirements of *PEFC Denmark's Forest Management Standard – PEFC DK 001-4* for group members in a group certification must be based on sampling. The sampling method must follow the guidelines in *IAF MD 1:2018*
4. **Assessment of the audit evidence.** An assessment is performed to check whether there is compliance with the certification requirements and whether the forest owner/group leader can be certified, or, if necessary, what amendments must be made before the certification can be take place. Guidance on handling observations and non-conformances in respect of *PEFC Denmark's Forest Management Standard – PEFC DK 001-4* can be found in Appendix 1
5. **Final meeting.** The audit team must provide a summary of their observations to the applicant once the conditions have been assessed
6. **Reporting the results.** The audit team's audit report and non-conformance reporting follow the certification body's procedures for this purpose

6.5.4 Certification report

The certification report must include the following elements as a minimum:

- Identification of the audit team
- Scope of certification
- A conformity assessment in relation to the certification requirements. Observations and non-conformances must always be documented in the report
- Summary of the public consultation
- Summary of the report, which includes:
 - Master data
 - Policy and objective for the property (for individually certified forest properties)
 - Any non-conformances

The certification body must make the summary of the certification report available to the general public.

6.5.5 Decision on certification

The certification body decides whether or not to award certification to the forest owner/group leader. The people making the decision must not have participated in the audit.

Minor and major non-conformances must be corrected before certification can be achieved.

The certificate is issued to the applicant when a positive decision on certification has been made.

6.5.6 Information to PEFC Denmark

The certification body must notify PEFC Denmark of all forest management and group certificates issued pursuant to the Danish scheme, as well as amendments relating to the validity and scope of the certification. Information to be sent to PEFC Denmark is described in *PEFC Information and Registration System – Data Requirements – PEFC DG 1008:2019*.

6.5.7 Follow-up audit

The certification body must perform annual follow-up audits at certified forest properties and group leaders during the period of validity of the certificate so as to verify that they continue to meet the requirements of the Danish scheme. In the case of follow-up audits, points 6.5.3 and 6.5.4 must be implemented with the exception of the public consultation, and the intensity of the main audit is not required. However, in the case of follow-up audits of group leaders, all parts of the management system are required to be audited at least once during the period of validity of the certificate.

If there are changes in management or procedures with regard to documentation or data entry at a certified forest property or group leader, the certified forest/group leader must notify the certification body immediately so that a correction plan can be made for this.

6.5.8 Re-certification

Points 6.5.1 to 6.5.5 are implemented in the event of re-certification.

6.6 Information on certificates

Certificates must as a minimum include information regarding:

- Name and address of the forest property/group leader
- Reference to normative documents
- Scope
- Date of issue
- Period of validity (expiry date)
- Certificate number
- Name and accreditation number of the certification body
- The relevant accreditation body symbol

- PEFC Trademark logo with the certification body's logo licence number.

6.6.1 References to normative documents

The following references to normative documents must be used:

Individual certification of sustainable forest management:

PEFC Denmark's Forest Management Standard – PEFC DK 001-4

Group certification of sustainable forest management:

PEFC Denmark's requirements for group certification of sustainable forest management – PEFC DK 003-5 and PEFC Denmark's Forest Management Standard – PEFC DK 001-4

PEFC Trademarks Rules – Requirements – PEFC ST 2001:2020

7. Requirements for accreditation bodies

The accreditation body must be a member of the European Cooperation for Accreditation (EA) and/or the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and must have signed the multilateral agreement on mutual recognition of accreditation bodies.

Annex 1 – Guidance on handling observations and non-conformances in respect of PEFC Denmark's Forest Management Standard – PEFC DK 001-4

The purpose of this guidance is to clarify which corrective measures can be implemented in respect of group-certified forest owners in the event of non-conformances in respect of *PEFC Denmark's Forest Management Standard PEFC DK ST 001-4*.

Requirements:

Observations and non-conformances in respect of PEFC Denmark's Forest Management Standard for certified forest properties are recorded by means of external audits.

Corrective measures cannot be demanded for non-conformances due to circumstances beyond the control of the owner themselves, e.g. consequences of expropriations or military exercises, etc.

Guidance

It is generally necessary for certification bodies to bear in mind that forests are biological systems that evolve slowly, and that they are production sites that are replaced only at 50 to 150-year intervals. Moreover, the specific soil and climate conditions, as well as the specific vegetation conditions, play an absolutely crucial part in what constitutes reasonable measures in forest management.

Forest management must be assessed on the basis of the following:

- General guidelines for forest management – *PEFC Denmark's Forest Management Standard – PEFC DK 001-4*, section 6
- The specific criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management – *PEFC Denmark's Forest Management Standard – PEFC DK 001-4*, section 7
- The individual objectives described for the forest property in question

In instances where a forest property is developing in an inappropriate direction in one or more areas, the certification report compiled must assess whether this development is explicable and acceptable in relation to the specific situation at the forest property.

Observations and non-conformances must be defined and handled as follows:

1. Observations

Observations are conditions recorded on the property that may develop into non-conformances in the long term.

2. Minor non-conformance

A minor non-conformance is a non-conformance, which means that an indicator develops in a decidedly negative direction or that there are operating conditions that are problematic in relation to the Forest Management Standard in general.

Whether the non-conformance is reasonably justified by special circumstances at the property is assessed. Non-conformances must be indicated in the audit report.

Minor non-conformances must be dealt with by the certification body's non-conformance management procedure and must be corrected before certification can be obtained.

The minor non-conformance will be upgraded to a major non-conformance if corrective measures for a minor non-conformance are not followed up within the specified time limit.

3. Major non-conformance

A major non-conformance is where the certification body identifies forest management that significantly breaches the foundation and content of PEFC Denmark's Forest Management Standard, or where previous requirements relating to corrective measures/non-conformances have not been followed up.

The certification body cannot issue a certificate if a major non-conformance is found and the situation is not corrected.

Non-conformances must be indicated in the audit report.

If the non-conformance is found during a follow-up audit or re-certification, the certification body shall require corrective action from the owner, with a time limit of a maximum of three months. In the case of repeated non-conformances, the certification body must suspend the certificate until the corrective action has been taken.

If the corrective measures are not performed or the non-conformance is deemed to be in direct conflict with PEFC Denmark's Forest Management Standard, conditions for withdrawal of the certificate exist. The forest owner is notified in writing that the condition for withdrawal of the certificate is met. For example, the condition for withdrawal of a certificate could involve failure to follow up on identified non-conformances, failure to cooperate with the planning and implementation of audits, or activities or allegations that could harm the reputation of PEFC Denmark, the certification company, etc. The forest owner is asked to explain the conditions open to criticism within two months. If the explanation is considered unsatisfactory, the certification agreement shall be withdrawn by submission of written notification to the forest owner.