

Romanian Forest Certification Scheme 2017 – Annex 10

PEFC-RO DST 8010:2017



Group certification - Requirements
for assessing sustainable forest management
in Romania

March 2017

Copyright notice

© PEFC Romania 2017

This PEFC Romania document is copyright-protected by the PEFC Romania. This document is freely available from the PEFC Romania website or upon request.

No part of this document covered by the copyright may be changed or amended; reproduced or copied in any form or by any means for commercial purposes without the permission of the PEFC Romania.

The official version of this document is Romanian and English. Translations of this document can be provided by the PEFC Council or PEFC Romania.

In case of any doubt the English version is definitive.

Document name: PEFC Group certification - Requirements

Document title: PEFC RO STD 8010:2017

Approved by: PEFC Romania General Assembly

Date: 2017-05-29

Issue date: 2017-05-29

Date of entry into force: 2018-04-01

Content

Content	3
1. Introduction	4
2. Scope.....	4
3. Requirements.....	4
3.1. Terms and Definitions	4
3.1.1 Certified area	4
3.1.2 Group entity.....	4
3.1.3 Group forest certificate	5
3.1.4 Group forest certification	5
3.1.5 Group organisation	5
3.1.6 Participant.....	6
3.1.7 Document confirming participation in group forest certification	6
3.2. Guiding principles of the group for forest management.....	6
3.3. Organisation and responsibilities.....	6
3.3.1. Group representation (applicant).....	6
3.3.2. Assignments of the group representation.....	6
3.3.3 Group members.....	8
3.3.4. Procedures and processes (Procedures for system stability).....	8
3.4. Documentation	9
3.5. Procedures for the admittance of new members.....	9
3.6. Planning (objectives and measures)	9
3.7. Internal audits	10
3.7.1. Elements and design	10
3.7.2. Participants	10
3.7.3. Auditors and report	10
3.8. Review	10
3.9. Issuance of confirmations of participation	11
3.9.1. Procedure of issuance.....	11
3.9.2. Validity of the confirmations	11
3.10. Exclusion of members.....	11

1. Introduction

Certification on the level of a group shall be an incentive for forest enterprises, depending on their existing structures, to establish forestry association in order to strengthen their capability. The group, originally designed for certification, can develop further common activities (e.g. timber marketing) and present itself as productive organisation.

2. Scope

This document is valid for the certification of sustainable forest management on the level of a group. This document defines requirements which have to be fulfilled by the certification groups respectively their members in order to participate in the PEFC system.

3. Requirements

Forest owners, organisation of forest owners (e.g. forestry associations) or forest managers with the forest area they are responsible for managing can form a group.

The forest area of these persons or organisations forming a group shall be clearly and definitely delimited.

On principle the whole forest area, which is managed by a person or organisation which is member of the group, shall be included on the forest area of the group.

3.1. Terms and Definitions

For the purposes of this document the terms and definitions given in ISO/IEC Guide 2:1996 apply together with the following definitions.

3.1.1 Certified area

The forest area covered by a group forest certificate representing the sum of forest areas of the participants.

3.1.2 Group entity

An entity that represents the participants, with overall responsibility for ensuring the conformity of forest management in the certified area to the sustainable forest management standard and other applicable requirements of the forest certification scheme.

Note 1: The term “group entity” is equivalent to the term “regional/group applicant”, etc.

Note 2: The relationship between the terms “group organisation”, “group entity” and “participant” is shown in Figure 1.

3.1.3 Group forest certificate

A document confirming that the group organisation complies with the requirements of the sustainable forest management standard and other applicable requirements of the forest certification scheme.

Note: The term “group forest certificate” is equivalent to the term “regional certificate” or other terms chosen by a relevant forest certification scheme which comply with the content of this definition.

3.1.4 Group forest certification

Certification of the group organisation under one group forest certificate.

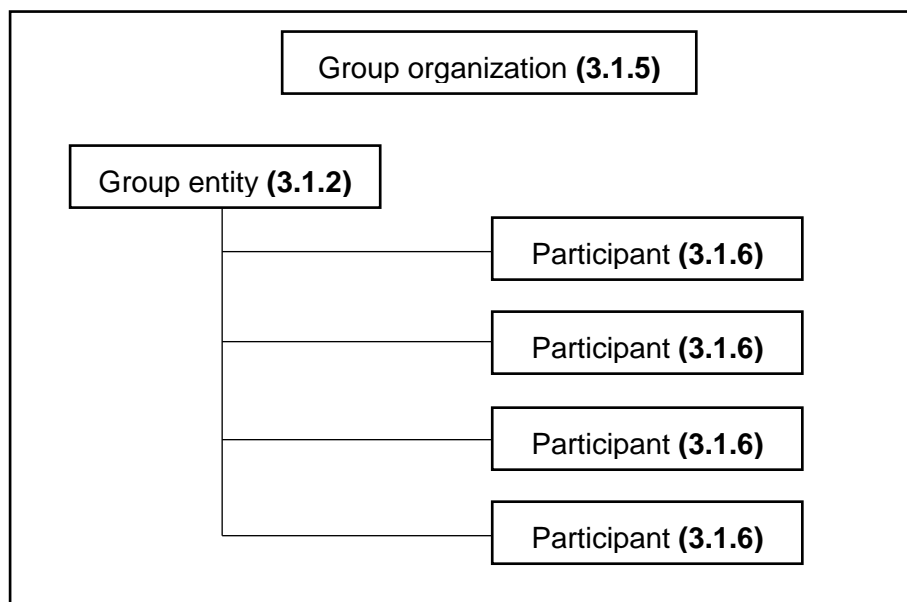
Note: The term “group organisation” is equivalent to the term “regional forest certification” or other terms chosen by the relevant forest certification scheme and complying with the content of this definition. The term “regional forest certification” is to be understood as “group forest certification” limited by geographical boundaries.

3.1.5 Group organisation

A group of participants represented by the group entity for the purposes of implementation of the sustainable forest management standard and its certification.

Note: The term “group organisation” is equivalent to the term “region” or other terms chosen by the relevant forest certification scheme and complying with the content of this definition.

Figure 1: Definition of the group organization



3.1.6 Participant

A forest owner/manager or other entity covered by the group forest certificate, who has the legal right to manage the forest in a clearly defined forest area, and the ability to implement the requirements of the sustainable forest management standard in that area.

Note1: The term “ability to implement the requirements of the sustainable forest management standard” requires the entity to have a long-term legal right to manage the forest and would disqualify one-off contractors from becoming participants in group certification.

Note 2: The relationship between the terms “group organisation”, “group entity” and “participant” is shown in Figure 1.

3.1.7 Document confirming participation in group forest certification

A document issued to an individual participant that refers to the group forest certificate and that confirms the participant as being covered by the scope of the group forest certification.

3.2. Guiding principles of the group for forest management

Based on the regulations of PEFC Romania, especially the standards for forest management, the group shall develop common guiding principles.

They shall be known to all group members and shall be part of the contractual arrangements for group membership.

They shall be documented and publicly available.

3.3. Organisation and responsibilities

3.3.1. Group representation (applicant)

The group shall establish a group representation in which the group members are represented.

The group representation is the responsible body for the group certification and applicant in the certification process.

By the means of a standing order the group representation can define assignment of tasks in a clear and transparent way.

3.3.2. Assignments of the group representation

The group representation has the following tasks:

Group entity shall have contract or other written agreement with all group participants including:

- a) the long-term commitment of the group participant to the principles of sustainable forest management and to the participation in PEFC Romania

- b) declaration of the group participant on not taking part in other group organizations, or individual forest certification under PEFC Romania.
- c) the group participants commitment to comply with the sustainable forest management standard and other applicable parts of the PEFC Romania scheme on all its forest area and other wooded land
- d) the group participants commitment to subject itself to external audit
- e) the right of the group entity to carry out internal monitoring
- f) the right of the group entity to implement and enforce any preventive or corrective measures
- g) the right of the group entity to exclude the group participant in the event of non-conformity with the sustainable forest management standard.

Application at an accredited certification body, including:

- a) communication with the certification body
- b) submission of an application for certification
- c) contractual relationship with the certification body
- d) providing commitment on behalf of the whole group organisation to comply with the sustainable forest management standard and other applicable requirements of the forest certification scheme.

List all members and their forest areas, including:

- a) Name of participant
- b) Address of participant
- c) Contact details
- d) Contact person
- e) Forest area on which participant is a registered forest management
- f) Other wooded area used by the participant

Communication with the national governing body (PEFC Romania)

Register all self-commitments of the group members.

Planning and implementation of internal audits.

Development of objectives and measures.

Elaboration of an annual review.

Informing the group members.

Generating the necessary documentations.

Admittance of new members

Exclusion of members.

3.3.3 Group members

3.3.3.1. Options for membership

The following persons or organisation can be group members:

- Forest owners.
- Forest managers as representatives of the areas they manage.
- Organisation of forest owners (e.g. forestry associations)

3.3.3.2. Assignments of the members

The members of the group are assigned to:

- Obligation to comply with the regulations of the group by signing contract with the group representation.
- Obligation to manage their forest in line with the sustainable forest management standards of PEFC Romania (Standards for forest management)
- Give information about their forest area to the group representation.
- Provide information and to provide access to the forest area and administration for the purpose of both internal audits and external certification and surveillance audits.
- Group member shall not take part in more than one instance of forest certification under PEFC Romania.

The group members can transfer their obligation for documentation and management to the group representation deriving from the standards for forest management. Each case shall be documented in the contract with the group representation.

3.3.4. Procedures and processes (Procedures for system stability)

The group shall demonstrate effective procedures that contribute to the stability of the system. In this context measures and elements can be of particular use to assure that:

- Group Entity's management operation shall be based on written procedures.
- Group members and interested parties are sufficiently informed and involved in the PEFC requirements and the certification process.
- Information on the compliance with the PEFC standards in the participating forest properties is presented and if necessary appropriate measures will be taken.

-
- Information on the PEFC certification in the group is analysed and if necessary appropriate measures will be taken.
 - The achievement of the objectives and measures is pursued and if necessary appropriate measures will be taken.

Measures, assignments and responsibilities shall be defined and documented.

3.4. Documentation

The procedures, required according to the regulation of PEFC Romania shall be documented. Especially the following issues shall be considered:

- Register of members as well as their forest areas.
- Audit results
- Review
- Planning (Objectives and measures)

A management handbook is a suitable instrument for the documentation of these procedures and elements.

3.5 Procedures for the admittance of new members

New members shall apply for membership at the group representation. In the scope of a contractual arrangement they shall oblige themselves to observe the rules of the group.

As part of the application the applicant shall submit all documents required according to the forest management standards.

The group representation shall inform the applicant about the rules of the group and shall provide access to all existing documents.

The applicants shall be integrated into the plan for internal audits and shall be included in the audits at the earliest.

The group representation shall check the documents submitted by the applicant.

The certification body shall be informed about the new member when the contract was signed which e.g. include the obligation to manage the forests in conformity with the standards.

According to the defined procedures a new member shall get a confirmation of participation in the certification process.

3.6. Planning (objectives and measures)

Based on the existing information and the regulations of PEFC Romania the group representation shall develop a plan for the group referring to objectives and measures for forest management.

The members shall implement the objectives and measures within the scope of their capabilities.

3.7. Internal audits

3.7.1. Elements and design

The group representation shall plan and implement internal audits annually in order to check the compliance with group regulations and to detect potential respectively demand for improvements. Especially the audits shall ensure:

- The compliance with the standards for sustainable forest management.
- The observance of legal regulations with reference to forest management.
- Information flow about focal points, objectives and action plans respectively about the contribution of the individual forest owners to achieve them.

A plan shall be drawn up for the audits which shall include information at least about:

- The appointed auditors.
- The participants.
- The period of time.
- The focal points of the audit.
- The proceeding.

3.7.2. Participants

All group participants shall be subject to the internal monitoring programme.

Applicants for membership shall be considered in the audit plan in the course of the application and shall be included in the audits at the earliest possible date.

3.7.3. Auditors and report

The appointed auditors shall be sufficiently qualified to evaluate the relevant issues. This could be geared to the requirements for auditors of certification bodies.

A documented audit report shall contain a short description of the main results as well as measures for improvement and corrective actions.

3.8. Review

The group representation shall undertake an annual review. This review shall consist of an assessment with respect to:

- The audit results.
- The inputs of third parties, if there have been received any.

- The implementation of the planning (objectives and measures)

Consequences shall be deduced in the review as base of future planning (objectives and measures).

Following the review corrective and preventive measures will be operated, if required, and evaluation of the effectiveness of corrective actions taken.

3.9. Issuance of confirmations of participation

3.9.1. Procedure of issuance

The group shall develop procedures how to issue confirmations of participation to the participating persons or organisations after the group certificate has been issued by the certification body

The participant receives an individual attestation (confirmation) from the group representation stating the successful participation in the certification process and referring to the group certificate.

3.9.2 Validity of the confirmations

The period of validity of the confirmation of participation that has been issued to the group members begins with signing of the voluntary self-commitment and lasts up to the end of the validity of the group certificate.

3.10. Exclusion of members

The group representation is entitled to exclude group members in case of major violations of the rules of the group.