



PEFC Council

## **Conformity Assessment of the Romanian Forest Certification System Against the PEFC Council Requirements**

*Final Report*

Indufor Oy, Helsinki

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## ABBREVIATIONS

GA	General Assembly
CB	certification body
COC	chain of custody
DR	Development Report
IAF	International Accreditation Forum
MLA	Multilateral Recognition Arrangement
NGB	national governing body
NRM	natural resources management
PEFC	Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification
PEFC GD	PEFC Guidance Document
PEFC ST	PEFC Standard
PEFCC	PEFC Council
RFCS	Romanian Forest Certification System
SFM	sustainable forest management
WG	Working Group



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### Background

The PEFC Romania Association (a.k.a. PEFC Romania), also the Romanian PEFC National Governing Body, was founded as an independent, non-profit organisation in 2016 to develop the PEFC national system for Romania.

The Romanian Forest Certification System (RFCS) was developed according to the PEFC Council procedures, and it was endorsed for the first time by PEFC General Assembly on May 29, 2018.

PEFC Romania launched the first review process of the system on March 23, 2022. It was concluded that the system needed a revision due to legislative changes at the national level and updates on the PEFC International standards and new PEFC Standards (PEFC ST 2001, PEFC ST 2002, and PEFC ST 2003).

The revised documents were adopted by the General Assembly of PEFC Romania on May 27, 2024. The application to the PEFC Council for conformity assessment of its revised documentation was submitted on May 29, 2024.

### Scope of the Report

This Report presents the findings of the assessor team. The structure of the report is as follows:

- Chapter 1 describes the background and the scope of the independent assessment.
- Chapter 2 states Indufor's recommendation on the endorsement of the Romanian Forest Certification System (RFCS) to the PEFC Board of Directors and specifies possible conditions the Board should take into consideration in the decision-making.
- Chapter 3 describes a summary of findings for each element of the national System and gives justifications for the given recommendation.
- Chapter 4 presents the material used and the assessment methods.
- Chapter 5 describes the structure of the applicant system.
- Chapter 6 assesses the national System's procedures for standard development and the procedures for standard review and revision against the PEFC Council requirements.
- Chapter 7 assesses how the standard review and revision process was implemented.
- Chapter 8 assesses the System requirements for sustainable forest management (SFM) and their compliance with the PEFC Council requirements.
- Chapter 9 assesses the group certification and its compliance with the PEFC Council requirements.
- Chapter 10 reviews the System requirements for certification and accreditation procedures including notification of certification bodies.
- Chapter 11 gives a summary of the received stakeholder comments and explains their consideration in the assessment.
- Annex 1 includes the PEFC benchmark checklists with Indufor's conclusions on the PEFC Romania's conformity with each PEFC benchmark requirement and lists the reference documents that provide the basis for the conclusions.
- Annex 2 is the stakeholder survey form.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Indufor recommends that the PEFC Council **maintains the endorsement** of the Romanian Forest Certification System, **under the condition that the remaining 25 nonconformities are either addressed within a period of six (6) months or noted and corrected during the next standard-setting process.**

The rationale of the recommendation derives from the following:

1. The System does not involve major nonconformities with the PEFC requirements.
2. The PEFC Romania has the possibility to address the remaining minor nonconformities within the given timeframe.

The remaining nonconformities to be addressed include the following:

1. **Three (3) minor nonconformities** in the system's requirements for standard-setting procedures.
  - a. We recommend that these nonconformities should be addressed within a period of six (6) months.
2. **Seven (7) minor nonconformities** in the system's standard-setting processes against the PEFC ST 1001:2017.
  - a. We recommend that four of these nonconformities (related to benchmarks 6.2.1, 6.2.3, 6.5.1 (a), and 9.1) are noted and corrected during the next standard-setting process.
  - b. We recommend that three of these nonconformities (related to benchmarks 9.4.1, 9.4.2, and 9.4.3) should be addressed within a period of six (6) months, and
  - c. That the formal approval of the modifications to the standard in question takes place within six (6) months.
3. **Fourteen (14) minor nonconformities** in the system's sustainable forest management requirements.
  - a. We recommend that these nonconformities should be addressed within a period of six (6) months, and
  - b. That the formal approval of the modifications to the standard in question takes place within six (6) months.
4. **One (1) minor nonconformity** at the general level regarding the use of "should" instead of "shall" on several occasions.
  - a. We recommend that this nonconformity should be addressed within a period of six (6) months, and
  - b. That the formal approval of the modifications to the standard in question takes place within six (6) months.

### **3. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

#### **3.1 Structure of the PEFC Romania Certification System**

The PEFC Romania Association (a.k.a. PEFC Romania), also the Romanian PEFC National Governing Body was founded as an independent, non-profit organisation in 2016 to develop the PEFC national system for Romania. Its national forest certification system was endorsed on May 29, 2018.

The review of the 2024 system started on March 23, 2022. It was concluded that the system needed a revision due to legislative changes at the national level and updates on the PEFC International standards and new PEFC Standards (PEFC ST 2001, PEFC ST 2002, and PEFC ST 2003). The revised documents were adopted by the General Assembly of PEFC Romania on May 27, 2024. The application to the PEFC Council for conformity assessment of its revised documentation was submitted on May 29, 2024.

PEFC Romania is responsible for the following:

- standard setting,
- representation of the scheme in the PEFC Council,
- notification of certification bodies,
- licensing the PEFC Trademarks
- service for the support of scheme implementation,
- training and information support,
- marketing, promotion, communication.

PEFC Romania is not involved in the certification and accreditation process.

The RFCS comprises the following normative documents:

- PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023 - Procedure for Developing and Revision of Romanian PEFC Standards on Sustainable Forest Management, May 12, 2023
- PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 - PEFC Romania Sustainable Forest Management Certification Scheme, May 27, 2024
- PEFC-RO ST 8001:2024 - Criteria and Indicators
- PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 - Group forest management certification – Requirements
- PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024 – Certification Body Requirements – Forest Management

Technical documents include the following:

- PEFC-RO ST 8009:2024 - Complaints and appeals procedures for the establishment and operation of the Romanian Certification Scheme, May 27, 2024
- PEFC-RO ST 8014:2024 – Notification for Certification Bodies
- PEFC-RO ST 8015:2024 – Trademark Use Agreement
- PEFC-RO ST 8016:2024 – List of fees

In addition, the system includes documents PEFC-RO DS 8001:2024 – System description and the PEFC-RO DS 8000:2024 Guidance Document – Commitment.

The RFCS also recognises the following international (normative) standards:

- PEFC ST 2001:2020 – PEFC Trademarks Rules – Requirements
- PEFC ST 2002:2020 – Chain of Custody of Forest and Tree Based Products – Requirements
- PEFC ST 2003:2020 – Certification Body Requirements – Chain of Custody.

#### **3.2 Standard-Setting Procedures**

The standard-setting procedures of the RFCS were assessed against the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements based on the documentation provided with the application and clarifications provided by PEFC Romania.



The list of documents and supporting files used as a reference is provided in conjunction with the checklist in Annex 1. Documentation is also included in the list provided under section 4.1.

The assessment identified **three (3) minor nonconformities** at the benchmark level in the standard-setting procedures of the RFCS. **We recommend that these nonconformities should be addressed within a period of six (6) months.** These nonconformities are listed below.

**Nonconformities:**

- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 6.1.1 (b-d). The documentation does not mention justification of the need for the new standard as a requirement, there is no mention of the intended outcomes, and there is no mention of a risk assessment of potential negative impacts arising from the implementation of the standard.
- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 6.6. There is no mention of a pilot testing for a new standard in PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023.
- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 9.1. Section 6 includes two minor nonconformities at the benchmark level. They are the following: benchmark requirement 6.1.1.(b): the justification of the need for the new standard is not mentioned, (c): there is no mention of the intended outcomes, and (d): there is no mention of a risk assessment of potential negative impacts arising from the implementation of the standard. Benchmark requirement 6.6. There is no mention of a pilot testing for a new standard in PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023

Moreover, the Romanian system uses “should” instead of “shall” on several occasions. This will be treated as **one general nonconformity across the whole system**. The benchmarks where in the source text, the word “should” must be replaced with “shall”, to ensure conformity against the international standard, are listed below:

- 5.1.1 (f), 5.3.1 (a), 5.3.2, 6.1.1 (a, b, d, e), 6.4.1, 6.4.2 (a, b), 6.4.3, 6.4.4 (b, c), 6.5.1 (f, g), 7.1, and 8.1.

Also, one **comment** was raised:

- Benchmark 6.4.4 (c): The numbering of this section of PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023 should be checked (i.e. 5.4.4.4-5.4.4.6 should be 5.4.3.4-5.4.3.6)

Due to the **three (3) minor nonconformities** at the benchmark level, and the usage of “should” instead of “shall”, the RFCS’s standard-setting procedures **do not yet fully comply** with the PEFC requirements.

### 3.3 Standard-Setting Process

The implementation of the standard setting process of the RFCS was assessed against the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements based on supporting documentation and clarifications provided by PEFC Romania.

The following documents were consulted during the assessment of the standard-setting procedures:

- Development Report - Revision of the Romanian PEFC scheme, 2024
- Excel file containing contact information of contacted stakeholders, received from PEFC Romania on October 14, 2024
- Public announcement, May 29, 2023
- Presentation in the Stakeholder Forum at the revision launching meeting July 31, 2023
- Minutes of the four Working Group meetings dated October 19, 2023, November 29, 2023, January 18, 2024, and February 7, 2024
- Minutes of the PEFC Romania General Assembly meeting May 27,
- Minutes of the PEFC Romania General Assembly meeting October 14, 2022
- Voting results on the email postal ballot of the final draft, undated.

It is worth noting that some of the documents were in Romanian only, and unofficial translations were provided by Indufor. In addition, the PEFC Romania website was consulted.

The assessment identified **seven (7) minor nonconformities** at the benchmark level in the standard-setting process, **four of them to be noted and corrected during the next standard-setting process, and three should be subject to corrective action within six (6) months.** The nonconformities are listed below.

**Nonconformities:**

- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 6.2.1. There is no documentation on the definition of likely key issues, and which means of communication would be best to reach the key stakeholders in each stakeholder group. The nonconformity should be noted and corrected during the next standard-setting process.
- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 6.2.3. There is no documentation on the standardising body addressing any constraints to the participation of disadvantaged and key stakeholders in standard-setting activities. The nonconformity should be noted and corrected during the next standard-setting process.
- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 6.5.1 (a). The public consultation was announced on the PEFC.RO website on the same day as the start of the consultation. The nonconformity should be noted and corrected during the next standard-setting process.
- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 9.1. Section 6 includes three minor nonconformities. They are the following: benchmark requirement 6.2.1: there is no documentation on the definition of likely key issues, and which means of communication would be best to reach the key stakeholders in each stakeholder group. Benchmark requirement 6.2.3: there is no documentation on the standardising body addressing any constraints to the participation of disadvantaged and key stakeholders in standard-setting activities. Benchmark requirement 6.5.1 (a): the public consultation was announced on the PEFC.RO website on the same day as the start of the consultation. The nonconformity should be noted and corrected during the next standard-setting process.
- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 9.4.1. The application and transition dates are not defined. Since the application date and the transition period are mandatory elements of the standard, the process is not in line with PEFC ST 1001:2017. The nonconformity should be subject to corrective action within six (6) months.
- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 9.4.2. The application date is not defined. The nonconformity should be subject to corrective action within six (6) months.
- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 9.4.3. The transition period is not defined. The nonconformity should be subject to corrective action within six (6) months.

One **comment** was raised:

- Benchmark 5.2.1 (b): The numbering of chapters in the DR should be checked.

### 3.4 Forest Management Standard

The requirements for sustainable forest management in Romania are described in two documents:

- PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 - PEFC Romania Sustainable Forest Management Certification Scheme, and
- PEFC-RO ST 8001:2024 - Criteria and Indicators for Forest Management Evaluation in Romania.

The conformity assessment of the RFCS requirements for SFM as set by the national standard document identified **fourteen (14) minor nonconformities** at the benchmark level against the

requirements of PEFC ST 1003:2018. **We recommend that these nonconformities should be addressed within a period of six (6) months.** The nonconformities were the following:

- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 4.1 (i). PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 includes a list of applicable legislation, but it does not include information about in relation to which requirement each legislative element provides evidence of compliance. On one instance (benchmark 8.2.3), this information is provided in PEFC Romania's checklist. However, the benchmark requires that the requirement shall include an overview of applicable legislation should it be addressed by it.
- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 5.3. The standard itself establishes the responsibilities for sustainable forest management for the forest owner/manager and/or the organisation but does not require that the responsibilities for sustainable forest management shall be clearly defined and assigned.
- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 6.2.8. Note 2 of requirement 6.2.7 shall be revised. The summary of the management plan must be publicly available: in its current form, note 2 does not comply with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 7.2.1. The requirements 7.2.1–7.2.4 of PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 do not apply to forest owners or managers, only to employees and contractors.
- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 8.1.2. PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 requires that irreversible damage to forest ecosystems should not be caused whereas the benchmark requires minimising adverse impacts on forest resources.
- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 8.1.3. PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 requires that forests and their management shall have a positive impact on climate only under certain environmental conditions. When asked for a clarification, PEFC Romania answered the following: *The term "certain environmental conditions" in section 8.5.4.3 refers specifically to regions or circumstances where forests play a critical protective role. These include: Steppe and forest-steppe zones: Areas in Romania vulnerable to drought, wind erosion, and climatic extremes, where forests are essential for stabilizing soil and regulating the microclimate. Polluted regions: Forests located near industrial zones or high-pollution areas, where tree cover serves as a filter for pollutants. These conditions reflect Romania's geographical and ecological realities, where forests are prioritized for protective roles due to environmental stresses.*
- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 8.1.4 (a, b, d). PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 requires consultation with *relevant stakeholders* whereas the benchmark requires consultation with *affected stakeholders*. *Relevant stakeholder* is not defined in the standard. PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 refers to the forest area whereas the benchmark requirement refers to the individual forest type. PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 does not require that forest conversion shall not destroy areas of significantly high carbon stock. PEFC Romania note the following in their checklist: *The PEFC Romania Forum considered the forest is always a high carbon stock so conversion is always implying a level of destroy of a significantly carbon stock, so this requirement cannot be respected.* When asked, PEFC Romania further elaborated: *The PEFC Romania Forum determined that the Romanian forests, regardless of their age or specific characteristics, possess significant carbon stocks. This view is based on the understanding that forests, by their nature, function as substantial carbon sinks, storing carbon in both biomass and soil. The Forum reasoned that any conversion of forest land inevitably leads to a loss of carbon stock, given that the transition from forest to another land use results in the removal of trees and associated biomass, which contributes directly to carbon release. The Forum acknowledged that carbon stock levels can vary between young and mature stands, however, even younger forests contribute to carbon sequestration and storage. From this perspective, it was concluded that it is challenging to differentiate between levels of significant carbon stock across various forest stages when applying this standard at a national level. Therefore, it was deemed more appropriate to adopt*

a precautionary approach, treating all forest conversion as involving a significant loss of carbon stock. The benchmark specifically forbids the conversion of areas of significantly high carbon stock thus the justification cannot be accepted. Should all forest conversion be considered as involving a significant loss of carbon stock, all forest conversion should in that case be prohibited. PEFC Romania mentioned that there is an ecological impact assessment required by law in place that would in practice prevent the conversion of forest areas with significant carbon stock, but this claim was not yet substantiated during the draft report commenting phase.

- Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 8.1.6 (a–h). PEFC Romania note the following in their checklist: *The PEFC Romania Forum considered that severely degraded forest is by definition, not fulfilling its economic, ecological, social role so if a decision of conversion is made, this will automatically be made respecting all the requirements from 8.1.6 Chapter. The Forum consider that a human made forest even if artificial will fulfil all the roles better than a severely degraded forests. Severely degraded forests is not an exact technical term as the severity can be subjective and not defined. The Forum decided to eliminate the hole Chapter 8.1.6* When asked, PEFC Romania further elaborated: *The PEFC Romania Forum decided to omit Benchmark 8.1.6, which concerns the conversion of severely degraded forests to plantations, based on a few key considerations. As a plus from the explanations in the checklist, Romanian legislation forbids to convert natural forest into forest plantations. There is a terminology that is "the fundamental forest type" that is defined by law, it clearly specifies with what species a degraded forest can be recovered and in what conditions and this action is dictated by the management planning. A conversion from forest (even degraded one) is not possible in Romania. Plantations are possible, but only on agricultural or degraded lands that are not in the Forest Fund, so not in the certification scope. The structure of cultivated forests in Romania tends to maintain a natural-like character, even when artificially regenerated. These plantations are often aimed at promoting native species and maintaining ecological balance. This approach differs from the more industrial plantation forestry models referenced in PEFC ST 1003:2018, which might include uniform, fast-growing species. Also, the term "severely degraded forest" lacks a precise technical definition, making it subjective and challenging to apply consistently across diverse forest landscapes in Romania. Given this ambiguity, the Forum opted to focus on broader principles of sustainable management, rather than creating detailed requirements that might not accurately reflect local conditions. The Forum believed that existing legal frameworks and the sustainable management practices within the PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 standard sufficiently address the intentions behind Benchmark 8.1.6 without the need for an additional, specific chapter on converting degraded forests to plantations. (...) 4. Minister order 2533/2022 TECHNICAL RULES of September 28, 2022, regarding the compositions, schemes and technologies of forest regeneration and afforestation of degraded lands Art.4 alin (1) When choosing the species for afforestation, the correlation of the functions that the respective crops must fulfill with the requirements of the species and the specifics of the natural conditions is taken into account. alin. (4) The ecological group is determined according to the floor or bioclimatic zone and the data from the forestry management, as follows: a) the type of resort (TS) is determined based on: (i) elements obtained by drawing up the station record and eventually by special station charting; (ii) the indications provided by woody and herbaceous vegetation - type of forest, type of indicator flora; (iii) stationary factors that limit growth; b) the fundamental natural type of forest (TP) is determined based on: (i) data from arrangements or other documents/studies; (ii) the characterization elements of the existing natural vegetation; (iii) investigations carried out in neighboring stands, with similar seasonal conditions; (iv) the characterization elements of the indicator flora specific to the fundamental natural type of forest; (v) other information. To conclude, the conversion of degraded forests to forest plantations is not applicable in the context of Romania as legislation prevents it. However, this legislation is not referred to in the standard.*

- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 8.2.3. PEFC Romania notes the following in their checklist: *Fire is not used in forest management. Fire in the forest is forbidden by legislation no.171/16.07.2010 Chapter IV Art.9 letter b).* However, this law is not referred to in the standard.
- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 8.2.8. The standard does not make it clear whether WHO Class 1A and 1B pesticides and other highly toxic pesticides are prohibited, and usage to “a limited scale” is not defined.
- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 8.2.11. PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 does not require that fertilizer shall not be used as an alternative to appropriate soil nutrient management.
- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 8.4.4. The standard doesn't require that saplings shall be adapted to the site conditions and that regeneration shall be satisfactory from a qualitative and quantitative point of view.
- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 8.4.11. PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 does not require constructing infrastructure in a way that minimises damage to ecosystems, especially to rare, sensitive or representative ecosystems and genetic reserves and taking the migration patterns of threatened or other key species into consideration.
- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 8.5.5. PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 does not require installing proper road drainage facilities.

In addition, eleven **comments** were raised:

- Benchmark 4.1 (a): It is recommended to add the clarification that is included in the checklist in the scope.
- Benchmark 4.1 (g): There is a typo in the claim: *100% PEFC certificate* should be *100% PEFC certified*.
- Benchmark 6.2.4: There may be a translation issue in requirement 6.2.5 regarding the word “possibility”.
- Benchmark 6.2.6: The phrase “it is recommended” must be replaced with a “shall”.
- Benchmark 6.3.2.2: It would be beneficial to either define “specific forestry activities” in the standard or revise the term.
- Benchmark 6.3.4.3: There is a typo in the requirement: a full stop between “areas” and “shall”.
- Benchmark 8.1.1: When asked for clarification for the term “production fund”, PEFC Romania answered with a definition of forest fund. This is taken to mean that “production fund” equals “forest fund” i.e., regulatory definition of forest land. However, it would be beneficial to either define “production fund” or revise its usage.
- Benchmark 8.1.5 (e): As legislation covers the benchmark, the applicable legislation should be referred to in the standard.
- Benchmark 8.2.2. Replacing “installed” with “established” in PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.1.1 is recommendable.
- Benchmark 8.4.12. PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.4.6 and 8.4.4.7 refer to legislation in relation to animal population control and grazing. The legal possibilities can potentially overwrite the benchmark objectives.

Benchmark 8.5.4: To make PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.5.1.6 clear, “and its” should be added between “water” and “quality”.

Moreover, the Romanian system uses “should” instead of “shall” on several occasions. This will be treated as **one general nonconformity across the whole system**. The benchmarks, where

in the source text, the word “should” must be replaced with “shall” to ensure conformity against the international standard are listed below:

- 6.2.8, 7.2.1, 8.1.4 (a–c, e), 8.2.1, 8.2.2, 8.2.4, 8.2.5, 8.2.6, 8.4.1, 8.4.4, 8.4.5, 8.4.6, 8.4.9, 8.5.4, 8.5.5, 8.6.4, and 8.6.5.

Due to the **fourteen (14) benchmark-level minor nonconformities**, PEFC Romania’s requirements for sustainable forest management **do not comply** with the PEFC Council requirements.

### 3.5 Group Certification Model

The requirements for group certification in Romania are described in two documents:

- PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 - Group forest management certification – Requirements, May 27, 2024, and
- PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 - PEFC Romania Sustainable Forest Management Certification Scheme.

The conformity assessment of the RFCS requirements for group forest management as set by the national standard documents identified **no nonconformities** at the benchmark level against the requirements of PEFC ST 1002:2018. Two **comments** were raised:

- Benchmark 4.3.3: In relation to 5.2: PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 defines that the group administrator shall make the commitment publicly available whereas PEFC ST 1002:2018 does not specify that.
- Benchmark 5.1.1 (e): The requirement refers to *panel participants* instead of *group participants*.

Moreover, the Romanian system uses “should” instead of “shall” on several occasions; as explained earlier, this will be treated as **one general nonconformity across the whole system**. The benchmarks where in the source text, the word “should” must be replaced with “shall” to ensure conformity against the international standard, are listed below:

- 4.3.1 (a), 7.4 (c), 7.5, and 9.3.1.3.

Apart from the usage of “should” instead of “shall”, the RFCS requirements for group forest management **fully comply** with the PEFC requirements.

### 3.6 Certification and Accreditation Arrangements

The RFCS requirements for certification bodies and procedures for forest management certification are described in the standard PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024, based on the international standard PEFC ST 1004:2024 with requirements for Certification Bodies operating certification against forest management standard, and in the PEFC-RO ST 8014:2024 Notification of Certification Bodies.

These standards were assessed against the PEFC benchmark standard Annex 6. **No nonconformities** were identified.

However, the Romanian system uses “should” instead of “shall” on several occasions. This will be treated as **one general nonconformity across the whole system**. The benchmarks, where in the source text, the word “should” must be replaced with “shall” to ensure conformity against the international standard, are listed below:

- 16 and 21.

Because **no nonconformities** at the benchmark level were identified, the RFCS requirements for certification and accreditation arrangements **comply** with the PEFC requirements.

## 4. MATERIAL AND METHODS

### 4.1 Material

The conformity assessment was based on the following documentation concerning the PEFC Romania (Table 4.1).

**Table 4.1 Documentation used in the assessment of the Romanian Forest Certification System.**

PEFC Romania normative and technical documents	Date of issuance	Received by assessor
PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023 - Procedure for Developing and Revision of Romanian PEFC Standards on Sustainable Forest Management	May 12, 2023	August 1, 2024
PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 - PEFC Romania Sustainable Forest Management Certification Scheme	May 27, 2024	August 1, 2024
PEFC-RO ST 8001:2024 - Criteria and Indicators	May 27, 2024	August 1, 2024
PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 - Group forest management certification – Requirements	May 27, 2024	August 1, 2024
PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024 – Certification Body Requirements – Forest Management	May 27, 2024	August 1, 2024
PEFC-RO ST 8009:2024 - Complaints and appeals procedures for the establishment and operation of the Romanian Certification Scheme	May 27, 2024	August 1, 2024
PEFC-RO ST 8014:2024 – Notification for Certification Bodies	May 27, 2024	August 1, 2024
PEFC-RO ST 8015:2024 – Trademark Use Agreement	May 27, 2024	August 1, 2024
PEFC-RO ST 8016:2024 – List of fees	May 27, 2024	August 1, 2024
<b>Descriptive documents</b>		
Development Report - Revision of the Romanian PEFC scheme	2024	August 1, 2024
PEFC-RO DS 8001:2024 – System Description - The Romanian Forest Certification System	2024	August 1, 2024
PEFC-RO DS 8000:2024 Guidance Document – Commitment	May 27, 2024	August 1, 2024
<b>Supporting documents</b>		
PEFC-RO DST 8006:2017 – Statutes, PEFC Romania	March 2017	October 21, 2024
Excel file containing contact information of contacted stakeholders,	undated	October 14, 2024
The following documents were in the Romanian language and translated by Indufor: Public announcement	May 29, 2023	October 24, 2024
Presentation in the Stakeholder Forum at the revision launching meeting July 31, 2023	July 31, 2023	October 24, 2024
Minutes of the four Working Group meetings dated October 19, 2023, November 29, 2023, January 18, 2024, and February 7, 2024	several	October 24, 2024
Minutes of the PEFC Romania General Assembly meeting, May 27, 2024	May 27, 2024	October 24, 2024
Minutes of the PEFC Romania General Assembly meeting, October 14, 2022	October 14, 2022	October 28, 2024
Voting results on the email postal ballot of the final draft	undated	October 24, 2024

### 4.2 Methods

The assessment has been carried out as a desk study based on the documentation listed above and clarifications provided by PEFC Romania.

Additionally, consultations with stakeholders have been carried out in two separate processes: The international public consultation webinar by PEFC Internation was held on July 15, 2024, which opened the consultation for the stakeholders' comments until September 13, 2024. A

national stakeholder survey was carried out by the assessor from October 16, 2024, to November 17, 2024.

The following grading of conformity levels was used in the assessment (Box 4.1).

**Box 4.1 Assessment Scales Used in Conformity Assessment**

**Conformity**

A procedure described by the System documentation fully meets the particular requirement of the PEFC Council.

**Minor nonconformity**

A minor nonconformity does not violate the integrity of the certification System and is not a bar to endorsement. The assessor recommends appropriate corrective action. Generally, a minor nonconformity should be corrected within 6 months. The assessor may recommend a longer period, where justified by particular circumstances.

**Major nonconformity**

A major nonconformity violates the integrity of the certification System and has to be corrected before the endorsement of the System.

**NA**

Not applicable.

Only a positive conclusion on the conformity was considered to meet the PEFC requirements. The System elements indicating minor or major nonconformities were classified as not meeting the performance level set for the endorsed Systems. PEFC benchmark requirements were classified as not applicable if they related to a standard development phase or process not relevant for PEFC Romania. These included, e.g., requirements specific to development of a new standard, as assessed process considered standard revision.



## 5. STRUCTURE OF THE APPLICANT SYSTEM

### 5.1 PEFC Romania

PEFC Romania is the national governing body in Romania and a member of the PEFC Council. PEFC Romania was founded in January 2016 and joined PEFC in November 2016. The Romanian Forest Certification System (RFCS) achieved PEFC endorsement in June 2018. PEFC Romania is responsible for the following:

- standard setting,
- representation of the scheme in the PEFC Council,
- notification of certification bodies,
- licensing the PEFC Trademarks
- service for the support of scheme implementation,
- training and information support,
- marketing, promotion, communication.

PEFC Romania is not involved in the certification and accreditation process.

PEFC Romania **General Assembly (GA)** is the highest governing body of PEFC Romania and is responsible for the formal approval of the Romanian System. It is comprised of representatives of all members and is responsible for passing resolutions on all basic issues concerning PEFC Romania. It nominates the Managing Council and the President of PEFC Romania. The Managing Council elects censors, approves or rejects proposals for amending the Statute of PEFC Romania, and handles several administrative tasks related to budgeting, work programs, etc.

Between GA meetings, the governing body is the **Managing Board**, which meets usually twice a year, or whenever necessary. The **President** is elected by the GA from among the founding or active members, for a term of four years, with the possibility of re-election.

For the standard revision, a Technical Working Group (a.k.a. Forum) is nominated.

Under the terms of a contract with the PEFC Council, PEFC Romania is authorised to use the PEFC logo for educational purposes. It is also responsible for issuing licenses on behalf of the PEFC Council, if appropriate, in accordance with PEFC ST 2001:2020 PEFC Trademark Rules - Requirements. PEFC Romania is also responsible for keeping an up-to-date register of all the on- and off-product logo users given licenses by PEFC Romania, and of the certificate holders in the country, as well as for transferring the data to the PEFC Council.

### 5.2 The Romanian Forest Certification System (RFCS)

The RFCS comprises the following normative documents:

- PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023 --Procedure for Developing and Revision of Romanian PEFC Standards on Sustainable Forest Management, May 12, 2023
- PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 – PEFC Romania Sustainable Forest Management Certification Scheme, May 27, 2024
- PEFC-RO ST 8001:2024 – Criteria and Indicators
- PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 – Group forest management certification – Requirements
- PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024 – Certification Body Requirements – Forest Management

Technical documents include the following:

- PEFC-RO ST 8009:2024 – Complaints and appeals procedures for the establishment and operation of the Romanian Certification Scheme, May 27, 2024
- PEFC-RO ST 8014:2024 – Notification for Certification Bodies
- PEFC-RO ST 8015:2024 – Trademark Use Agreement
- PEFC-RO ST 8016:2024 – List of fees



In addition, the system includes documents PEFC-RO DS 8001:2024 – System description and the PEFC-RO DS 8000:2024 Guidance Document – Commitment.

The RFCS also recognises the following international (normative) standards:

- PEFC ST 2001:2020 – PEFC Trademarks Rules – Requirements
- PEFC ST 2002:2020 – Chain of Custody of Forest and Tree Based Products – Requirements
- PEFC ST 2003:2020 – Certification Body Requirements – Chain of Custody

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of the RFCS:

- ISO/IEC 17011:2004 Conformity assessment -- General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies
- ISO/IEC Guide 59:1994 Code of good practice for standardisation
- ISO/IEC 17021:2011 Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems
- ISO/IEC 17065 Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services.

### **5.3 Organisations in Accreditation and Certification**

Certification bodies carrying out forest, group or chain of custody certification shall be accredited by an internationally recognised accreditation body that complies with the rules and contract terms of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF).

Certification entities operating in Romania must be specifically accredited for forest management certification by the national accreditation entity (RENAR<sup>1</sup>) or an equivalent entity. For the chain-of-custody accreditation, they must be accredited and authorised according to the standard PEFC ST 2003:2020 on *Requirements for Certification Bodies operating Certification against the PEFC International Chain of Custody Standard*.

Accreditation bodies must meet the requirements of ISO 17011. For chain of custody certification, the accreditation body must be a signatory of the Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA) of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) for product certification. The accreditation body's activities are governed by ISO 17011 and relevant documents of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF).

### **5.4 Applicants**

The Romanian SFM standard PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 PEFC Romania Sustainable Forest Management Certification Scheme applies to forest owners and administrators, as well as contractors and other operators operating in forests whose management is PEFC certified.

PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 Group forest management certification – Requirements applies to forest owners, organisations of forest owners (e.g. forest associations) or forest managers with the forest area under their management. Both group and individual certifications are possible.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.renar.ro/>. Information from PEFC Romania: *PEFC Romania tried to have accreditation of CBs in Romania but after many meetings we learned that RENAR can accredit only Romanian CBs. As in Romania there is no CB activating in FM certification that is local, RENAR could not help with this. SOIL Association is the only accredited CB for FM at the time, and it got accredited with UKAS in UK.*

## 6. STANDARD-SETTING PROCEDURES

### 6.1 Introduction

The standard-setting documents of the RFCS are included in the following normative documents:

- PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023 - Procedure for Developing and Revision of Romanian PEFC Standards on Sustainable Forest Management, 12 May 2023
- PEFC-RO ST 8009:2024 - Complaints and appeals procedures for the establishment and operation of the Romanian Certification Scheme, May 27, 2024

In addition, the following documents were consulted during the assessment of the standard-setting procedures:

- PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 - PEFC Romania Sustainable Forest Management Certification Scheme, May 27, 2024
- System Description - The Romanian Forest Certification System, 2024
- PEFC-RO DST 8006:2017 – Statutes, PEFC Romania., March 2017

It is worth noting that some of the documents were in Romanian only, and unofficial translations were provided by Indufor.

A summary of the main findings is provided below, following the structure of the PEFC ST 1001:2017. The checklist is included in Annex (PEFC Checklist - Standard Setting Procedures and Process, page 28.

The assessment identified **three (3) minor nonconformities** at the benchmark level in the standard-setting procedures of the RFCS. **All nonconformities identified in this section should be subject to corrective action within six (6) months.**

### 6.2 Findings of the Assessment

#### Standardizing Body

The legal status and organisational structure are described in the System Description document, the PEFC Romania Statutes, and the document Procedure for Developing and revision of Romanian Standards on Sustainable Forest Management, which also determines the body responsible for consensus-building and procedures for the formal adoption of the standard. The Complaints and appeals procedures are determined in a separate document.

The assessment found no nonconformities with the benchmark requirements under this chapter.

#### Standard-Setting Process

PEFC Romania's current standard-setting process is described in the normative document PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023 - Procedure for Developing and Revision of Romanian PEFC Standards on Sustainable Forest Management.

The assessment concludes that the procedures described above are in line with the requirements of the PEFC ST 1001:2017. However, **two (2) minor nonconformities** were identified at the benchmark level under this chapter at the benchmark level:

- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 6.1.1 (b-d). The documentation does not mention justification of the need for the new standard as a requirement, there is no mention of the intended outcomes, and there is no mention of a risk assessment of potential negative impacts arising from the implementation of the standard.
- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 6.6. There is no mention of a pilot testing for a new standard in PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023.

The latter nonconformity was a “working accident” as information from PEFC Romania states: “...from draft to final version the Ch. 5.5.9 disappeared. It was like this:”5.5.9 If developing a

*new standard, PEFC Romania must arrange a pilot test to assess the clarity, auditability and feasibility of the requirements. The Forum must consider the results of the pilot test. Note: A pilot test is not required when revising an existing standard because feedback about its implementation can replace a pilot test.”*

Also, one **comment** was raised:

- Benchmark 6.4.4 (c): The numbering of this section of PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023 should be checked (i.e. 5.4.4.4-5.4.4.6 should be 5.4.3.4-5.4.3.6)

### **Approval and Publication**

The procedures for the approval and publication of the RFCS standards are described in PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023 – Procedure for Developing and Revision of Romanian PEFC Standards on Sustainable Forest Management.

During the assessment of the procedures for the approval and publication, **no nonconformities** were identified.

### **Periodic Review of Standards**

The procedure for the periodic review of the RFCS standards are described in PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023 – Procedure for Developing and Revision of Romanian PEFC Standards on Sustainable Forest Management.

During the assessment of the procedures for the periodic review of standards, **no nonconformities** were identified.

### **Revision of Standards**

The procedure for the revision of RFCS standards are described in PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023 – Procedure for Developing and Revision of Romanian PEFC Standards on Sustainable Forest Management.

During the assessment of the procedures for the periodic review of standards, **one (1) minor nonconformity** was identified:

- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 9.1. Section 6 includes two minor nonconformities at the benchmark level. They are the following: Benchmark requirement 6.1.1.(b): the justification of the need for the new standard is not mentioned, (c): there is no mention of the intended outcomes, and (d): there is no mention of a risk assessment of potential negative impacts arising from the implementation of the standard. Benchmark requirement 6.6: There is no mention of a pilot testing for a new standard in PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023.

## **6.3 Assessment of Conformity**

Due to the **three (3) benchmark-level minor nonconformities**, and the general one on the use of “should” instead of “shall”, PEFC Romania’s requirements for standard-setting procedures **do not yet fully comply** with the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements and should be **subject to corrective action within six (6) months**.

## 7. STANDARD-SETTING PROCESS

### 7.1 Introduction

The implementation of the standard setting process of the RFCS was assessed against the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements based on supporting documentation and clarifications provided by PEFC Romania.

The following documents were consulted during the assessment of the standard-setting procedures:

- Development Report - Revision of the Romanian PEFC scheme, 2024
- Excel file containing contact information of contacted stakeholders, received from PEFC Romania on October 14, 2024
- Public announcement, May 29, 2023
- Presentation in the Stakeholder Forum at the revision launching meeting July 31, 2023
- Minutes of the four Working Group meetings dated October 19, 2023, November 29, 2023, January 18, 2024, and February 7, 2024
- Minutes of the PEFC Romania General Assembly meeting May 27,
- Minutes of the PEFC Romania General Assembly meeting October 14, 2022
- Voting results on the email postal ballot of the final draft, undated.

It is worth noting that some of the documents were in Romanian only, and unofficial translations were provided by Indufor. In addition, the PEFC Romania website was consulted.

The summary of the main findings from the assessment of the standard-setting process against the requirements of the PEFC ST 1001:2017 is presented below, following the structure of the PEFC ST 1001:2017. The checklist is included in Annex 1 (PEFC Checklist - Standard Setting Procedures and Process, page 28).

The assessment identified **six (6) minor nonconformities at the benchmark level** in the standard-setting process, **four of them to be noted and corrected during the next standard-setting process, and two should be subject to corrective action within six (6) months.**

### 7.2 Findings of the Assessment

#### Standardizing Body

The standardising body has kept the documented information as required by the benchmark. The documentation is abundant, public, and generally well-prepared. All documents, including the standard drafts were available to all Forum members online during the process. Processes for dealing with complaints and appeals cannot be assessed as no complaints or appeals were reportedly received by the PEFC Romania.

No nonconformities in the process were identified in relation to the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements under this subsection. However, one **comment** was raised:

- Benchmark 5.2.1 (b): The numbering of chapters in the DR should be checked.

#### Standard-Setting Process

The standard-setting process was implemented as a normal standard revision process. Benchmark requirements regarding the creation of a new standard were deemed not applicable in the assessment. The standard development was considered in the assessment to have been by large in line with the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements, including, e.g., working group composition and operation, and the implemented public consultation. **Three (3) minor nonconformities** were identified in the assessment:

- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 6.2.1. There is no documentation on the definition of likely key issues, and which means of communication would be best to reach the

key stakeholders in each stakeholder group. The nonconformity should be noted and corrected during the next standard-setting process.

- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 6.2.3. There is no documentation on the standardising body addressing any constraints to the participation of disadvantaged and key stakeholders in standard-setting activities. The nonconformity should be noted and corrected during the next standard-setting process.
- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 6.5.1 (a): The public consultation was announced on the PEFC.RO website on the same day as the start of the consultation. The nonconformity should be noted and corrected during the next standard-setting process.

Also, one **comment** was raised:

- Benchmark 6.4.4 (c): The numbering of this section of PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023 should be checked (i.e. 5.4.4.4-5.4.4.6 should be 5.4.3.4-5.4.3.6)

### Approval and Publication

The standard approval and publication process was found to have been in line with the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements. **No nonconformities** were identified.

### Periodic Review of Standards

Although there was some confusion with the terminology between the English and Romanian languages (review vs. revision) during the assessment, it can be concluded that PEFC Romania carried out a review of the standard, including a stakeholder mapping, a gap analysis, and a public consultation to collect stakeholder feedback, and arrived at the decision that standard revision was necessary.

During the assessment of the periodic review of standards process, **no nonconformities** were identified.

### Revision of Standards

The PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements concerning editorial revision and time-critical revision under this chapter were deemed “not applicable”, as the process was carried out as a normal standard revision. This revision process was found to have been largely in line with the benchmark requirements. However, **four (4) minor nonconformities** were identified, related to the standard setting process:

- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 9.1. Section 6 includes three minor nonconformities. They are the following: Benchmark requirement 6.2.1: there is no documentation on the definition of likely key issues, and which means of communication would be best to reach the key stakeholders in each stakeholder group. Benchmark requirement 6.2.3: there is no documentation on the standardising body addressing any constraints to the participation of disadvantaged and key stakeholders in standard-setting activities. Benchmark requirement 6.5.1 (a): the public consultation was announced on the PEFC.RO website on the same day as the start of the consultation. The nonconformity should be noted and corrected during the next standard-setting process.
- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 9.4.1. The application and transition dates are not defined. Since the application date and the transition period are mandatory elements of the standard, the process is not in line with PEFC ST 1001:2017. The nonconformity should be subject to corrective action within six (6) months.
- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 9.4.2. The application date is not defined. The nonconformity should be subject to corrective action within six (6) months.

- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 9.4.3. The transition period is not defined. The nonconformity should be subject to corrective action within six (6) months.

### **7.3 Assessment of Conformity**

Altogether, the PEFC Romania's standard-setting process can be considered of a high standard, with open public communication, stakeholder participation, process documentation, and general transparency.

The assessment identified **seven (7) minor nonconformities** at the benchmark level, as well as the general nonconformity on the use of "should" instead of "shall". The identified nonconformities were assessed very carefully, considering the clarifications and additional information from PEFC Romania. Four of them are **recommended to be noted for correction during the next standard-setting process**, and three should be **subject to corrective action within six (6) months**. Therefore, the assessor concludes that the standard-setting process **does not yet comply to a satisfactory extent** with the PEFC requirements.



## 8. FOREST MANAGEMENT STANDARD

### 8.1 Introduction

RFCS's sustainable forest management requirements are described in two documents:

- PEFC Romania Sustainable Forest Management Certification Scheme, May 27, 2024 (referred to as PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024) and
- Criteria and Indicators for Forest Management Evaluation in Romania, May 27, 2024, (referred to as PEFC-RO ST 8001:2024).

A summary of the findings is presented below, following the structure of the PEFC ST 1003:2018. The checklist is in Annex 1 (Checklist: Sustainable Forest Management, page 121).

The assessment identified **fourteen (14) minor nonconformities** at the benchmark level against the requirements of PEFC ST 1003:2018. **All nonconformities identified in this section should be subject to corrective action within six (6) months.**

### 8.2 Findings of the Assessment

#### Context of the National Standard and the Organisations Applying a PEFC-Endorsed Standard

This chapter of the PEFC ST 1003:2018 involves an array of general requirements regarding the national SFM standard.

**One (1) minor nonconformity** was identified in this chapter.

- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 4.1 (i). PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 includes a list of applicable legislation, but it does not include information about in relation to which requirement each legislative element provides evidence of compliance. On one instance (benchmark 8.2.3), this information is provided in PEFC Romania's checklist. However, the benchmark requires that the requirement shall include an overview of applicable legislation should it be addressed by it.

In addition, two **comments** were raised:

- Benchmark 4.1 (a): It is recommended to add the clarification that is included in the checklist in the scope.
- Benchmark 4.1 (g): There is a typo in the claim: *100% PEFC certificate* should be *100% PEFC certified*.

#### Leadership

**One (1) minor nonconformity** was identified in this chapter.

- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 5.3. The standard itself establishes the responsibilities for sustainable forest management for the forest owner/manager and/or the organisation but does not require that the responsibilities for sustainable forest management shall be clearly defined and assigned.

#### Planning

**No nonconformities** were identified in this chapter.

- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 6.2.8. Note 2 of requirement 6.2.7 shall be revised. The summary of the management plan must be publicly available: in its current form, note 2 does not comply with PEFC ST 1003:2018.

In addition, four **comments** were raised:

- Benchmark 6.2.4: There may be a translation issue in requirement 6.2.5 regarding the word “possibility”.
- Benchmark 6.2.6: The phrase “it is recommended” must be replaced with a “shall”.
- Benchmark 6.3.2.2: It would be beneficial to either define “specific forestry activities” in the standard or revise the term.
- Benchmark 6.3.4.3: There is a typo in the requirement: a full stop between “areas” and “shall”.

## Support

**One (1) minor nonconformity** was identified in this chapter.

- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 7.2.1. The requirements 7.2.1–7.2.4 of PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 do not apply to forest owners or managers, only to employees and contractors.

## Operation

In this chapter, **ten (10) benchmark-level minor nonconformities** were identified:

- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 8.1.2. PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 requires that irreversible damage to forest ecosystems should not be caused whereas the benchmark requires minimising adverse impacts on forest resources.
- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 8.1.3. PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 requires that forests and their management shall have a positive impact on climate only under certain environmental conditions. When asked for a clarification, PEFC Romania answered the following: *The term “certain environmental conditions” in section 8.5.4.3 refers specifically to regions or circumstances where forests play a critical protective role. These include: Steppe and forest-steppe zones: Areas in Romania vulnerable to drought, wind erosion, and climatic extremes, where forests are essential for stabilizing soil and regulating the microclimate. Polluted regions: Forests located near industrial zones or high-pollution areas, where tree cover serves as a filter for pollutants. These conditions reflect Romania’s geographical and ecological realities, where forests are prioritized for protective roles due to environmental stresses.*
- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 8.1.4 (a, b, d). PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 requires consultation with *relevant stakeholders* whereas the benchmark requires consultation with *affected stakeholders*. *Relevant stakeholder* is not defined in the standard. PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 refers to the forest area whereas the benchmark requirement refers to the individual forest type. PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 does not require that forest conversion shall not destroy areas of significantly high carbon stock. PEFC Romania note the following in their checklist: *The PEFC Romania Forum considered the forest is always a high carbon stock so conversion is always implying a level of destroy of a significantly carbon stock, so this requirement cannot be respected.* When asked, PEFC Romania further elaborated: *The PEFC Romania Forum determined that the Romanian forests, regardless of their age or specific characteristics, possess significant carbon stocks. This view is based on the understanding that forests, by their nature, function as substantial carbon sinks, storing carbon in both biomass and soil. The Forum reasoned that any conversion of forest land inevitably leads to a loss of carbon stock, given that the transition from forest to another land use results in the removal of trees and associated biomass, which contributes directly to carbon release. The Forum acknowledged that carbon stock levels can vary between young and mature stands, however, even younger forests contribute to carbon sequestration and storage. From this perspective, it was concluded that it is challenging to differentiate*

between levels of significant carbon stock across various forest stages when applying this standard at a national level. Therefore, it was deemed more appropriate to adopt a precautionary approach, treating all forest conversion as involving a significant loss of carbon stock. The benchmark specifically forbids the conversion of areas of significantly high carbon stock, thus the justification cannot be accepted. Should all forest conversion be considered as involving a significant loss of carbon stock, all forest conversion should in that case be prohibited. PEFC Romania mentioned that there is an ecological impact assessment required by law in place that would in practice prevent the conversion of forest areas with significant carbon stock, but this claim was not yet substantiated during the draft report commenting phase.

- Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 8.1.6 (a–h). PEFC Romania note the following in their checklist: *The PEFC Romania Forum considered that severely degraded forest is by definition, not fulfilling its economic, ecological, social role so if a decision of conversion is made, this will automatically be made respecting all the requirements from 8.1.6 Chapter. The Forum consider that a human made forest even if artificial will fulfil all the roles better than a severely degraded forests. Severely degraded forests is not an exact technical term as the severity can be subjective and not defined. The Forum decided to eliminate the hole Chapter 8.1.6* When asked, PEFC Romania further elaborated: *The PEFC Romania Forum decided to omit Benchmark 8.1.6, which concerns the conversion of severely degraded forests to plantations, based on a few key considerations. As a plus from the explanations in the checklist, Romanian legislation forbids to convert natural forest into forest plantations. There is a terminology that is "the fundamental forest type" that is defined by law, it clearly specifies with what species a degraded forest can be recovered and in what conditions and this action is dictated by the management planning. A conversion from forest (even degraded one) is not possible in Romania. Plantations are possible, but only on agricultural or degraded lands that are not in the Forest Fund, so not in the certification scope. The structure of cultivated forests in Romania tends to maintain a natural-like character, even when artificially regenerated. These plantations are often aimed at promoting native species and maintaining ecological balance. This approach differs from the more industrial plantation forestry models referenced in PEFC ST 1003:2018, which might include uniform, fast-growing species. Also, the term "severely degraded forest" lacks a precise technical definition, making it subjective and challenging to apply consistently across diverse forest landscapes in Romania. Given this ambiguity, the Forum opted to focus on broader principles of sustainable management, rather than creating detailed requirements that might not accurately reflect local conditions. The Forum believed that existing legal frameworks and the sustainable management practices within the PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 standard sufficiently address the intentions behind Benchmark 8.1.6 without the need for an additional, specific chapter on converting degraded forests to plantations. (...) 4. Minister order 2533/2022 TECHNICAL RULES of September 28, 2022 regarding the compositions, schemes and technologies of forest regeneration and afforestation of degraded lands Art.4 alin (1) When choosing the species for afforestation, the correlation of the functions that the respective crops must fulfill with the requirements of the species and the specifics of the natural conditions is taken into account. alin. (4) The ecological group is determined according to the floor or bioclimatic zone and the data from the forestry management, as follows: a) the type of resort (TS) is determined based on: (i) elements obtained by drawing up the station record and eventually by special station charting; (ii) the indications provided by woody and herbaceous vegetation - type of forest, type of indicator flora; (iii) stationary factors that limit growth; b) the fundamental natural type of forest (TP) is determined based on: (i) data from arrangements or other documents/studies; (ii) the characterization elements of the existing natural vegetation; (iii) investigations carried out in neighboring stands, with similar seasonal conditions; (iv) the characterization elements of the indicator flora specific to the fundamental natural type of forest; (v) other information. To conclude, the conversion of degraded forests to forest*

plantations is not applicable in the context of Romania as legislation prevents it. However, this legislation is not referred to in the standard.

- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 8.2.3. PEFC Romania note the following in their checklist: *Fire is not used in forest management. Fire in the forest is forbidden by legislation no.171/16.07.2010 Chapter IV Art.9 letter b).* However, this law is not referred to in the standard.
- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 8.2.8. The standard does not make it clear whether WHO Class 1A and 1B pesticides and other highly toxic pesticides are prohibited, and usage to “a limited scale” is not defined.
- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 8.2.11. PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 does not require that fertilizer shall not be used as an alternative to appropriate soil nutrient management.
- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 8.4.4. The standard doesn't require that saplings shall be adapted to the site conditions and that regeneration shall be satisfactory from a qualitative and quantitative point of view.
- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 8.4.11. PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 does not require constructing infrastructure in a way that minimizes damage to ecosystems, especially to rare, sensitive or representative ecosystems and genetic reserves and taking the migration patterns of threatened or other key species into consideration.
- **Minor nonconformity:** Benchmark 8.5.5. PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 does not require installing proper road drainage facilities.

In addition, five **comments** were raised:

- Benchmark 8.1.1: When asked for clarification for the term “production fund”, PEFC Romania answered with a definition of forest fund. This is taken to mean that “production fund” equals “forest fund” i.e., regulatory definition of forest land. However, it would be beneficial to either define “production fund” or revise its usage.
- Benchmark 8.1.5 (e): As legislation covers the benchmark, the applicable legislation should be referred to in the standard.
- Benchmark 8.2.2. Replacing “installed” with “established” in PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.1.1 is recommendable.
- Benchmark 8.4.12. PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.4.6 and 8.4.4.7 refer to legislation in relation to animal population control and grazing. The legal possibilities can potentially overwrite the benchmark objectives.
- Benchmark 8.5.4: To make PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.5.1.6 clear, “and its” should be added between “water” and “quality”.

### **Performance Evaluation**

**No nonconformities** were identified in this section.

### **Improvement**

**No nonconformities** were identified in this section.

## **8.3 Assessment of Conformity**

Due to the **fourteen (14) minor nonconformities at the benchmark level**, and the general one on the use of “should” instead of “shall”, the RFCS’ requirements for sustainable forest management **do not comply** with the PEFC ST 1003:2018 requirements and should be **subject to corrective action within six (6) months**.

## 9. GROUP CERTIFICATION MODEL

### 9.1 Introduction

The requirements for group certification in Romania are described in two documents:

- Group forest management certification – Requirements, May 27, 2024 (referred to as PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024) and
- PEFC Romania Sustainable Forest Management Certification Scheme (referred to as PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024)

The RFCS defines two types of groups: regular group and regional group. All forest owners or managers located in a given region may participate in the regional group certificate, provided that the requirements established by the RFCS are met. The regions can also be divided into smaller administrative units if deemed necessary.

The definition of “participant” in RFCS mostly follows the definition of PEFC ST 1002:2018 apart from not allowing contractors without long term management rights for a specific forest area to participate in group forest certification. Forest owner may delegate the responsibility of managing their forest assets to a forest manager. Group entity is named group administrator in the RFCS, but the definition is identical as is the case for group organisation.

A summary of the findings is presented below, following the structure of the PEFC ST 1002:2018. The checklist is in Annex 1 (Checklist: Group Forest Management Certification, page 172).

The conformity assessment of the RFCS requirements for group forest management as set by the national standard documents identified **no nonconformities** at the benchmark level against the requirements of PEFC ST 1002:2018.

### 9.2 Findings of the Assessment

#### Context of the Group Organisation

RFCS describes the context of the group organisation, e.g., the types of groups and the determination of the scope of the group management system in chapter 4 of PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024. Definitions are provided in chapter 3 of PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024. **No nonconformities** were identified in this chapter. One **comment** was raised:

- Benchmark 4.3.3: In relation to 5.2: PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 defines that the group administrator shall make the commitment publicly available whereas PEFC ST 1002:2018 does not specify that.

#### Leadership

The RFCS defines the leadership for the group management certificate to be under the group administrator i.e. group entity. The group administrator is responsible for the functions defined in PEFC ST 1002:2018. The responsibilities of the participants are in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018. **No nonconformities** were identified in this chapter. One **comment** was raised:

- Benchmark 5.1.1 (e): The requirement refers to *panel participants* instead of *group participants*.

#### Planning

RFCS’s requirements for group management planning related to planned changes in the management system and the fulfilment of sustainable forest management requirements at the group level are in line with the international benchmark. **No nonconformities** were identified in this chapter.

### Support

RFCS outlines the requirements for support to uphold the group management system in chapter 7 of PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024. The responsibilities fall on the group administrator. **No nonconformities** were identified in this section.

### Operation

PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 chapter 8 outlines the operational requirements. Group administrator must oversee and implement processes that meet the requirements of RFCS sustainable forest management standard and group certification standard as well as enable the group administrator to meet the requirements on planning concerning the group management system. In the oversight and implementation, the group administrator is to develop necessary processes and use developed evaluation criteria in the oversight of the processes. **No nonconformities** were identified in this section.

### Performance Evaluation

RFCS requirements for performance evaluation include both an ongoing internal monitoring programme and annual internal audits. The requirements for performance evaluation are outlined in chapter 9 of PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024. RFCS recognises five different indicator categories that can be used in the risk assessment for sampling. **No nonconformities** were identified in this section.

### Improvement

RFCS requires the group organisation to continuously improve the management of the forests under the group certificate by reacting to any nonconformities, correcting them as well as managing the consequences, as well as ensuring the function of the management system. **No nonconformities** were identified in this section.

## 9.3 Assessment of Conformity

As there are **no benchmark-level nonconformities**, PEFC Romania's requirements for group certification **fully comply** with the PEFC ST 1002:2018 requirements, apart from the general nonconformity on the use of "should" instead of "shall".

## 10. CERTIFICATION AND ACCREDITATION ARRANGEMENTS

### 10.1 PEFC Romania Requirements for Certification and Accreditation of Forest Management

The RFCS requirements for certification bodies and procedures for forest management certification are described in the standard PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024, based on the international standard PEFC ST 1004:2024 with requirements for Certification Bodies operating certification against forest management standard. The standard has three articles (7.1.4.4; 7.1.5.1; Appendix 1, 4.3.4.1) that are developed by PEFC Romania as requested and adapted to national characteristics.

The standard requires that certification bodies comply also with the ISO 17021 standard on *Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems*.

The RFCS recognises accreditation bodies that are signatories of the Multilateral Recognition Arrangement of IAF or a regional organisation such as the European co-operation for Accreditation (EA), Interamerican Accreditation Cooperation (IAAC), Asia Pacific Accreditation Cooperation (APAC) etc. The accreditation body shall be signatory to the IAF MLA with a main scope of ISO/IEC 17021-1. The standard PEFC ST 1004:2024, to which PEFC Romania refers to in PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024, on accreditation, requires that ABs are organised and operate in conformance to the ISO 17011 standard. ABs that are signatories to IAF MLA-agreement shall maintain the conformity to the valid version of the ISO 17011 standard on *Conformity assessment – Requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies*.

A summary of the main findings is provided below, and the checklist is included in Annex 1 (PEFC Checklist - Certification and Accreditation Procedures, page 205).

During the assessment, **no nonconformities** were found on the RFCS's provisions for certification and accreditation arrangements in forest management and chain of custody certification.

### 10.2 Accreditation Requirements for Chain of Custody Certification and Logo Use

The Scheme has adopted the international PEFC ST 2002:2020 on *Chain of Custody of Forest and Tree Based Products – Requirements* as the benchmark for the chain of custody certification. Consequently, the requirements for certification bodies doing a chain of custody certification are stated in the international PEFC ST 2003:2020 on *Requirements for Certification Bodies operating Certification against the PEFC International Chain of Custody Standard*.

The RFCS **complies** with the PEFC requirements for certification bodies conducting chain of custody certifications.

### 10.3 Notification of Certification Bodies

The RFCS technical document PEFC-RO ST 8014:2024 Notification of Certification Bodies outlines the notification rules. It includes a contract template for notification of certification bodies for forest management certification.

The notification requirements for certification bodies doing chain of custody certifications are described in the international PEFC ST 2003:2020. PEFC-RO ST 8014:2024 Notification of Certification Bodies includes also a contract template for notification of certification bodies for chain-of-custody certification.

The RFCS has adopted the following PEFC International standards

- PEFC ST 2001, PEFC Trademarks Rules – Requirements
- PEFC ST 2002, Chain of Custody of Forest and Tree Based Products – Requirements
- PEFC ST 2003, Requirements for Certification Bodies operating Certification against the PEFC International Chain of Custody Standard.

The RFCS procedures for PEFC notification of certification bodies non-discriminatory

The RFCS notification rules **comply** with the requirements of the PEFC Annex 6.

#### **10.4 Assessment of Conformity**

The assessment found **no nonconformities** under the RFCS provisions for certification and accreditation arrangements in forest management and chain of custody certification, except **the general nonconformity on the use of “should” instead of “shall”**, the certification and accreditation requirements of the RFCS **comply** with the PEFC requirements.



## **11. STAKEHOLDER VIEWS**

### **11.1 Results of Stakeholder Involvement Survey**

Indufor sent questionnaires in the Romanian language to a total of 71 stakeholders on October 16, 2024, to inquire about their views on the standard-setting process and its performance. An English translation of the stakeholder questionnaire form is included in Annex 2, page 223.

Two answers were received by the deadline of November 17, 2024, one from a forest owner and one from the academia. Both respondents participated in the standard revision and were invited by PEFC Romania. Their main motivation to participate in the revision was “simplifying and clarifying certain indicators, harmonising with the current state of the forestry system in Romania”, and “Realisation of an efficient certification system, with requirements adapted to Romanian conditions. The contribution was on glossary of terms, use of terms, correction of indicators”.

Both respondents saw the process as a success and responded positively to all questions in the survey. They thought that all interested parties relevant to standard development had been proactively identified and invited and given the possibility to participate and contribute to the process. They confirmed that the organiser provided them with adequate material before the process, and that the stakeholders in the standard-setting working group represent the different interests in a balanced way.

Both respondents further confirmed that, in their view, the revision process followed the procedures that were communicated with participants in advance, they were aware of the dispute settlement procedures in case of conflicting views in the standard development but none and did not think that any aspects of the standard or its revision process deserve further consideration. All participants, in the two respondents' view, were given a meaningful opportunity to contribute to the standard formulation and to submit comments for further consideration, and the views and comments submitted by any participant in the Standard Setting Working Group were considered in an open and transparent way. Also, comments received in public consultations have been discussed and addressed in an objective and transparent way. The standard criteria were agreed on in consensus.

One of the respondents wanted to congratulate the PEFC team “*for the effort in revising the PEFC standard*”.

### **11.2 Results of International Consultation**

An international stakeholder consultation was launched on the website of PEFC International on July 15, 2024.

The public consultation webinar was held on the same date, and it was accessible on the PEFC's YouTube channel.

No comments from stakeholders were received through this process by the deadline of September 13, 2024.



Annex 1

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**PEFC Standard and System Requirements Checklists**

## PEFC Checklist 1 - Standard Setting Procedures and Process (PEFC ST 1001:2017)

### 12. 1 Scope

This checklist covers the requirements for standard-setting procedures and processes as defined in the revised 2017 issue of PEFC ST 1001, *Standard Setting – Requirements*.

Any inconsistencies between this text and the original referred-to document will be overruled by the content and wording of the technical document.

#### PEFC Romania Reference Documents:

Document type	Document name
Normative documents	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023 - Procedure for Developing and Revision of Romanian PEFC Standards on Sustainable Forest Management, 12 May 2023 (hereafter referred to as “PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023”)</p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 - PEFC Romania Sustainable Forest Management Certification Scheme, May 27, 2024 (hereafter referred to as PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024)</p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8009:2024 - Complaints and appeals procedures for the establishment and operation of the Romanian Certification Scheme, May 27, 2024 (hereafter referred to as PEFC-RO ST 8009:2024)</p>
Descriptive documents	<p>Development Report - Revision of the Romanian PEFC scheme, 2024 (hereafter referred to as “DR”)</p> <p>System Description - The Romanian Forest Certification System, 2024 (hereafter referred to as “System Description”)</p> <p>PEFC-RO DST 8006:2017 – Statutes, PEFC Romania, March 2017 (hereafter referred to as “Statutes”)</p> <p>Excel file containing contact information of contacted stakeholders, received from PEFC Romania on October 14, 2024</p> <p><u>The following documents were in the Romanian language and translated by Indufor:</u></p> <p>Public announcement, May 29, 2023 (hereafter referred to as the “Public Announcement”).</p> <p>Presentation in the Stakeholder Forum at the revision launching meeting July 31, 2023 (hereafter referred to as the “Presentation at the revision launching meeting”)</p> <p>Minutes of the four Working Group meetings dated October 19, 2023, November 29, 2023, January 18, 2024, and February 7, 2024 (hereafter referred to as “Minutes of the WG meetings”)</p> <p>Minutes of the PEFC Romania General Assembly meeting May 27, 2024 (hereafter referred to as “Minutes of the GA meeting, May 27, 2024”)</p>



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	Minutes of the PEFC Romania General Assembly meeting October 14, 2022 (hereafter referred to as “Minutes of the GA meeting, October 14, 2022”) Voting results on the email postal ballot of the final draft, undated.
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## 2 Checklist

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<b>Standardising Body</b>			
5.1.1 The standardising body shall have written procedures for standard-setting activities describing:			
(a) its legal status and organisational structure, including a body responsible for consensus-building (working group, refer to 6.4) and procedures for formal adoption of the standard (refer to 7.1),	Procedures	Y	<p>Statutes: <i>PEFC Romania is established, as a non-governmental, non-profit, non-political association, operating in accordance with provisions of GO no. 26/2000, as amended and supplemented.</i></p> <p>5. Organs. a). <i>The General Assembly is comprised of representatives of all members and is responsible for passing resolutions on all basic issues concerning PEFC Romania. ...b). Between meetings, the governing body is the Managing Board, ...c). The President is elected by the General Assembly, from the founding or active...d. The Executive manager has the following responsibilities... e). The internal financial control of PEFC Romania shall be exercised by a board of censors, consisting of three persons</i></p> <p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. Foreword: <i>The national governance body, known as PEFC Romania, is a not-for-profit association under GO nr. 26/2000,...</i></p> <p>4.1: <i>GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PEFC ROMANIA. The General Assembly of PEFC Romania is responsible for the formal adoption of Romanian standards for sustainable forest management and for this revision procedure. The composition and decision-making process of the General Assembly of PEFC Romania are defined in the statutes of PEFC Romania.</i></p>



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PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>4.2: 4.2.1 BOARD OF DIRECTORS (CD) PEFC ROMANIA... 4.2.2 Secretariat...4.2.3 Composition of the Board of Directors and Secretariat...4.2.4 Regulation of the decision of the Board of Directors and of the Secretariat</p> <p>4.3: EXECUTIVE DIRECTORATE OF PEFC ROMANIA. The Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania is responsible for compliance with and implementation of this procedure and, in particular, for each step of the process of developing a review and revision of standards (see point 5.1). To this end, the Executive Directorate liaises between Forum members, working groups and CDs.</p> <p>4.4: FORUM. 4.4.1. Establishment and tasks of the Forum. Romanian standards for sustainable forest management are developed and reviewed by a forum (created during the review work until the adoption of the final document), composed of stakeholders interested in sustainable forest management in Romania.</p> <p>5.6: STAGES OF APPROVAL. 5.6.1 Approval by Forum. After the results of the public consultation have been fully examined and taken into account in full or in part by the Forum, the Forum endorses the draft Romanian standard for sustainable forest management PEFC, in accordance with the consensus and voting rules defined in point 4.4.3. The document thus approved is called the "Final Document".</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023 defines the required legal status and organisational structure for PEFC Romania and body responsible for consensus-building (FORUM) and procedures for formal adoption of the standard. The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
(b) procedures for keeping documented information,	Procedures	Y	PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 10: ARCHIVING AND PRESERVATION. 10.1 Publicly available documents. The Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania shall keep up to date and keep up to date until the next revision and for at



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PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><i>least 5 years, in computer format, a file called "Publicly available documents" containing the following documents:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>the procedure for reviewing Romanian standards for sustainable forest management;</i></li> <li>- <i>PEFC Romania press release regarding the start date of the review process;</i></li> <li>- <i>Version of revised standards proposed by the Forum and adopted by the Board of Directors of PEFC Romania or by the PEFC Romania Secretariat, regarding the delegation of the Board of Directors;</i></li> <li>- <i>Public consultation form;</i></li> <li>- <i>Comments received in the context of the public consultation and their synthesis;</i></li> <li>- <i>Version of standards amended by the Forum following public consultation;</i></li> <li>- <i>The final version of the revised standards adopted by the General Assembly of PEFC Romania;</i></li> <li>- <i>Any complaints, as well as the response given to them;</i></li> <li>- <i>Development report;</i></li> <li>- <i>List of all the abovementioned documents in force with the date of validation, the place of classification, the date and arrangements for their distribution and the list of addressees.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023 defines the procedures for keeping documented information. The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
(c) procedures for balanced representation of stakeholders,	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 4.4.2.4 <i>The Forum shall be composed of three chambers, composed in the most balanced way possible of relevant actors (in terms of number and category of stakeholders) as defined in point 4.4.2.2, these actors may be individual natural or legal persons or representative organisations at national or local level: Forest and Forestry Chamber composed of stakeholders directly related to the forest ecosystem, including:</i></p>



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PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Forest owners</li> <li>➤ Forest managers</li> <li>➤ Forestry experts</li> <li>➤ Forest nurseries</li> <li>➤ Entities accessing PEFC certification for Forest Management</li> <li>➤ Scientific communities and research centres</li> <li>➤ Natural parks</li> </ul> <p>Forest and Market Room , composed of market-related stakeholders, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Logging companies</li> <li>➤ Paper processing enterprises</li> <li>➤ Companies</li> <li>➤ Private and public representatives: distributors, developers, project owners (communities, state, etc.)</li> </ul> <p>The Forest and Society Chamber is composed of stakeholders from civil society and/or related to the societal and environmental dimension of sustainable forest management, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Nature organisations (especially environmental NGOs)</li> <li>➤ Users of the forest: local populations grouped into associations, hikers, hunters, etc</li> <li>➤ Workers and trade unions</li> <li>➤ Educational communities</li> <li>➤ Consumers</li> </ul> <p>The Forum may involve observers in its work (e.g. representatives of public authorities and the political sphere, accreditation and certification bodies) and may invite nominal experts to enrich certain work (e.g. economists or lawyers).</p> <p>Where necessary, the Forum shall set up working groups to deepen specific themes. Working groups must be accountable for their work at the Forum.</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023 defines the procedures for balanced representation of stakeholders. The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
(d) the standard-setting process,	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. <i>5 STAGES OF THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING A REVIEW AND REVISION OF ROMANIAN STANDARDS FOR SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT. 5.1. THE DIFFERENT STAGES. ... 5.2. RELEASE STEPS. 5.2.1 The Executive Directorate and the Board of Directors of PEFC Romania are responsible for initiating the development, review and review process.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023 defines the procedures the standard-setting process. The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
(e) the mechanism for reaching consensus, and	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. <i>4.4.3 How the forum works. 4.4.3.3 In order to reach consensus, the Forum may use the following alternative procedures to ensure that there is no opposition: a face-to-face meeting, including an oral yes/no vote, a show of hands "yes/no", a statement by the Presidency on the absence of opposition cast, a formal vote by secret ballot, a meeting by telephone conference or videoconference, including an oral "yes/no" vote, an email consultation of members, including a ballot paper or voting server allowing them to "express their agreement or opposition", allowing members to provide a written response or a combination of these procedures, or any other process they consider relevant.</i></p> <p><i>The choice of procedure shall be made on a case-by-case basis, by consensus among the participants, otherwise by the Chair of the Forum and, in his absence, by the chair of the working group meeting.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p>






PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023 defines the mechanism for reaching consensus. The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
(f) review and revision of standard(s)/normative document(s).	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 6 REVISION/REVIEW. 6.1 <i>The Romanian standard for sustainable forest management should be revised at intervals not exceeding a period of five years.</i></p> <p>6.2 <i>PEFC Romania ensures the establishment and maintenance of a permanent mechanism to collect and record feedback on the implementation of standards through its website. The elements thus collected are systematically recorded and analysed, regardless of the channel through which they were formulated.</i></p> <p><i>Note 1: Feedback can take different forms: comments, requests for clarification and/or interpretation, complaints, thematic working groups, etc.</i></p> <p>6.3 <i>PEFC Romania shall conduct an analysis of the compliance of the standards in force with the corresponding PEFC Council reference standard, Romanian laws and norms and all other relevant standards, in order to identify any deviations.</i></p> <p><i>PEFC Romania must also take into account the latest advances in science and research as well as new challenges related to forest.</i></p> <p>6.4 <i>If the review of mechanism (6.2) and compliance (6.3) does not identify the need for revision, PEFC Romania shall consult members and stakeholders to determine whether they consider that standards need to be revised. On this occasion, the committee shall provide them with the analysis (6.3).</i></p> <p><i>PEFC Romania announces the stakeholder review and consultation in a timely manner and updates the identification of stakeholders (5.3.1). The stakeholder consultation shall include a 30-day public consultation in line with requirements 5.5.1 and/or stakeholder meetings.</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>6.5 Based on the analysis of the mechanism (6.2), compliance (6.3) and stakeholder consultation (6.4), the Board of Directors of PEFC Romania decides to attest to the standards or revise them through a normal or editorial review (7). The decision and its reasoning shall be published on the PEFC Romania website.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023 defines the procedures for review and revision of standard(s)/normative document(s). The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
<p>5.1.2 The standardising body shall make its standard-setting procedures publicly available and shall review its standard-setting procedures regularly. The review shall consider feedback from stakeholders.</p>	<p>Procedures</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 8: PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY (normal review). The transparency of the review procedure and the publication of related documents are guaranteed in the normal process of revising forest certification standards in Romania. 8.1 The following shall be made public :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This procedure;</li> <li>- Start date of the review process;</li> <li>- Forum document subject to public consultation;</li> <li>- Public consultation form;</li> <li>- Summary of comments received in the context of the public consultation;</li> <li>- Version of revised standards proposed by the Forum following public consultation and adopted by the General Assembly of PEFC Romania;</li> <li>- Development report;</li> <li>- Any complaints, as well as the response given to them;</li> <li>- Final standards recognized by PEFC International at the end of the international assessment.</li> </ul> <p>8.2 These documents will be published as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For documents "available on request": submitted, upon request, by the Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania.</li> <li>- For "publicly available" documents: at least posted on the PEFC Romania website: <a href="http://www.pefc.ro">www.pefc.ro</a></li> </ul>




PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>5.3.2.5 Depending on any comments received, the Board of Directors of PEFC Romania may, if it considers it relevant, review and modify these procedures and/or the process followed for developing or revising Romanian sustainable forest management standards. Where appropriate, the Commission shall inform the stakeholders of the Forum accordingly.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
	Process	Y	<p><a href="https://pefc.ro/revizia-standardului/">https://pefc.ro/revizia-standardului/</a></p>  <p>16 Iulie 2024 Consultare publică: Sistemul român de certificare forestieră</p> <p>Consultare publică: Sistemul românesc de certificare forestieră Oferiți-vă feedback despre Sistemul românesc de Certificare Forestieră.</p> <p>DR. 2. Scope. The revision has covered the entire Romanian PEFC scheme. Table below contains documents of Romanian PEFC scheme affected by the revision process, stating the nature of the changes. (Table:) Document: Annex 08 PEFC-RO DST 8008:2017 Standard setting procedures Changes: Major – Replaced by Annex 11 PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023 procedure for developing and revision of Romanian PEFC standards on sustainable forest management.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The standard-setting procedures are made publicly available on the PEFC Romania website. The procedures were revised completely. No feedback was received.</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
5.2.1 The standardising body shall keep documented information relevant to the standard-setting and review process. Evidence of compliance with the requirements of this standard and the standardising body's own procedures includes:			
(a) Standard-setting procedures,	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 10: ARCHIVING AND PRESERVATION. 10.1 Publicly available documents. The Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania shall keep up to date and keep up to date until the next revision and for at least 5 years, in computer format, a file called "Publicly available documents" containing the following documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the procedure for reviewing Romanian standards for sustainable forest management;</li> <li>- PEFC Romania press release regarding the start date of the review process;</li> <li>- Version of revised standards proposed by the Forum and adopted by the Board of Directors of PEFC Romania or by the PEFC Romania Secretariat, regarding the delegation of the Board of Directors;</li> <li>- Public consultation form;</li> <li>- Comments received in the context of the public consultation and their synthesis;</li> <li>- Version of standards amended by the Forum following public consultation;</li> <li>- The final version of the revised standards adopted by the General Assembly of PEFC Romania;</li> <li>- Any complaints, as well as the response given to them;</li> <li>- Development report;</li> <li>- List of all the abovementioned documents in force with the date of validation, the place of classification, the date and arrangements for their distribution and the list of addressees.</li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
	Process	Y	<p><a href="https://pefc.ro/revizia-standardului/">https://pefc.ro/revizia-standardului/</a></p>  <p>16 Iulie 2024 Consultare publică: Sistemul român de certificare forestieră</p> <p>Consultare publică: Sistemul românesc de certificare forestieră Oferiți-vă feedback despre Sistemul românesc de Certificare Forestieră.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The standard-setting procedures are documented in PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023, which are published in the PEFC Romania website.</p>
(b) Stakeholder identification mapping,	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 10.2 <i>Archiving and preservation of elements related to the preparation phase. The Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania keeps up to date and maintains until the next revision and for at least 5 years, in paper and/or IT format, a file called "launching the procedure for reviewing Romanian sustainable forest management standards" containing the following documents:</i></p> <p><i>Report(s) of the Board of Directors/Secretariat approving the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Preparatory dossier (including review procedures);</li> <li>✓ Start date of the review process;</li> <li>✓ Stakeholder mapping from the Board of Directors;</li> <li>✓ List of invitations of all relevant actors to the Forum;</li> <li>✓ List of candidates actually accepted to participate in the Forum.</li> </ul> <p><i>Confirmation of participation of interested parties whose applications have been accepted.</i></p> <p><i>Publication of information on the launch of the review process and its date and modalities.</i></p>



**Indufor**

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>List of all documents referred to above with the date of validation, their place of classification, the date and arrangements for their distribution and the list of addressees.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
	Process	Y	<p>DR. 4.2. (Indufor: should be 5.2) <i>Announcement of recruitment to the working group. The PEFC Romania identified stakeholders relevant to the objectives and scope of the revision process of the Romanian criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management for forest certification as follows:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) forest owners/administrators (private and state),</li> <li>2) forest/wood related industry/business,</li> <li>3) non-governmental organisations (forest and ecology),</li> <li>4) authorities (public administration and local government),</li> <li>5) the scientific and technological community,</li> <li>6) employees and trade unions,</li> </ol> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS process meets the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> The numbering of chapters in the DR should be checked.</p>
(c) Contacted and/or invited stakeholders,	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 10.2 <i>Archiving and preservation of elements related to the preparation phase. ...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ List of invitations of all relevant actors to the Forum;</li> <li>✓ List of candidates actually accepted to participate in the Forum.</li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.
	Process	Y	Excel file containing contact information of contacted stakeholders, received from PEFC Romania on October 14, 2024 <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS process meets the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.
(d) Stakeholders involved in standard-setting activities including participants in each working group meeting,	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 10.2 Archiving and preservation of elements related to the preparation phase. ...</p> <p>✓ List of candidates actually accepted to participate in the Forum.</p> <p>Confirmation of participation of interested parties whose applications have been accepted.</p> <p>10.4 Archiving and preservation of elements related to the construction phase. The Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania keeps up to date and keeps until the next revision and for at least 5 years, in paper and/or IT format, a file entitled "Construction of revised Romanian standards for sustainable forest management" containing the following documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Minutes of plenary meetings or working groups of the Forum;</li> <li>- Associated working documents and different versions of the revised draft standard;</li> <li>- Forum Document (final version approved by the Forum);</li> <li>- Where applicable, minutes of the Conciliation Committee (and related documents);</li> <li>- List of all documents referred to above with the date of validation, their place of classification, the date and arrangements for their distribution and the list of addressees.</li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p>



**Indufor**

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.
	Process	Y	DR. <i>Appendix I : Members of Working Group.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.
(e) Feedback received and a synopsis of how feedback was addressed,	Procedures	Y	PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. <i>10.5 Archiving and preservation of consultation phase elements. The Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania shall keep up to date and keep up to date until the next revision and for at least 5 years, in paper and/or IT format, a file entitled "Consultation on revised Romanian sustainable forest management standards" containing the following documents:</i>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Announcing the launch of the consultation and informing about the modalities of dissemination;</i></li> <li>- <i>Forum document submitted for consultation;</i></li> <li>- <i>Consultation form;</i></li> <li>- <i>Summary report/compilation of contributions received;</i></li> <li>- <i>List of all the abovementioned documents with their validation status, their place of classification, the date and methods of their distribution, and the list of addressees.</i></li> </ul> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.
	Process	NA	<b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b> <b>Justification:</b> No feedback was received.






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PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
(f) All drafts and final versions of the standard,	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 10.4 Archiving and preservation of elements related to the construction phase. The Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania keeps up to date and keeps until the next revision and for at least 5 years, in paper and/or IT format, a file entitled "Construction of revised Romanian standards for sustainable forest management" containing the following documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Minutes of plenary meetings or working groups of the Forum;</li> <li>- Associated working documents and different versions of the revised draft standard;</li> <li>- Forum Document (final version approved by the Forum);</li> <li>- Where applicable, minutes of the Conciliation Committee (and related documents);</li> <li>- List of all documents referred to above with the date of validation, their place of classification, the date and arrangements for their distribution and the list of addressees.</li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
	Process	Y	<p>DR. 4.4. (Indufor: should be 5.4) <i>The activities of the working group. The first working meeting: The Secretariat of PEFC Romania elaborated the very first drafts of the PEFC sustainable management standards based on: the PEFC ST 1003:2018: Sustainable Forest Management – Requirements PEFC ST 1002:2018) Group forest management, and Annex 01 - Criteria and indicators 2017</i></p> <p><i>Working drafts and any other documents were available to all working group members on the Drive folder. Also, the drafted documents were shared one OneDrive platform in a live format so all the members of the forum can comment and see the comments added by others.</i></p>



Indufor

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>Documents are available at the PEFC Romania website or are available upon request. <a href="https://pefc.ro/documentatie/">https://pefc.ro/documentatie/</a></p>  <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS process meets the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
(g) Outcomes from working group considerations,	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 10.4 Archiving and preservation of elements related to the construction phase. The Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania keeps up to date and keeps until the next revision and for at least 5 years, in paper and/or IT format, a file entitled "Construction of revised Romanian standards for sustainable forest management" containing the following documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Minutes of plenary meetings or working groups of the Forum;</li> <li>- Associated working documents and different versions of the revised draft standard;</li> <li>- Forum Document (final version approved by the Forum);</li> </ul>



**Indufor**

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>- Where applicable, minutes of the Conciliation Committee (and related documents);</p> <p>- List of all documents referred to above with the date of validation, their place of classification, the date and arrangements for their distribution and the list of addressees.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
	Process	Y	<p>DR. DR. 4.4. <i>The activities of the working group.</i> Indufor: (the subsection should be numbered 5.4). The DR describes how all the working group meetings were audio-recorded and the working drafts and any other documents were available to all working group members on the Drive folder. Also, the drafted documents for all meetings were shared one OneDrive platform in a live format so all the members of the forum could comment and see the comments added by others.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS process meets the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
(h) Evidence of consensus on the final version of the standard(s),	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 4.4.3.2 <i>The Forum shall be able to demonstrate that the standards have been approved by consensus prior to their formal adoption by the General Assembly of PEFC Romania. To this end, the Executive Directorate shall ensure that the different versions of all minutes of meetings, different working documents and all successive versions of draft standards have been available to Forum members.</i></p> <p>10.6 <i>Archiving and keeping elements related to the approval phase. The Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania shall keep up to date and keep up to date until the next revision and for at least 5 years, in paper and/or IT format,</i></p>



**Indufor**

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><i>a file entitled "Approval of revised Romanian standards for sustainable forest management", containing the following documents:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Minutes of the Forum for the approval of final documents;</i></li> <li>- <i>Development report;</i></li> <li>- <i>Commission report approving the final document;</i></li> <li>- <i>Minutes of the extraordinary general meeting approving the Final Document;</i></li> <li>- <i>The final document approved by the General Assembly;</i></li> <li>- <i>Elements required by the PEFC Council for international assessment (final document and correlation table and compliance with international requirements in particular);</i></li> <li>- <i>The International Assessment Report (and any interim versions thereof);</i></li> <li>- <i>Decision to recognize the Romanian forest certification system by the General Assembly of the PEFC Council.</i></li> <li>- <i>Proof of publication and communication to all interested parties of the standard thus recognized;</i></li> <li>- <i>Report of the Board of Directors pronouncing the dissolution of the Forum;</i></li> <li>- <i>List of all documents referred to above with the date of validation, place of classification, date and arrangements for their distribution, and list of recipients.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
	Process	Y	<p>DR. 4.4. (Indufor: should be 5.4) <i>The activities of the working group. ...The working group activities were based on a consensus, according to definition of consensus and rules described in PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023.</i></p> <p><i>... Third working meeting: The meeting took place in a physical-online hybrid format on 18 January 2024 and was audio recorded. The meeting started at</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>11:30 AM and lasted until 18:30 PM. The meeting took place at the Faculty of Forestry in Brasov. 14 members were present and good progress was made. No strong opposition was encountered, consensus could be found through discussions.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS process meets the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
(i) Evidence relating to the review process, and	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 10.3 Archiving and preservation of elements related to the launch phase. The Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania shall keep up to date and maintain until the next review and for at least 5 years, in paper and/or IT format, a file entitled "Preparation of the revision of Romanian sustainable forest management standards" containing the following documents: ... (documents listed earlier).</p> <p>10.8 Archiving and preserving elements related to editorial reviews. As part of an editorial review (see point 9 above), the Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania shall update and maintain until the next revision and for at least 5 years, in paper and/or IT format, a file called "Editorial Review" containing the following documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Report of the Board of Directors validating in a reasoned manner the principle of this editorial review;</li> <li>- List of built-in fixes;</li> <li>- Reports of approval of the standard thus revised by the statutory bodies of PEFC Romania;</li> <li>- Proof of publication and communication of the revised standard to all interested parties (certified entities and notified bodies);</li> <li>- The final version of the revised standards adopted by the General Assembly of PEFC Romania;</li> </ul>



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PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>- List of all documents referred to above with the date of validation, their place of classification, date and arrangements for their distribution and list of addressees.</p> <p>10.9 Archive and preserve items related to urgent revisions. In the context of an urgent review (see paragraph 9 above), the Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania shall keep up to date and for at least 5 years, in paper and/or IT format, a file called "Urgent review" containing the following documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The committee's report validating in a reasoned manner the principle of this urgent revision</li> <li>- Information explaining and justifying the urgent review and the process followed;</li> <li>- The different versions of the standard thus revised and the Committee's working reports;</li> <li>- Minutes of approval by the Board of Directors and by the General Assembly of PEFC Romania;</li> <li>- any complaints and remedies received in the context of the implementation of this review and its results, and the outcome given to them;</li> <li>- The final version of the revised standards according to the accelerated procedure adopted by the General Assembly;</li> <li>- List of all documents referred to above with the date of validation, their place of classification, the date and arrangements for their distribution and the list of addressees.</li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
	Process	Y	DR. 4. Review of the revision process. The revision process was based on procedures described in the PEFC PL 1001 document (for which the PEFC-



**Indufor**

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><i>EN DST 8008:2023 standard was the basis). This document was approved by the Board of Directors of PEFC Romania.</i></p> <p><i>The standard revision group, coordinated by Mr. Lucian Filigean Executive President of PEFC Romania, 5 times in total – 3 times online and 2 times in person.</i></p> <p><i>Based on the review and changes resulting from the revision of the international standards the Forum prepared preliminary drafts of PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 and PEFC-RO ST 8001:2024 documents. No comments and remarks were received during the public consultation, as a result, final draft documents were agreed by postal electronic vote. There was no consistent opposition.</i></p> <p><i>5. Managing the process of revision of the scheme. 4.1. (Indufor: it should be 5.1) Planning. The start of the review process of PEFC Romania's documentation and roadmap was taken on 23 March 2022. The start of the review was announced on PEFC.ro official webpage, Facebook page and LinkedIn on 29 May 2022. One year later, on 03 February 2023, the revision process was officially launched. On 29.05.2023 the PEFC International was notified by letter of the revision start.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> Evidence relating to the review process has been documented as per the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
(j) Final approval by the standardising body.	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 10.6 Archiving and keeping elements related to the approval phase. The Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania shall keep up to date and keep up to date until the next revision and for at least 5 years, in paper and/or IT format, a file entitled "Approval of revised Romanian standards for sustainable forest management", containing the following documents:...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Commission report approving the final document;</li> <li>- Minutes of the extraordinary general meeting approving the Final Document;</li> </ul>



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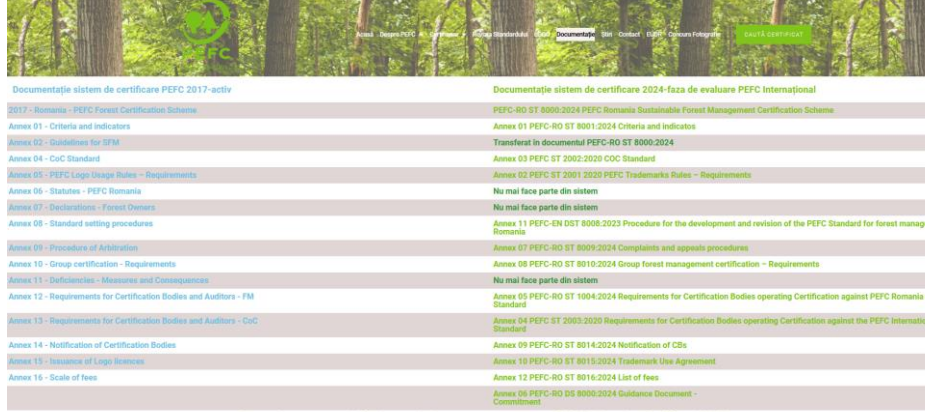
PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>- <i>The final document approved by the General Assembly; ...</i>  <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
	Process	Y	<p>DR. 5 (<i>editorial comment - it should be 6</i>) <i>Approval of the standards. PEFC Forum voted by email postal ballot the Final Documents to be approved. The vote was organised between 20-24 May 2024.</i>  <i>On 27 May 2024, the PEFC Romania General Assembly formally adopted the final version of the forest management standards through an online vote:</i>            – <i>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 PEFC Romania Sustainable Forest Management Certification Scheme,</i>            – <i>Annex 01 PEFC-RO ST 8001:2024 Criteria and indicators.</i>            – <i>Annex 08 PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 Group Certification</i>  <i>The adopted documents are available at <a href="http://www.pefc.ro">www.pefc.ro</a>.</i>  <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The final approval of the PEFC Romanian standards is documented according to the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
5.2.2 Documented information shall be kept until completion of the next review or revision of the standard to which they refer. Otherwise the documented information must be kept for a minimum of five years after publication of the standard.	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 10 ARCHIVING AND PRESERVATION. Sections 10.1-10.9 all start with the following text: <i>The Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania shall keep up to date and keep up to date until the next revision and for at least 5 years, in paper and/or IT (or computer) format, a file called...</i>  <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
	Process	NA	<p><b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b></p>





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PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><b>Justification:</b> Documented information is stored in electronic form by PEFC Romania. The conformity with this requirement can only be assessed after the period defined in the benchmark.</p>
<p>5.2.3 Documented information shall be available to interested parties upon request.</p>	<p>Procedures</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 8 PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY (normal review). The transparency of the review procedure and the publication of related documents are guaranteed in the normal process of revising forest certification standards in Romania. ...8.2 These documents will be published as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For documents "available on request": submitted, upon request, by the Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania.</li> <li>- For "publicly available" documents: at least posted on the PEFC Romania website: <a href="http://www.pefc.ro">www.pefc.ro</a>.</li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
	<p>Process</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>Documents are available at the PEFC Romania website or are available upon request. <a href="https://pefc.ro/documentatie/">https://pefc.ro/documentatie/</a></p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			 <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The documentation is available on the PEFC.RO website and therefore, the process meets the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
<p>5.3.1 The standardising body shall establish procedure(s) for dealing with any substantial and process complaints and appeals relating to its standard-setting activities. It must make procedure(s) accessible to stakeholders. Upon receipt of a complaint or appeal, the standardising body shall:</p>			
(a) acknowledge receipt of the complaint or appeal to the complainant,	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 9 COMPLAINT HANDLING (all types of review). 9.1 Any complaint shall be addressed to PEFC Romania, which shall treat it impartially and objectively in accordance with the Annex 9 arbitration procedure.</p> <p>Note: Complaints against PEFC Romania regarding the procedure or process for developing/revising Romanian sustainable forest management standards shall be submitted in writing (e-mail) to the Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania no later than fifteen days after the publication of the revised standard approved by the PEFC Romania General Assembly.</p>




PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>9.2 Complaints and appeals should be sent by email to the following address:  PEFC Romania  Mr. Executive Director  by e-mail to office@pefc.ro</p> <p>9.3 Complaints shall not suspend enforcement.</p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8009:2024. 4.2 Acknowledgement of receipt. PEFC Romania Secretariat shall acknowledge receipt of the complaint within one week and make a written request to the members of the arbitration body to meet.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
	Process	NA	<p><b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC Romania has not received complaints during this revision.</p>
<p>(b) gather and verify all necessary information to validate the complaint or appeal, evaluate the subject matter of the complaint or appeal impartially and objectively, and make a decision regarding the complaint or appeal,</p>	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8009:2024. 4 Arbitration procedure. 4.1 Initiation of arbitration. Any interested party may initiate an arbitration procedure by submitting a written request to the PEFC Romania Secretariat. The application must contain details of: i. the detailed description of the facts, ii. the positions of the parties involved (if available) and iii. where necessary, reports of the certification body.</p> <p>4.3 Hearing and Decision. The hearing will be held within one month of receipt of the complaint and the final decision will be taken within 60 days. In justified circumstances, which may include the need for additional expertise, the period for taking the decision may be extended by a further 30 days. The decision of the arbitration body shall be taken by simple majority; In the event of a tie, the President shall have the casting vote.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.
	Process	NA	<b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC Romania has not received complaints during this revision.
(c) formally communicate the decision on the complaint or appeal to the complainant and describe the handling process.	Procedures	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8009:2024. 4.4 <i>Communication of the decision. The PEFC Romania Secretariat is responsible for maintaining the protocols of the hearings and for informing the parties involved about the results of the arbitration. The decision of the arbitration body is binding and represents the conclusion of the arbitration procedure for PEFC Romania.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.
	Process	NA	<b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC Romania has not received complaints during this revision.
5.3.2 The standardising body shall establish at least one contact point for enquiries, complaints and appeals relating to its standard-setting activities. The contact point shall be easy to access and readily available.	Procedures	Y	PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 9.2 <i>Complaints and appeals should be sent by email to the following address:</i> <i>PEFC Romania</i> <i>Mr. Executive Director</i> <i>by e-mail to office@pefc.ro</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.
	Process	Y	<b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>



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PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><b>Justification:</b> <a href="https://pefc.ro/contact/">https://pefc.ro/contact/</a></p> <p><b>Contact</b></p>  <p>E-mail: <a href="mailto:office@pefc.ro">office@pefc.ro</a>            Lucian Filigean – Președinte Executiv            E-mail: <a href="mailto:lucian.filigean@pefc.ro">lucian.filigean@pefc.ro</a>            tel. 0040 785 433 288</p>
<b>Standard-setting process</b>			
6.1.1 For the creation of a new standard, the standardising body shall develop a proposal including:			
(a) the scope of the standard,	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.2 <i>RELEASE STEPS</i>. 5.2.2 <i>The Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania should prepare and submit to the PEFC Romania Council a preparatory dossier which will serve as a basis for reflection in the Forum and which will consist of at least the following elements. ...5.2.2.2 Proposal for development or revision of the standard including the scope of the standard, contextual elements for developing or revising standards, description of process steps and provisional timeline in its main stages.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.
	Process	Y	<b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> The scope of the standard that was to be revised was practically set by the previous operative version of the standard and its review process.
(b) a justification of the need for the standard,	Procedures	N	PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.2 <i>RELEASE STEPS</i> . 5.2.2 <i>The Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania should prepare and submit to the PEFC Romania Council a preparatory dossier which will serve as a basis for reflection in the Forum and which will consist of at least the following elements. ... 5.2.2.2 Proposal for development or revision of the standard including the scope of the standard, contextual elements for developing or revising standards, description of process steps and provisional timeline in its main stages. 5.2.2.3 The current international reference standard for sustainable forest management PEFC, in its original English version and translated into Romanian; 5.2.2.4 Romanian Standard for Sustainable Forest Management in force for Romania (revision only);</i> <b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> The documentation does not mention justification of the need for the new standard as a requirement.
	Process	NA	<b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC Romania carried out a standard revision, not the development of a new standard.
(c) a clear description of the intended outcomes	Procedures	N	PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. ...5.2.2.2 <i>Proposal for development or revision of the standard including the scope of the standard, contextual elements for developing or revising standards, description of process steps and provisional timeline in its main stages.</i> <b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<b>Justification:</b> There is no mention of the intended outcomes.
	Process	NA	<b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC Romania carried out a standard revision, not the development of a new standard.
(d) a risk assessment of potential negative impacts arising from implementing the standard, such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• factors that could affect the achievement of the outcomes negatively,</li> <li>• unintended consequences of implementation,</li> <li>• actions to address the identified risks, and</li> </ul>	Procedures	N	PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.2 RELEASE STEPS. 5.2.2 <i>The Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania should prepare and submit to the PEFC Romania Council a preparatory dossier which will serve as a basis for reflection in the Forum and which will consist of at least the following elements.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 5.2.2.1 <i>This procedure;</i></li> <li>- 5.2.2.2 <i>Proposal for development or revision of the standard including the scope of the standard, contextual elements for developing or revising standards, description of process steps and provisional timeline in its main stages.</i></li> <li>- 5.2.2.3 <i>The current international reference standard for sustainable forest management PEFC, in its original English version and translated into Romanian;</i></li> <li>- 5.2.2.4 <i>Romanian Standard for Sustainable Forest Management in force for Romania (revision only);</i></li> <li>- 5.2.2.5 <i>Any other matter deemed relevant by the Board.</i></li> </ul> <b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> There is no mention of a risk assessment of potential negative impacts arising from the implementation of the standard.
	Process	NA	<b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC Romania carried out a standard revision, not the development of a new standard.



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<p>(e) a description of the stages of standard development and their expected timetable.</p> <p>NOTE Guidance for development of a proposal and justification is given in ISO Directives, Part 1, Annex C and Annex SL (Appendix 1).</p>	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.2.2.2 <i>Proposal for development or revision of the standard including the scope of the standard, contextual elements for developing or revising standards, description of process steps and provisional timeline in its main stages.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
	Process	Y	<p>Public announcement Presentation in the Stakeholder Forum</p> <p>DR. 4.2 (Indufor: should be 5.2) <i>Announcement of recruitment to the working group. ...</i> On 29 May 2023 PEFC Romania announced the recruitment for the PEFC Forum. The announcement was published on the PEFC Romania website (<a href="https://pefc.ro/revizia-standardului">https://pefc.ro/revizia-standardului</a>) as well as in the online forest magazine <a href="https://forestmania.ro">ferestmania.ro</a> (<a href="https://forestmania.ro/pefc-romania-lucreaza-la-un-nou-standard-de-certificare-a-managementului-forestier/">https://forestmania.ro/pefc-romania-lucreaza-la-un-nou-standard-de-certificare-a-managementului-forestier/</a>). Emails were sent to identified stakeholders notifying them of the open call. The closing date for applications was set for 1 July 2023.</p> <p>The announcement included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– information about the objectives, scope and the steps of the standard-setting process,</li> <li>– information about opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the process,</li> <li>– the invitation to stakeholders to nominate their representative(s) to the working group.</li> </ul> <p>– The PEFC-EN DST 8008:2023 Procedure for the development and revision of the PEFC Standard for forest management Romania document</p> <p>– <i>Registering Form – that needed to be signed by Forum participants</i></p>





PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><i>In addition to public announcements in the media, the PEFC Romania has contacted the identified stakeholders occasionally, by phone.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> Stages of the revision process and the expected timelines for different stages were presented in the public announcement, in the presentation for the launch meeting, and they are described in the DR, Chapter 4.</p>
6.1.2 For the revision of a standard the proposal shall cover at least (a) and (e) of clause 6.1.1.	Procedures	Y	<p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> See points 6.1.1. (a) and (e) procedures.</p>
	Process	Y	<p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> See points 6.1.1. (a) and (e) process.</p>
6.2.1 The standardising body shall identify stakeholders relevant to the objectives and scope of the standard-setting activities by means of a stakeholder identification mapping exercise. It shall define which stakeholder groups are relevant to the subject matter and why. For each stakeholder group the standardising body shall identify the likely key issues, key stakeholders, and which means of communication would be best to reach them.	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.3. PREPARATION STAGES. 5.3.1 Identification of stakeholders. 5.3.1.1 <i>The PEFC Romania Board of Directors shall carry out a stakeholder mapping to identify all relevant factors (for the purposes of point 4.4.2.2), i.e. with an interest in the objectives and scope of activities for the development and review of Romanian sustainable forest management standards.</i></p> <p>5.3.1.3 <i>For each group, the Council identifies key issues, key stakeholders and the most appropriate means of communication, and sets targets for the participation of key stakeholders.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
	Process	N	<p>DR. 4.2 (Indufor: should be 5.2) <i>Announcement of recruitment to the working group. The PEFC Romania identified stakeholders relevant to the objectives and scope of the revision process of the Romanian criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management for forest certification as follows:</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>1) forest owners/administrators (private and state),            2) forest/wood related industry/business,            3) non-governmental organisations (forest and ecology),            4) authorities (public administration and local government),            5) the scientific and technological community,            6) employees and trade unions,</p> <p><i>The PEFC Romania identified disadvantaged stakeholder: private forest owners. In Romania private forests are very fragmented and poorly managed. Private forest owners are very poor represented in the forest sector.</i></p> <p><i>The PEFC Romania identified the key stakeholder: the State Forests Administrator -RomSilva. RomSilva. administrates more than half of the Romania's forests and it is the administrator of the 22 national and natural parks.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> There is no documentation on the definition of likely key issues, and which means of communication would be best to reach the key stakeholders in each stakeholder group.</p>
<p>6.2.2 Identification of stakeholder groups shall be based on nine major stakeholder groups as defined by Agenda 21 of the <i>United Nations Conference on Environment and Development</i> (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. At least the following groups shall be included in the stakeholder mapping:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• forest owners,</li> <li>• business and industry,</li> <li>• indigenous people,</li> <li>• non-government organisations,</li> </ul>	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.3.1.2 <i>The PEFC Romania Board of Directors defines and identifies, motivating its choices and decisions, stakeholders based on the nine major groups as defined in Agenda 21 of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. At least, at least the following groups shall be included in the census:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Forest owners and managers</li> <li>- Enterprise, commerce and industries</li> <li>- Private and public representatives: distributors, developers, project owners (developers, social owners, communities, state, etc.)</li> </ul>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<p>• scientific and technological community, • workers and trade unions.</p> <p>Other groups shall be added if relevant to the scope of standard-setting activities.</p> <p>NOTE The full list of nine major stakeholder groups defined by Agenda 21 of the <i>United Nations Conference on Environment and Development</i> consists of: (i) business and industry, (ii) children and youth, (iii) forest owners, (iv) indigenous peoples, (v) local authorities, (vi) non-government organisations, (vii) scientific and technological community, (viii) women, and (ix) workers and trade unions.</p>			<p>- <i>Research centers, scientific communities</i></p> <p>- <i>Users: local populations grouped into associations, hikers, hunters, associations of forest users in general</i></p> <p>- <i>Environmental associations / NGOs</i></p> <p>- <i>Consumer associations</i></p> <p>- <i>Workers and trade unions</i></p> <p><i>Other groups can be added according to their relevance to the scope of review activities, such as 'children and young people', women's associations, for example.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> As there are no indigenous peoples in Romania, the RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements. Note: <i>In Romania, all ethnic groups are considered full Romanian citizens with no differentiation, privileges, or special rights. Therefore, the concept of indigenous peoples as defined by the ILO does not apply specifically to Romania. However, the Roma population is often discussed in the context of minority rights and social inclusion.</i></p>
	Process	Y	<p>DR. 4.2 (Indufor: should be 5.2) <i>Announcement of recruitment to the working group. The PEFC Romania identified stakeholders relevant to the objectives and scope of the revision process of the Romanian criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management for forest certification as follows:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <i>forest owners/administrators (private and state),</i></li> <li>2) <i>forest/wood related industry/business,</i></li> <li>3) <i>non-governmental organisations (forest and ecology),</i></li> <li>4) <i>authorities (public administration and local government),</i></li> <li>5) <i>the scientific and technological community,</i></li> <li>6) <i>employees and trade unions,</i></li> </ol>



**Indufor**

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> As there are no indigenous peoples in Romania, the RFCS process meets the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements. Note: <i>In Romania, all ethnic groups are considered full Romanian citizens with no differentiation, privileges, or special rights. Therefore, the concept of indigenous peoples as defined by the ILO does not apply specifically to Romania. However, the Roma population is often discussed in the context of minority rights and social inclusion.</i></p>
<p>6.2.3 The standardising body shall identify disadvantaged stakeholders and key stakeholders and address any constraints to their participation in standard-setting activities.</p> <p>NOTE A stakeholder can be both a disadvantaged and a key stakeholder at the same time.</p>	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.3.1.4 <i>As part of this identification of relevant factors, the PEFC Romania Board of Directors shall pay particular attention to identifying affected, essential and disadvantaged stakeholders, the relative needs and constraints of their participation, and the actions to be implemented to address these needs and mitigate these constraints. Particular attention shall also be paid to the content of the invitation so that it can be well understood by all categories of stakeholders invited.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
	Process	N	<p>DR. 4.2 (Indufor: should be 5.2) <i>Announcement of recruitment to the working group. ...The PEFC Romania identified disadvantaged stakeholder: private forest owners. In Romania private forests are very fragmented and poorly managed. Private forest owners are very poor represented in the forest sector.</i></p> <p><i>The PEFC Romania identified the key stakeholder: the State Forests Administrator -RomSilva. RomSilva. administrates more than half of the Romania's forests and it is the administrator of the 22 national and natural parks.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><b>Justification:</b> There is no documentation on the standardising body addressing any constraints to the participation of disadvantaged and key stakeholders in standard-setting activities.</p>
<p>6.3.1 The standardising body shall make a public announcement of the start of the standard-setting process and include an invitation to stakeholders to participate in the process. The announcement shall be made in a timely manner through suitable media, as appropriate, to give stakeholders an opportunity for meaningful contributions.</p> <p>NOTE 1 <i>In a timely manner</i> means (at the latest) four weeks before the first standard-setting activity is scheduled to occur.</p> <p>NOTE 2 <i>Through suitable media</i> means at least through the standardising body's website and by email and/or letter to identified stakeholders. Other media includes press releases, news articles, features in trade-press, information sent to branch organisations, social media, digital media, etc.</p>	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.3.2 <i>Public announcement</i>. 5.3.2.1 <i>The public announcement regarding the start of the development or revision of Romanian standards for sustainable forest management is made through the PEFC Romania website and through another external and adapted means of communication (PEFC Romania newsletter and/or PEFC Council, dedicated email, press announcement, social networks, etc.), in order to provide the widest possible information on this process to all categories of stakeholders.</i></p> <p>5.3.2.2 <i>The public announcement must also be made by direct communication (e-mail, post) to identified stakeholders.</i></p> <p>5.3.2.3 <i>The public announcement shall take place at least 4 weeks before the first meeting of the Forum.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
	Process	Y	<p>Public Announcement.</p> <p>DR. 4.2 (Indufor: should be 5.2) <i>Announcement of recruitment to the working group. ... On 29 May 2023 PEFC Romania announced the recruitment for the PEFC Forum. The announcement was published on the PEFC Romania website (<a href="https://pefc.ro/revizia-standardului">https://pefc.ro/revizia-standardului</a>) as well as in the online forest magazine <i>ferestmania.ro</i> (<a href="https://forestmania.ro/pefc-romania-lucreaza-la-un-nou-standard-de-certificare-a-managementului-forestier/">https://forestmania.ro/pefc-romania-lucreaza-la-un-nou-standard-de-certificare-a-managementului-forestier/</a>). Emails were sent to identified stakeholders notifying them of the open call. The closing date for applications was set for 1 July 2023.</i></p> <p><i>The announcement included:</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>– information about the objectives, scope and the steps of the standard-setting process,            – information about opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the process,            – the invitation to stakeholders to nominate their representative(s) to the working group.            – The PEFC-EN DST 8008:2023 Procedure for the development and revision of the PEFC Standard for forest management Romania document            – Registering Form – that needed to be signed by Forum participants            In addition to public announcements in the media, the PEFC Romania has contacted the identified stakeholders occasionally, by phone.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> Public announcement was published on May 29, 2023. The revision launch meeting was held on the Forum meeting was held on July 30, 2023. The described process is in line with the PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
6.3.1 The announcement and invitation shall include:			
(a) overview of the standard-setting process,	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.3.2.4 The public announcement shall contain at least:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- an explanation of the process for developing or revising the standard in a proposal document as described in point 5.2.2.2 above;</li> <li>- Information on opportunities for stakeholder participation;</li> <li>- Public invitation to apply to participate in the forum and deadline for application;</li> <li>- Access to the procedure for developing, revising and revising standards;</li> <li>- Request for comments on the scope and process of staff development and information on the procedures to be followed for this purpose.</li> </ul>



**Indufor**

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>5.2.2.2 Proposal for development or revision of the standard including the scope of the standard, contextual elements for developing or revising standards, description of process steps and provisional timeline in its main stages.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
	Process	Y	<p>DR. 4.2 (Indufor: should be 5.2) <i>Announcement of recruitment to the working group. ...The announcement included:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- information about the objectives, scope and the steps of the standard-setting process,...</li> </ul> <p>Public Announcement.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The described process is in line with the PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
(b) access to the proposal for the standard (refer to 6.1),	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.3.2.4 The public announcement shall contain at least:...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Access to the procedure for developing, revising and revising standards;</li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
	Process	Y	<p>DR. 4.2 (Indufor: should be 5.2) <i>Announcement of recruitment to the working group. ...The announcement included:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- information about the objectives, scope and the steps of the standard-setting process,</li> <li>- information about opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the process,</li> </ul>



**Indufor**

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>– the invitation to stakeholders to nominate their representative(s) to the working group.</p> <p>– The PEFC-EN DST 8008:2023 Procedure for the development and revision of the PEFC Standard for forest management Romania document</p> <p>– Registering Form – that needed to be signed by Forum participants</p> <p>In addition to public announcements in the media, the PEFC Romania has contacted the identified stakeholders occasionally, by phone.</p> <p>Public Announcement.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The process is in line with PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
(c) information about opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the process,	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.3.2.4 The public announcement shall contain at least:...</p> <p>- Information on opportunities for stakeholder participation;</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
	Process	Y	<p>Public announcement.</p> <p>DR. 4.2 (Indufor: should be 5.2) Announcement of recruitment to the working group. ...The announcement included:</p> <p>– information about opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the process,</p> <p>– the invitation to stakeholders to nominate their representative(s) to the working group.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The described process is in line with the PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>





PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
(d) requests to stakeholders to nominate their representative(s) or themselves to the working group (refer to 6.4). The request to disadvantaged stakeholders and key stakeholders shall be made in a manner that ensures that the information reaches intended recipients and in a format that is easy to understand,	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.3.2.4 <i>The public announcement shall contain at least: ...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Information on opportunities for stakeholder participation;</li> <li>- Public invitation to apply to participate in the forum and deadline for application;</li> </ul> <p>5.3.3. <i>Establishment of the Forum.</i> 5.3.3.1 <i>The Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania issues formal invitations to participate in the forum to stakeholders identified as relevant by the CD.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
	Process	Y	<p>Public announcement.</p> <p>DR. 4.2 (Indufor: should be 5.2) <i>Announcement of recruitment to the working group. ...The announcement included:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- information about opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the process,</li> <li>- the invitation to stakeholders to nominate their representative(s) to the working group.</li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The described process is in line with the PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
(e) explicit invitation and clear instruction on how to submit feedback on the scope and standard-setting process, and	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.3.2.4 <i>The public announcement shall contain at least:...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Public invitation to apply to participate in the forum and deadline for application;</li> <li>- Access to the procedure for developing, revising and revising standards;</li> </ul>



**Indufor**

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>- Request for comments on the scope and process of staff development and information on the procedures to be followed for this purpose.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
	Process	Y	<p>Public announcement.</p> <p>DR. 4.2 (Indufor: should be 5.2) <i>Announcement of recruitment to the working group. ...The announcement included:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- information about the objectives, scope and the steps of the standard-setting process,</li> <li>- information about opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the process,</li> <li>- the invitation to stakeholders to nominate their representative(s) to the working group.</li> </ul> <p>- The PEFC-EN DST 8008:2023 Procedure for the development and revision of the PEFC Standard for forest management Romania document</p> <p>- Registering Form – that needed to be signed by Forum participants</p> <p><i>In addition to public announcements in the media, the PEFC Romania has contacted the identified stakeholders occasionally, by phone.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The announcement included an explicit invitation and clear instruction on how to submit feedback on the scope and standard-setting process</p>
(f) access to the standard-setting procedures.	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.3.2.4 <i>The public announcement shall contain at least:...</i></p> <p>- Access to the procedure for developing, revising and revising standards;</p>



**Indufor**

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
	Process	Y	<p>Public announcement.  DR. 4.2 (Indufor: should be 5.2) <i>Announcement of recruitment to the working group. ...The announcement included: ...</i>  – <i>The PEFC-EN DST 8008:2023 Procedure for the development and revision of the PEFC Standard for forest management Romania document</i>  <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The described process is in line with the PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
6.3.2 The standardising body shall review the standard-setting process based on feedback received in response to the public announcement.	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.3.2.5 <i>Depending on any comments received, the Board of Directors of PEFC Romania may, if it considers it relevant, review and modify these procedures and/or the process followed for developing or revising Romanian sustainable forest management standards. Where appropriate, the Commission shall inform the stakeholders of the Forum accordingly.</i>  <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
	Process	NA	<p><b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b>  <b>Justification:</b> No feedback was received.</p>
6.4.1 The standardising body shall establish a permanent or temporary working group or adjust the composition of an already existing working group based on nominations it received. Acceptance and refusal of nominations shall be justified in relation to the requirements for balanced	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.3.3 <i>Establishment of the Forum. 5.3.3.1 The Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania issues formal invitations to participate in the forum to stakeholders identified as relevant by the CD. The invitation shall contain at least the following information:</i>  – <i>Scope of development or revision of the standard;</i></p>



**Indufor**

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<p>representation of the working group, considerations of an appropriate gender balance, relevance of the organisation, an individual's competence, an individual's relevant experience and resources available for standard-setting.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>The role of the Forum in the review process;</i></li> <li>- <i>List of publicly accessible documents (in particular the procedure for developing standards);</i></li> <li>- <i>The possibility for invited persons and organisations to provide feedback to the Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania on the scope and review process;</i></li> <li>- <i>The possibility for the Board of Directors of PEFC Romania to review the procedures for developing and revising standards in the light of comments received, if necessary.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>5.3.3.2 The invitation should be addressed to key, affected and disadvantaged stakeholders through direct communication (email) to ensure that they receive and understand its content.</i></p> <p><i>5.3.3.3 The PEFC Romania Council shall consider all requests to participate in the Forum.</i></p> <p><i>5.3.3.4 The Council accepts or rejects requests to participate in the Forum. The acceptance or rejection of requests shall be made taking into account the requirement of balanced representation in the Forum in particular as regards representation of different categories of stakeholders, different interest categories, gender balance, relevance of the organisation, individual skills and experience, and resources available for participation in review work. The Board of Directors decides on their assignment to one of the Forum Chambers. The Commission shall reject the remaining applications with reasons.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
	Process	Y	<p>DR. 4.3 (Indufor: should be 5.3) <i>Establishment of the working group. A total of 18 people applied to work in the PEFC Forum. PEFC Romania agreed with accepting all of them to be part of the Forum. The information was made</i></p>



**Indufor**

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><i>public on the PEFC Romania webpage on 10 July 2023 and emails were sent to members of the PEFC Forum. Also posts were made on the official pages of PEFC Romania on Facebook and LinkedIn.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The described process is in line with the PEFC ST 1001:2017. All applicants were accepted to be part of the Forum, so the requirements for balanced representation of the working group, and other considerations were not needed.</p>
6.4.2 The working group shall:			
<p>(a) have balanced representation and decision-making by stakeholder categories, relevant to the subject matter and geographical scope of the standard, where no single concerned stakeholder group can dominate, nor be dominated in the process, and</p>	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 4.4.2. <i>Composition of the Forum.</i> 4.4.2.1 <i>The Forum should ensure a balanced representation between the different interest groups that are relevant to the topic and geographical scope of the standard, ensuring gender parity and balance between the chambers constituting the Forum (see point 4.4.2.4), so that no interest group composing these chambers can dominate or be dominated in this process. In order to ensure a balanced representation, PEFC Romania shall ensure that all identified stakeholder groups are brought together in the Forum (see point 5.3).</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
	Process	Y	<p>DR. 4.3 (Indufor: should be 5.3) <i>Establishment of the working group. A total of 18 people applied to work in the PEFC Forum. PEFC Romania agreed with accepting all of them to be part of the Forum.</i></p> <p><i>DR Appendix 1 Members of the Working Group</i> shows that the 18 members are divided quite equally between the 5 different chambers.</p> <p>Information from PEFC Romania: <i>The geographical scope was deemed irrelevant as the focus was on balanced stakeholder representation within</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>Romania, aligning with national forest management needs and stakeholders rather than broader regional diversity.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> There is no documentation showing that the geographical scope of the standard was considered. However, the additional information from PEFC Romania clarified the situation, and the process is deemed to meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
<p>(b) include stakeholders with expertise relevant to the subject matter of the standard, those that affected by the standard, and those that can influence implementation of the standard. The affected stakeholders shall be represented in an appropriate proportion among participants.</p>	<p>Procedures</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 4.4.2.2 <i>The Forum shall be composed of relevant stakeholders, namely:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Have an interest in the objectives and scope of activities for the development/revision of Romanian sustainable forest management standards;</i></li> <li>- <i>And/or having a direct or indirect link with the forestry and timber industry sectors in Romania, at national, regional or local level;</i></li> <li>- <i>And/or with expertise in the field;</i></li> <li>- <i>And/or having an interest in the purposes of the standards (stakeholders in the general sense);</i></li> <li>- <i>And/or whose participation is essential to the results of the standard-development work (key stakeholders);</i></li> <li>- <i>And/or is affected in the sense that it is likely to suffer a direct displacement of its living and/or working conditions as a result of the implementation of revised standards or is likely to be a user of sustainable forest management standards and is therefore subject to the requirements of those standards. Affected stakeholders should be represented to an appropriate extent in the Forum.</i></li> <li>- <i>And/or is likely to influence the implementation of standards.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>



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PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
	Process	Y	<p>DR. 4.3 (Indufor: should be 5.3) <i>Establishment of the working group. A total of 18 people applied to work in the PEFC Forum. PEFC Romania agreed with accepting all of them to be part of the Forum.</i></p> <p><i>DR Appendix 1 Members of the Working Group.</i></p> <p>Information from PEFC Romania: <i>The affected stakeholder group is represented by number 1,2 and 3. In the Development report is the list of participants.... Szabo-Sandi Melinda, Calaras Bogdan, Platon Ioan-Horia.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The process is deemed to meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
<p>6.4.3 In order to achieve balanced representation, the standardising body shall strive to have all identified stakeholder groups (refer to 6.2) represented. The standardising body shall set targets for the participation of key stakeholders and proactively seek their participation by using outreach such as (but not limited to) personal emails, phone calls, meeting invitations etc.</p> <p>NOTE When a stakeholder group is not represented and key stakeholders cannot be encouraged to participate, the standardising body may consider alternative options.</p>	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 4.4.2. <i>Composition of the Forum. 4.4.2.1 The Forum should ensure a balanced representation between the different interest groups that are relevant to the topic and geographical scope of the standard, ensuring gender parity and balance between the chambers constituting the Forum (see point 4.4.2.4), so that no interest group composing these chambers can dominate or be dominated in this process. In order to ensure a balanced representation, PEFC Romania shall ensure that all identified stakeholder groups are brought together in the Forum (see point 5.3).</i></p> <p><i>5.3.1.3 For each group, the Council identifies key issues, key stakeholders and the most appropriate means of communication, and sets targets for the participation of key stakeholders.</i></p> <p><i>5.3.3.2 The invitation should be addressed to key, affected and disadvantaged stakeholders through direct communication (email) to ensure that they receive and understand its content.</i></p> <p><i>5.3.3.7 If a group of stakeholders is not sufficiently represented in the Forum and key stakeholders cannot be encouraged to participate in the Forum, the R&amp;D may consider other options for their engagement.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p>




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PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<b>Justification:</b> <i>The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</i>
	Process	Y	DR. 4.3 (Indufor: should be 5.3) <i>Establishment of the working group. A total of 18 people applied to work in the PEFC Forum. PEFC Romania agreed with accepting all of them to be part of the Forum.</i> <i>DR Appendix 1 Members of the Working Group</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> All identified stakeholder groups are represented, including the identified key stakeholder, Romsilva.
6.4.4. Activities of the working group shall be organized in an open and transparent manner where:			
(a) working drafts shall be available to all members of the working group,	Procedures	Y	PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.4.3 <i>Forum Activity. 5.4.3.1 The Executive Directorate shall send Forum members in good time before each plenary or working group meeting:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A written convocation containing the agenda;</li> <li>- Preparatory documents required (including the latest version of draft standards under review);</li> <li>- Minutes of previous meeting.</li> </ul> <i>Note: The Executive Directorate will also encourage the participation of key stakeholders, in particular by sending emails, phone calls and personalised invitations to them personally, in line with the participation objectives set by the CD.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.
	Process	Y	DR 4.3 (Indufor: should be 5.3) <i>Establishment of the working group. The meeting was recorded and made available for Forum together with all</i>





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PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><i>documents till the end of the process on a Google Drive folder especially created for this purpose and managed by PEFC Romania Secretariat.</i></p> <p>DR. 4.4. (Indufor: should be 5.4) <i>The activities of the working group. The first working meeting: The Secretariat of PEFC Romania elaborated the very first drafts of the PEFC sustainable management standards based on: the PEFC ST 1003:2018: Sustainable Forest Management – Requirements PEFC ST 1002:2018) Group forest management, and Annex 01 - Criteria and indicators 2017</i></p> <p><i>Working drafts and any other documents were available to all working group members on the Drive folder. Also, the drafted documents were shared one OneDrive platform in a live format so all the members of the forum can comment and see the comments added by others.</i></p> <p>Documents are available at the PEFC Romania website or are available upon request. <a href="https://pefc.ro/documentatie/">https://pefc.ro/documentatie/</a></p>  <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><b>Justification:</b> Working drafts were available to all members of the working group</p>
<p>(b) all members of the working group shall be given meaningful opportunities to contribute to the development or revision of the standard and to provide feedback on working drafts, and</p>	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.4.3 Forum Activity. 5.4.3.1 The Executive Directorate shall send Forum members in good time before each plenary or working group meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A written convocation containing the agenda;</li> <li>- Preparatory documents required (including the latest version of draft standards under review);</li> <li>- Minutes of previous meeting.</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: The Executive Directorate will also encourage the participation of key stakeholders, in particular by sending emails, phone calls and personalised invitations to them personally, in line with the participation objectives set by the CD.</i></p> <p>5.4.4.4 Members of the Forum should be able to express their views and comments without restrictions, which should be taken into account by the Forum in an open manner.</p> <p>5.4.4.5 At the end of each meeting, a report recording the main elements of the discussions and their outcome shall be drawn up and distributed.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
	Process	Y	<p>See 6.4.4. (a) process.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> All members of the working group were given meaningful opportunities to contribute to the development or revision of the standard and to provide feedback on working drafts. The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<p>(c) feedback and views given by any member of the working group shall be considered in an open and transparent way where the outcome of these considerations is recorded.</p>	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.4.3 Forum Activity. 5.4.3.1 The Executive Directorate shall send Forum members in good time before each plenary or working group meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A written convocation containing the agenda;</li> <li>- Preparatory documents required (including the latest version of draft standards under review);</li> <li>- Minutes of previous meeting.</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: The Executive Directorate will also encourage the participation of key stakeholders, in particular by sending emails, phone calls and personalised invitations to them personally, in line with the participation objectives set by the CD.</i></p> <p>5.4.4.4 Members of the Forum should be able to express their views and comments without restrictions, which should be taken into account by the Forum in an open manner.</p> <p>5.4.4.5 At the end of each meeting, a report recording the main elements of the discussions and their outcome shall be drawn up and distributed.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity'</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> The numbering of this section of PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023 should be checked (i.e. 5.4.4.4-5.4.4.6 should be 5.4.3.4-5.4.3.6)</p>
	Process	Y	<p>See 6.4.4. (a) process.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> Feedback and views given by any member of the working group were considered in an open and transparent way and the outcome of these considerations was recorded.</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
6.4.5 The decision of the working group to recommend the final draft for formal approval shall be taken on the basis of consensus. In order to determine whether there is any sustained opposition, the working group can utilise the following methods:			
(a) face-to face meeting(s) where there is a verbal yes/no vote, a show of hands for a yes/no vote; a statement on consensus from the Chair when there are no dissenting voices or hands (votes); a formal ballot, etc.,	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 4.4.3. <i>How the forum works.</i> 4.4.3.3 <i>In order to reach consensus, the Forum may use the following alternative procedures to ensure that there is no opposition: a face-to-face meeting, including an oral yes/no vote, a show of hands "yes/no", a statement by the Presidency on the absence of opposition cast, a formal vote by secret ballot, a meeting by telephone conference or videoconference, including an oral "yes/no" vote, an email consultation of members, including a ballot paper or voting server allowing them to "express their agreement or opposition", allowing members to provide a written response or a combination of these procedures, or any other process they consider relevant.</i></p> <p><i>The choice of procedure shall be made on a case-by-case basis, by consensus among the participants, otherwise by the Chair of the Forum and, in his absence, by the chair of the working group meeting.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures comply with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
	Process	NA	<p>DR. 4. <i>Review of the revision process ... Based on the review and changes resulting from the revision of the international standards the Forum prepared preliminary drafts of PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 and PEFC-RO ST 8001:2024 documents. No comments and remarks were received during the public consultation, as a result, final draft documents were agreed by postal electronic vote. There was no consistent opposition.</i></p> <p>5 (Indufor: should be 6) <i>Approval of the standards. PEFC Forum voted by email postal ballot the Final Documents to be approved. The vote was organised between 20-24 May 2024.</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><i>On 27 May 2024, the PEFC Romania General Assembly formally adopted the final version of the forest management standards through an online vote:</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> There was no sustained opposition. The RFCS process meets the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
(b) telephone conference meeting(s) where there is a verbal yes/no vote,	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 4.4.3.3 In order to reach consensus, the Forum may use the following alternative procedures... a meeting by telephone conference or videoconference, including an oral "yes/no" vote,...</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures comply with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
	Process	NA	<p><b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> There were no telephone conference meetings.</p>
(c) e-mail request to the working group for agreement or objection where the members provide a formal (written) response (vote),	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 4.4.3.3 In order to reach consensus, the Forum may use the following alternative procedures ... an email consultation of members, including a ballot paper or voting server allowing them to "express their agreement or opposition", allowing members to provide a written response or a combination of these procedures, or any other process they consider relevant.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures comply with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
	Process	Y	<p><i>DR. 4. Review of the revision process ... Based on the review and changes resulting from the revision of the international standards the Forum prepared preliminary drafts of PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 and PEFC-RO ST 8001:2024 documents. No comments and remarks were received during the public</i></p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>consultation, as a result, final draft documents were agreed by postal electronic vote. There was no consistent opposition.</p> <p>5 (Indufor: should be 6) Approval of the standards. PEFC Forum voted by email postal ballot the Final Documents to be approved. The vote was organised between 20-24 May 2024.</p> <p>On 27 May 2024, the PEFC Romania General Assembly formally adopted the final version of the forest management standards through an online vote:</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS process meets the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
(d) combinations of these methods.	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 4.4.3.3 In order to reach consensus, the Forum may use the following alternative procedures ... or a combination of these procedures, or any other process they consider relevant.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures comply with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
	Process	NA	<p><b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> There were no telephone conference meetings.</p>
6.4.6 Where a vote is used in decision-making, the standard-setting procedures shall determine and include decision-making thresholds that quantifies consensus. The threshold must be consistent with the consensus definition (refer to 3.1). However, a majority vote cannot override sustained opposition in order to achieve consensus.	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 4.4.3. How the forum works. 4.4.3.5 If unanimity cannot be found on a subject at the end of the implementation of the above alternative procedures, then a proposal is considered to be the result of consensus when the Chambers agree with a majority of 2/3 in each of them. The votes cast by members present in person or represented shall be taken into account. The Forum may deliberate provided that at least two-thirds of the members are present or represented, each chamber being represented. Each member of the Forum may be represented by another member of the Forum.</p>



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PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><i>Note: A majority vote cannot prevail over strong opposition on a major issue to reach consensus. In such a case, see points 4.4.3.5 and 4.4.3.8.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures comply with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
	Process	Y	<p><i>DR. 4. Review of the revision process ... Based on the review and changes resulting from the revision of the international standards the Forum prepared preliminary drafts of PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 and PEFC-RO ST 8001:2024 documents. No comments and remarks were received during the public consultation, as a result, final draft documents were agreed by postal electronic vote. There was no consistent opposition.</i></p> <p><i>5 (Indufor: should be 6) Approval of the standards. PEFC Forum voted by email postal ballot the Final Documents to be approved. The vote was organised between 20-24 May 2024.</i></p> <p><i>Complementary information from PEFC Romania: The Vote in the PEFC Forum was by email postal ballot, we received 10 from 18 possible votes, all "for", no vote "against". The list is attached "Voting Results on the email postal ballot of the final draft".</i></p> <p><i>Voting results on the email postal ballot of the final draft.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The Forum's decision was considered to be the result of a consensus being achieved. The vote was according to the determined standard-setting procedures and respected the decision-making thresholds that quantifies consensus.</p>
6.4.7 When there is sustained opposition to a substantial issue, the issue shall be resolved using the following methods:			
(a) finding a compromise through discussion and negotiation on the disputed issue within the working group,	Procedures	Y	PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 4.4.3.4 <i>In case of strong opposition on major issues, the following processes are put in place to reach consensus:</i>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>- Further discussions and negotiations within the Forum;</p> <p>- Discussions and negotiations between the parties concerned or in a dedicated working party;</p> <p>- Organise new public consultations (as appropriate) to obtain new information to resolve opposition issues and reach consensus. PEFC Romania will determine the scope and duration of any new public consultation.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures comply with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
	Process	NA	<p><b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The Forum voted in favour of the standard and reached a consensus. The process did not involve persisting stakeholder disagreement that would have counted as sustained opposition.</p>
(b) finding a compromise through direct negotiation between the stakeholder(s) making the objection and other stakeholders with different views on the disputed issue,	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 4.4.3.4 <i>In case of strong opposition on major issues, the following processes are put in place to reach consensus:</i></p> <p>- Further discussions and negotiations within the Forum;</p> <p>- Discussions and negotiations between the parties concerned or in a dedicated working party;</p> <p>- Organise new public consultations (as appropriate) to obtain new information to resolve opposition issues and reach consensus. PEFC Romania will determine the scope and duration of any new public consultation.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures comply with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
	Process	NA	<p><b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b></p>





PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<b>Justification:</b> The Forum voted in favour of the standard and reached a consensus. The process did not involve persisting stakeholder disagreement that would have counted as sustained opposition.
(c) additional round(s) of public consultation (if necessary) where further stakeholder input can help to achieve consensus on unresolved issues. The standardising body determines the scope and duration of any additional public consultation.	Procedures	Y	PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 4.4.3.4 <i>In case of strong opposition on major issues, the following processes are put in place to reach consensus:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Further discussions and negotiations within the Forum;</li> <li>- Discussions and negotiations between the parties concerned or in a dedicated working party;</li> <li>- Organise new public consultations (as appropriate) to obtain new information to resolve opposition issues and reach consensus. PEFC Romania will determine the scope and duration of any new public consultation.</li> </ul> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures comply with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.
	Process	NA	<b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b> <b>Justification:</b> The Forum voted in favour of the standard and reached a consensus. The process did not involve persisting stakeholder disagreement that would have counted as sustained opposition.
6.4.8 When a substantial issue cannot be resolved and sustained opposition persists, the standardising body shall initiate dispute resolution in accordance with its procedures for impartial and objective action.	Procedures	Y	PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 4.4.3.7 <i>In the event of a serious conflict within the Forum which completely blocks its action, the matter shall ultimately be dealt with by a Conciliation Committee.</i> 4.4.3.8.1 <i>The Conciliation Committee shall be composed of and designated as follows:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- President of PEFC Romania.</li> <li>- President of the Forum.</li> <li>- One representative of each Board of the Forum appointed on the joint proposal of the President of the Forum and the President of PEFC Romania,</li> </ul>



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PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><i>whom these deniers consider relevant to the problem to be subsequently resolved and ratified by each Chamber of residence, under the conditions of decision-making described in points 4.4.3.2 to 4.4.3.7 above.</i></p> <p><i>Each Chamber may make an alternative proposal, under the conditions of decision-making described in points 4.4.3.2-4.4.3.7 above, if it identifies itself a person it considers more relevant than the one proposed by the President of the Forum and that of PEFC Romania.</i></p> <p><i>- A representative of the PEFC Romania Council appointed at the proposal of the President of PEFC Romania.</i></p> <p><i>4.4.3.8.2 The Conciliation Committee shall meet by the President of the Forum by unilateral decision of the President of the Forum if he considers it necessary, or at the request of the Forum under the conditions for a decision referred to in points 4.4.3.2 to 4.4.3.7</i></p> <p><i>4.4.3.8.3 Any deadlock situation shall be examined and dealt with by the Conciliation Committee as soon as possible so as not to delay the work of the Forum .</i></p> <p><i>4.4.3.8.4 If the Conciliation Committee considers it necessary to resolve the conflict, it may, before taking a decision, carry out further investigations or measures it considers useful (such as consulting experts on the issue to be addressed, for example).</i></p> <p><i>4.4.3.8.5 The decisions of the Conciliation Committee must be taken by consensus. If unanimity cannot be found, then a proposal is considered to be the result of consensus if its members voted by a majority of 3/4. The votes cast by the members present shall be taken into account.</i></p> <p><i>4.4.3.8.6 The decisions of the Conciliation Committee shall be recorded in an electronic report, containing at least:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>- Procedures for referral to the Conciliation Committee</i></li> <li><i>- List of its members</i></li> </ul>



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PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Summary of objections motivating his referral</li> <li>- Summary of exchanges and proposals made to resolve oppositions</li> <li>- Conclusions and decisions</li> <li>- Conditions for making decisions.</li> </ul> <p><i>This report shall be communicated to the Forum together with, if necessary, the draft standard amended accordingly. This communication shall serve as notification of the decision.</i></p> <p><i>4.4.3.8.7 The work of the Forum in relation to the deadlock point addressed in the Conciliation Committee shall be suspended until this Decision has been notified.</i></p> <p><i>4.4.3.8.8 The decision thus notified shall be enforceable without delay.</i></p> <p><i>4.4.3.8.9 Decisions of the Conciliation Committee may not be appealed.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures comply with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
	Process	NA	<p><b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The Forum voted in favour of the standard and reached a consensus. The process did not involve persisting stakeholder disagreement that would have counted as sustained opposition.</p>
6.5.1 The standardising body shall organise public consultation on the enquiry draft and shall ensure that:			
(a) the start and the end dates of public consultation are announced in a timely manner through suitable media, NOTE <i>In a timely manner</i> means (at the latest) the day before the start of public consultation.	Procedures	Y	PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5 STAGES OF THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING A REVIEW AND REVISION OF ROMANIAN STANDARDS FOR SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT. 5.5. STAGES OF CONSULTATION. 5.5.1 PEFC Romania shall publicly announce on its website and through other external and adapted media channels (social




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PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><i>media, press announcement, etc.) at the latest one day before the start of the public consultation the start and end dates of this consultation.</i></p> <p><i>5.5.2 The forum document submitted for public consultation is published on the PEFC Romania websites. It is also sent by email with an invitation to participate in the public consultation sent to all stakeholders identified by the Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania and who are not members of the Forum (5.3.1)</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures comply with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
	Process	N	<p>DR 4.5 (Indufor: should be 5.5) <i>Public consultation. PEFC Romania organised a public consultation of the developed preliminary draft of forest management standards. The start and duration of the consultation was announced on the website of PEFC Romania and official pages of Facebook and LinkedIn. Email was sent to an enlarged list of stakeholders.</i></p> <p><i>The draft was publicly available on the PEFC Romania website. Duration of public consultation was 60 days: 05.03.2024-03.05.2024....</i></p> <p><i><a href="https://pefc.ro/revizia-standardului/">https://pefc.ro/revizia-standardului/</a></i></p>



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PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><b>Public consultation 60 days of the national PEFC standard for forest management in Romania</b></p>  <p>5 March 2024 – PEFC Romania is pleased to announce the start of the public consultation process for the national forest management standard.</p> <p>The public consultation process will run over a period of 60 days, until May 3, 2024, thus providing the opportunity for all stakeholders to express their opinions and to make valuable contributions to the development of the national standard.</p> <p>What do you need to do to send your feedback?</p> <p>Download the two documents above:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– PEFC-RO ST 8000 Draft Certification Scheme</li> <li>– PEFC-RO ST 8001 Criteria and Draft Indicators</li> </ul> <p>Add comments where you think changes should be made. Send the file in .PDF format with your comments to <a href="mailto:office@PEFC.ro">office@PEFC.ro</a></p> <p>This is all! Following the public consultation process, all comments will be evaluated by the PEFC Forum and in the end you will receive a response for each comment.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The public consultation was announced on the PEFC.RO website on the same day as the start of the consultation.</p>
<p>(b) a direct invitation to comment on the enquiry draft is sent to each stakeholder identified by stakeholder identification mapping (refer to 6.2) aiming for a balanced participation of stakeholder groups,</p>	<p>Procedures</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.3. PREPARATION STAGES. 5.3.1 Identification of stakeholders. 5.3.1.1 The PEFC Romania Board of Directors shall carry out a stakeholder mapping to identify all relevant factors (for the purposes of point 4.4.2.2), i.e. with an interest in the objectives and scope of activities for the development and review of Romanian sustainable forest management standards.</p> <p>5.5.1 PEFC Romania shall publicly announce on its website and through other external and adapted media channels (social media, press announcement,</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><i>etc.) at the latest one day before the start of the public consultation the start and end dates of this consultation.</i></p> <p><i>5.5.2 The forum document submitted for public consultation is published on the PEFC Romania websites. It is also sent by email with an invitation to participate in the public consultation sent to all stakeholders identified by the Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania and who are not members of the Forum (5.3.1)</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures comply with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
	Process	Y	<p>DR 4.5 (Indufor: should be 5.5) <i>Public consultation. ...Email was sent to an enlarged list of stakeholders.</i></p> <p><i>Reminder emails and posts were sent at 25 days remaining and 5 days remaining.</i></p> <p><i>Despite continuous effort to engage the stakeholders to comment or come with proposals, this not happened.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS process meets the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
(c) invitations are sent to disadvantaged and key stakeholders by methods that ensure they reach recipients and are easy to understand,	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. <i>5.5.1 PEFC Romania shall publicly announce on its website and through other external and adapted media channels (social media, press announcement, etc.) at the latest one day before the start of the public consultation the start and end dates of this consultation.</i></p> <p><i>5.5.2 The forum document submitted for public consultation is published on the PEFC Romania websites. It is also sent by email with an invitation to participate in the public consultation sent to all stakeholders identified by the Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania and who are not members of the Forum (5.3.1)</i></p>



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PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><i>5.4.3 Forum Activity. 5.4.3.1 The Executive Directorate shall send Forum members in good time before each plenary or working group meeting: ... Note: The Executive Directorate will also encourage the participation of key stakeholders, in particular by sending emails, phone calls and personalised invitations to them personally, in line with the participation objectives set by the CD.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures comply with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
	Process	Y	<p><i>DR 4.5 (Indufor: should be 5.5) Public consultation. PEFC Romania organised a public consultation of the developed preliminary draft of forest management standards. The start and duration of the consultation was announced on the website of PEFC Romania and official pages of Facebook and LinkedIn. Email was sent to an enlarged list of stakeholders.</i></p> <p><i>The draft was publicly available on the PEFC Romania website. Duration of public consultation was 60 days: 05.03.2024-03.05.2024.</i></p> <p><i>Reminder emails and posts were sent at 25 days remaining and 5 days remaining.</i></p> <p><i>Despite continuous effort to engage the stakeholders to comment or come with proposals, this not happened.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The methods for invitations were sufficient as all stakeholders read and speak Romanian and have access to email.</p>
(d) the enquiry draft is made publicly available,	Procedures	Y	<p><i>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.5.1 PEFC Romania shall publicly announce on its website and through other external and adapted media channels (social media, press announcement, etc.) at the latest one day before the start of the public consultation the start and end dates of this consultation.</i></p>



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PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>5.5.2 The forum document submitted for public consultation is published on the PEFC Romania websites. It is also sent by email with an invitation to participate in the public consultation sent to all stakeholders identified by the Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania and who are not members of the Forum (5.3.1)</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures comply with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
	Process	Y	<p>DR 4.5 (Indufor: should be 5.5) <i>Public consultation. ...The draft was publicly available on the PEFC Romania website.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS process meets the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
(e) public consultation is for at least 60 days,	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.5.4 The duration of the public consultation shall be at least 60 days.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures comply with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
	Process	Y	<p>DR 4.5 (Indufor: should be 5.5) <i>Public consultation. ...Duration of public consultation was 60 days: 05.03.2024-03.05.2024.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS process meets the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements</p>
(f) all feedback is considered by the working group in an objective manner, and	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.5.5 <i>The Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania collects all contributions received in the public consultation and prepares a report containing the list of contributors and the compilation and/or synthesis of contributions received. This report shall be submitted to the Forum.</i></p>





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PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><i>Note: For reasons of clarity, responses from like-minded stakeholders can be compiled in the synthesis report. However, best practice is to compile contributions separately so that each interested party can find its purpose in summary.</i></p> <p><i>5.5.6 Any comments and views received should be taken into account in an open and transparent manner by the Forum in order to reach the final document.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures comply with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
	Process	NA	<p><i>DR 4.5 (Indufor: should be 5.5) Public consultation. ...Despite continuous effort to engage the stakeholders to comment or come with proposals, this not happened.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b>  <b>Justification:</b> No feedback was received.</p>
<p>(g) a synopsis of feedback is compiled for each material issue, including the outcome of considering the issue. The synopsis is made publicly available (e.g. on a website) and is sent to each stakeholder/party that gave feedback.</p> <p>NOTE For clarity the standardising body's synopsis may aggregate responses on material issues where there was similar feedback from different stakeholders. However, best practice would be to publish each piece of original feedback and the response, to allow each stakeholder to identify its own feedback.</p>	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.5.5 ...<i>Note: For reasons of clarity, responses from like-minded stakeholders can be compiled in the synthesis report. However, best practice is to compile contributions separately so that each interested party can find its purpose in summary.</i></p> <p><i>5.5.7 Changes made by the public consultation, following a review of Forum contributions, should be documented by complementing the consultation summary report (5.5.5) with the decision taken by the Forum. This report shall be submitted to contractors and made publicly available on the PEFC Romania website and upon request.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures comply with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>



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PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
	Process	NA	DR 4.5 (Indufor: should be 5.5) <i>Public consultation. ...Despite continuous effort to engage the stakeholders to comment or come with proposals, this not happened.</i> <b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b> <b>Justification:</b> No feedback was received.
6.5.2 For new standards the standardising body shall organise a second round of public consultation lasting at least 30 days.	Procedures	Y	PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.5.8 In order to develop a new standard, PEFC Romania must organise a second public consultation of at least 30 days. <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures comply with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.
	Process	NA	<b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC Romania carried out a standard revision, not the development of a new standard.
6.6 The standardising body shall organise pilot testing of new standard(s) to assess the clarity, auditability and feasibility of the requirements. The working group shall consider the outcome of pilot testing.  NOTE Pilot testing is not required for revision of an existing standard when experience from its usage can substitute for pilot testing.	Procedures	N	PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. Information from PEFC Romania: <i>I don't know why but from draft to final version the Ch. 5.5.9 disappeared. It was like this:"5.5.9 If developing a new standard, PEFC Romania must arrange a pilot test to assess the clarity, auditability and feasibility of the requirements. The Forum must consider the results of the pilot test. Note: A pilot test is not required when revising an existing standard because feedback about its implementation can replace a pilot test."</i> <i>In the final version there is no other place were the pilot testing is mentioned.</i> <b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> There is no mention of a pilot testing for a new standard in PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023.



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
	Process	NA	<p><b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC Romania carried out a standard revision, not the development of a new standard.</p>
<b>Approval and Publication</b>			
<p>7.1 The standardising body shall approve the standard(s)/normative document(s) formally when there is evidence of consensus among the working group.</p>	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 3. <i>TERMS AND DEFINITIONS</i>. 3.21 <i>Standard. Normative document, developed by consensus and approved by a recognized body, which provides, for common and repeated use, rules and guidelines for different activities and their results. Its goal is to achieve an optimal level in a particular context.</i></p> <p>5.4.3. <i>Forum Activity</i>. 5.4.4.6 (Indufor: this number should be 5.4.3.6) <i>The Chair of the Forum, in collaboration with the Forum and the Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania, shall be responsible for ensuring that the conditions for consensus (as set out in Article 4.4.3.2) are met to allow for the start of the public consultation phase on the final version of the Forum document.</i></p> <p>5.6. <i>STAGES OF APPROVAL</i>. 5.6.1 <i>Approval by Forum. After the results of the public consultation have been fully examined and taken into account in full or in part by the Forum, the Forum endorses the draft Romanian standard for sustainable forest management PEFC, in accordance with the consensus and voting rules defined in point 4.4.3. The document thus approved is called the "Final Document".</i></p> <p>5.6.2 <i>Development report. In order to allow approval of the final document by the statutory bodies of PEFC Romania, the Executive Directorate shall prepare a development report which shall describe the review process implemented and prove its compliance with this procedure. This development report shall be published on the PEFC Romania website and shall contain at least the following elements:</i></p> <p>- <i>Timeline of the review process;</i></p>



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PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Identified stakeholders (5.3.1 )</i>;</li> <li>- <i>Information on the announcement of the start of the review process and the invitation of interested parties (list of invited parties)</i>;</li> <li>- <i>A description of all stages of the review process</i>;</li> <li>- <i>minutes of Forum meetings (plenary meetings and working groups) and the case of the Conciliation Committee (and related documents)</i>;</li> <li>- <i>information on the public consultation and a summary of the comments received and the outcome of their examination</i> ;</li> <li>- <i>Evidence of consensus, including a summary of any oppositions present and their resolution</i>;</li> <li>- <i>Major changes from the current standard</i></li> </ul> <p><i>5.6.3 Approval by the Board of Directors. The development report and the final document are submitted to the Board of Directors, which gives a favorable or unfavorable opinion. In the event of an unfavourable opinion, the Committee should return the final document to the 'Preparation stages' (point 5.3) or 'Construction stages' (point 5.4) phase.</i></p> <p><i>5.6.4 Formal adoption by the General Assembly. The final document, after approval by the Board of Directors, is subject to approval by the General Assembly of PEFC Romania.</i></p> <p><i>The General Assembly deliberates by a majority of 2/3 of the members present or represented.</i></p> <p><i>If the final document is not formally approved, the General Assembly must send the final document to the "Preparation phase" (point 5.3) or "Construction phase" (point 5.4).</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures comply with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>



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PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
	Process	Y	<p>DR 5 (Indufor: should be 6) <i>Approval of the standards. PEFC Forum voted by email postal ballot the Final Documents to be approved. The vote was organised between 20-24 May 2024.</i></p> <p>Complementary information from PEFC Romania: <i>The Vote in the PEFC Forum was by email postal ballot, we received 10 from 18 possible votes, all "for", no vote "against". The list is attached "Voting Results on the email postal ballot of the final draft".</i></p> <p>Voting results on the email postal ballot of the final draft.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The process met the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
<p>7.2.1 The formally approved standard(s)/normative document(s) shall be published and made publicly available at no cost within 14 days of approval, or as otherwise defined by the standardising body.</p>	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.7 PUBLICATION STEPS. 5.7.1 <i>Unless otherwise specified by PEFC Romania, within two weeks of approval of the final document by the General Assembly, the Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania shall perform the following due diligence:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Correction of any minor errors of form appearing in the officially approved document;</i></li> <li>- <i>Sending to PEFC Romania members of the officially approved (and, if necessary, corrected) final document.</i></li> <li>- <i>Publication of the officially approved final document on the PEFC Romania website, with information on the international assessment to which it will be subjected;</i></li> <li>- <i>Send the officially approved final document to the PEFC Council for international evaluation and recognition.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures comply with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>



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PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
	Process	Y	<p>DR. 5 (Indufor: should be 6) <i>Approval of the standards. PEFC Forum voted by email postal ballot the Final Documents to be approved. The vote was organised between 20-24 May 2024.</i></p> <p><i>On 27 May 2024, the PEFC Romania General Assembly formally adopted the final version of the forest management standards through an online vote:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>– PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 PEFC Romania Sustainable Forest Management Certification Scheme,</i></li> <li><i>– Annex 01 PEFC-RO ST 8001:2024 Criteria and indicators.</i></li> <li><i>– Annex 08 PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 Group Certification</i></li> </ul> <p><i>The adopted documents are available at <a href="http://www.pefc.ro">www.pefc.ro</a>.</i></p> <p><i>Information from PEFC Romania: The approved standards were published on PEFC.ro standard in the same day of the approval 27.05.2024, and on 03.06.2024 on PEFC.org website.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The process met the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
7.2.2 Standard(s) shall include:			
(a) identification and contact information for the standardising body,	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.7.2 <i>The published standard must include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>- PEFC Romania identification and contact details;</i></li> <li><i>- English as the official language of the standard, as well as a note stating that, in case of inconsistency between the Romanian version and the English version approved by the PEFC Board, the English version shall prevail;</i></li> <li><i>- Date of approval by PEFC Romania and expected date of the next periodic review.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures comply with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>



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PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
	Process	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024. Cover page: <i>PEFC Romania</i> <i>Mail: office@pefc.ro</i> <i>Web: www.pefc.ro</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> The standard includes the identification and contact information for the standardising body.
(b) official language of the standard,	Procedures	Y	PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.7.2 <i>The published standard must include: ...</i> <i>- English as the official language of the standard, as well as a note stating that, in case of inconsistency between the Romanian version and the English version approved by the PEFC Board, the English version shall prevail;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures comply with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.
	Process	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024. Page 2: <div style="border: 1px solid green; padding: 10px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>Copyright notice</p> <p>© PEFC Romania 2024</p> <p>This PEFC Romania document is copyrighted by PEFC Romania. This document is available free of charge on the PEFC Romania website or upon request.</p> <p>No copyrighted part of this document may be modified, reproduced or copied in any form or by any means for commercial purposes without the permission of PEFC Romania.</p> <p>The official version of this document is Romanian and English. Translation of this document may be provided by the PEFC Council or PEFC Romania.</p> <p><b>In case of doubt, the English version is decisive.</b></p> </div>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The standard mentions the official language of the standard: The official version of this document is Romanian and English. Translation of this document may be provided by the PEFC Council or PEFC Romania. In case of doubt, the English version is decisive.</p>
<p>(c) a note that when there is inconsistency between versions, the English version of the standard as endorsed by the PEFC Council is the reference.</p>	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.7.2 <i>The published standard must include: ... - English as the official language of the standard, as well as a note stating that, in case of inconsistency between the Romanian version and the English version approved by the PEFC Board, the English version shall prevail;</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures comply with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
	Process	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024. Page 2: : <i>The official version of this document is Romanian and English. Translation of this document may be provided by the PEFC Council or PEFC Romania. In case of doubt, the English version is decisive.</i></p> <div style="border: 1px solid green; padding: 5px;"> <p>Copyright notice            © PEFC Romania 2024</p> <p>This PEFC Romania document is copyrighted by PEFC Romania. This document is available free of charge on the PEFC Romania website or upon request.</p> <p>No copyrighted part of this document may be modified, reproduced or copied in any form or by any means for commercial purposes without the permission of PEFC Romania.</p> <p>The official version of this document is Romanian and English. Translation of this document may be provided by the PEFC Council or PEFC Romania.</p> <p><b>In case of doubt, the English version is decisive.</b></p> </div>





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PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The standard mentions the official languages of the standard and that the English version of the standard is decisive.</p>
<p>(d) The approval date and the date of next periodic review</p> <p>NOTE The date of next periodic review may be within a shorter period than five years based on (for example) stakeholder expectations or other foreseen developments.</p>	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.7.2 <i>The published standard must include: ... - Date of approval by PEFC Romania and expected date of the next periodic review.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures comply with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
	Process	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024. Page 2 :</p> <p>Document Name: PEFC Romania Sustainable Forest Management Certification Scheme  Document Title(s): PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024  Approved by: PEFC Romania General Assembly      Date: 27.05.2024  Issuing date: 27.05.2024  Application date: Date of endorsement by the PEFC Council  Transition Period: One year from the endorsement  Review date: 27.05.2029</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The standard mentions the approval date and the date of next periodic review.</p>
7.2.3 Printed copies shall be made available upon request at a price that covers no more than administrative costs (if any)	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.7.4 <i>Printed copies of standards may be provided upon request to members of PEFC Romania.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
	Process	Y	<p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures comply with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024. Page 2:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid green; padding: 5px;"> <p>Copyright notice</p> <p>© PEFC Romania 2024</p> <p>This PEFC Romania document is copyrighted by PEFC Romania. This document is available free of charge on the PEFC Romania website or upon request.</p> <p>No copyrighted part of this document may be modified, reproduced or copied in any form or by any means for commercial purposes without the permission of PEFC Romania.</p> <p>The official version of this document is Romanian and English. Translation of this document may be provided by the PEFC Council or PEFC Romania.</p> <p><b>In case of doubt, the English version is decisive.</b></p> </div> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> Documents are publicly available on the PEFC Romania website and <i>de facto</i> free of charge, and upon request.</p>
7.2.4 The standardising body shall make the development report (refer to PEFC GD 1007) publicly available	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.6.2 <i>Development report. In order to allow approval of the final document by the statutory bodies of PEFC Romania, the Executive Directorate shall prepare a development report which shall describe the review process implemented and prove its compliance with this procedure. This development report shall be published on the PEFC Romania website and shall contain at least the following elements:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Timeline of the review process;</i></li> <li>- <i>Identified stakeholders (5.3.1 );</i></li> <li>- <i>Information on the announcement of the start of the review process and the invitation of interested parties (list of invited parties);</i></li> </ul>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A description of all stages of the review process;</li> <li>- minutes of Forum meetings (plenary meetings and working groups) and the case of the Conciliation Committee (and related documents);</li> <li>- information on the public consultation and a summary of the comments received and the outcome of their examination;</li> <li>- Evidence of consensus, including a summary of any oppositions present and their resolution;</li> <li>- Major changes from the current standard</li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures comply with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
	Process	Y	<p>Information from PEFC Romania: <i>The Development report ... was made public on the PEFC.org website together with all the other documents here:</i> <a href="https://pefc.org/discover-pefc/our-pefc-members/national-members/pefc-romania">https://pefc.org/discover-pefc/our-pefc-members/national-members/pefc-romania</a></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The development report was made publicly available.</p>
<b>Periodic review of standards</b>			
<p>8.1 The standard(s)/normative document(s) shall be reviewed at intervals that do not exceed a five-year period. The review shall be based on consideration of feedback received during the standard's implementation and a gap analysis. If necessary, a stakeholder consultation shall be organised to obtain further feedback and input.</p>	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 6. REVISION/REVIEW. 6.1 <i>The Romanian standard for sustainable forest management should be revised at intervals not exceeding a period of five years.</i></p> <p>6.2 <i>PEFC Romania ensures the establishment and maintenance of a permanent mechanism to collect and record feedback on the implementation of standards through its website. The elements thus collected are systematically recorded and analysed, regardless of the channel through which they were formulated.</i></p>



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PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><i>Note 1: Feedback can take different forms: comments, requests for clarification and/or interpretation, complaints, thematic working groups, etc.</i></p> <p><i>6.3 PEFC Romania shall conduct an analysis of the compliance of the standards in force with the corresponding PEFC Council reference standard, Romanian laws and norms and all other relevant standards, in order to identify any deviations.</i></p> <p><i>PEFC Romania must also take into account the latest advances in science and research as well as new challenges related to forest.</i></p> <p><i>6.4 If the review of mechanism (6.2) and compliance (6.3) does not identify the need for revision, PEFC Romania shall consult members and stakeholders to determine whether they consider that standards need to be revised. On this occasion, the committee shall provide them with the analysis (6.3).</i></p> <p><i>PEFC Romania announces the stakeholder review and consultation in a timely manner and updates the identification of stakeholders (5.3.1). The stakeholder consultation shall include a 30-day public consultation in line with requirements 5.5.1 and/or stakeholder meetings.</i></p> <p><i>6.5 Based on the analysis of the mechanism (6.2), compliance (6.3) and stakeholder consultation (6.4), the Board of Directors of PEFC Romania decides to attest to the standards or revise them through a normal or editorial review (7). The decision and its reasoning shall be published on the PEFC Romania website.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures comply with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
	Process	Y	<p><a href="https://pefc.org/discover-pefc/our-pefc-members/national-members/pefc-romania">https://pefc.org/discover-pefc/our-pefc-members/national-members/pefc-romania</a></p>




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PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><b>Endorsement milestones</b></p> <p>To maintain its PEFC endorsement, the system must meet specific endorsement milestones. The first milestone is the start of the periodic review within five years of the national approval of the sustainable forest management standard.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; National approval date: 29 May 2017</li> <li>&gt; Review date: <b>29 May 2022</b></li> </ul> <p>DR 1 Introduction. ... <i>After each five years the national standards need to go through a review process with the aim of continuous improvement. In 23.03.2022 PEFC Romania launched the review process that concluded the system need a revision due to legislative changes at the national level and also Benchmark upgrades at PEFC International level.</i></p> <p>Information from PEFC Romania: <i>In romanian it's a bit tricky to translate review and revision as it is used the same word - "revizie". The timeline started at the bottom of the page with the announcement of the review on 23.03.2022. The review start was also promoted on Facebook and LinkedIn PEFC Romania official pages.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The previous standards were approved on May 29, 2017 and the review decision was made on March 23, 2022, within the five-year period and based on the feedback received during the standard's implementation and a gap analysis.</p>
8.2.1 The standardising body shall establish and maintain a permanent mechanism for collecting and recording feedback on a standard. This mechanism shall be accessible on the website of the standardising body and/or	Procedures	Y	PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 6.2 <i>PEFC Romania ensures the establishment and maintenance of a permanent mechanism to collect and record feedback on the implementation of standards through its website. The elements thus collected are systematically recorded and analysed, regardless of the channel through which they were formulated.</i>



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PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<p>PEFC National Governing Body with clear directions for providing feedback.</p> <p>NOTE Feedback can be sent in various formats: comments, requests for clarification and/or interpretation, complaints, etc.</p>			<p><i>Note 1: Feedback can take different forms: comments, requests for clarification and/or interpretation, complaints, thematic working groups, etc.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures comply with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
<p>8.2.2 All feedback received through all channels, including meetings, training courses, etc. shall be recorded and considered.</p>	<p>Process</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> <a href="https://pefc.ro/contact/">https://pefc.ro/contact/</a></p> <p><b>Contact</b></p> <div style="text-align: right;"> <p>E-mail: <a href="mailto:office@pefc.ro">office@pefc.ro</a></p> <p>Lucian Filigean – Președinte Executiv</p> <p>E-mail: <a href="mailto:lucian.filigean@pefc.ro">lucian.filigean@pefc.ro</a></p> <p>tel. 0040 785 433 288</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p><b>PEFC</b></p> <p>PEFC/46-01-01</p> </div>
	<p>Procedures</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 6.2 PEFC Romania ensures the establishment and maintenance of a permanent mechanism to collect and record feedback on the implementation of standards through its website. The elements thus collected are systematically recorded and analysed, regardless of the channel through which they were formulated.</p> <p><i>Note 1: Feedback can take different forms: comments, requests for clarification and/or interpretation, complaints, thematic working groups, etc.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures comply with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.
	Process	N/A	<b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b> <b>Justification:</b> No feedback was received beyond the Forum work.
8.3.1 At the start of a review, the standardising body shall evaluate the standard against appropriate PEFC International standards, national laws and regulations, and other relevant standards to identify potential gaps in the standard.	Procedures	Y	PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 6.3 <i>PEFC Romania shall conduct an analysis of the compliance of the standards in force with the corresponding PEFC Council reference standard, Romanian laws and norms and all other relevant standards, in order to identify any deviations.</i> <i>PEFC Romania must also take into account the latest advances in science and research as well as new challenges related to forest.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures comply with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.
	Process	Y	DR 1 Introduction. ... <i>In 23.03.2022 PEFC Romania launched the review process that concluded the system need a revision due to legislative changes at the national level and also Benchmark upgrades at PEFC International level.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS process met the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.
8.3.2 The standardising body shall consider the latest scientific knowledge, research and relevant emerging issues.	Procedures	Y	PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 6.3 <i>PEFC Romania shall conduct an analysis of the compliance of the standards in force with the corresponding PEFC Council reference standard, Romanian laws and norms and all other relevant standards, in order to identify any deviations.</i> <i>PEFC Romania must also take into account the latest advances in science and research as well as new challenges related to forest.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>



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PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures comply with the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
	Process	Y	<p>Information from PEFC Romania: <i>I have to say there is no specific documentation that can show this. As part of the Forum, we had 4 university professors and researchers from the two main forestry Faculties in Romania- "Transilvania" from Brasov and "Stefan cel Mare" from Suceava</i></p> <p><i>-Nicolescu Valeriu Norocel - Silviculture professor, Author of over 10 books and 150 papers, published in both Romania and abroad. IUFRO officeholder, a member of the Management Committee and WG Leader (Ecology and Silviculture Working Group), COST Action FP 1301 Innovative management and multifunctional utilization of traditional coppice forests – an answer to future ecological, economic and social challenges in the European forestry sector (EuroCoppice) (2013-2017). Member of Management Committee and Deputy WG Leader (Silviculture Working Group), COST Action FP1403 Non-native Tree Species for European Forests (NNEXT) (2014-2018), Correspondent Member of Romanian Academy of Agricultural and Forestry Sciences (ASAS).</i></p> <p><i>- Halalisan Florin - Vice-dean in Brasov Faculty with a PhD in Certification of forest management and chain of custody in Romania,</i></p> <p><i>- Dragoi Marian over 40 years' experience in forest planning, professor and researcher in forest planning, wood market and economy.</i></p> <p><i>- Nichiforel Liviu Vice-dean in Suceava Faculty professor of forest economy, with a great study publised in 2024 - Two decades of stakeholder voices: Exploring engagement in Romania's FSC forest management certification and many others.</i></p> <p><i>Having them active participating in the development of the standard revision , we considered it was enough to meet this requirement, as they brought the latest scientific knowledge to the table. Also, as you I am sure noted, some</i></p>





PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><i>definitions and requirements are adapted to the EUDR regulation, so the relevant emerging issues were clearly taken in consideration.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> Although there is no mention of considerations of the latest scientific knowledge, research and relevant emerging issue in the RFCS documentation, the additional information received shows that these were considered, and the process meets the PEFC ST 1001:2017 requirements.</p>
<p>8.4.1 Where the feedback and the gap analysis do not identify a need to revise the standard, the standardising body shall organise stakeholder consultation to determine whether stakeholders see a need for revising the standard. The standardising body shall include the gap analysis in the stakeholder consultation.</p>	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 6.3 <i>PEFC Romania shall conduct an analysis of the compliance of the standards in force with the corresponding PEFC Council reference standard, Romanian laws and norms and all other relevant standards, in order to identify any deviations.</i></p> <p>PEFC Romania must also take into account the latest advances in science and research as well as new challenges related to forest. 6.4 <i>If the review of mechanism (6.2) and compliance (6.3) does not identify the need for revision, PEFC Romania shall consult members and stakeholders to determine whether they consider that standards need to be revised. On this occasion, the committee shall provide them with the analysis (6.3).</i></p> <p><i>PEFC Romania announces the stakeholder review and consultation in a timely manner and updates the identification of stakeholders (5.3.1). The stakeholder consultation shall include a 30-day public consultation in line with requirements 5.5.1 and/or stakeholder meetings.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
	Process	NA	<p><b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The feedback and the gap analysis identified a need to revise the standard.</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<p>8.4.2 At the start of a review, the standardising body shall update the stakeholder identification mapping (refer to clause 6.2).</p>	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.3. PREPARATION STAGES. 5.3.1 Identification of stakeholders. 5.3.1.1 The PEFC Romania Board of Directors shall carry out a stakeholder mapping to identify all relevant factors (for the purposes of point 4.4.2.2), i.e. with an interest in the objectives and scope of activities for the development and review of Romanian sustainable forest management standards</p> <p>6.4 If the review of mechanism (6.2) and compliance (6.3) does not identify the need for revision, PEFC Romania shall consult members and stakeholders to determine whether they consider that standards need to be revised. On this occasion, the committee shall provide them with the analysis (6.3).</p> <p>PEFC Romania announces the stakeholder review and consultation in a timely manner and updates the identification of stakeholders (5.3.1). The stakeholder consultation shall include a 30-day public consultation in line with requirements 5.5.1 and/or stakeholder meetings.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
	Process	Y	<p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The PEFC requirement 8.4.2 only applies to situations where the feedback and gap analysis do not identify the need to revise the standard (PEFC requirement, 8.4.1). Both the gap analysis and the feedback from stakeholders resulted in PEFC Romania's decision to revise the standard and the stakeholders mapping was carried out as a part of the preparatory phase of the revision.</p>
<p>8.4.3 The Standardizing body shall organize:</p>			



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<p>(a) a public consultation period of at least 30 days (following the requirements of clause 6.5.1) and/or,</p>	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 6.4 <i>If the review of mechanism (6.2) and compliance (6.3) does not identify the need for revision, PEFC Romania shall consult members and stakeholders to determine whether they consider that standards need to be revised. On this occasion, the committee shall provide them with the analysis (6.3).</i></p> <p><i>PEFC Romania announces the stakeholder review and consultation in a timely manner and updates the identification of stakeholders (5.3.1). The stakeholder consultation shall include a 30-day public consultation in line with requirements 5.5.1 and/or stakeholder meetings.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
	Process	NA	<p><b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC Romania took the decision to revise the standards. Therefore, a public consultation for this purpose was not required.</p>
<p>(b) stakeholder meetings.</p>	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 6.4 <i>If the review of mechanism (6.2) and compliance (6.3) does not identify the need for revision, PEFC Romania shall consult members and stakeholders to determine whether they consider that standards need to be revised. On this occasion, the committee shall provide them with the analysis (6.3).</i></p> <p><i>PEFC Romania announces the stakeholder review and consultation in a timely manner and updates the identification of stakeholders (5.3.1). The stakeholder consultation shall include a 30-day public consultation in line with requirements 5.5.1 and/or stakeholder meetings.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
	Process	NA	<p><b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC Romania took the decision to revise the standards. Therefore, stakeholder meetings for this purpose were not required.</p>
<p>8.4.4 The standardising body shall announce the review in a timely manner (refer to 6.3).</p>	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 6.4 <i>If the review of mechanism (6.2) and compliance (6.3) does not identify the need for revision, PEFC Romania shall consult members and stakeholders to determine whether they consider that standards need to be revised. On this occasion, the committee shall provide them with the analysis (6.3).</i></p> <p><i>PEFC Romania announces the stakeholder review and consultation in a timely manner and updates the identification of stakeholders (5.3.1). The stakeholder consultation shall include a 30-day public consultation in line with requirements 5.5.1 and/or stakeholder meetings.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
	Process	Y	<p>DR 1 Introduction. ... <i>After each five years the national standards need to go through a review process with the aim of continuous improvement. In 23.03.2022 PEFC Romania launched the review process that concluded the system need a revision due to legislative changes at the national level and also Benchmark upgrades at PEFC International level.</i></p> <p>Information from PEFC Romania: <i>In romanian it's a bit tricky to translate review and revision as it is used the same word - "revizie". The timeline started at the bottom of the page with the announcement of the review on 23.03.2022. The review start was also promoted on Facebook and LinkedIn PEFC Romania oficial pages.</i></p> <p>Benchmark 6.3: NOTE 1 <i>In a timely manner</i> means (at the latest) four weeks before the first standard-setting activity is scheduled to occur.</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			Presentation at the revision launching meeting. <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> The review was announced on March 23, 2022, and the launch meeting was held on July 31, 2023. The process meets the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.
8.5.1 Based on the feedback received during the period of a standard's implementation, the outcome of the gap analysis and the consultations, the standardising body shall decide whether to reaffirm the standard or whether a revision of the standard is necessary.	Procedures	Y	PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 6.5 <i>Based on the analysis of the mechanism (6.2), compliance (6.3) and stakeholder consultation (6.4), the Board of Directors of PEFC Romania decides to attest to the standards or revise them through a normal or editorial review (7). The decision and its reasoning shall be published on the PEFC Romania website.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.
	Process	Y	DR 1. Introduction. ...In 23.03.2022 PEFC Romania launched the review process that concluded the system need a revision due to legislative changes at the national level and also Benchmark upgrades at PEFC International level. <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> The standardisation body decided to revise the standard based on the feedback received during the period of a standard's implementation, the outcome of the gap analysis and the consultations.
8.5.2 The decision shall be made at the highest decision-making level of the standardising body	Procedures	Y	PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 6.5 <i>Based on the analysis of the mechanism (6.2), compliance (6.3) and stakeholder consultation (6.4), the Board of Directors of PEFC Romania decides to attest to the standards or revise them through a normal or editorial review (7).</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>



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PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><b>Justification:</b> The Board of Directors is the highest decision-making level of PEFC Romania. The RFCS procedures meet the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
	Process	Y	<p>Minutes of the GA meeting, October 14, 2022. ...</p> <p><i>-the vote on the approval of the <u>normal</u> revision of the standards that form the PEFC certification scheme in Romania, there were no votes against or abstentions, the motion was approved with 4 votes "in favor"</i></p> <p>DR 1. Introduction. ...<i>In 23.03.2022 PEFC Romania launched the review process that concluded the system need a revision due to legislative changes at the national level and also Benchmark upgrades at PEFC International level.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> As the General Assembly is the highest decision-making body for PEFC Romania standards, the process was in line with PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
8.5.3 Where the decision is to reaffirm a standard, the standardising body shall provide a justification for the decision and make the justification publicly available.	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 6.5 <i>Based on the analysis of the mechanism (6.2), compliance (6.3) and stakeholder consultation (6.4), the Board of Directors of PEFC Romania decides to attest to the standards or revise them through a normal or editorial review (7). The decision and its reasoning shall be published on the PEFC Romania website.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
	Process	NA	<p><b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC Romania took the decision to revise the standards.</p>
	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 6.5 <i>Based on the analysis of the mechanism (6.2), compliance (6.3) and stakeholder consultation (6.4), the Board of Directors of</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
8.5.4 Where the decision is to revise the standard, the standardising body shall specify the type of revision (normal or editorial revision).			<p><i>PEFC Romania decides to attest to the standards or revise them through a normal or editorial review (7).</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
	Process	Y	<p>Minutes of the GA meeting, October 14, 2022. ...</p> <p><i>-the vote on the approval of the <u>normal</u> revision of the standards that form the PEFC certification scheme in Romania, there were no votes against or abstentions, the motion was approved with 4 votes "in favor"</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The decision on "normal revision »was made in the GA meeting of October 14, 2022.</p>
<b>Revision of standards</b>			
9.1 Procedures for revision of standard(s)/normative document(s) shall conform to those stated in section 6. A normal revision can occur at the periodic review, or between periodic reviews, but does not include editorial revisions and time-critical revisions.	Procedures	N	<p><b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> Section 6 includes two minor nonconformities at the benchmark level. They are the following:</p> <p>Benchmark requirement 6.1.1.(b): the justification of the need for the new standard is not mentioned, (c): there is no mention of the intended outcomes, and (d): there is no mention of a risk assessment of potential negative impacts arising from the implementation of the standard.</p> <p>Benchmark requirement 6.6: There is no mention of a pilot testing for a new standard in PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023.</p>
	Process	N	<p><b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> Section 6 includes three minor nonconformities. They are the following:</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>Benchmark requirement 6.2.1: There is no documentation on the definition of likely key issues, and which means of communication would be best to reach the key stakeholders in each stakeholder group.</p> <p>Benchmark requirement 6.2.3: There is no documentation on the standardising body addressing any constraints to the participation of disadvantaged and key stakeholders in standard-setting activities.</p> <p>Benchmark requirement 6.5.1 (a): The public consultation was announced on the PEFC.RO website on the same day as the start of the consultation.</p>
9.2 Editorial revisions can be made without triggering the normal revision process. The standardising body shall approve the editorial changes formally and publish an amendment or a new edition of the standard.	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 7.2 Editorial review. 7.2.1 Minor corrections, which do not change the meaning of the requirements contained in sustainable forest management standards, are made with the responsibility of the Board of Directors of PEFC Romania and are approved by the General Assembly of PEFC Romania.</p> <p>7.2.2 Within four weeks of this approval, the Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania shall make the corrected standards public on its website and submit them to certification bodies accredited in Romania under PEFC sustainable forest management.</p> <p>Within the editorial journal, the following are made public:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Standards revised in accordance with this procedure;</li> <li>- Information on changes made.</li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
	Process	NA	<p><b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b>  <b>Justification:</b> No editorial changes have been made.</p>





PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<p>9.3.1 A time-critical revision is a revision between two periodic reviews using a fast-track process.</p>	<p>Procedures</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 7.3 Urgent review. 7.3.1 An urgent review is a review that takes place between two periodic reviews (6) and involves an accelerated procedure.</p> <p>7.3.2 The urgent review can be carried out only in the following two situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Changes in national laws and regulations that have an impact on compliance with PEFC International requirements;</li> <li>- Request the PEFC Council to align Romanian requirements with certain specific or new PEFC requirements within a time limit that excludes recourse to the normal procedure.</li> </ul> <p>7.3.3 The urgent review will take place in the following steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PEFC Romania develops a revised standard, under the authority of R&amp;D;</li> </ul> <p>Note: To do this, PEFC Romania may consult with stakeholders, but this is not an obligation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The revised standard is approved by the Board of Directors and then adopted by the Extraordinary General Assembly of PEFC Romania.</li> </ul> <p>7.3.4 The following shall be published in the emergency review report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This procedure;</li> <li>- Information explaining and justifying the urgent review and the process followed;</li> <li>- The final version of the revised standards according to the accelerated procedure adopted by the Extraordinary General Assembly;</li> <li>- any complaints received in the context of the implementation of this review and its results, and the response given to them;</li> </ul> <p>Note: These documents will be issued as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Upon request from the Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania;</li> <li>- And/or posted on the PEFC Romania website: <a href="http://www.pefc.ro">www.pefc.ro</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
	Process	NA	<b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b> <b>Justification:</b> No time-critical revisions have been made.
9.3.2. A time-critical revision can be conducted only in the following situations:			
(a) Change in national laws and regulations affecting compliance with PEFC International requirements	Procedures	Y	PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 7.3.2 <i>The urgent review can be carried out only in the following two situations:</i> - <i>Changes in national laws and regulations that have an impact on compliance with PEFC International requirements; ...</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.
	Process	NA	<b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b> <b>Justification:</b> The revision was not implemented as a time-critical revision.
(b) Instruction by PEFC International to comply with specific or new PEFC requirements within a timescale that is too short for a normal revision.	Procedures	Y	PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 7.3.2 <i>The urgent review can be carried out only in the following two situations: ...</i> - <i>Request the PEFC Council to align Romanian requirements with certain specific or new PEFC requirements within a time limit that excludes recourse to the normal procedure.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.
	Process	NA	<b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b> <b>Justification:</b> The revision was not implemented as a time-critical revision.
9.3.3 The time-critical revision shall follow these steps:			



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
(a) The standardising body shall draft the revised standard,	Procedures	Y	PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 7.3.3 <i>The urgent review will take place in the following steps:</i> - PEFC Romania develops a revised standard, under the authority of R&D; <i>Note: To do this, PEFC Romania may consult with stakeholders, but this is not an obligation.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.
	Process	NA	<b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b> <b>Justification:</b> The revision was not implemented as a time-critical revision.
(b) The standardising body may consult stakeholders, but it is not mandatory,	Procedures	Y	PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 7.3.3 <i>The urgent review will take place in the following steps:</i> - PEFC Romania develops a revised standard, under the authority of R&D; <i>Note: To do this, PEFC Romania may consult with stakeholders, but this is not an obligation.</i> <b>Conclusion:</b> <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.
	Process	NA	<b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b> <b>Justification:</b> The revision was not implemented as a time-critical revision.
(c) The revised standard shall be approved formally at the highest appropriate decision-making level of the standardising body,	Procedures	Y	PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 7.3.3 <i>The urgent review will take place in the following steps: ...</i> - <i>The revised standard is approved by the Board of Directors and then adopted by the Extraordinary General Assembly of PEFC Romania.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>



PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<b>Justification:</b> As the Board of Directors is the highest decision-making level of PEFC Romania, the RFCS procedures meet the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.
	Process	NA	<b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b> <b>Justification:</b> The revision was not implemented as a time-critical revision.
(d) The standardising body shall explain the justification for the urgent change(s) and make the justification publicly available.	Procedures	Y	PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 7.3.4 <i>The following shall be published in the emergency review report:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This procedure;</li> <li>- Information explaining and justifying the urgent review and the process followed;</li> <li>- The final version of the revised standards according to the accelerated procedure adopted by the Extraordinary General Assembly;</li> <li>- any complaints received in the context of the implementation of this review and its results, and the response given to them;</li> </ul> <i>Note: These documents will be issued as follows:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Upon request from the Executive Directorate of PEFC Romania;</li> <li>- And/or posted on the PEFC Romania website: <a href="http://www.pefc.ro">www.pefc.ro</a></li> </ul> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.
	Process	NA	<b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b> <b>Justification:</b> The revision was not implemented as a time-critical revision.
9.4.1 A revision shall define the application date and transition period of the revised standard(s)/normative document(s).	Procedures	Y	PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.7.5 <i>Romanian standards on sustainable forest management (new standard or resulting from revision) enter into force one year after their publication by PEFC Romania.</i>



**Indufor**

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><i>Note: The one-year period between the date of publication and the date of entry into force allows time for evaluation and approval of the standard by the PEFC Board, introduction of possible changes, dissemination of information and instructions. Recognition by the PEFC Board is generally carried out within one year of formal approval of the standard by the General Assembly of PEFC Romania.</i></p> <p><i>7.4 Transitional period. PEFC participants shall have a transitional period of one year to implement the new standards from the date of their entry into force.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
	Process	N	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024. Page 2 :</p> <p>Document Name: PEFC Romania Sustainable Forest Management Certification Scheme</p> <p>Document Title(s): PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024</p> <p>Approved by: PEFC Romania General Assembly      Date: 27.05.2024</p> <p>Issuing date: 27.05.2024</p> <p>Application date: Date of endorsement by the PEFC Council</p> <p>Transition Period: One year from the endorsement</p> <p>Review date: 27.05.2029</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The application and transition dates are not defined. Since the application date and the transition period are mandatory elements of the standard, the process is not in line with PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>



**Indufor**

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<p>9.4.2 An application date shall not be more than one year after the publication of the standard. This allows time for endorsement of the revised standard(s)/normative document(s), introduction of change(s), information dissemination and training.</p>	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024. PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 5.7.5 <i>Romanian standards on sustainable forest management (new standard or resulting from revision) enter into force one year after their publication by PEFC Romania.</i></p> <p><i>Note: The one-year period between the date of publication and the date of entry into force allows time for evaluation and approval of the standard by the PEFC Board, introduction of possible changes, dissemination of information and instructions. Recognition by the PEFC Board is generally carried out within one year of formal approval of the standard by the General Assembly of PEFC Romania.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
	Process	N	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024. Page 2 :</p> <p>Document Name: PEFC Romania Sustainable Forest Management Certification Scheme  Document Title(s): PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024  Approved by: PEFC Romania General Assembly      Date: 27.05.2024  Issuing date: 27.05.2024  Application date: Date of endorsement by the PEFC Council  Transition Period: One year from the endorsement  Review date: 27.05.2029</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The application date is not defined.</p>



**Indufor**

PEFC benchmark requirement	Assessment basis	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<p>9.4.3 The transition period shall not exceed one year. The standardising body may determine a longer period when justified by exceptional circumstances.</p>	Procedures	Y	<p>PEFC/EN DST 8008:2023. 7.4 <i>Transitional period. PEFC participants shall have a transitional period of one year to implement the new standards from the date of their entry into force.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS procedures meet the requirements of PEFC ST 1001:2017.</p>
	Process	N	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024. Page 2 :</p> <p>Document Name: PEFC Romania Sustainable Forest Management Certification Scheme  Document Title(s): PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024  Approved by: PEFC Romania General Assembly      Date: 27.05.2024  Issuing date: 27.05.2024  Application date: Date of endorsement by the PEFC Council  Transition Period: One year from the endorsement  Review date: 27.05.2029</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The transition period is not defined.</p>

## PEFC Checklist 2 - Sustainable Forest Management (PEFC ST 1003:2018)

### 1 Scope

This checklist covers requirements for sustainable forest management as defined in PEFC ST 1003:2018, *Sustainable Forest Management – Requirements*. Any inconsistencies between this text and the original referred to document will be overruled by the content and wording of the technical document.

#### PEFC Romania Reference Documents:

Document type	Document name
Normative documents	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 PEFC Romania Sustainable Forest Management Certification Scheme, May 27, 2024 (hereafter referred to as PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024) PEFC-RO ST 8001:2024 Criteria and indicators for forest management evaluation in Romania, May 27, 2024 (hereafter referred to as PEFC-RO ST 8001:2024)

### 2 Checklist

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<b>Context of the national standard and the organisations applying a PEFC endorsed standard</b>		
4.1 General The requirements for sustainable forest management defined by regional, national or sub-national forest management standards shall:		
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 intent 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 (e.g. group/regional) is	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 1. Scope: <i>This document defines the Romanian national sustainability requirements for sustainable forest management, covering all ecosystem services (wood and non-wood products supply services, ecosystem regulation and cultural services). The requirements presented in this document apply to forest owners and administrators, as well as contractors and other operators operating in forests whose management is PEFC certified. They cover all management system-specific</i>





PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<p>monitoring of forest health. Through monitoring of forest health at regional level, and communicating of results at the FMU level, the objective of the requirement is met without the necessity to carry out the individual monitoring of each forest management unit.</p>		<p><i>processes aimed at sustainable forest management, from forest management to harvesting of wood and non-wood forest products.</i></p> <p><i>Forest owners and administrators must ensure that they have implemented certification scheme requirements demonstrating compliance with forest management standards. The minimum period for keeping records demonstrating, on the basis of evidence, compliance with these standard requirements is 5 (five) years.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC Romania note the following in their checklist: <i>Only forests that have a management plan (Amenajament) can be PEFC certified. In Romania, the management plan is applied at management unit level.</i> All requirements are applicable at the participant/management unit level.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> It is recommended to add the clarification that is included in the checklist in the scope.</p>
<p>b) be clear, performance based and auditable;</p>	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 4.1.4: <i>The management system shall be clear, performance based and auditable;</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> RFCS's requirements for sustainable forest management are assessed to be clear, performance based and auditable.</p>
<p>c) apply to activities of all forest operators in the defined forest area who have an impact on achieving compliance with the requirements;</p>	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 1. Scope: (...) <i>The requirements presented in this document apply to forest owners and administrators, as well as contractors and other operators operating in forests whose management is PEFC certified. (...)</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>d) require record-keeping that provides evidence of compliance with the requirements of the forest management standards;</p>	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 1. Scope: (...) <i>Forest owners and administrators must ensure that they have implemented certification scheme requirements demonstrating compliance with forest management standards. The minimum period for keeping records demonstrating, on the basis of evidence, compliance with these standard requirements is 5 (five) years. (...)</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>e) specify “100% PEFC certified”, or another system specific claim, as claim to be used to communicate the origin of products in an area covered by the standard to customers with a PEFC chain of custody;            Note: System specific claims of PEFC endorsed standards and PEFC Council approved abbreviations of such claims and the claim “100% PEFC certified”, and their translations into languages other than English, are published online on the PEFC website <a href="http://www.pefc.org">www.pefc.org</a>.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 1. Scope: (...) <i>Following the implementation of the requirements of the PEFC certification scheme, it is possible to use the claim "100% PEFC certified". (...)</i>            PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 4.2.2.: <i>The organisation shall use the "100% PEFC certified" statement to communicate to customers the PEFC-certified origin of products in an area covered by the certificate scope.</i>  <i>Note: In case of customers from Romania and Moldova, the claim can be translated into Romanian language "100% certificat PEFC "; abbreviations and translations approved by the PEFC Council, of the statement "100% PEFC certified", are available on the <a href="http://www.pefc.org">www.pefc.org</a> website.</i>  <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>f) require that where owners/managers of forests are selling products from areas other than covered by the standard, only products from areas covered by the standard are sold with the claim “100% PEFC-certified” or a system specific claim;</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 4.2.3.: <i>Only products originating from areas covered by the PEFC certificate shall be marketed with the claim "100% PEFC certified". The use of this claim is excluded when selling products from areas not included in certification scope.</i>  <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>g) require that claims on the origin of products in an area covered by the standard are only made by forest owners/managers covered by a PEFC recognised certificate issued against the standard;</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 1. Scope: (...) <i>The claim "100% PEFC certificate" can only be used by forest owners or administrators who hold a valid PEFC certificate or are members of a group certificate. (...)</i>  <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.  <b>Comment:</b> There is a typo in the claim: <i>100% PEFC certificate</i> should be <i>100% PEFC certified</i>.</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<p>h) specify requirements concerning the information which need to be provided to a PEFC chain of custody certified customer;</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 4.2.4.: <i>Upon delivery, the organisation must provide the customer holding a valid PEFC Chain of Custody certificate, allowing him to register the PEFC-certified origin of products, a document that must include the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>a) Identification elements of the supplier;</i></li> <li><i>b) Product identification elements (species, assortment);</i></li> <li><i>(c) The quantity of products;</i></li> <li><i>d) Delivery information: delivery date, delivery period or payment due date;</i></li> <li><i>e) Identification elements of the recipient;</i></li> <li><i>(f) The "100% PEFC certified" claim for each product originating from an area included in the certification scope;</i></li> <li><i>g) Number of valid PEFC certificate.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Note 1: The document may be represented by the invoice, the transport document, or any other document containing the above information.</i></p> <p><i>Note 2: The PEFC certificate number is a numeric or alpha-numeric combination and is a unique identifier thereof.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>i) include an overview of applicable legislation, if requirements of this benchmark are not reflected in the regional, national or sub-national standard, because they are already addressed through the legislation.</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>Chapter 2. <i>Normative references</i> of PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 includes a list of applicable legislation.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 includes a list of applicable legislation, but it does not include information about in relation to which requirement each legislative element provides evidence of compliance. On one instance (benchmark 8.2.3), this information is provided in PEFC Romania's checklist. However, the benchmark requires that the requirement shall include an overview of applicable legislation should it be addressed by it.</p>
<p>4.2 Understanding the needs and expectations of affected stakeholders</p>		



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
The standard requires that the organisation shall determine:		
a) the affected stakeholders that are relevant to the sustainable forest management;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 4.2.6.: <i>The organisation shall identify stakeholders relevant to sustainable forest management and their needs and expectations. In case of group PEFC certification, this activity is performed by the Group Administrator.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
b) the relevant needs and expectations of these stakeholders.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 4.2.6.: <i>The organisation shall identify stakeholders relevant to sustainable forest management and their needs and expectations. In case of group PEFC certification, this activity is performed by the Group Administrator.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
4.3 Determining the scope of the management system		
4.3.1 The standard requires that the organisation shall determine the boundaries and applicability of the management system to establish its scope.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 4.1.2.: <i>The organisation must determine the scope (purpose) of the management system by defining its boundaries and responsibilities.</i> <i>Note: The requirements of sections 4.1.1 and 4.1.2 shall be implemented by organisations seeking individual certification for sustainable forest management under PEFC. For group certification of sustainable forest management according to PEFC-RO DST 8010:2023, compliance with these requirements is the responsibility of the Group Administrator, not its members.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
4.3.2 The standard requires that forest management shall comprise the cycle of inventory and planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and shall include an appropriate assessment of the social, environmental and economic impacts of forest management practices. This shall form a basis for a cycle of continuous improvement.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 6.1.2.: <i>The inventory and mapping of forest resources shall be established and maintained in accordance with applicable legal requirements and in accordance with the requirements described in this standard.</i> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.3.4.2.: <i>Periodically, monitoring of the implementation of the management plans is carried out, and their results shall be taken into account when developing new plans.</i>



**Indufor**

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 9.1.1.: <i>The monitoring of forest resources and the evaluation of their management, including ecological, social and economic effects, shall be periodically performed, and results fed back into the planning process.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 9.1.2.: <i>The 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.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 9.1.3.: <i>Where it is the responsibility of the forest owner/administrator and included in forest management, the use of non-wood forest products, including hunting and fishing, shall be regulated, monitored and controlled.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
5. Leadership		
5.1 The standard requires that the organisation shall provide a commitment:		
a) to comply with the sustainable forest management standard and other applicable requirements of the certification system;	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 5.1.: <i>The organisation shall provide a written commitment that: a) comply with the sustainable forest management standard and other applicable requirements of the certification system (see PEFC-RO DS 8000 2024 Commitment);</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
b) to continuously improve the sustainable forest management system.	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 5.1.: <i>The organisation shall provide a written commitment that: b) continuously improve the sustainable forest management system.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
5.2 The standard requires that this commitment shall be publicly available.	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 5.2.: <i>The commitment shall be made publicly available.</i></p>



**Indufor**

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p><i>Note: In case of group certification, the requirements of sections 5.1 and 5.2 are implemented by signing a contractual commitment or agreement of each participant and publishing it on the PEFC Romania website or, if available, on its own website.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>5.3 The standard requires that responsibilities for sustainable forest management shall be clearly defined and assigned.</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 1. Scope: (...) <i>Forest owners and administrators must ensure that they have implemented certification scheme requirements demonstrating compliance with forest management standards. (...)</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 4.1.2: <i>The organisation must determine the scope (purpose) of the management system by defining its boundaries and responsibilities.</i></p> <p><i>Note: The requirements of sections 4.1.1 and 4.1.2 shall be implemented by organisations seeking individual certification for sustainable forest management under PEFC. For group certification of sustainable forest management according to PEFC-RO DST 8010:2023, compliance with these requirements is the responsibility of the Group Administrator, not its members.</i></p> <p>Throughout the standard, responsibilities are clearly defined and assigned.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The standard itself establishes the responsibilities for sustainable forest management for the forest owner/manager and/or the organisation but does not require that the responsibilities for sustainable forest management shall be clearly defined and assigned.</p>
<p>6. Planning</p>		
<p>6.1 Actions to address risks and opportunities</p>		
<p>6.1.1 The standard requires that the organisation shall consider risks and opportunities concerning compliance with the requirements for sustainable forest management. Size and scale of the operations of the organisation shall be considered.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 6.1.1.: <i>The organisation shall consider risks and opportunities concerning compliance with the requirements for sustainable forest management. The size and scale of the organisation's operations shall be taken into account.</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
6.1.2 The standard requires that inventory and mapping of forest resources shall be established and maintained, adequate to local and national conditions and in correspondence with the requirements described in this international benchmark standard.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 6.1.2.: <i>The inventory and mapping of forest resources shall be established and maintained in accordance with applicable legal requirements and in accordance with the requirements described in this standard.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
6.2 Management plan		
6.2.1 The standard requires that management plans shall be:		
a) elaborated and periodically updated or continually adjusted;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 6.2.1.: <i>The management plan is equivalent to „Amenajament silvic” - the forest management plan elaborated according to Romanian legislation.</i> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 6.2.2.: <i>Management plans shall: a) elaborated and periodically updated or continually adjusted;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
b) appropriate to the size and use of the forest area;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 6.2.2.: <i>Management plans shall: b) correspond to the size and use of the forest area;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
c) based on applicable local, national and international legislation as well as existing land-use or other official plans; and	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 6.2.2.: <i>Management plans shall: c) based on applicable local, national and international legislation as well as existing land-use or other official plans; and</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
d) adequately covering forest resources.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 6.2.2.: <i>Management plans shall: d) adequately covering forest resources</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
6.2.2 The standard requires that management plans shall take into account the different uses or functions of the managed forest area.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 6.2.3.: <i>The management plan shall take into account the different uses or functions of the managed forest area.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
6.2.3 The standard requires that management plans shall include at least a description of the current forest management unit, long-term objectives, and the average annual allowable cut, including its justification.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 6.2.4.: <i>The management plan must include at least a description of the actual production unit, the long-term objectives and the allowable possibility, including its justification.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
6.2.4 The standard requires that the annually allowable use of non-wood forest products shall be included in the management plan where forest management covers commercial use of non-wood forest products at a level which can have an impact on their long-term sustainability.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 6.2.5.: <i>The allowable annual possibility of non-wood forest products shall be included in the management plan, where non-wood forest products will be economically exploited, this will be made at a sustainable level in the long term.</i> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.3.2.1.: <i>The quantity of non-wood products harvested from forest flora or fauna shall not exceed a level that can be sustained in the long term, (...)</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018. <b>Comment:</b> There may be a translation issue in requirement 6.2.5 regarding the word "possibility".
6.2.5 The standard requires that management plans specify ways and means to minimise the risk of degradation and damage to forest ecosystems.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 6.2.6.: <i>Management plans shall specify ways and means to reduce to minimum the impact on forest ecosystems.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>





PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
6.2.6 The standard requires that management plans shall take into account the results of scientific research.	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.6.4.4.: <i>In the forest planning and silvicultural work execution process, it is recommended to use the results of relevant research activities obtained either internally or disseminated by research organizations.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> The phrase “it is recommended” must be replaced with a “shall”.</p>
6.2.7 The standard requires that a summary of the management plan, appropriate to the scope and scale of forest management, shall be publicly available and shall include information on the general objectives and forest management principles.	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 6.2.7.: <i>A summary of the management plan shall be publicly available and shall include information on the general objectives and principles of forest management. (...)</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
6.2.8 The standard requires that the publicly available summary of the management plan may exclude confidential business and personal information and other information made confidential by applicable legislation or for the protection of cultural sites or sensitive natural resource features.	N	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 6.2.7.: (...) <i>Note 1: The summary of the publicly available management plan may exclude commercially and personally confidential information and other information rendered confidential by applicable legislation for the protection of cultural sites or sensitive features of natural resources.</i></p> <p><i>Note 2: If there are no means of making the summary publicly available (no website), it should be sent to interested parties upon request.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> Note 2 of requirement 6.2.7 shall be revised. The summary of the management plan must be publicly available: in its current form, note 2 does not comply with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
6.3 Compliance requirements		
6.3.1 Legal compliance		



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<p>6.3.1.1 The standard requires that the organisation shall identify and have access to the legislation applicable to its forest management and determine how these compliance obligations apply to the organisation.</p> <p>Note: For a country which has signed a FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) between the European Union and the producing country, the “legislation applicable to forest management” is defined by the VPA agreement.</p>	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 6.3.1.1.: <i>The organisation shall identify and have access to applicable forestry legislation and determine how these compliance obligations apply to the organisation.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>6.3.1.2 The standard requires that the organisation shall comply with applicable local, national and international legislation on forest management, including but not limited to forest management practices; nature and environmental protection; protected and endangered species; property, tenure and land-use rights for indigenous peoples, local communities or other affected stakeholders; health, labour and safety issues; anti-corruption and the payment of applicable royalties and taxes.</p>	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 6.3.1.2.: <i>The organisation shall comply with applicable local, national and international legislation on forest management, including but not limited to forest management practices, nature and environmental protection; protected and endangered species; property, tenure and land-use rights, affected local communities or other stakeholders; occupational health and safety issues, anti-corruption and the payment of applicable royalties and taxes.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.6.3.1: <i>Both the owner and administrator of the certified areas shall ensure employment under non-discriminatory conditions, in accordance with the conventions initiated by the International Labour Organisation and implemented by Romanian legislation.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.6.3.2: <i>The prevention of accidents and occupational diseases in the forestry sector is an important social aspect of sustainable management. The certified area administrator shall systematically implement and monitor occupational health and safety activities in accordance with the provisions of national legislation.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>6.3.1.3 The standard requires that where no anti-corruption legislation exists, the organisation must take alternative anti-corruption measures appropriate to the risk of corruption.</p>	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 6.3.1.2.: <i>The organisation shall comply with applicable local, national and international legislation on forest management, including but not limited to (...) anti-corruption (...)</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 6.3.1.5.: <i>In the situation where violations of the law occur, namely in the case of crimes to the forestry regime, of corruption or fraud, where the criminal investigation has been initiated, the owners or administrators of the area in question will not sell certified materials from these areas.</i></p> <p><i>This restriction is valid as long as there is a suspicion that the possible crime has been committed by its own personnel who are still within the organisation and participate in the forest management process. (...)</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>6.3.1.4 The standard requires that measures shall be implemented to address protection of the forest from unauthorised activities such as illegal logging, illegal land use, illegally initiated fires, and other illegal activities.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 6.3.1.4.: <i>The organisation must implement measures to ensure the protection of the forest from unauthorised activities such as illegal logging, illegal land use, fires and other illegal activities.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>6.3.2 Legal, customary and traditional rights related to the forest land</p>		
<p>6.3.2.1 The standard requires that property rights, tree ownership and land tenure arrangements shall be clearly defined, documented and established for the relevant management unit. Likewise, legal, customary and traditional rights related to the forest land shall be clarified, recognised and respected.</p> <p>Note: Guidance for the handling of tenure arrangements can be obtained from the FAO Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 6.3.2.1.: <i>Land ownership rights shall be clearly defined, documented and established. Legal, customary and traditional rights related to forest land shall also be clarified, recognised and respected.</i></p> <p><i>Note: Guidelines for the management of property agreements can be obtained from the FAO Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security. FAO.com-2022).</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.6.1.1.: <i>Ownership right shall be clear for any forest to be certified. The ownership right shall be full, legally indisputable and shall not be subject for further disputes, in order to not compromise the sustainability of the certified forest management.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.6.1.2.: <i>Forest areas for which ownership is not clarified and are in dispute shall not be included in the certification process.</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.6.1.3.: <i>In the case of forest areas subject to certification, regardless of the type of property, they must be managed based on a legally accepted form of forest management planning.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.6.1.4.: <i>For forest areas subject to certification, regardless of ownership form, they must be managed/administered by a legally recognized public or private entity hereinafter referred to as the 'certified area administrator.' Only areas for which there is a service/administration contract prepared in accordance with legal provisions may be included in the certification process.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.6.1.5.: <i>The administrator/owner of the certified forest must demonstrate that the certified area has clear boundaries, materialized both on the planning map and on-site through boundary markings. Within these boundaries, property rights must be clearly defined and proven through ownership documents.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>6.3.2.2 The standard requires that forest practices and operations shall be conducted in recognition of 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 upon without the free, prior and informed consent of the holders of the rights, including the provision of compensation where applicable. Where the extent of rights is not yet resolved, or is in dispute, there are processes for just and fair resolution. In such cases forest managers shall, in the interim, provide meaningful opportunities for parties to be engaged in forest management decisions whilst respecting the processes and roles and responsibilities laid out in the policies and laws where the certification takes place.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 6.3.2.2.: <i>Specific forestry activities must be carried out in compliance with the established framework of legal, customary and traditional rights, as outlined in ILO 169, which shall not be infringed upon without the free, prior and informed consent of the right, including the provision of compensation where applicable. If the status of rights is not yet resolved or is in dispute, there are lawsuits for a fair and equitable settlement.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018. It was confirmed with PEFC Romania that the term <i>specific forestry activities</i> entails all forest practices and operations. It should be noted that even though PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 complies with the benchmark, there are no indigenous peoples in Romania.  <b>Comment:</b> It would be beneficial to either define “specific forestry activities” in the standard or revise the term.</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<p>6.3.2.3 The standard requires that forest practices and operations shall respect human rights as defined by the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.</p>	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 6.3.2.3.: <i>Specific forestry activities must respect human rights as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.</i>  <i>Note: In Romania, the requirements of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights have been incorporated into laws and regulations.</i>  <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018. It was confirmed with PEFC Romania that the term <i>specific forestry activities</i> entails all forest practices and operations.</p>
6.3.3 Fundamental ILO conventions		
<p>6.3.3.1 The standard requires that forest practices and operations shall comply with fundamental ILO conventions.  <i>Note:</i> In countries where the fundamental ILO conventions have been ratified, the requirements of 6.3.3.1 apply. In countries where a fundamental convention has not been ratified and its content is not covered by applicable legislation, specific requirements shall be included in the forest management standard.</p>	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 6.3.3.1.: <i>Specific forestry activities must comply with ILO (International Labour Organisation) core conventions.</i>  <i>Note: In Romania, ILO core conventions have been incorporated into laws and regulations.</i>  <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018. It was confirmed with PEFC Romania that the term <i>specific forestry activities</i> entails all forest practices and operations.</p>
6.3.4 Health, safety and working conditions		
<p>6.3.4.1 The standard requires that forest operations shall be planned, organised and performed in a manner that enables health and accident risks to be identified and all reasonable measures to be applied to protect workers from work-related risks. Workers shall be informed about the risks involved with their work and about preventive measures.</p>	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 6.3.4.1.: <i>Specific forestry activities shall be planned, organised and performed in a manner that enables health and accidents risks to be identified, followed by the application of all reasonable measures to protect workers from work-related risks. Workers shall be informed about the risks involved with their work and about preventive measures.</i>  <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018. It was confirmed with PEFC Romania that the term <i>specific forestry activities</i> entails all forest operations.</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<p>6.3.4.2 The standard requires that working conditions shall be safe, and guidance and training in safe working practices shall be provided to all those assigned to a task in forest operations. Working hours and leave shall comply with national laws or applicable collective agreements.</p> <p>Note: Guidance for specifying national standards can be obtained from the ILO Code of Good Practice: Safety and Health in Forestry Work.</p>	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 6.3.4.2.: <i>Working conditions shall be safe, and guidance and training in safe working practices must be provided to all those with a task in forestry operations. Working hours and leave must comply with national law or applicable collective agreements.</i></p> <p><i>Note: Guidelines for specifying national standards can be obtained from the ILO Code of Good Practice: Safety and Health in Forestry-ILO.org-1998.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>6.3.4.3 The standard requires that wages of local and migrant forest workers as well as of contractors and other operators operating in PEFC-certified areas shall meet or exceed at least legal, industry minimum standards or, where applicable, collective bargaining agreements.</p> <p>Note: Where wages are below the living wage of a country, steps should be taken to attain increased wages towards a living wage level over time in addition to increases for inflation.</p>	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 6.3.4.3.: <i>Wages of local and migrant forest workers as well as of contractors and other operators operating in PEFC certified areas. shall exceed at least the national minimum wage required by legislation or, as the case may be, collective agreements.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018. The standard requires that wages shall exceed, not only meet the legal or collectively agreed upon minimums: according to PEFC Romania, this is an approach to ensure that workers' livelihoods are better safeguarded.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> There is a typo in the requirement: a full stop between "areas" and "shall".</p>
<p>6.3.4.4 The standard requires that the organisation is committed to equal opportunities, non-discrimination and freedom from workplace harassment. Gender equality shall be promoted.</p>	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 6.3.4.4.: <i>The organisation shall be committed to ensuring equal opportunities and eradicating discrimination, unwanted sexual harassment behaviour and disrespect. Gender equality must be promoted.</i></p> <p><i>Note: Unwanted sexual harassment behaviour and disrespect consists of any unwanted verbal, non-verbal or sexual harassment and/or disrespect behaviour in the workplace, if the purpose or result of such conduct is to violate a person's dignity, humiliate or create an offensive environment.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
7. Support		
7.1 Resources		
7.1.1 The standard requires that the organisation shall determine and provide the resources needed for the establishment, implementation, maintenance and continual improvement of the sustainable forest management system.	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 7.1.1.: <i>The organisation shall establish and provide the resources necessary for the establishment, implementation, maintenance and continuous improvement of the sustainable forest management system.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
7.2 Competence		
7.2.1 The standard requires that forest managers, contractors, employees and forest owners shall be provided with sufficient information and kept up-to-date through continuous training in relation to sustainable forest management, as a precondition for all management planning and practices described in this benchmark.	N	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 7.2.1.: <i>The organisation shall ensure that employees and contractors receive regular training applicable to all relevant jobs and/or sufficient information on sustainable forest management (including training on environmental protection, maintenance of biodiversity as well as forest regeneration and care, etc.).</i></p> <p><i>Note: If the organisation is the owner, the requirement refers to the administrator, and if the organisation is the administrator, the requirement refers to its employees.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 7.2.2.: <i>The organisation should consider possibilities for participating in informative or educational campaigns on the multi-purpose use of wood resources, including renewable energy.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 7.2.3.: <i>The organisation should be regularly informed about innovations and novelties in forest management, especially those related to adaptation to climate change, maintenance of soil functionality, conservation of biodiversity, maintenance of species and habitats.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 7.2.4.: <i>The organisation should provide training for personnel involved in forestry activities to ensure the application of the requirements of PEFC standards, the importance of quality work in the forest and basic first aid techniques.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The requirements 7.2.1–7.2.4 of PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 do not apply to forest owners or managers, only to employees and contractors.</p>



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PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
7.3 Communication		
<p>7.3.1 The standard requires that effective communication and consultation with local communities, indigenous peoples and other stakeholders relating to sustainable forest management shall be provided.</p>	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 3.1. Affected Stakeholders: <i>An individual, group, community that could be directly affected by changes in living and/or working conditions as a result of the implementation of a standard, or an entity that could use a standard and therefore be subject to its requirements.</i></p> <p><i>Note 1: Affected stakeholders include forest-neighbouring communities, forest workers, etc. However, having an interest in the application of the standard (e.g. NGOs, scientific community, civil society) is not considered to be affected by the application of the standard.</i></p> <p><i>Note 2: A stakeholder who could be a user of the standard is likely to become a certified entity, e.g. a forest administrator in the case of a forest management standard or a timber processing company in the case of a chain of custody standard.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 7.3.1.: <i>The organisation shall maintain communication with affected stakeholders and stakeholders about sustainable forest management, answer their questions, and maintain documented information.</i></p> <p><i>Note 1: Documented information includes minutes of meetings as well as mutual correspondence.</i></p> <p><i>Note 2: The exchange of information in writing will be kept for at least 5 years.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.6.7.2.: <i>The administrator of the certified area and/or the owner shall conduct at least once a year a consultation with interested parties (local communities, NGOs, institutions, logging and processing companies) regarding the impact of forest management.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
7.4 Complaints		
<p>7.4.1 The standard requires that appropriate mechanisms are in place for resolving complaints and disputes relating to forest management operations, land use rights and work conditions.</p>	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 7.2.5.: <i>In the case of group certification for forest management, the organisation shall:</i></p>





PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>a) <i>be able to respond to complaints received directly by the participant regarding forestry operations, land use rights and working conditions.</i></p> <p>b) <i>to be able to respond to complaints received indirectly through the Group Administrator in order to facilitate its resolution.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 7.2.6.: <i>In the case of individual certification for sustainable forest management, the organisation must be able to respond to and resolve complaints related to forest operations, land-use rights and working conditions.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 7.4.1.: <i>The organisation shall establish appropriate publicly available mechanisms for dealing with complaints relating to forest management operations, land-use rights and working conditions. Written and documented complaints regarding forest management will be evaluated and will receive a written response within 30 days of submission.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
7.5 Documented Information		
7.5.1 The standard requires that the organisation’s management system shall include documented information required by the standard and determined by the organisation as being necessary for the effectiveness of the sustainable forest management system.	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 7.5.1.: <i>The organisation's management system shall include documented information required by the standard and established by the organisation as necessary to confirm the effectiveness of the sustainable forest management system.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
7.5.2 The standard requires that the documented information is relevant, and updated as appropriate, to the activities of the organisation.	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 7.5.2.: <i>The documented information must be relevant and updated as appropriate, to the activities of the organisation.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
8. Operation		
8.1 Criterion 1: Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of forest resources and their contribution to the global carbon cycle		



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<p>8.1.1 The standard requires that management shall aim to maintain or increase forests and their ecosystem services and maintain or enhance the economic, ecological, cultural and social values of forest resources.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.1.2.1.: <i>Through forest management plan shall be ensured that the size of the production fund is increased in accordance with the economic, ecological and social functions established.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018. The definition of <i>production fund</i> is not provided in the standard, but when asked, PEFC Romania elaborated as follows:</p> <p><i>Forest fund is defined by legislation-Forest code as:</i></p> <p><i>"The totality of forests, lands intended for afforestation, those that serve the needs of culture, production or forestry administration, ponds, streambeds, other lands for forestry purposes, including non-productive ones, included in forestry management on January 1, 1990, including surface changes, according to the entry-exit operations carried out under the law, constitute, regardless of the form of ownership, the national forest fund"</i></p> <p><i>In Romania about 90% of the forest is included in Forest Fund and has a management plan, but there are still some forests that are not. This forests that are not, cannot be PEFC certified as they are out of the scope.</i></p> <p><b>Comment:</b> When asked for clarification for the term "production fund", PEFC Romania answered with a definition of forest fund. This is taken to mean that "production fund" equals "forest fund" i.e., regulatory definition of forest land. However, it would be beneficial to either define "production fund" or revise its usage.</p>
<p>8.1.2 The standard requires that the quantity and quality of the forest resources and the capacity of the forest to store and sequester carbon shall be safeguarded in the medium and long term by balancing harvesting and growth rates, using appropriate silvicultural measures and preferring techniques that minimise adverse impacts on forest resources.</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.1.2.2.: <i>The forest management plan shall ensure that forest resources and the forest's carbon storage capacity are maintained in the medium and long term, through a balance between harvest and growth.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.3.5.1.: <i>Silvicultural treatments, tending and conducting forest stand shall be carried out in such a manner that maintains the long-term productivity of the stand and is carried out in a way that does not cause irreversible damage to forest ecosystems. (...)</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 requires that irreversible damage to forest ecosystems should not be caused whereas the benchmark requires minimising adverse impacts on forest resources.</p>
<p>8.1.3 The standard requires that climate positive practices in management operations, such as greenhouse gas emission reductions and efficient use of resources shall be encouraged.</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.5.4.3.: <i>Under certain environmental conditions, forests shall, as a priority, also ensure protection against harmful climatic factors (especially those located in the steppe and forest-steppe of Romania), and against pollution. The management of these forests must lead to strengthening the specific protective capacities of each forest area and to the creation of structures that have a positive effect on harmful climatic and industrial factors.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 requires that forests and their management shall have a positive impact on climate only under certain environmental conditions. When asked for a clarification, PEFC Romania answered the following:  <i>The term “certain environmental conditions” in section 8.5.4.3 refers specifically to regions or circumstances where forests play a critical protective role. These include:</i>  <i>Steppe and forest-steppe zones: Areas in Romania vulnerable to drought, wind erosion, and climatic extremes, where forests are essential for stabilizing soil and regulating the microclimate.</i>  <i>Polluted regions: Forests located near industrial zones or high-pollution areas, where tree cover serves as a filter for pollutants.</i>  <i>These conditions reflect Romania’s geographical and ecological realities, where forests are prioritized for protective roles due to environmental stresses.</i></p>
<p>8.1.4 The standard requires that forest conversion shall not occur unless in justified circumstances where the conversion:</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>N</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.1.1.5.: <i>The conversion of forests to other land uses will only take place in justified circumstances where it will not have a negative impact on threatened forest ecosystems, culturally and socially significant areas, important habitats of threatened species or other protected areas.</i>  <i>Forest conversion should take place only in justified circumstances where:</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p><i>a) is in compliance with applicable national policy and legislation for land use and forest management and is the result of national land-use planning governed by a governmental or other official authority.</i></p> <p><i>b) is established following a process, where relevant stakeholders have the opportunity to contribute to conversion decisions through transparent and participatory consultation processes; (...)</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 requires consultation with <i>relevant stakeholders</i> whereas the benchmark requires consultation with <i>affected stakeholders</i>. <i>Relevant stakeholder</i> is not defined in the standard.</p>
<p>b) entails a small proportion (no greater than 5 %) of forest type within the certified area; and</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.1.1.5.: (...) <i>Forest conversion should take place only in justified circumstances where: c) entails a small proportion (not more than 5 %) of forest area within the certified area;</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 refers to the forest area whereas the benchmark requirement refers to the individual forest type.</p>
<p>c) does not have negative impacts on ecologically important forest areas, culturally and socially significant areas, or other protected areas; and</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.1.1.5.: (...) <i>Forest conversion should take place only in justified circumstances where: d) does not have negative impact on ecologically important forest areas, culturally and socially significant areas or other protected areas;</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>d) does not destroy areas of significantly high carbon stock; and</p>	<p>N</p>	<p><b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 does not require that forest conversion shall not destroy areas of significantly high carbon stock. PEFC Romania note the following in their checklist: <i>The PEFC Romania Forum considered the forest is always a high carbon stock so conversion is always implying a level of destroy of a significantly carbon stock, so this requirement cannot be respected.</i></p> <p>When asked, PEFC Romania further elaborated:</p>



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PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p><i>The PEFC Romania Forum determined that the Romanian forests, regardless of their age or specific characteristics, possess significant carbon stocks. This view is based on the understanding that forests, by their nature, function as substantial carbon sinks, storing carbon in both biomass and soil. The Forum reasoned that any conversion of forest land inevitably leads to a loss of carbon stock, given that the transition from forest to another land use results in the removal of trees and associated biomass, which contributes directly to carbon release.</i></p> <p><i>The Forum acknowledged that carbon stock levels can vary between young and mature stands, however, even younger forests contribute to carbon sequestration and storage. From this perspective, it was concluded that it is challenging to differentiate between levels of significant carbon stock across various forest stages when applying this standard at a national level. Therefore, it was deemed more appropriate to adopt a precautionary approach, treating all forest conversion as involving a significant loss of carbon stock.</i></p> <p>The benchmark specifically forbids the conversion of areas of significantly high carbon stock, thus the justification cannot be accepted. Should all forest conversion be considered as involving a significant loss of carbon stock, all forest conversion should in that case be prohibited. PEFC Romania mentioned that there is an ecological impact assessment required by law in place that would in practice prevent the conversion of forest areas with significant carbon stock, but this claim was not yet substantiated during the draft report commenting phase.</p>
<p>e) makes a contribution to long-term conservation, economic, and social benefits.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.1.1.5.: (...) <i>Forest conversion should take place only in justified circumstances where: e) contributes in the long term to conservation, economic and social benefits.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>8.1.5 The standard requires that afforestation of ecologically important non-forest ecosystems shall not occur unless in justified circumstances where the conversion:</p>		



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<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; and</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.1.1.6.: <i>Afforestation of ecologically important non-forest ecosystems shall not occur unless in justified circumstances where the conversion: a) is in accordance with national and regional policy and legislation applicable for land use and forest management and is the result of national land-use planning governed by a governmental authority, or by another official authority;</i>  <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>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</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.1.1.6.: <i>Afforestation of ecologically important non-forest ecosystems shall not occur unless in justified circumstances where the conversion: b) is established following a process, where relevant stakeholders have the opportunity to contribute to conversion decisions through transparent and participatory consultation processes;</i>  <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>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</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.1.1.6.: <i>Afforestation of ecologically important non-forest ecosystems shall not occur unless in justified circumstances where the conversion: c) does not have a negative impact on threatened (including vulnerable, rare or endangered) non-forest ecosystems, culturally and socially significant areas, important habitats of threatened species or other protected areas;</i>  <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>d) entails a small proportion of the ecologically important non-forest ecosystem managed by an organisation; and</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.1.1.6.: <i>Afforestation of ecologically important non-forest ecosystems shall not occur unless in justified circumstances where the conversion: d) entails a small proportion of the ecologically important non-forest ecosystem managed by organisation;</i>  <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>



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PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<p>e) does not destroy areas of significantly high carbon stock; and</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.1.1.6.: <i>Afforestation of ecologically important non-forest ecosystems shall not occur unless in justified circumstances where the conversion:</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 does not require that afforestation of ecologically important non-forest ecosystems shall not destroy areas of significantly high carbon stock. PEFC Romania note the following in their checklist: <i>The PEFC Romania Forum considered the forest is always a high carbon stock so afforestation of an ecologically important not-forest ecosystem is always creates an carbon stock and cannot destroy it, making the requirement unnecessary.</i> However, no evidence is provided to support this claim and more information about the ecologically important non-forest ecosystems in Romania is needed: e.g., peatlands, marshes and wetlands can potentially hold significant belowground and/or soil organic carbon stocks.</p> <p>When asked, PEFC Romania further elaborated:</p> <p><i>The PEFC Romania Forum's decision not to include specific requirements for the protection of non-forest ecosystems during afforestation is based on the principle that afforestation generally results in a net increase in carbon stock. By converting non-forest land into forest, the process involves the introduction of new tree cover, which actively sequesters carbon as the trees grow and mature. This is especially relevant in Romania, where forest expansion is seen as a way to strengthen carbon sequestration efforts.</i></p> <p><i>In this context, afforestation is not viewed as a process that could result in the destruction of significant carbon stocks. Instead, it contributes to the creation of new carbon sinks. However, this perspective is not intended to disregard the ecological value of certain non-forest ecosystems, such as peatlands, wetlands, and marshes, which can have high levels of carbon storage. The protection of such ecosystems is addressed through Romania's national legislation, which imposes strict restrictions on activities that could impact these areas. As a result, the afforestation of such sensitive ecosystems is either highly regulated or prohibited, ensuring that their carbon and ecological integrity is preserved.</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p><i>This regulatory framework supports the rationale that additional restrictions within the PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 standard are unnecessary. The PEFC Romania Forum believed that the existing legal protections effectively mitigate the risk of carbon loss from afforestation activities in ecologically sensitive areas. By relying on these established protections, the focus of the PEFC standard could remain on promoting sustainable forest management practices that align with national priorities for increasing forest cover and carbon sequestration.</i></p> <p>According to PEFC Romania, regulations regarding ecologically important non-forest ecosystems are spread through legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Law no.5/200 - Law of Protected Natural Areas</i></li> <li>- <i>Government Emergency Ordinance No. 57/2007 (On the Regime of Natural Protected Areas, Conservation of Natural Habitats, Flora, and Fauna)</i></li> <li>- <i>Law no.10/1996 Water Law</i></li> <li>- <i>Minister order 2533/2022 - TECHNICAL RULES of September 28, 2022 regarding the compositions, schemes and technologies of forest regeneration and afforestation of degraded lands</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o <i>Art.3 alin. (8) Afforestation or reforestation on agricultural land of high nature value, grassland or wetlands is prohibited, except for habitat restoration, which contributes positively to the objectives of biodiversity conservation, water management and soil protection.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Comment:</b> As legislation covers the benchmark, the applicable legislation should be referred to in the standard.</p>
f) makes a contribution to long-term conservation, economic, and social benefits.	y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.1.1.6.: <i>Afforestation of ecologically important non-forest ecosystems shall not occur unless in justified circumstances where the conversion: e) makes a contribution to long-term conservation, economic and social benefits.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>





PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<p>8.1.6 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:</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; and</p>	<p>N</p>	<p><b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC Romania note the following in their checklist: <i>The PEFC Romania Forum considered that severely degraded forest is by definition, not fulfilling its economic, ecological, social role so if a decision of conversion is made, this will automatically be made respecting all the requirements from 8.1.6 Chapter. The Forum consider that a human made forest even if artificial will fulfil all the roles better than a severely degraded forests. Severely degraded forests is not an exact technical term as the severity can be subjective and not defined. The Forum decided to eliminate the hole Chapter 8.1.6</i></p> <p>When asked, PEFC Romania further elaborated:</p> <p><i>The PEFC Romania Forum decided to omit Benchmark 8.1.6, which concerns the conversion of severely degraded forests to plantations, based on a few key considerations.</i></p> <p><i>As a plus from the explanations in the checklist, Romanian legislation forbids to convert natural forest into forest plantations. There is a terminology that is "the fundamental forest type" that is defined by law, it clearly specifies with what species a degraded forest can be recovered and in what conditions and this action is dictated by the management planning. A conversion from forest (even degraded one) is not possible in Romania. Plantations are possible, but only on agricultural or degraded lands that are not in the Forest Fund, so not in the certification scope. The structure of cultivated forests in Romania tends to maintain a natural-like character, even when artificially regenerated. These plantations are often aimed at promoting native species and maintaining ecological balance. This approach differs from the more industrial plantation forestry models referenced in PEFC ST 1003:2018, which might include uniform, fast-growing species.</i></p> <p><i>Also, the term "severely degraded forest" lacks a precise technical definition, making it subjective and challenging to apply consistently across diverse forest landscapes in Romania. Given this ambiguity, the Forum opted to focus on broader principles of</i></p>



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PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p><i>sustainable management, rather than creating detailed requirements that might not accurately reflect local conditions.</i></p> <p><i>The Forum believed that existing legal frameworks and the sustainable management practices within the PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 standard sufficiently address the intentions behind Benchmark 8.1.6 without the need for an additional, specific chapter on converting degraded forests to plantations.</i></p> <p><i>(...)</i></p> <p><i>4. Minister order 2533/2022 TECHNICAL RULES of September 28, 2022 regarding the compositions, schemes and technologies of forest regeneration and afforestation of degraded lands</i></p> <p><i>Art.4 alin (1) When choosing the species for afforestation, the correlation of the functions that the respective crops must fulfill with the requirements of the species and the specifics of the natural conditions is taken into account.</i></p> <p><i>alin. (4) The ecological group is determined according to the floor or bioclimatic zone and the data from the forestry management, as follows:</i></p> <p><i>a) the type of resort (TS) is determined based on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>(i) elements obtained by drawing up the station record and eventually by special station charting;</i></li> <li><i>(ii) the indications provided by woody and herbaceous vegetation - type of forest, type of indicator flora;</i></li> <li><i>(iii) stationary factors that limit growth;</i></li> </ul> <p><i>b) the fundamental natural type of forest (TP) is determined based on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>(i) data from arrangements or other documents/studies;</i></li> <li><i>(ii) the characterization elements of the existing natural vegetation;</i></li> <li><i>(iii) investigations carried out in neighboring stands, with similar seasonal conditions;</i></li> <li><i>(iv) the characterization elements of the indicator flora specific to the fundamental natural type of forest;</i></li> <li><i>(v) other information.</i></li> </ul>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		To conclude, the conversion of degraded forests to forest plantations is not applicable in the context of Romania as legislation prevents it. However, this legislation is not referred to in the standard.
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	N	<b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> See 8.1.6 (a).
c) has a positive impact on long-term carbon sequestration capacity of forest vegetation; and	N	<b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> See 8.1.6 (a).
d) does not have negative impacts on ecologically important forest areas, culturally and socially significant areas, or other protected areas; and	N	<b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> See 8.1.6 (a).
e) safeguards protective functions of forests for society and other regulating or supporting ecosystem services; and	N	<b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> See 8.1.6 (a).
f) safeguards socio-economic functions of forests, including the recreational function and aesthetic values of forests and other cultural services; and	N	<b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> See 8.1.6 (a).
g) has a land history providing evidence that the degradation is not the consequence of deliberate poor forest management practices; and	N	<b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> See 8.1.6 (a).
h) is based on credible evidence demonstrating that the area is neither recovered nor in the process of recovery.	N	<b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> See 8.1.6 (a).
8.2 Criterion 2: Maintenance of forest ecosystem health and vitality		
8.2.1 The standard requires that health and vitality of forest ecosystems shall be maintained or enhanced and degraded forest ecosystems shall be rehabilitated wherever and as far as	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.2.1.1.: <i>Forest management shall ensure the health and vitality of forests, and degraded forest ecosystems should be rehabilitated whenever</i>



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PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
economically feasible, by making best use of natural structures and processes and using preventive biological measures.		<p><i>necessary, and to the extent that is economically possible making best use of natural structures and processes and using preventive biological measures.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
8.2.2 The standard requires that adequate genetic, species and structural diversity shall be encouraged or maintained to enhance the stability, vitality and resilience of the forests to adverse environmental factors and strengthen natural regulation mechanisms.	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.2.1.2.: <i>Technical solutions in forest management plans should aim to encourage or maintain a genetic diversity of species and appropriate structures in order to strengthen the stability, vitality and resilience of forests to adverse environmental factors and to strengthen natural regulatory mechanisms.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.1.1.: <i>Maintaining and/or installation of mixed stands with tree species adapted to local stationary conditions shall be promoted. Pure, naturally installed stands (from seed, stump shoots, drajons [basal shoots growing from the root system of certain tree species (grows from the root system of certain species (e.g., poplar, acacia or elm)]) are an exception to this recommendation.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.1.3.: <i>By applying tending and conducting forest stands activities and silvicultural treatments, rare species of trees and shrubs shall be promoted.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.4.1.: <i>Silvicultural treatments shall promote irregular and mixed stands, with diverse horizontal and vertical structures, will aim to maintain, conserve or improve biodiversity at landscape, ecosystem, species and genetics levels.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018. In relation to excluding pure, naturally established stands from the requirement, PEFC Romania answered the following:  <i>Pure stands that occur naturally (e.g., beech or oak forests) represent an essential part of Romania's forest biodiversity and are maintained as such to respect natural regeneration dynamics. The purpose of the requirement is to promote mixed stands where artificial regeneration is implemented to enhance resilience and diversity. Pure</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p><i>stands are excluded only when they arise naturally and meet ecological sustainability goals.</i></p> <p>The exclusion only concerns naturally regenerating stands.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> Replacing “installed” with “established” in PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.1.1 is recommendable.</p>
<p>8.2.3 The standard requires that use of fire shall be limited to regions where fire is an essential tool in forest management for regeneration, wildfire protection and habitat management or a recognized practice of indigenous peoples. In these cases adequate management and control measures shall be taken.</p>	<p>N</p>	<p><b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC Romania note the following in their checklist: <i>Fire is not used in forest management. Fire in the forest is forbidden by legislation no.171/16.07.2010 Chapter IV Art.9 letter b).</i> However, this law is not referred to in the standard.</p>
<p>8.2.4 The standard requires that appropriate forest management practices such as reforestation and afforestation with tree species and provenances that are suited to the site conditions or the use of tending, harvesting and transport techniques that minimise tree and/or soil damages shall be applied.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.3.1.4.: <i>Management, harvesting and regeneration operations shall be carried out at a time and in a manner that does not reduce production capacity, for example by avoiding damage to standing soil and trees.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.1.1.: <i>Maintaining and/or installation of mixed stands with tree species adapted to local stationary conditions shall be promoted. Pure, naturally installed stands (from seed, stump shoots, drajons) are an exception to this recommendation.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.3.1.: <i>Where possible, the natural regeneration of stands from seed should be preferred, provided it is adapted to the site conditions and satisfactory from a qualitative and quantitative point of view. If necessary, gaps in naturally established regeneration from seed can be filled in by planting.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.3.2.: <i>Allochthone tree species can be used in artificial regeneration in compliance with the provisions of good practice guidelines/ specific technical norms regarding regeneration/afforestation target compositions.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.3.3.: <i>Allochthone tree species may be used in mixed stands if they do not affect by their natural regeneration the regeneration capacity of native tree species, that lead to their elimination.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.3.4.: <i>Forest seeds and saplings used for the installation of forestry crops must have known and verifiable origins. It must come from stands –</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p><i>seed sources or forest plantations included in the National Catalogue of Forest Reproductive Materials.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.5.2.2.: <i>The management shall be focused on protecting the soil and reducing the impact of forestry operations at soil level.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>8.2.5 The standard requires that the indiscriminate disposal of waste on forest land shall be strictly avoided. Non-organic waste and litter shall be collected, stored in designated areas and removed in an environmentally-responsible manner. The spillage of oil or fuel during forest management operations shall be prevented. Emergency procedures for the minimisation of risk of environmental harm arising from the accidental spillage shall be in place.</p>	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.5.2.5.: <i>The discharge of waste onto forest terrain is strictly prohibited. Inorganic waste and garbage of any kind must be collected, stored in designated areas and disposed of in an environmentally responsible manner.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.5.4.2.: <i>For water and soil protection, the use of biodegradable hydraulic oils should be promoted. Oil or fuel leakage into water or soil during forest management operations shall be avoided. Emergency procedures must be in place to minimise the risk of environmental damage resulting from accidental spills of oils or fuels.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>8.2.6 The standard requires that integrated pest management, appropriate silviculture alternatives and other biological measures shall be preferred to minimise the use of pesticides.</p>	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.2.3.2.: <i>Integrated pest management, appropriate silvicultural measures or biological methods should be preferred, to minimise pesticide use. (...)</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>8.2.7 The standard requires that any use of pesticides is documented.</p>	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.2.3.2.: <i>(...) Any use of pesticides must be documented.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>8.2.8 The standard requires that the WHO Class 1A and 1B pesticides and other highly toxic pesticides shall be prohibited, except where no other viable alternative is available. Any</p>	N	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.2.3.1.: <i>The use of chemicals is limited by national and international regulations for use. It is not allowed to use herbicides and pesticides that are prohibited by international conventions.</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<p>exception to the usage of WHO Class 1A and 1B pesticides shall be defined in the national/regional standard.</p>		<p>PEFC-RO ST 8001:2024 2.3: [Description] (...) <i>The use of chemicals is limited by national and international regulations (WHO lists 1A and 1B as well as the List of active substances authorized for use in plant protection products in Romania). Pesticides (herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, rodenticides, molluscicides, etc.) are used only on a limited scale, and when possible, they are replaced by silvicultural measures or biological methods. The use of pesticides that are prohibited by international conventions is not allowed. All chemicals must meet standards, thresholds, and conditions (hygienic, toxicological, and ecological) regarding nature protection.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The standard does not make it clear whether WHO Class 1A and 1B pesticides and other highly toxic pesticides are prohibited, and usage to “a limited scale” is not defined.</p>
<p>8.2.9 The standard requires that pesticides, such as chlorinated hydrocarbons whose derivatives remain biologically active and accumulate in the food chain beyond their intended use, and any pesticides banned by international agreement, shall be prohibited.</p> <p>Note: “Pesticides banned by international agreements” are defined in the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.</p>	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.2.3.5.: <i>The use of pesticides, such as chlorinated hydrocarbons whose derivatives remain biologically active and accumulate in the food chain beyond their destination, as well as any pesticides prohibited by international agreements is prohibited.</i></p> <p><i>Note: 'Pesticides banned by international agreements' are defined in the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>8.2.10 The standard requires that the use of pesticides shall follow the instructions given by the pesticide producer and be implemented with proper equipment by trained personnel.</p>	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.2.3.6.: <i>The use of pesticides must follow the manufacturer's instructions and be used with appropriate equipment by trained personnel.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>8.2.11 The standard requires that where fertilisers are used, they shall be applied in a controlled manner and with due</p>	N	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.2.3.3.: <i>Fertilizers or growth-stimulating substances must be applied in a controlled manner and in compliance with environmental conditions.</i></p>



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PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
consideration for the environment. Fertilizer use shall not be an alternative to appropriate soil nutrient management.		<b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 does not require that fertilizer shall not be used as an alternative to appropriate soil nutrient management.
8.3 Criterion 3: Maintenance and encouragement of productive functions of forests (wood and non-wood)		
8.3.1 The standard requires that the capability of forests to produce a range of wood and non-wood forest products and services on a sustainable basis shall be maintained.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.3.1.1.: <i>The volume of harvested wood shall not exceed a level that can be quantitatively sustained in the long term, and the use of forest products will be done in an optimal way, taking into account the extraction of nutrients.</i> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.3.2.1.: <i>The quantity of non-wood products harvested from forest flora or fauna shall not exceed a level that can be sustained in the long term, and the use of forest products will be done in an optimal way, taking into account the extraction of nutrients.</i> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.3.2.2.: <i>The use of non-wood products shall be limited to an ecologically sustainable level.</i> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.3.2.3.: <i>The extraction of forest products, of non-biological origin, is done on the basis of legal approvals, in compliance with environmental requirements.</i> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.3.3.1.: <i>The marketable services (tourism services, leasing, educational services, etc.) shall only be used to an extent which will not jeopardise sustainable forest management, taking into account all available market studies and possibilities provided by new markets and economic activities in relation to relevant ecosystem services in the forestry sector.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
8.3.2 The standard requires that sound economic performance shall be pursued, taking into account possibilities for new markets and economic activities in connection with all relevant goods and services of forests.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.3.1.3.: <i>Economic performance shall be followed, taking into account the possibilities provided by new markets and economic activities capitalising on all relevant goods and services of the forest.</i> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.3.3.1.: <i>The marketable services (tourism services, leasing, educational services, etc.) shall only be used to an extent which will not jeopardise</i>





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PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p><i>sustainable forest management, taking into account all available market studies and possibilities provided by new markets and economic activities in relation to relevant ecosystem services in the forestry sector.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>8.3.3 The standard requires that management, harvesting and regeneration operations shall be carried out at a time, and in a way, that does not reduce the productive capacity of the site, for example by avoiding damage to soil and retained stands and trees.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.3.1.4.: <i>Management, harvesting and regeneration operations shall be carried out at a time and in a manner that does not reduce production capacity, for example by avoiding damage to standing soil and trees.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.3.5.1. <i>Silvicultural treatments, tending and conducting forest stand shall be carried out in such a manner that maintains the long-term productivity of the stand and is carried out in a way that does not cause irreversible damage to forest ecosystems. Whenever possible, practical measures shall be taken to maintain or enhance biological diversity.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>8.3.4 The standard requires that harvesting levels of both wood and non-wood forest products shall not exceed a rate that can be sustained in the long term, and optimum use shall be made of the harvested products.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.3.1.1.: <i>The volume of harvested wood shall not exceed a level that can be quantitatively sustained in the long term, and the use of forest products will be done in an optimal way, taking into account the extraction of nutrients.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.3.1.2.: <i>There shall be a balance between growth and harvested volume over the last 10 years; felling may exceed the growth only in cases provided for by the regulations in force.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.3.2.1.: <i>The quantity of non-wood products harvested from forest flora or fauna shall not exceed a level that can be sustained in the long term, and the use of forest products will be done in an optimal way, taking into account the extraction of nutrients.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.3.2.2.: <i>The use of non-wood products shall be limited to an ecologically sustainable level.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
8.3.5 The standard requires that adequate infrastructure such as roads, skid tracks or bridges shall be planned, established and maintained to ensure efficient delivery of goods and services while minimising negative impacts on the environment.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.3.5.2.: <i>Adequate infrastructure, such as forest roads, collecting routes or bridges/culverts, shall be planned, built and maintained to ensure efficient transport of goods and services. It aims to minimize the negative impact on the environment. (...)</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
8.4 Criterion 4: Maintenance, conservation and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity in forest ecosystems		
8.4.1 The standard requires that management planning shall aim to maintain, conserve or enhance biodiversity on landscape, ecosystem, species and genetic levels.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.2.1.2.: <i>Technical solutions in forest management plans should aim to encourage or maintain a genetic diversity of species and appropriate structures in order to strengthen the stability, vitality and resilience of forests to adverse environmental factors and to strengthen natural regulatory mechanisms.</i> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.4.1.: <i>Silvicultural treatments shall promote irregular and mixed stands, with diverse horizontal and vertical structures, will aim to maintain, conserve or improve biodiversity at landscape, ecosystem, species and genetics levels.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
8.4.2 The standard requires that inventory, mapping and planning of forest resources shall identify, protect, conserve or set aside ecologically important forest areas. Note: This does not prohibit forest management activities that do not damage the important ecologic values of those biotopes.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 3.5. Ecologically important forest areas: <i>Ta) virgin and quasi-virgin forests included in the National Catalogue of Virgin and Quasi-Virgin Forests;</i> <i>b) scientific reserves;</i> <i>c) stands in nature reserves with strict protection regime;</i> <i>d) stands declared natural monuments;</i> <i>e) stands in strictly protected and fully protected areas of natural protected areas;</i> <i>f) junipers from the national forest fund (NFF).</i>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p><i>Note: Are considered ecologically important: habitat trees, trees of special value identified as such in various normative acts, outstanding trees outside national forest fund, trees from ageing islands and such, as well as natural marginal habitats of conservative value found on non-productive land in NFF.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 6.1.2.: <i>The inventory and mapping of forest resources shall be established and maintained in accordance with applicable legal requirements and in accordance with the requirements described in this standard.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.2.2.: <i>Maps/plans of areas with high concentrations of representative ecosystems, endemic species, threatened species (of animals and plants), Natura 2000 sites, national parks, nature parks, nature reserves, UNESCO reserves, virgin and quasi-virgin forests shall be available.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8001:2024 4.2: [Description] <i>The forest management planning, inventory, and mapping of forest resources shall identify, protect, and/or conserve ecologically important forest areas containing significant concentrations of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>a) Protected, rare, sensitive, or representative forest ecosystems;</i></li> <li><i>b) Areas containing endemic species and habitats of threatened species, as defined in official reference lists;</i></li> <li><i>c) In situ threatened or protected genetic resources;</i></li> <li><i>d) Large-scale landscape areas significant at global, regional, and national levels, with natural distribution and abundance of species occurring naturally. (...)</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>8.4.3 The standard requires that protected, threatened and endangered plant and animal species shall not be exploited for commercial purposes. Where necessary, measures shall be taken for their protection and, where relevant, to increase their population.</p> <p>Note: The requirement does not preclude trade according to CITES requirements.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.2.1.: <i>Special measures shall be taken to identify and manage forests in order to protect representative forest ecosystems, stands in protected areas, threatened species of wild animals and plants. Protected, threatened and endangered species of plants and animals shall not be exploited for commercial purposes. If necessary, measures shall be taken to protect them and, where possible, to increase their population size.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
<p>8.4.4 The standard requires that successful regeneration shall be ensured through natural regeneration or planting that is adequate to ensure the quantity and quality of the forest resources.</p>	N	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.1.2.: <i>The target composition of the stand must include a sufficient proportion of tree species of the fundamental natural forest type.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.3.1.: <i>Where possible, the natural regeneration of stands from seed should be preferred, provided it is adapted to the site conditions and satisfactory from a qualitative and quantitative point of view. If necessary, gaps in naturally established regeneration from seed can be filled in by planting.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The standard doesn't require that saplings shall be adapted to the site conditions and that regeneration shall be satisfactory from a qualitative and quantitative point of view. According to PEFC Romania, the phrase “sufficient proportion” in section 8.4.1.2 refers to a threshold that ensures the stand’s composition aligns with the fundamental natural forest type for the site. This proportion is guided by Romanian technical norms for forest management, which define specific ratios based on forest type, site conditions, and natural dynamics.</p>
<p>8.4.5 The standard requires that for reforestation and afforestation origins of native species that are well-adapted to site conditions shall be preferred. Only those introduced species, provenances or varieties shall be used whose impacts on the ecosystem and on the genetic integrity of native species and local provenances have been scientifically evaluated, and if negative impacts can be avoided or minimised.</p> <p>Note: CBD (Convention on Biological Diversity) Guiding Principles for the Prevention, Introduction, and Mitigation of Impacts of Alien Species that Threaten Ecosystems, Habitats or Species are recognised as guidance for avoidance of invasive species.</p>	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.1.1.: <i>Maintaining and/or installation of mixed stands with tree species adapted to local stationary conditions shall be promoted. Pure, naturally installed stands (from seed, stump shoots, drajons [basal shoots]) are an exception to this recommendation.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.1.2.: <i>The target composition of the stand must include a sufficient proportion of tree species of the fundamental natural forest type.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.3.1.: <i>Where possible, the natural regeneration of stands from seed should be preferred, provided it is adapted to the site conditions and satisfactory from a qualitative and quantitative point of view. If necessary, gaps in naturally established regeneration from seed can be filled in by planting.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.3.2.: <i>Allochthone tree species can be used in artificial regeneration in compliance with the provisions of good practice guidelines/ specific technical norms regarding regeneration/afforestation target compositions.</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.3.3.: <i>Allochthone tree species may be used in mixed stands if they do not affect by their natural regeneration the regeneration capacity of native tree species, that lead to their elimination.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.3.4.: <i>Forest seeds and saplings used for the installation of forestry crops must have known and verifiable origins. It must come from stands – seed sources or forest plantations included in the National Catalogue of Forest Reproductive Materials.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8001:2024 4.3: [Description] (...) <i>For afforestation and reforestation works, preference will be given, where possible, to origins of native species and local provenances that are well adapted to site conditions. Only those allochthonous species, provenances, or varieties whose impacts on the ecosystem and genetic integrity of native species and local provenances have been assessed, and if negative impacts can be avoided or minimized, will be used. (...)</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>8.4.6 The standard requires that afforestation, reforestation and other tree planting activities that contribute to the improvement and restoration of ecological connectivity shall be promoted.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.4.1.: <i>Silvicultural treatments shall promote irregular and mixed stands, with diverse horizontal and vertical structures, will aim to maintain, conserve or improve biodiversity at landscape, ecosystem, species and genetics levels.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8001:2024 4.3: [Description] (...) <i>Afforestation and reforestation works that contribute to improving and restoring ecological connectivity will be promoted.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>8.4.7 The standard requires that genetically-modified trees shall not be used.</p> <p>Note: The restriction on the usage of genetically-modified trees has been adopted by the PEFC General Assembly based on the Precautionary Principle. Until enough scientific data on genetically modified trees indicates that impacts on human and</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.3.5.: <i>Genetically modified trees shall not be used in artificial forest regeneration activities.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018. According to PEFC Romania, the term “regeneration activities” refers to all forms of stand re-establishment where human intervention is present. The requirement could be</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
animal health and the environment are equivalent to, or more positive than, those presented by trees genetically improved by traditional methods, no genetically-modified trees will be used.		interpreted as not including the establishment of plantations. According to PEFC Romania, plantations are possible but only on agricultural or degraded lands that are not in the Forest Fund [legal forest land]; thus, they are not in the certification scope.
8.4.8 The standard requires that a diversity of both horizontal and vertical structures and the diversity of species such as mixed stands shall be promoted, where appropriate. The practices shall also aim to maintain or restore landscape diversity.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.4.1.: <i>Silvicultural treatments shall promote irregular and mixed stands, with diverse horizontal and vertical structures, will aim to maintain, conserve or improve biodiversity at landscape, ecosystem, species and genetics levels.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
8.4.9 The standard requires that traditional management practices that create valuable ecosystems on appropriate sites shall be supported, where appropriate.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.6.7.5.: <i>The forest experience and knowledge of innovations and traditional practices, (...) should be optimally utilized.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
8.4.10 The standard requires that tending and harvesting operations shall be conducted in a way that does not cause lasting damage to ecosystems. Wherever possible, practical measures shall be taken to maintain or improve biological diversity.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.3.5.1.: <i>Silvicultural treatments, tending and conducting forest stand shall be carried out in such a manner that maintains the long-term productivity of the stand and is carried out in a way that does not cause irreversible damage to forest ecosystems. Whenever possible, practical measures shall be taken to maintain or enhance biological diversity.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
8.4.11 The standard requires that infrastructure shall be planned and constructed in a way that minimizes damage to ecosystems, especially to rare, sensitive or representative ecosystems and genetic reserves, and that takes threatened or other key species – in particular their migration patterns – into consideration.	N	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.3.5.2.: <i>Adequate infrastructure, such as forest roads, collecting routes or bridges/culverts, shall be planned, built and maintained to ensure efficient transport of goods and services. It aims to minimize the negative impact on the environment. In terms of management objectives, measures are being taken to balance the pressure of wildlife and domestic animal populations on forest regeneration, growth and development, as well as biodiversity.</i> <b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 does not require constructing infrastructure in a way that minimizes damage to ecosystems, especially to rare, sensitive or representative ecosystems and genetic reserves and taking the migration patterns of threatened or other key species into consideration.</p>
<p>8.4.12 The standard requires that, with due regard to management objectives, measures shall be taken to control the pressure of animal populations on forest regeneration and growth as well as on biodiversity.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.3.5.2.: (...) <i>In terms of management objectives, measures are being taken to balance the pressure of wildlife and domestic animal populations on forest regeneration, growth and development, as well as biodiversity.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.4.6.: <i>Populations of game species shall be maintained at adequate levels in accordance with the legislation in force in order to avoid significant harm to young natural or artificial regeneration and standing trees.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.4.7.: <i>Grazing in the forest of domestic animals is possible only in compliance with the provisions of the forestry legislation in force.</i><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.4.6 and 8.4.4.7 refer to legislation in relation to animal population control and grazing. The legal possibilities can potentially overwrite the benchmark objectives.</p>
<p>8.4.13 The standard requires that standing and fallen dead wood, hollow trees, old groves and rare tree species shall be left in quantities and distribution necessary to safeguard biological diversity, taking into account the potential effect on the health and stability of forests and on surrounding ecosystems.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.4.4.: <i>An adequate number of habitat trees (standing dry trees, hollow trees, trees of rare species) will be preserved and protected for the conservation of biological diversity. Their number must not lead to economic disadvantages for the forest owner.</i></p> <p><i>Note: Through adequate number to be understood a minimum of 5 trees/hectare.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.4.5.: <i>When choosing biotope trees, aspects related to forest protection, occupational safety at forestry works and forest roads will also be taken into account.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 3.5. Ecologically important forest areas: (...) <i>Note: Are considered ecologically important: habitat trees, trees of special value identified as such in various normative acts, outstanding trees outside national forest fund, trees</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p><i>from ageing islands and such, as well as natural marginal habitats of conservative value found on non-productive land in NFF.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8001:2024 4.1: [Description] <i>Trees serving as habitat, standing or fallen, trees with cavities, mature coppice stands, and trees from rare species will be retained in necessary quantities and distributions to ensure biological diversity. This consideration will include their potential impact on forest and ecosystem health and stability, as well as on occupational safety.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8001:2024 4.2: [Description] <i>The forest management planning, inventory, and mapping of forest resources shall identify, protect, and/or conserve ecologically important forest areas containing significant concentrations of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>a) Protected, rare, sensitive, or representative forest ecosystems;</i></li> <li><i>b) Areas containing endemic species and habitats of threatened species, as defined in official reference lists;</i></li> <li><i>c) In situ threatened or protected genetic resources;</i></li> <li><i>d) Large-scale landscape areas significant at global, regional, and national levels, with natural distribution and abundance of species occurring naturally.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 does not directly require leaving old groves, but similar habitat types are reflected in the requirements to preserve ecologically important forest areas.</p>
8.5 Criterion 5: Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of protective functions in forest management (notably soil and water)		
8.5.1 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.	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.5.1.1.: <i>The management of forests with water protection function shall ensure the support of the hydrological function of stands, avoiding negative effects on the quality and quantity of water resources, aquatic and riparian ecosystems.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.5.2.1.: <i>The forest, as a land-use, ensures the best protection of soils against pluvial and wind erosion, having, under certain environmental and structural conditions, special functions of consolidating unstable</i></p>





PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p><i>terrains and soils and regulating the water balance in the soil. The way these forests are managed shall preserve and improve their protective capacities.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.5.3.1.: <i>In the case of forests located in the immediate vicinity of infrastructure elements of local or national interest (motorways, public roads, normal railways, waterways, cultural monuments, etc.), their management, logging techniques and technologies shall be applied without interruption of the protective effect on protected objectives, and specific technological processes shall not prejudice the forests.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.5.4.3.: <i>Under certain environmental conditions, forests shall, as a priority, also ensure protection against harmful climatic factors (especially those located in the steppe and forest-steppe of Romania), and against pollution. The management of these forests must lead to strengthening the specific protective capacities of each forest area and to the creation of structures that have a positive effect on harmful climatic and industrial factors.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018. Chapters 8.5.1–8.5.4 of the standard establish extensive requirements related to maintaining and enhancing the protective functions of forests.</p>
<p>8.5.2 The standard requires that areas that fulfil specific and recognised protective functions for society shall be mapped, and forest management plans and operations shall ensure the maintenance or enhancement of these functions.</p>	<p>y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.5.4.4.: <i>Areas fulfilling specific and recognised protective functions for society must be mapped and forest area management plans and operations must ensure that these functions are maintained or improved.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>8.5.3 The standard requires that special care shall be given to forestry operations on sensitive soils and erosion-prone areas as well as in areas where operations might lead to excessive erosion of soil into watercourses. Techniques applied and the machinery used shall be suitable for such areas. Special</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.5.2.1.: <i>The forest, as a land-use, ensures the best protection of soils against pluvial and wind erosion, having, under certain environmental and structural conditions, special functions of consolidating unstable terrains and soils and regulating the water balance in the soil. The way these forests are managed shall preserve and improve their protective capacities.</i></p>



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PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<p>measures shall be taken to minimise the pressure of animal populations on these areas.</p>		<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.5.2.2.: <i>The management shall be focused on protecting the soil and reducing the impact of forestry operations at soil level.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.5.2.3.: <i>On lands prone to erosion and landslides harvesting operations are prohibited from being conducted under thawed and moist soil conditions. Additionally, it is recommended that these operations are not carried out through skidding or dragging, regardless of soil conditions. The techniques and equipment used must be suitable for such areas.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.5.2.4.: <i>In order to support forest vegetation in achieving land and soil protection objectives, forest management may also include special construction works (retaining walls, simple terraces, drainage, etc.) or biotechnical (terraces supported on brushwood fences, brushwood fascines, etc.) on vulnerable land areas and those adjacent to them.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.5.3.2.: <i>The construction and maintenance of forest roads and access roads must be carried out in such a way that the impact on the soil is minimal and the material resulting from excavations does not reach the watercourses. Bridges and culverts must be used when crossing watercourses whose hydraulic section can ensure the transit of exceptional flows.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.3.5.2.: (...) <i>In terms of management objectives, measures are being taken to balance the pressure of wildlife and domestic animal populations on forest regeneration, growth and development, as well as biodiversity.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.4.6.: <i>Populations of game species shall be maintained at adequate levels in accordance with the legislation in force in order to avoid significant harm to young natural or artificial regeneration and standing trees.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.4.4.7.: <i>Grazing in the forest of domestic animals is possible only in compliance with the provisions of the forestry legislation in force.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The standard does not directly require “special measures” to minimise the pressure of animal populations on sensitive soils and erosion-prone areas, but the standard establishes adequate requirements related to animal population control in general.</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<p>8.5.4 The standard requires that special care shall be given to forestry operations in forest areas with water protection functions to avoid adverse effects on the quality and quantity of water resources. Inappropriate use of chemicals or other harmful substances or inappropriate silvicultural practices influencing water quality in a harmful way shall be avoided. Downstream water balance and water quality shall not be significantly affected by the operations.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.5.1.1.: <i>The management of forests with water protection function shall ensure the support of the hydrological function of stands, avoiding negative effects on the quality and quantity of water resources, aquatic and riparian ecosystems.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.5.1.2.: <i>Watercourses, sources of mineral and drinking water and accumulations of drinking or industrial water must not be affected by forestry activities. Particular attention should be paid to riparian areas and to the quality of surface and deep waters within the perimeters of water sources.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.5.1.4.: <i>The management of forests with a water protection function shall lead to structures capable of improving the drainage regime and protect banks, floodplains of undammed watercourses, the dam-shore area and hydrotechnical installations for regulating large water courses.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.5.1.6.: <i>Particular attention shall be paid to the management of harvesting debris, such as waste from forestry activities (oil, household waste, etc.), so that river beds and water remain clean. Inappropriate use of chemicals or other harmful substances or forestry practices that negatively influence water quality must be avoided. The quantity of downstream water quality shall not be significantly affected by forestry activities.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> To make PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.5.1.6 clear, “and its” should be added between “water” and “quality”.</p>
<p>8.5.5 The standard requires that construction of roads, bridges and other infrastructure shall be carried out in a manner that minimises bare soil exposure, avoids the introduction of soil into watercourses and preserves the natural level and function of water courses and river beds. Proper road drainage facilities shall be installed and maintained.</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.3.5.2.: <i>Adequate infrastructure, such as forest roads, collecting routes or bridges/culverts, shall be planned, built and maintained to ensure efficient transport of goods and services. It aims to minimize the negative impact on the environment. (...)</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.5.1.2.: <i>Watercourses, sources of mineral and drinking water and accumulations of drinking or industrial water must not be affected by forestry</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p><i>activities. Particular attention should be paid to riparian areas and to the quality of surface and deep waters within the perimeters of water sources.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.5.3.2.: <i>The construction and maintenance of forest roads and access roads must be carried out in such a way that the impact on the soil is minimal and the material resulting from excavations does not reach the watercourses. Bridges and culverts must be used when crossing watercourses whose hydraulic section can ensure the transit of exceptional flows.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Minor nonconformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 does not require installing proper road drainage facilities.</p>
8.6 Criterion 6: Maintenance or appropriate enhancement of socio-economic functions and conditions		
8.6.1 The standard requires that forest management planning shall aim to respect all socio-economic functions of forests.	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.6.2.1.: <i>Forest planning shall aim to respect the multiple functions offered by the forest to society, taking into account the role of the forest in rural development. Therefore, the forest planning process shall give high importance to the proper identification of all social, economic and ecological functions according to the functional zoning criteria existing in the technical norms in force at the time of certification.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
8.6.2 The standard requires that adequate public access to forests for the purpose of recreation shall be provided, taking into account respect for ownership rights, safety and the rights of others, the effects on forest resources and ecosystems, as well as compatibility with other functions of the forest.	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.6.5.1.: <i>Recreational activities involving the use of motorized vehicles are allowed only with the consent of the forest owner and administrator. The administrator/ owner of certified areas will ensure access to marked trails and will appropriately signal the areas where public access is restricted to avoid potential conflicts between the public and the owner.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.6.5.2.: <i>In areas located in protected areas, the access of motorized vehicles shall be restricted, according to the legal provisions.</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.6.5.3.: <i>The forest planning system shall aim to maintain and increase the quality of recreational services offered by the forest, respecting the principles of functional zoning.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.6.5.4.: <i>In areas identified in management plans as having a recreational role, elements of structural and compositional diversity will be promoted to increase the aesthetic value of the forest.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.6.6.1.: <i>Functional zoning shall aim to assign recreational functions to forests in the vicinity of recognized historical/cultural monuments.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>8.6.3 The standard requires that sites with recognised specific historical, cultural or spiritual significance and areas fundamental to meeting the needs of indigenous peoples and local communities (e.g. health, subsistence) shall be protected or managed in a way that takes due regard of the significance of the site.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.6.6.1.: <i>Functional zoning shall aim to assign recreational functions to forests in the vicinity of recognized historical/cultural monuments.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.6.6.2.: <i>The administrator/owner of the certified area shall conduct an assessment of areas with historical, cultural, and spiritual values that may not be identified through management plans, in order to integrate forests with historical, literary, or cultural significance attested by legal documents.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.6.6.3.: <i>In forest areas identified through management plans or by the administrator/owner as having historical, cultural, and spiritual values, silvicultural works will be applied to conserve the natural structure of the forests.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>8.6.4 The standard requires that management shall promote 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 indigenous peoples.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.6.2.2.: <i>Forest management and forestry operations are carried out by employing, to the extent possible, local workforce. Where feasible, local contractors will be preferred for logging and primary wood processing.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.6.2.3.: <i>In the forest management process, it is also recommended to capitalize on non-wood products owned by the forest land owner as an alternative source of income for both the owner and local communities.</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.6.7.2.: <i>The administrator of the certified area and/or the owner shall conduct at least once a year a consultation with interested parties (local communities, NGOs, institutions, logging and processing companies) regarding the impact of forest management.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.6.7.4.: <i>Forest management planning should promote the long-term health and well-being of communities within or near forests, supported, where appropriate, by the involvement of local communities.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>8.6.5 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 indigenous peoples. Equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of such knowledge shall be encouraged.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.6.7.2.: <i>The administrator of the certified area and/or the owner shall conduct at least once a year a consultation with interested parties (local communities, NGOs, institutions, logging and processing companies) regarding the impact of forest management.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.6.7.5.: <i>The forest experience and knowledge of innovations and traditional practices, such as those of forest owners, NGOs, and local communities, should be optimally utilized. Fair sharing of benefits arising from the use of this knowledge is encouraged.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>
<p>8.6.6 The standard requires that management shall give due regard to the role of forestry in local economies. Special consideration shall be given to new opportunities for training and employment of local people, including indigenous peoples.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.6.2.2.: <i>Forest management and forestry operations are carried out by employing, to the extent possible, local workforce. Where feasible, local contractors will be preferred for logging and primary wood processing.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.6.7.6.: <i>The administrator/owner must duly consider the role of forestry in local economies. Special attention is given to new opportunities for training and employment for locals.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
8.6.7 The standard requires that forest management shall contribute to research activities and data collection needed for sustainable forest management or support relevant research activities carried out by other organisations, as appropriate.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 8.6.4.3.: <i>The certified area administrator will support research and data collection activities necessary for sustainable management of the administered forests.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
9. Performance evaluation		
9.1 Monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation		
9.1.1 The standard requires that monitoring of forest resources and evaluation of their management, including ecological, social and economic effects, shall be periodically performed, and results fed back into the planning process.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 9.1.1.: <i>The monitoring of forest resources and the evaluation of their management, including ecological, social and economic effects, shall be periodically performed, and results fed back into the planning process.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
9.1.2 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.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 9.1.2.: <i>The 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.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
9.1.3 The standard requires that where it is the responsibility of the forest owner/manager and included in forest management, the use of non-wood forest products, including hunting and fishing, shall be regulated, monitored and controlled.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 9.1.3.: <i>Where it is the responsibility of the forest owner/administrator and included in forest management, the use of non-wood forest products, including hunting and fishing, shall be regulated, monitored and controlled.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
9.1.4 The standard requires that working conditions shall be regularly monitored and adapted as necessary.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 9.1.4.: <i>Working conditions shall be regularly monitored and adapted as necessary.</i>

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
9.2 Internal audit		
9.2.1 Objectives		
The standard requires that an internal audit programme at planned intervals shall provide information on whether the management system		
a) conforms to • the organisation's requirements for its management system; • the requirements of the national sustainable forest management standard	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 9.2.1. Objectives: <i>The organisation shall plan an internal audit programme at regular intervals providing information demonstrating that the management system: a) conforms to:</i> - <i>the organisation's requirements for its management system;</i> - <i>the requirements of the national sustainable forest management standard</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
b) is effectively implemented and maintained.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 9.2.1. Objectives: <i>The organisation shall plan an internal audit programme at regular intervals providing information demonstrating that the management system: b) is effectively implemented and maintained.</i> <i>The objectives and organization of internal audit, as well as the management of non-conformities and the implementation of corrective measures are set out in the national standard PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 "Group certification – Requirements" and are also fully applicable to the individual certification of the organization.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
9.2.2 Organisation		
The standard requires that the organisation shall:		
a) plan, establish, implement and maintain an audit programme(s) including the frequency, methods, responsibilities, planning requirements and reporting, which shall take into	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 9.2.2. Organisation: <i>The organisation shall: a) plan, establish, implement and maintain an audit programme(s) including the frequency, methods, responsibilities, planning requirements and reporting, which shall take into</i>





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PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
consideration the importance of the processes concerned and the results of previous audits;		<i>consideration the importance of the processes concerned and the results of previous audits;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
b) define the audit criteria and scope for each audit;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 9.2.2. Organisation: <i>The organisation shall: b) define the audit criteria and scope for each audit;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
c) select the auditors and conduct audits to ensure objectivity and the impartiality of the audit process;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 9.2.2. Organisation: <i>The organisation shall: c) select the auditors and conduct audits to ensure objectivity and the impartiality of the audit process;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
d) ensure that the results of the audits are reported to relevant management;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 9.2.2. Organisation: <i>The organisation shall: d) ensure that the results of the audits are reported to relevant management;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
e) retain documented information as evidence of the implementation of the audit programme and the audit results.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 9.2.2. Organisation: <i>The organisation shall: e) retain documented information as evidence of the implementation of the audit programme and the audit results.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
9.3 Management review		
9.3.1 The standard requires that an annual management review shall at least include		

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
a) the status of actions from previous management reviews;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 9.3.1.: <i>The management system shall be reviewed annually and shall contain at least: a) the status of actions from previous management system reviews;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
b) changes in external and internal issues that are relevant to the management system;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 9.3.1.: <i>The management system shall be reviewed annually and shall contain at least: b) changes in external and internal issues that are relevant to the management system;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
c) information on the organisation's performance, including trends in: • nonconformities and corrective actions; • monitoring and measurement results; • audit results;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 9.3.1.: <i>The management system shall be reviewed annually and shall contain at least: c) information on the organisation's performance, including trends in:</i> - <i>non-conformities and corrective actions;</i> - <i>monitoring and measurements results;</i> - <i>audit results;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
d) opportunities for continual improvement	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 9.3.1.: <i>The management system shall be reviewed annually and shall contain at least: d) opportunities for continual improvement.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
9.3.2 The standard requires that the outputs of the management review shall include decisions related to continual improvement opportunities and any need for changes to the management system.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 9.3.2.: <i>The results of the management review shall include decisions related to continual improvement opportunities and any need for changes to the management system.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
9.3.3 The standard requires that documented information as evidence of the results of management reviews shall be retained.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 9.3.3.: <i>Documented information as evidence of the results of management reviews shall be retained for the period of validity of the certificate.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
10. Improvement		
10.1 Nonconformity and corrective action		
10.1.1 The standard requires that when a nonconformity occurs, the organisation shall:		
a) react to the nonconformity and, as applicable: i. take action to control and correct it; ii. deal with the consequences;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 10.1.1.: <i>When a non-compliance occurs, the organisation shall: a) react to non-compliance and, as applicable:</i> <i>i. take action to control and correct it;</i> <i>ii. deal with the consequences;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
b) evaluate the need for action to eliminate the causes of the nonconformity, in order that it does not recur or occur elsewhere, by: i. reviewing the nonconformity; ii. determining the causes of the nonconformity; iii. determining if similar nonconformities exist, or could potentially occur;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 10.1.1.: <i>When a non-compliance occurs, the organisation shall: b) evaluate the need for action to eliminate the causes of the nonconformity, in order that it does not recur or occur elsewhere, by:</i> <i>i. reviewing the nonconformity;</i> <i>ii. determining the causes of the nonconformity;</i> <i>iii. determining if similar nonconformities exist, or could potentially occur;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
c) implement any action needed;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 10.1.1.: <i>When a non-compliance occurs, the organisation shall: c) implement any action needed;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
d) review the effectiveness of any corrective action taken;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 10.1.1.: <i>When a non-compliance occurs, the organisation shall: d) review the effectiveness of any corrective action taken;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
e) make changes to the management system, if necessary.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 10.1.1.: <i>When a non-compliance occurs, the organisation shall: e) make changes to the management system, if necessary.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
10.1.2 The standard requires that corrective actions shall be appropriate to the effects of the nonconformities encountered.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 10.1.2.: <i>Corrective actions shall be appropriate to the effects of the non-conformities encountered.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
10.1.3 The standard requires that the organisation shall retain documented information as evidence of:		
a) the nature of the nonconformities and any subsequent actions taken;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 10.1.3.: <i>The organisation shall keep documented information for 5 years as proof of: a) the nature of the nonconformities and any subsequent actions taken;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.
b) the results of any corrective action.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 10.1.3.: <i>The organisation shall keep documented information for 5 years as proof of: b) the results of any corrective action.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.



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<b>PEFC benchmark requirement</b>	<b>YES / NO</b>	<b>Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)</b>
10.2 Continual improvement The standard requires that the suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the sustainable forest management system and the sustainable management of the forest shall be continuously improved.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 10.2. Continuous improvement: <i>The compliance, adequacy and efficiency of the sustainable forest management system and sustainable management of the forest shall be continuously improved.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1003:2018.

## PEFC Checklist 3 - Group Forest Management Certification (PEFC ST 1002:2018)

### 1 Scope

This checklist covers requirements for sustainable forest management as defined in PEFC ST 1002:2018, *Group Forest Management Certification – Requirements*.

Any inconsistencies between this text and the original referred to document will be overruled by the content and wording of the technical document.

#### PEFC Romania Reference Documents:

Document type	Document name
Normative documents	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 PEFC Romania Sustainable Forest Management Certification Scheme, May 27, 2024 (hereafter referred to as PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024) PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 Group forest management certification – Requirements, May 27, 2024 (hereafter referred to as PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024)

### 2 Checklist

PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
4. Context of the group organisation		
4.1 Understanding the group organisation and its context The standard shall define how relevant external and internal issues of the group organisation shall be determined. A general framework for the group organisation shall be determined:		
a) regional groups: group of forest owners/managers defined by regional borders and	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 4.1: <i>Regional or Group Forest Certification is a type of forest certification requested by a group organisation, which provides for the voluntary participation of individual forest owners. Given the number of forest owners, their needs and expectations, the dispersion of forest operations, and in order to ensure profitability and nondiscrimination, as well as due to the method of</i>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p><i>collecting and processing data regarding the state of the forests, a group or regional certification system is the preferred choice.</i></p> <p><i>Considering the specified factors, a certification region can be defined, but it can also be divided into several regions or groups of forest owners from different administrative units if this is more suitable for reasons of data collection, non-discrimination rules, or profitability according to a single forest management standard.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> Regional groups are defined in the standard.</p>
b) other groups and/or	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 4.1: <i>Regional or Group Forest Certification is a type of forest certification requested by a group organisation, which provides for the voluntary participation of individual forest owners. Given the number of forest owners, their needs and expectations, the dispersion of forest operations, and in order to ensure profitability and nondiscrimination, as well as due to the method of collecting and processing data regarding the state of the forests, a group or regional certification system is the preferred choice.</i></p> <p><i>Considering the specified factors, a certification region can be defined, but it can also be divided into several regions or groups of forest owners from different administrative units if this is more suitable for reasons of data collection, non-discrimination rules, or profitability according to a single forest management standard.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> Other groups are defined in the standard.</p>
c) whether there are any other specific circumstances which influence the implementation of the group management system.	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 4.1: <i>Regional or Group Forest Certification is a type of forest certification requested by a group organisation, which provides for the voluntary participation of individual forest owners. Given the number of forest owners, their needs and expectations, the dispersion of forest operations, and in order to ensure profitability and nondiscrimination, as well as due to the method of collecting and processing data regarding the state of the forests, a group or regional certification system is the preferred choice.</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p><i>Considering the specified factors, a certification region can be defined, but it can also be divided into several regions or groups of forest owners from different administrative units if this is more suitable for reasons of data collection, non-discrimination rules, or profitability according to a single forest management standard.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> Apart from splitting the regional groups into smaller ones, there seem to be no specific circumstances influencing the implementation of the group management system.</p>
4.2 Understanding the needs and expectations of affected stakeholders		
4.2.1 The standard requires that the group organisation shall identify:		
a) the affected stakeholders that are relevant for the group management system and	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 4.2.1: <i>The organisation of the group shall identify: a) affected stakeholders who are relevant to the group management system, (...)</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
b) the relevant expectations of these affected stakeholders.	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 4.2.1: <i>The organisation of the group shall identify: b) the relevant expectations of these affected stakeholders.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
4.3 Determining the scope of the group management system		
4.3.1 The standard shall provide definitions relating to the following terms, which are in conformity with the definitions of those terms presented in chapter 3:		
a) the group organisation and the elements of the group organisation (group entity and participant),	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 3.10 Group organisation: <i>A group of participants represented by the group entity for the purposes of implementation of the sustainable forest management standard and its certification. A binding written agreement shall be established between a participant and the group entity.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 3.4 Participant: <i>A forest owner/manager or other entity covered by the group certificate, who has the legal right to manage forest in a</i></p>





PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p><i>well-defined forest area and the ability to implement the requirements of the sustainable forest management standard in that area.</i></p> <p><i>Note 1: The term "ability to implement the requirements of the sustainable forest management" requires the entity to have a long-term legal right to manage the forest and disqualifies occasional contractors from participating in group certification.</i></p> <p><i>Note 2: The relationship between the terms 'group organisation', 'group entity' and 'participant' is shown in Figure 1.</i></p> <p><i>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 3.5 Group administrator: A legal 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 system. For this purpose, the group entity is using a group management system.</i></p> <p><i>Note: The structure of the group entity should follow the operations, number of participants and other basic conditions for the group organisation. It may be represented by one person.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018. Note that <i>group administrator</i> is equal to <i>group entity</i>.</p>
b) the certified area,	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 3.1 Certified area: <i>Forest area covered by a sustainable forest management system according to the PEFC Sustainable Forest Management standard (PEFC-RO ST 8000).</i></p> <p><i>In the context of group certification, the certified area is the sum of the forest areas of the participants and covered by a group forest certificate.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
c) the group certificate and	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 3.6 Group forest certificate: <i>A document confirming that the group organisation complies with the requirements of a sustainable forest management standard and other applicable requirements of the forest certification system.</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 3.7 Group forest certification: <i>Certification of the group organisation under one group forest certificate.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
<p>d) the document confirming participation in group certification.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 3.3 Document confirming participation in group forest certification: <i>A document issued to a participant that refers to the group forest certificate and that confirms the participant as being covered by the scope of the group forest certification.</i></p> <p><i>Note: This document may be for instance a sub-certificate or a confirmation of participation.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
<p>4.3.2 The standard requires that for the establishment of the scope for the group management system the boundaries and applicability of the group management system shall be determined.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 4.2.4: <i>The organisation of the group shall establish the limits and applicability of the management system to determine its scope.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 4.3 Determining the scope of the group management system: <i>Main goal of forest owners is cost effectiveness of forest certification. Romania has a large number of small-scale forest owners. Group certification provides small forest owners with equal position of selling certified timber at competitive prices. An individual certification may result in discrimination of small forest owners, particularly in higher cost per unit of area compared to large forest owners.</i></p> <p><i>Group organisation must provide written justification for decision of establishment of group certification, scope of the group management system the geographical boundaries and applicability of the group management system.</i></p> <p><i>The scope shall be made available as documented information.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
4.3.3 The standard shall define which requirements of the sustainable forest management standard may be fulfilled on group level.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 defines five SFM requirements that are on the responsibility of the group administrator in case of group certification: 4.1.2, 4.2.6, 5.1, 5.2, 7.2.5, and 9.2. This is stated explicitly in the standard along the requirements in question. <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018. <b>Comment:</b> In relation to 5.2: PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 defines that the group administrator shall make the commitment publicly available whereas PEFC ST 1002:2018 does not specify that.
4.3.4 The standard requires that the scope shall be made available as documented information.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 4.3 Determining the scope of the group management system: (...) <i>The scope shall be made available as documented information.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
4.4 Group management system		
4.4.1 The standard requires that all participants shall be subject to the internal monitoring and the internal audit programme.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 4.4.1: <i>All participants must be subject to internal monitoring, and internal audit program.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
4.4.2 The standard requires that a certified PEFC chain of custody system shall be in place if a group entity acts as a trader of forest based material not covered by group certificate.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 4.4.2: <i>If a group entity acts as a forest material dealer not covered by the group's certificate, it shall implement the PEFC chain of custody certification.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
5. Leadership		
5.1 Organisational roles, responsibilities and authorities		
5.1.1 Functions and responsibilities of the group entity The standard requires that the following functions and responsibilities of the group entity shall be specified:		



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
a) to implement and maintain an effective management system covering all participants of the group;	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 5.1.1 Functions and responsibilities of the group administrator: <i>The group administrator has the following functions and responsibilities: a) to implement and maintain an effective management system covering all participants in the group;</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
b) to represent the group organisation in the certification process, including in communications and relationships with the certification body, submission of an application for certification, and contractual relationship with the certification body;	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 5.1.1 Functions and responsibilities of the group administrator: <i>The group administrator has the following functions and responsibilities: b) to represent the group organisation in the certification process, including communications and relations with the certification body, submission of an application for certification and contractual relationship with the certification body;</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
c) to establish written procedures for the management of the group organisation;	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 5.1.1 Functions and responsibilities of the group administrator: <i>The group administrator has the following functions and responsibilities: c) to establish written procedures for managing the organisation of the group;</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
d) to establish written procedures for the acceptance of new participants of the group organisation. These acceptance procedures shall cover at least the verification of the applicant's information about contact details, clear identification of their forest property and its/their size(s)	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 5.1.1 Functions and responsibilities of the group administrator: <i>The group administrator has the following functions and responsibilities: d) to establish written procedures for the acceptance of new participants to the group's organisation. These acceptance procedures shall include at least verification of the applicant's contact information on contact details, clear identification of the forest property and its size;</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<p>e) to establish written procedures for the suspension and exclusion of participants who do not correct/close nonconformities. Group participants excluded from any certification group based on nonconformities cannot be accepted within 12 months after exclusion</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 5.1.1 Functions and responsibilities of the group administrator: <i>The group administrator has the following functions and responsibilities: e) to establish written procedures for suspending and excluding participants who fail to correct/close non-compliances. Panel participants excluded from any certification group on the basis of non-compliances cannot be accepted within 12 months of exclusion</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.  <b>Comment:</b> The requirement refers to <i>panel participants</i> instead of <i>group participants</i>.</p>
<p>f) to keep documented information of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. the group entity and participants' conformity with the requirements of the sustainable forest management standard, and other applicable requirements of the forest certification system,</li> <li>ii. all participants, including their contact details, identification of their forest property and its/their size(s),</li> <li>iii. the certified area,</li> <li>iv. the implementation of an internal monitoring programme, its review and any preventive and/or corrective actions taken;</li> </ul>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 5.1.1 Functions and responsibilities of the group administrator: <i>The group administrator has the following functions and responsibilities: f) to keep documented information about:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>i. compliance of the group administrator and participants with the requirements of the forest management standard and other applicable requirements of the forest certification system;</i></li> <li><i>ii. all participants, including their contact details, identification of the forest property and its size;</i></li> <li><i>iii. the certified area;</i></li> <li><i>iv. the implementation of an internal monitoring programme, its revision and any preventive and/or corrective actions taken;</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
<p>g) to establish connections with all participants based on a binding written agreement which shall include the participants' commitment to comply with the sustainable forest management standard. The group entity shall have a written contract or other written agreement with all participants covering the right of the group entity to implement and enforce any corrective or preventive measures, and to initiate the exclusion of any</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 5.1.1 Functions and responsibilities of the group administrator: <i>The group administrator has the following functions and responsibilities: g) to establish links with all participants on the basis of a binding written agreement including participants' commitment to comply with the forest management standard. The group administrator must have a written contract or other written agreement with all participants covering the right of the group administrator to implement and enforce compliance with any corrective or</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<p>participant from the scope of certification in the event of nonconformity with the sustainable forest management standard;            Note: The requirements for “participant’ commitment” and “written contract or other written agreement with all participants” may also be satisfied by the commitment of and written agreement of a pre-existing organisation or group or the members participation, such as a forest owners’/managers’ association, SFM programme and submission to tax programming, where the organisation can demonstrate that it has a legal mandate to represent the participants and where its commitment and the terms and conditions of the contract are enforceable.</p>		<p><i>preventive measures and to initiate exclusion of any participant from the scope of certification in case of non-compliance with the sustainable forest management standard;</i>  <i>Note: The requirement for participants’ ‘written consent’ and ‘commitment’ is also satisfied by the written commitment and consent of a pre-existing organisation or group, such as a forest owner/manager association, if the organisation can demonstrate that it has a legal mandate to represent participants and if its commitment and terms and conditions of the contract are enforceable.</i>  <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
<p>h) to provide all participants with a document confirming participation in the group forest certification;</p>	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 5.1.1 Functions and responsibilities of the group administrator: <i>The group administrator has the following functions and responsibilities: h) to provide all participants with a document confirming their participation in the group’s forest certification;</i>  <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
<p>i) to provide all participants with information and guidance required for the effective implementation and maintenance of the sustainable forest management standard and other applicable requirements of the forest certification system;</p>	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 5.1.1 Functions and responsibilities of the group administrator: <i>The group administrator has the following functions and responsibilities: i) to provide all participants with the necessary information and support for the effective implementation and maintenance of the sustainable forest management standard and other applicable requirements of the forest certification system;</i>  <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
<p>j) to address nonconformities reported from group members which were identified under other PEFC certifications than the particular group certification and to ensure implementation with all group members;</p>	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 5.1.1 Functions and responsibilities of the group administrator: <i>The group administrator has the following functions and responsibilities: j) address nonconformities reported by group members that have been identified during PEFC certifications other than group specific certification and ensure implementation with all group members;</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
<p>k) to operate an internal monitoring programme that provides for the evaluation of the participants' conformity with the certification requirements;</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 5.1.1 Functions and responsibilities of the group administrator: <i>The group administrator has the following functions and responsibilities: k) operate an internal monitoring programme that provides for the evaluation of the participants conformity with the certification requirements;</i>  <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
<p>l) to operate an annual internal audit programme covering both group members and group entity;</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 5.1.1 Functions and responsibilities of the group administrator: <i>The group administrator has the following functions and responsibilities: l) to operate an annual internal audit programme covering both group members and group administrator;</i>  <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
<p>m) to operate a management review of the group forest certification and acting on the results from the review;</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 5.1.1 Functions and responsibilities of the group administrator: <i>The group administrator has the following functions and responsibilities: m) to operate a management review of the group forest certification and acting on the results from the review;</i>  <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
<p>n) to provide full co-operation and assistance in responding effectively to all requests from the certification body, accreditation body, PEFC International or the National Governing Body for relevant data, documentation or other information; allowing access to the forest area covered by the group organisation and other facilities, whether in connection with formal audits or reviews or otherwise related or with implications for the management system.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 5.1.1 Functions and responsibilities of the group administrator: <i>The group administrator has the following functions and responsibilities: n) to provide full cooperation and assistance to respond effectively to all requests from the certification body, accreditation body, PEFC International or PEFC Romania for data, documentation or other relevant information; allowing access to the forest area covered by the group organisation and other facilities, whether in connection with formal audits or reviews, or otherwise related to or with implications for the management system.</i>  <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
<p>5.1.2 Function and responsibilities of participants</p> <p>The standard requires that the following functions and responsibilities of the participants shall be specified:</p>		
<p>a) to provide the group entity with a binding written agreement, including a commitment on conformity with the sustainable forest management standard and other applicable requirements of the forest certification system; group participants excluded from any certification group cannot apply for group membership within 12 months after exclusion.</p> <p>Note: The requirement for “written agreement” and participants’ “commitment” is also satisfied by the commitment of and written agreement of a pre-existing organisation or group or the members participation, such as a forest owners’/managers’ association, SFM programme and submission to tax programming, where the organisation can demonstrate that it has a legal mandate to represent the participants and where its commitment and the terms and conditions of the contract are enforceable.</p>	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 5.1.2 Function and responsibilities of participants: <i>Participants have the following functions and responsibilities: a) to provide the group entity with a binding written agreement, including a commitment on conformity with the sustainable forest management standard and other applicable requirements of the forest certification system; group participants excluded from any certification group cannot apply for group membership within 12 months after exclusion;</i></p> <p><i>Note: The requirement for participants’ ‘written consent’ and ‘commitment’ is also satisfied by the written commitment and consent of a pre-existing organisation or group, such as a forest owner/manager association, if the organisation can demonstrate that it has a legal mandate to represent participants and if its commitment and terms and conditions of the contract are enforceable.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
<p>b) to provide the group entity with information about previous group participation;</p>	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 5.1.2 Function and responsibilities of participants: <i>Participants have the following functions and responsibilities: b) to provide the group manager with information about previous group participation;</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
<p>c) to comply with the sustainable forest management standard and other applicable requirements of the certification system as well as with the requirements of the management system;</p>	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 5.1.2 Function and responsibilities of participants: <i>Participants have the following functions and responsibilities: c) to comply with the forest management standard and other applicable requirements of the certification system as well as with the requirements of the management system;</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>





PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<p>d) to provide full co-operation and assistance in responding effectively to all requests from the group entity, or certification body for relevant data, documentation or other information; allowing access to the forest and other facilities, whether in connection with formal audits or reviews or otherwise related or with implications for the management system;</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 5.1.2 Function and responsibilities of participants: <i>Participants have the following functions and responsibilities: d) to provide full cooperation and assistance to respond effectively to all requests from the group administrator or certification body for data, documentation or other relevant information; allowing access to the forest and other facilities, whether in connection with formal audits or reviews, or otherwise related to or with implications for the management system;</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
<p>e) to inform the group entity about nonconformities identified under other PEFC certifications than the particular group certification.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 5.1.2 Function and responsibilities of participants: <i>Participants have the following functions and responsibilities: e) to inform the group administrator about nonconformities identified under other PEFC certifications than the particular group certification;</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
<p>f) to implement relevant corrective and preventive actions established by the group entity.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 5.1.2 Function and responsibilities of participants: <i>Participants have the following functions and responsibilities: f) implement relevant corrective and preventive actions set out by the group administrator.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
<p>5.2 Commitment and policy</p>		
<p>5.2.1 The standard requires that the group entity shall provide a commitment:</p>		
<p>a) to comply with the sustainable forest management standard and other applicable requirements of the certification system;</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 5.2.1: <i>The group administrator shall provide a commitment to: a) comply with the sustainable forest management standard and other applicable requirements of the certification system;</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
b) to integrate the group certification requirements in the group management system;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 5.2.1: <i>The group administrator shall provide a commitment to: b) integrate group certification requirements into the group management system;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
c) to continuously improve the group management system;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 5.2.1: <i>The group administrator shall provide a commitment to: c) continuously improve the group management system;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
d) to continuously support the improvement of the sustainable management of the land/forests by the participants.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 5.2.1: <i>The group administrator shall provide a commitment to: d) continuously support the improvement of forest management management by participants.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
5.2.2 The commitment of the group entity may be part of a group management policy and shall be publicly available as documented information upon request.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 5.2.2: <i>The group administrator commitment may form part of a group management policy and, upon request, shall be made publicly available in the form of documented information.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
5.2.3 The standard requires that the participants shall provide a commitment		
a) to follow the rules of the management system;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 5.2.3: <i>Participants shall provide a commitment to: a) follow the rules of the management system;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
b) to implement the requirements of the sustainability standard in their operations in their area.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 5.2.3: <i>Participants shall provide a commitment to: b) implement the requirements of the sustainability standard in operations in their area.</i>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
6. Planning		
6.1 Actions to address risks and opportunities		
6.1 The standard requires that if a group organisation plans any changes in the group management system, these changes shall be included in a group management plan.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 6.1: <i>Where a group organisation plans any changes to the group management system, those changes shall be included in the group management plan.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
6.2 The standard requires that if a group organisation decides to fulfil requirements of the sustainable forest management standard on the group level, these requirements shall be considered in a group management plan.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 6.2: <i>Where a group organisation decides to meet the requirements of the sustainable forest management standard at group level, these requirements shall be considered in a group management plan.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
7. Support		
7.1 The standard requires that resources needed for the establishment, implementation, maintenance and continual improvement of the group management system shall be determined and provided.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 7.1: <i>The group administrator must determine, and participants must provide, the necessary resources for the establishment, implementation, maintenance and continuous improvement of the group management system.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
7.2 The standard shall define the necessary competence of persons doing work in the group management system.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 7.2: <i>Persons working in the group management system shall have the necessary knowledge of forestry as well as sufficient knowledge of the forest management standard and other relevant requirements of sustainable forest management certification of PEFC Romania.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
7.3 The standard requires that communication processes shall be in place to raise the awareness of participants concerning:		
a) the group management policy;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 7.3: <i>The group administrator must ensure that communication processes are in place to raise participants' awareness of: a) group management policy;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
b) the requirements of the sustainable forest management standard;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 7.3: <i>The group administrator must ensure that communication processes are in place to raise participants' awareness of: b) requirements of the sustainable forest management standard;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
c) their contribution to the effectiveness of the group management system and the sustainable forest management, including the benefits of improved group performance;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 7.3: <i>The group administrator must ensure that communication processes are in place to raise participants' awareness of: c) their contribution to the effectiveness of the group's management system and to sustainable forest management, including the benefits of improving group performance;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
d) the implications of not conforming with the group management system requirements.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 7.3: <i>The group administrator must ensure that communication processes are in place to raise participants' awareness of: d) the implications of non-compliance with the requirements of the group management system.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
7.4 The standard requires that the internal and external communications relevant to the group management system shall be determined. This includes:		
a) on what to communicate;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 7.4: <i>The group administrator shall determine and manage relevant internal and external communication and use appropriate tools for information exchange. These include: a) What to communicate</i>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
b) when to communicate;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 7.4: <i>The group administrator shall determine and manage relevant internal and external communication and use appropriate tools for information exchange. These include: b) When to communicate</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
c) with whom to communicate;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 7.4: <i>The group administrator shall determine and manage relevant internal and external communication and use appropriate tools for information exchange. These include: c) Who they should communicate with</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
d) how to communicate.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 7.4: <i>The group administrator shall determine and manage relevant internal and external communication and use appropriate tools for information exchange. These include: d) How to communicate</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
7.5 The standard requires that appropriate mechanisms shall be in place for resolving complaints and disputes relating to group management and sustainable forest management operations.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 7.5: <i>The group administrator should develop and implement appropriate mechanisms for resolving complaints and disputes related to group management and forest management operations.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
7.6 The standard requires that the documented information relevant to the group management system and the conformance with the requirements of the sustainable forest management standard is:		
a) up to date;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 7.6: <i>The documented information relevant to the group management system and compliance with the requirements of the forest management standard shall be: a) up to date;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
b) available and suitable for use, where and when it is needed;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 7.6: <i>The documented information relevant to the group management system and compliance with the requirements of the forest management standard shall be: b) available and suitable for use, where and when it is needed;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
c) adequately protected against loss of confidentiality, improper use, or loss of integrity.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 7.6: <i>The documented information relevant to the group management system and compliance with the requirements of the forest management standard shall be: c) adequately protected against loss of confidentiality, misuse or loss of integrity.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
8. Operation		
8.1 The standard requires that the group organisation shall plan, implement and control processes needed:		
a) to meet the requirements of the group certification standard and the sustainable forest management standard and	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 8.1: <i>The group administrator must plan, implement, and control the processes necessary to: a) meet the requirements of the Group Certification Standard and the Sustainable Forest Management Standard, (...)</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
b) to implement the actions determined in 6.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 8.1: <i>The group administrator must plan, implement, and control the processes necessary to: b) implement the actions set out in chapter 6.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
8.2 The standard requires that this planning, implementing and controlling shall be done by:		



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
a) defining the necessary processes and establishing criteria for those;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 8.2: <i>Such planning, implementation and control shall be carried out through: a) defining the necessary processes and establishing criteria for them;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
b) implementing control of the processes in accordance with the criteria;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 8.2: <i>Such planning, implementation and control shall be carried out through: b) implementation of process control in accordance with the criteria;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
c) keeping documented information to the extent necessary to have confidence that the processes have been carried out as planned.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 8.2: <i>Such planning, implementation and control shall be carried out through: c) keeping documents so that it can be trusted that processes have been carried out as planned.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
9. Performance evaluation		
9.1 Monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation		
9.1.1 The standard requires that an ongoing internal monitoring programme provides confidence in the conformity of the group organisation with the sustainable forest management standard. In particular, it shall be determined:		
a) what shall be monitored and measured;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.1.2: <i>An internal continuous monitoring program provides confidence in the compliance of the group's organization with the forest management standard. In particular, it shall establish: a) what is to be monitored and measured;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
b) the methods for monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation, as applicable, to ensure valid results;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.1.2: <i>An internal continuous monitoring program provides confidence in the compliance of the group's organization with the forest management standard. In particular, it shall establish: b) the methods of</i>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<i>monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation methods, as appropriate, to ensure valid results;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
c) when the monitoring and measuring shall be performed;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.1.2: <i>An internal continuous monitoring program provides confidence in the compliance of the group's organization with the forest management standard. In particular, it shall establish: c) when monitoring and measurement is carried out;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
d) when the results from monitoring and measurement shall be analysed and evaluated;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.1.2: <i>An internal continuous monitoring program provides confidence in the compliance of the group's organization with the forest management standard. In particular, it shall establish: d) when the results from monitoring and measurement shall be analyzed and evaluated;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
e) what documented information shall be available as evidence of the results.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.1.2: <i>An internal continuous monitoring program provides confidence in the compliance of the group's organization with the forest management standard. In particular, it shall establish: e) what documented information shall be available as evidence of the results.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
9.1.2 The standard requires that the group entity shall evaluate the group management performance and the effectiveness of the group management system concerning the implementation of the sustainable forest management requirements.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.1.1: <i>The group administrator must implement an internal monitoring program to measure and analyze its compliance with this standard and the PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 sustainable forest management standard.</i>  PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.1.3: <i>The internal monitoring programme shall assess annually the following elements:</i>





PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p><i>a) compliance with the Sustainable Forest Management Standard (PEFC-RO ST 8000) and other relevant requirements of the PEFC Romania certification system.</i></p> <p><i>b) compliance with legal requirements for forest management (in particular the current Forest Code).</i></p> <p><i>c) the activities of the group organisation or individual participants with regard to the fulfilment of the requirements of the national group certification standard and their own requirements for the group management system and its actual introduction and maintenance;</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.1.4: <i>The following activities may be elements of an internal monitoring programme:</i></p> <p><i>a) assessment using an internal inspection/review or quality management system or participant control;</i></p> <p><i>b) internal on-site inspections carried out or commissioned by the group organisation;</i></p> <p><i>c) independent third-party evaluations of participants;</i></p> <p><i>d) assessments carried out by forestry associations;</i></p> <p><i>e) other independent assessments of participants' compliance with PEFC requirements.</i></p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.1.5: <i>The group administrator shall assess the performance of the group management and the effectiveness of the group management system in implementing sustainable forest management requirements.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
9.2 Internal audit		
9.2.1 Objectives		
9.2.1.1 The standard requires that an annual internal audit programme shall provide information on whether the group management system:		



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
a) conforms to i. the group organisation's own requirements for its group management system; ii. the requirements of the national group certification standard;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.2.1.1: <i>The annual internal audit programme shall provide information on whether the group management system: a) comply</i> <i>i. the group organisation's own requirements for its group management system;</i> <i>ii. the requirements of the national group certification standard;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
b) ensures the implementation of the sustainable forest management standard on the participant level;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.2.1.1: <i>The annual internal audit programme shall provide information on whether the group management system: b) ensures the implementation of the sustainable forest management standard at participant level;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
c) is effectively implemented and maintained.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.2.1.1: <i>The annual internal audit programme shall provide information on whether the group management system: c) is effectively implemented and maintained.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
9.2.1.2 The standard requires that the internal audit programme shall cover the group entity and all group participants. The group entity shall be audited annually. The participants may be selected on a sample basis.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.2.1.2: <i>The internal audit programme shall cover the group administrator and all participants in the group. The group administrator must be audited annually. Participants can be selected on a sample basis.</i> <i>Note: For group organizations with up to and including 10 participants, all participants must be verified.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
9.2.2 Organisation		
The standard requires an internal audit programme which shall cover at least:		



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
a) planning, establishing, implementing and maintaining an audit programme(s) including the frequency, methods, responsibilities, planning requirements and reporting, which shall take into consideration the importance of the processes concerned and the results of previous audits;	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.2.2.1: <i>The group administrator must define and implement the internal monitoring programme. It must include at least: a) planning, establishing, implementing and maintaining an audit programme(s) including the frequency, methods, responsibilities, planning requirements and reporting, which shall take into consideration the importance of the processes concerned and the results of previous audits;</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
b) definition of the audit criteria and scope for each audit;	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.2.2.1: <i>The group administrator must define and implement the internal monitoring programme. It must include at least: b) definition of the audit criteria and scope for each audit;</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
c) competence of internal auditor (forest knowledge, standard knowledge);	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.2.2.1: <i>The group administrator must define and implement the internal monitoring programme. It must include at least: c) competence of internal auditor (forest knowledge, standard knowledge);</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
d) selection of auditors and conducting of audits to ensure objectivity and the impartiality of the audit process;	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.2.2.1: <i>The group administrator must define and implement the internal monitoring programme. It must include at least: d) selection of auditors and conducting of audits to ensure objectivity and the impartiality of the audit process;</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
e) ensuring that the results of the audits are reported to relevant group management;	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.2.2.1: <i>The group administrator must define and implement the internal monitoring programme. It must include at least: e) ensuring that the results of the audits are reported to relevant group management;</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
f) retaining of the documented information as evidence of the implementation of the audit programme and the audit results.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.2.2.1: <i>The group administrator must define and implement the internal monitoring programme. It must include at least: f) retaining of the documented information as evidence of the implementation of the audit programme and the audit results.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
9.3 Selection of participants in the internal audit programme		
9.3.1 General		
9.3.1.1 The standard requires the establishment of requirements for the selection of participants in the internal audit programme. These requirements shall include the following procedures for:	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.3 Selection of participants in the internal audit program <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018. Chapter 9.3 establishes the requirements and the procedures for selecting the participants in the internal audit programme.
a) determination of the sample size (9.3.2);	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.3.1 Determination of sample size <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018. Chapter 9.3.1 establishes the requirements and the procedures for determining the sample size in the internal audit programme.
b) determination of sample categories (9.3.3);	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.3.2 Determination of sample categories <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018. Chapter 9.3.2 establishes the requirements and the procedures for determining the sample categories in the internal audit programme.
c) distribution of the sample to the categories (9.3.4);	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.3.3 Sample distribution: <i>The sample shall be distributed to categories according to the outcome of the risk assessment.</i>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
<p>d) selection of the participants (9.3.5).</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.3.4 Selection of participants  PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.3.4.1: <i>At least 25 % of the sample must be selected randomly.</i>  PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.3.4.2: <i>A risk-based procedure shall be specified for the selection of participants.</i>  <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
<p>9.3.1.2 The standard may define additional requirements on the regional, national or sub-national level.</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p><b>Conclusion: Not applicable</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 does not define additional requirements on the regional, national or sub-national level.</p>
<p>9.3.1.3 The standard shall define additional sampling requirements in case of participation of pre-existing organisations or group or the members participation, such as a forest owners'/managers' association, SFM programme and submission to tax programming which have their own members.</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.3.1.2: <i>The sample size shall be: d) In case of participation in pre-existing organisations or group or the members participation, such as a forest owners'/managers' association should be additionally sampled. The square root formula shall be used in steps for total number of forest owners'/managers covered by the group certificate and for number of participants. The first result must be divided proportionally to the participants number from the second result. During the period of the certificate, each participant shall be audited at least once.</i>  <i>Note: Example</i>  <i>Group composed by 5 participants associations of owners'/managers with 6,9,16,16 and 17 members.</i>  <i>Calculation:</i>  <math>6+9+16+16+17= 64</math> total members  <math>\sqrt{64}=8</math> members to be audited from 3 participants.  <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
9.3.2 Determination of the sample size		
9.3.2.1 The sample size shall be calculated for the participants of the group organisation.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.3.1.1: <i>The sample size shall be calculated taking into account all participants in the group's organisation.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
9.3.2.2 The size of the sample generally should be the square root of the number of participants: ( $y=\sqrt{x}$ ), rounded to the upper whole number.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.3.1.2: <i>The sample size shall be: a) square root of number of participants: (<math>y = \sqrt{x}</math>), rounded to the upper whole number in case of first assessment</i> <i>b) If previous inspections have proven effective in meeting the targets, the sample size may be reduced to <math>y=0,6\sqrt{x}</math>, rounded up to the next integer.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
9.3.2.3 The size of the sample may be adapted by a standard taking into account one or more of the following indicators:		
a) results of a risk assessment. In this case deviations of sample sizes in case of low or high risk for individual categories shall be defined;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.3.1.3: <i>The sample size may be adapted taking into account one or more of the following indicators: a) the results of a risk assessment. In this case, deviations of sample sizes in case of low or high risk shall be defined for individual categories;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
b) results of internal audits or previous certification audits;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.3.1.3: <i>The sample size may be adapted taking into account one or more of the following indicators: b) results of previous internal or certification audits;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
c) quality / level of confidence of the internal monitoring programme;	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.3.1.3: <i>The sample size may be adapted taking into account one or more of the following indicators: c) quality/confidence level of the internal monitoring programme;</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
<p>d) use of technologies allowing the gathering of information concerning specified requirements;</p> <p>Note: Such technologies may be e.g. the use of satellite data or drones and allow compliance statements for specific requirements of a sustainability standard or support the risk based sampling.</p>	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.3.1.3: <i>The sample size may be adapted taking into account one or more of the following indicators: d) use of technologies that allow the collection of information on specified requirements;</i></p> <p><i>Note: Such technologies can be, for example, the use of satellite data, drones or LIDAR technology and allow declarations of conformity for specific requirements of a sustainability standard or support risk-based sampling.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
<p>e) based on other means of gathering information about activities on the ground.</p> <p>Note: One way could be a survey with participants who provide some information about their activities on the ground.</p>	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.3.1.3: <i>The sample size may be adapted taking into account one or more of the following indicators: e) on the basis of other means of collecting information on activities carried out on the ground.</i></p> <p><i>Note: One way could be a survey with participants who provide some information about their activities on the ground.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
9.3.3 Determination of sample categories		
9.3.3.1 The sample categories shall be established based on the results of a risk assessment. The indicators used in the risk assessment shall reflect the geographical scope of the standard. The following non exhaustive list of indicators may be used for the risk assessment:		
a) ownership type (e.g. state forest, communal forest, private forest);	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.3.2.1: <i>The categories of samples shall be established on the basis of the results of a risk assessment. The indicators used in the risk assessment reflect the geographical scope of the standard. The following non-exhaustive list of indicators may be used for risk assessment: a) type of property (e.g. state forest, UAT-owned forest, private forest);</i></p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
b) size of management units (different size classes);	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.3.2.1: <i>The categories of samples shall be established on the basis of the results of a risk assessment. The indicators used in the risk assessment reflect the geographical scope of the standard. The following non-exhaustive list of indicators may be used for risk assessment: b) size of management units (different size classes);</i>  <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
c) biogeographic region (e.g. lowlands, low mountain range, high mountain range);	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.3.2.1: <i>The categories of samples shall be established on the basis of the results of a risk assessment. The indicators used in the risk assessment reflect the geographical scope of the standard. The following non-exhaustive list of indicators may be used for risk assessment: c) geographical region (e.g. plains, hills, low mountain ranges, high mountain ranges);</i>  <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
d) operations, processes and products of potential group participants;	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.3.2.1: <i>The categories of samples shall be established on the basis of the results of a risk assessment. The indicators used in the risk assessment reflect the geographical scope of the standard. The following non-exhaustive list of indicators may be used for risk assessment: d) operations, processes and products of potential participants in the group;</i>  <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
e) deforestation and forest conversion;	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.3.2.1: <i>The categories of samples shall be established on the basis of the results of a risk assessment. The indicators used in the risk assessment reflect the geographical scope of the standard. The following non-exhaustive list of indicators may be used for risk assessment: e) deforestation and forest conversion;</i>  <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p>





PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
f) rotation period(s);	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.3.2.1: <i>The categories of samples shall be established on the basis of the results of a risk assessment. The indicators used in the risk assessment reflect the geographical scope of the standard. The following non-exhaustive list of indicators may be used for risk assessment: f) rotation period(s);</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
g) richness of biological diversity;	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.3.2.1: <i>The categories of samples shall be established on the basis of the results of a risk assessment. The indicators used in the risk assessment reflect the geographical scope of the standard. The following non-exhaustive list of indicators may be used for risk assessment: g) richness of biological diversity;</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
h) recreation and other socio-economic functions of the forest;	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.3.2.1: <i>The categories of samples shall be established on the basis of the results of a risk assessment. The indicators used in the risk assessment reflect the geographical scope of the standard. The following non-exhaustive list of indicators may be used for risk assessment: h) recreation and other socio-economic functions of the forest;</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
i) dependence of and interaction with local communities and indigenous people;	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.3.2.1: <i>The categories of samples shall be established on the basis of the results of a risk assessment. The indicators used in the risk assessment reflect the geographical scope of the standard. The following non-exhaustive list of indicators may be used for risk assessment: i) dependence on and interaction with local communities;</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
j) available resources for administration, operations, training and research;	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.3.2.1: <i>The categories of samples shall be established on the basis of the results of a risk assessment. The indicators used in the risk assessment reflect the geographical scope of the standard. The following non-exhaustive list of indicators may be used for risk assessment: j) resources available for administration, operations, training and research;</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
k) governance and law enforcement.	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.3.2.1: <i>The categories of samples shall be established on the basis of the results of a risk assessment. The indicators used in the risk assessment reflect the geographical scope of the standard. The following non-exhaustive list of indicators may be used for risk assessment: k) governance and law enforcement.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
9.3.3.2 Conditions which constitute risk for each indicator on low, medium and high level and the respective consequences for the sampling shall be defined.	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.3.2.2: <i>The conditions constituting risk for each low, medium and high indicator and the respective consequences for sampling shall be defined.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
9.3.4 Distribution of the sample The sample shall be distributed to the categories according to the result of the risk assessment.	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.3.3 Sample distribution: <i>The sample shall be distributed to categories according to the outcome of the risk assessment.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
9.3.5 Selection of the participants		
9.3.5.1 At least 25% of the sample should be selected at random.	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.3.4 Selection of participants, 9.3.4.1: <i>At least 25 % of the sample must be selected randomly.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
9.3.5.2 A risk-based procedure for the selection of the participants shall be specified.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.3.4 Selection of participants, 9.3.4.2: <i>A risk-based procedure shall be specified for the selection of participants.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
9.4 Management review		
9.4.1 The standard requires that an annual management review shall at least include:		
a) the status of actions from previous management reviews;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.4.1: <i>The annual review by the group administrator shall include at least: a) the status of actions in previous reviews;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
b) changes in external and internal issues that are relevant to the group management system;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.4.1: <i>The annual review by the group administrator shall include at least: b) changes in external and internal aspects that are relevant to the group's management system;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
c) the status of conformity with the sustainable forest management standard, that includes reviewing the results of the internal monitoring programme, the internal audit and the certification body's evaluations and surveillance;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.4.1: <i>The annual review by the group administrator shall include at least: c) the status of compliance with the sustainable forest management standard, which includes review of the results of the internal monitoring programme, internal audit and evaluations and supervision of the certification body;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
d) information on the group performance, including trends in: i. nonconformities and corrective actions; ii. monitoring and measurement results; iii. audit results;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.4.1: <i>The annual review by the group administrator shall include at least: d) information on the group's performance, including trends in:</i> <i>i. non-conformities and corrective actions;</i> <i>ii. monitoring and measurement results;</i>



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
		<i>iii. audit results;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
e) opportunities for continual improvement.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.4.1: <i>The annual review by the group administrator shall include at least: e) opportunities for continuous improvement.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
9.4.2 The standard requires that the outputs of the management review shall include decisions related to continual improvement opportunities and any need for changes to the group management system.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.4.2: <i>The results of the analysis carried out by the group administrator shall include decisions related to opportunities for continuous improvement and any need to changes to the group management system.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
9.4.3 The standard requires that the group organisation shall retain documented information as evidence of the results of management reviews.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 9.4.3: <i>The group administrator shall keep documented information as evidence of the results of the analyses carried out.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
10. Improvement		
10.1 Nonconformity and corrective action		
10.1.1 The standard requires when a nonconformity occurs, the group organisation shall:		
a) react to the nonconformity and, as applicable: i. take action to control and correct it; ii. deal with the consequences;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 10.1.1: <i>When a non-compliance occurs, the group organization shall: a) react to non-compliance and, where appropriate: i. take measures to control and correct it; ii. cope with the consequences;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
b) evaluate the need for action to eliminate the causes of the nonconformity, in order that it does not recur or occur elsewhere, by: i. reviewing the nonconformity; ii. determining the causes of the nonconformity; iii. determining if similar nonconformities exist, or could potentially occur;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 10.1.1: <i>When a non-compliance occurs, the group organization shall: b) assess the need for action to eliminate the causes of non-compliance, so that it does not recur or occur elsewhere, by:</i> <i>i. review of non-compliance;</i> <i>ii. determining the causes of non-compliance;</i> <i>iii. determining whether similar non-compliances exist or could occur;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
c) implement any action needed;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 10.1.1: <i>When a non-compliance occurs, the group organization shall: c) implement any necessary action;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
d) review the effectiveness of any corrective action taken;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 10.1.1: <i>When a non-compliance occurs, the group organization shall: d) review the effectiveness of any corrective actions taken;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
e) make changes to the group management system, if necessary.	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 10.1.1: <i>When a non-compliance occurs, the group organization shall: e) make changes to the group management system, if necessary.</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.
10.1.2 The standard requires that the group organisation shall retain documented information as evidence of:		
a) the nature of the nonconformities and any subsequent actions taken;	Y	PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 10.1.2: <i>The group organization shall maintain documented information as proof of: a) the nature of the non-conformities and any follow-up action taken;</i> <b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.



PEFC benchmark requirement	YES / NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
b) the results of any corrective action.	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 10.1.2: <i>The group organization shall maintain documented information as proof of: b) the results of any corrective action.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
<p>10.1.3 The standard requires that a participant who was excluded from a group certification shall be internally audited by the group entity before it is allowed to re-enter the group certification. The internal audit shall not take place sooner than 12 months after the exclusion.</p>	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 10.1.3: <i>A participant who has been excluded from a group certification shall to be internally audited by the group administrator before being allowed to re-enter the group certification. Internal audit shall not take place earlier than 12 months after exclusion.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>
<p>10.2 Continual improvement</p> <p>The standard requires that the suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the group management system and the sustainable management of the forest shall be continuously improved.</p>	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 10.2 Continuous improvement: <i>Adequacy and effectiveness of the group management system and sustainable forest management will be continuously improved.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> PEFC-RO ST 8010:2024 is in line with PEFC ST 1002:2018.</p>

## PEFC Checklist 4 – Certification and Accreditation Procedures (Annex 6)

### 1 Scope

This document covers the requirements for certification and accreditation procedures for PEFC forest management certification outlined in Annex 6 of the PEFC Council Technical Document (*Certification and accreditation procedures*).

#### PEFC Romania Reference Documents:

Document type	Document name
Normative	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024 - PEFC Romania Sustainable Forest Management Certification Scheme, May 27, 2024 (hereafter referred to as PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024)
	PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024 - Requirements for Certification Bodies operating Certification against PEFC Romania Forest Management Standards, 2024 (hereafter referred to as PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024)
	PEFC-RO ST 8014:2024 - Notification of certification bodies for assessing sustainable forest management in Romania, 2024 (hereafter referred to as PEFC-RO ST 8014:2024)

### 2 Checklist

No.	PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
<b>Certification Bodies</b>			
1.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification shall be carried out by impartial, independent third parties that cannot be involved in the standard setting process as governing or decision making body, or in the forest management and are independent of the certified entity?	Annex 6, 3.1 Y	PEFC-RO ST 8000:2024. <i>Introduction. Certification – Demonstration of compliance with the requirements of the standard. ...Certification, in order to be credible, requires certification decisions to be impartial, independent and competent. This means that standard-setting, certification and accreditation must be completely separate to eliminate the risk of conflicts of interest and ensure the highest level of competence:</i>



No.	PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>- The setting of standards and the process for defining certification requirements are carried out by PEFC Romania in collaboration with stakeholders.</p> <p>- Certification, the process of verifying that a forest administrator or company meets certification requirements, is carried out by a certification body.</p> <p>- The accreditation, i.e. the process of assessing the competence of the certification body, is carried out by an accreditation body with membership in the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) or by an IAF regional accreditation group.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS documentation requires that certification shall be carried out by impartial, independent third parties that cannot be involved in the standard setting process as governing or decision-making body, nor in the forest management and are independent of the certified entity.</p>
2.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification body for forest management certification shall fulfil requirements defined in ISO 17021?	Annex 6, 3.1	<p>Y</p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024. Introduction. The PEFC Council requires that certification bodies operating forest management certification against PEFC endorsed forest management standards meet the requirements of ISO/IEC 17021-1.</p> <p>PEFC forest management is considered management system certification in accordance with ISO/IEC 17021-1. In exceptional cases, PEFC may accept that endorsed national or regional forest certification systems base their accreditation requirements for certification bodies on ISO/IEC 17065. In those cases, the endorsed system shall follow this standard, and the additional requirements set out in Appendix 4 of this standard.</p> <p>This document is based on ISO/IEC 17021-1. It does not include the text of this standard, which can be obtained from ISO or national standard organisations.</p>





No.	PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><i>Appendix 2. 3. The scope of accreditation shall explicitly state the certification body is accredited against ISO/IEC 17021-1.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The system documentation requires that certification bodies for forest management certification have accreditation in line with the ISO 17021 standard on certification of environmental management systems.</p>
3.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification bodies carrying out forest certification shall have the technical competence in forest management on its economic, social and environmental impacts, and on the forest certification criteria?	Annex 6, 3.1	<p>PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024. 5. Resource requirements. 5.1 Personnel involved in the certification activities. 5.1.1 General. 5.1.1.1 The certification body shall ensure that personnel involved in the certification activities have the relevant and appropriate knowledge and competencies corresponding to these activities, including PEFC specific knowledge.</p> <p>5.1.2.7 Competencies. 5.1.2.7.1 The certification body shall ensure that auditors demonstrate ability to apply knowledge and skills in the following areas:</p> <p>a) Principles, objectives, requirements, criteria, and indicators of the PEFC forest management standard Benchmarks, PEFC ST 1003 and 1002, as implemented by the endorsed national and/or regional forest certification system, as applicable.</p> <p>b) Audit principles, procedures, and techniques, and how to apply them appropriately to different audits while ensuring that audits are conducted in a consistent and systematic manner.</p> <p>c) Managing an organisation, including organisational size, structure, functions and relationships, general business processes, risk management and cultural and social aspects.</p> <p>d) Appropriate knowledge of the socio-demographics, sustainability issues, cultural issues (including gender equality), indigenous interests and values and indigenous treaties, where applicable, and</p>



No.	PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><i>industrial relations in the region of application of the forest management requirements.</i></p> <p><i>e) Knowledge of legislation, regulations, or other relevant requirements, including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>i. Contracts and agreements and/or collective bargaining agreements (as applicable).</i></li> <li><i>ii. Forest governance and law enforcement system of the country, including those covering social, workers and trade union rights and occupational safety and health of workers.</i></li> <li><i>iii. International conventions relating to worker rights (ILO core conventions).</i></li> <li><i>iv. International treaties and conventions relating to forestry, forest trade, and tree-based products.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>f) The principles of forest management based on techniques, including: inventory, planning, protection, management of forest ecosystems, identification and management of ecologically important forest areas, carbon stocks and biodiversity, as well as technical aspects of forest operations, and their potential impacts.</i></p> <p><i>g) Understanding of and ability to interpret Geographic Information Systems (GIS) as it applies to forest monitoring and management.</i></p> <p><i>h) Management and control of online documents, data and records, confidential data, data privacy and protection; and</i></p> <p><i>i) Application of risk assessment techniques.</i></p> <p><i>5.1.2.7.2 The certification body shall ensure that the audit team consists of individuals who collectively have all the required competencies for the scope of the audit.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS requires that CBs carrying out forest certification and their auditors have the technical competence in forest</p>



No.	PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			management, on its economic, social and environmental impacts, and on the forest certification criteria.
4.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification bodies shall have a good understanding of the national PEFC system against which they carry out forest management certification?	Annex 6, 3.1	<p>Y</p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024. 5.1.2.7.1 <i>The certification body shall ensure that auditors demonstrate ability to apply knowledge and skills in the following areas:</i></p> <p>a) <i>Principles, objectives, requirements, criteria, and indicators of the PEFC forest management standard Benchmarks, PEFC ST 1003 and 1002, as implemented by the endorsed national and/or regional forest certification system, as applicable.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS requires that CBs ensure that auditors have a good understanding of the national PEFC system against which they carry out forest management certification.</p>
5.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification bodies have the responsibility to use competent auditors and who have adequate technical know-how on the certification process and issues related to forest management certification?	Annex 6, 3.2	<p>Y</p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024. 5.1.2.7.1 <i>The certification body shall ensure that auditors demonstrate ability to apply knowledge and skills in the following areas: ...</i></p> <p>b) <i>Audit principles, procedures, and techniques, and how to apply them appropriately to different audits while ensuring that audits are conducted in a consistent and systematic manner. ...</i></p> <p>d) <i>Appropriate knowledge of the socio-demographics, sustainability issues, cultural issues (including gender equality), indigenous interests and values and indigenous treaties, where applicable, and industrial relations in the region of application of the forest management requirements.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS requires that CBs ensure that the auditors are competent who have a good understanding of the certification process and issues related to forest management certification.</p>



No.	PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
6.	Does the scheme documentation require that the auditors must fulfil the general criteria of ISO 19011 for Quality Management Systems auditors or for Environmental Management Systems auditors?	Annex 6, 3.2	<p>PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024. 5.1.2.5 <i>Audit training. The certification body shall ensure that auditors have successfully completed training in audit techniques based on ISO 19011.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS documentation requires that auditors have successfully completed training in audit techniques based on ISO 19011.</p>
7.	Does the scheme documentation include additional qualification requirements for auditors carrying out forest management audits?	Annex 6, 3.2	<p>PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024. 5.2 <i>Personnel records and annual monitoring. 5.2.1 The certification body shall maintain records of personnel's compliance with the requirements of this chapter. Table: Overview of qualification requirements.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS sets detailed additional requirements on the competence of the audit teams.</p>
<b>Certification procedures</b>			
8.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification bodies shall have established internal procedures for forest management certification?	Annex 6, 4	<p>PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024. 4 <i>General requirements. 4.1 Legal and contractual matters. 4.1.1 Certification agreement ... 4.2 Management of impartiality. 4.2.1 The certification body shall put in place procedures to ensure that personnel involved in the certification activities are free from conflict of interest and independent from the client. 4.3 Confidentiality. 4.4 Risk based approach.</i></p> <p>5.1.3 <i>Audit team. 5.1.3.1 General requirements. 5.1.3.1.1 The audit team shall comprise auditor(s) fulfilling the requirements defined in 5.1.2.7. (See benchmark 3)</i></p> <p>5.1.3.1.2 <i>The certification body shall have documented procedures for selecting and appointing the audit team, including the audit team leader.</i></p>



No.	PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>6.6.2 Engagement process for affected stakeholders. 6.6.2.1 The certification body shall have documented procedures for the engagement of affected stakeholders. This procedure shall ensure that any such engagement does not adversely impact impartiality, independence, and confidentiality with respect to the operations of the certification body or the client.</p> <p>7.2.2 Audit plan. 7.2.2.1 The certification body shall have documented procedures to ensure that a risk-based audit plan is established for each audit and selected participant. The audit plan shall provide the basis to conduct and schedule the audit activities.</p> <p>7.4.6.7 The certification body shall have procedures for immediate suspension or withdrawal of the certificate in cases of identification of non-reversible nonconformities or in case of intentional corrupt or fraudulent activities by certified organisations.</p> <p>8. Management system requirements. 8.1 General. 8.1.1 The certification body shall have a system in place to maintain knowledge of and track changes in local, national, and international legislation on forest management applicable to its clients.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The System requires that certification bodies have established internal procedures for forest management certification.</p>
9.	Does the scheme documentation require that applied certification procedures for forest management certification shall fulfil or be compatible with the requirements defined in ISO 17021?	Annex 6, 4	<p>PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024. 3.10 Certification body. A certification body is a third-party conformity assessment body operating certification against a PEFC endorsed forest certification system, which is accredited for that system according to ISO/IEC 17021 by an accreditation body member of IAF MLA.</p> <p>Appendix 2 (normative): Accreditations accepted by the PEFC Council. 1. Forest management or product certification shall be carried out by certification bodies who are accredited by accreditation bodies that are signatories of the Multilateral Recognition Arrangement of IAF</p>



No.	PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>or a regional organisation such as the European co-operation for Accreditation (EA), Interamerican Accreditation Cooperation (IAAC), Asia Pacific Accreditation Cooperation (APAC) etc. The accreditation body shall be signatory to the IAF MLA with a main scope of ISO/IEC 17021-1.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS requires that certification procedures fully comply with the ISO 17021 standard.</p>
10.	Does the scheme documentation require that applied auditing procedures shall fulfil or be compatible with the requirements of ISO 19011?	Annex 6, 4	<p>Y</p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024. 3.4 Audit plan. Description of the activities and arrangements for a specific audit (Source: definition is based on ISO 19011:2018 clause 3.6).</p> <p>5.1.2.5 Audit training. The certification body shall ensure that auditors have successfully completed training in audit techniques based on ISO 19011.</p> <p>5.1.4.5 Audit training. The certification body shall ensure that the reviewer and certification decision maker have successfully completed training in audit techniques based on ISO 19011.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS documentation requires that the applied audit procedures comply with the ISO 19011 standard.</p>
11.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification body shall inform the relevant PEFC National Governing Body about all issued forest management certificates and changes concerning the validity and scope of these certificates?	Annex 6, 4	<p>Y</p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024. 6.5 Information exchange between the certification body and PEFC Council and/or the PEFC authorised body. 6.5.1 The certification body shall immediately inform the relevant PEFC authorised body, or the PEFC Council where the PEFC authorised body does not exist, when certification is granted, suspended, terminated, withdrawn, its scope is changed or any other changes affecting the certification or the information that certification bodies shall report to PEFC.</p>



No.	PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>6.5.2 The certification body shall collect and report information, as required by the PEFC Council or the PEFC authorised body.</p> <p>6.5.3 The certification body shall verify the area in hectares at each audit and advise the PEFC Council or the PEFC authorised body of any change at least annually.</p> <p>6.5.4 On request, the certification body shall provide to the PEFC Council or/and the PEFC authorised body, any information related to the certification process and the client, such as the full audit report or information on open nonconformities, when there is a concern of reputational risk for PEFC.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS documentation requires that a CB informs the relevant PEFC authorized body about all issued forest management certificates and changes concerning the validity and scope of these certificates.</p>
12.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification body shall carry out controls of PEFC logo usage if the certified entity is a PEFC logo user?	Annex 6, 4	<p>Y</p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024. 4. General requirements. 4.1 Legal and contractual matters. 4.1.1 Certification agreement. 4.1.1.3 The certification agreement shall include, at least, the following content: ...          - Trademarks use: ...h) Client's commitment to use the PEFC trademarks and the accreditation trademarks and certification body trademarks in compliance with any applicable requirements and consistent with the scope of certification, and to not make any references or claims that may be misleading or unauthorised or may bring PEFC, certification bodies or accreditation bodies to disrepute.</p> <p>7.3 Initial certification. 7.3.1 Stage 1. 7.3.1.1 The Stage 1 audit has the function of a document and "readiness" review. The scope of this Stage 1 audit shall comprise, at least: ...</p> <p>f) Determining the conformity of the client's procedures for the use of the PEFC trademarks and the use of the PEFC endorsed systems trademarks, if applicable.</p>



No.	PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS documentation requires that certification body carries out controls of PEFC logo usage if the certified entity is a PEFC logo user.</p>
13.	Does a maximum period for surveillance audits defined by the scheme documentation not exceed more than one year?	Annex 6, 4 Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024. 7.6 <i>Maintaining certification. 7.6.1 Surveillance activities. 7.6.1.1 Surveillance audits shall be carried out at least annually. The certification body shall carry out at least four surveillance audits before the expiry date of the certificate.</i>  <i>Note 1: Annually means once every twelve months, plus or minus three months.</i>  <i>Note 2: If the certificate is valid for less than five years, the number of surveillance audits can be reduced accordingly.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS documentation requires that surveillance audits shall be carried out at least annually.</p>
14.	Does a maximum period for assessment audit not exceed five years for forest management certifications?	Annex 6, 4 Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024. 7.1.3 <i>Audit programme. 7.1.3.3 The certification cycle shall not exceed 5 years.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b>  <b>Justification:</b> Full assessment audits shall be conducted at least every five years.</p>
15.	Does the scheme documentation include requirements for public availability of certification report summaries?	Annex 6, 4 Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024. 7.4.4 <i>Summary audit report. 7.4.4.6 The summary of the audit report shall be made publicly available on the PEFC database which is externally accessible through the PEFC website.</i>  7.8.6 <i>On request by the PEFC authorised body, the certification body shall provide a summary of the complaints they have received, as they pertain to the PEFC endorsed system. On request by the PEFC authorised body, this summary shall be provided in English.</i></p>



No.	PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<b>Conclusion: Conformity</b> <b>Justification:</b> The RFCS documentation requires public availability of certification report summaries.
16.	Does the scheme documentation include requirements for usage of information from external parties as the audit evidence?	Annex 6, 4	Y PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024. 6.6 <i>Engagement of affected stakeholders.</i> 6.6.1 <i>General.</i> 6.6.1.1 <i>The certification body shall verify the effectiveness of the client’s process for engagement of affected stakeholders during the audit process.</i> 6.6.1.2 <i>During the audit process, the certification body shall consider the information, if any, provided by the affected stakeholders.</i> <i>Note: This engagement process is not intended to bypass the regular complaints process of the client and the certification body.</i> 6.6.2 <i>Engagement process for affected stakeholders.</i> 6.6.2.1 <i>The certification body shall have documented procedures for the engagement of affected stakeholders. This procedure shall ensure that any such engagement does not adversely impact impartiality, independence, and confidentiality with respect to the operations of the certification body or the client.</i> 6.6.2.2 <i>The certification body’s procedure for the engagement of affected stakeholders shall include the following steps:</i> a) <i>Verification of the effectiveness of the identification of stakeholders by the client</i> b) <i>Ensuring public notification of the audit by the client.</i> c) <i>Engagement with affected stakeholders during the audit process, as necessary.</i> d) <i>Summary of affected stakeholder engagement process in the summary audit reports.</i> 6.6.3 <i>Identification of affected stakeholders.</i> 6.6.3.1 <i>The certification body shall require the client to provide, in advance of the audit:</i>



No.	PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p><i>a) information on the client's identification of affected stakeholders</i></p> <p><i>b) the relevant needs and expectations of these stakeholders</i></p> <p><i>Note: The PEFC ST 1003, Sustainable Forest Management, requires on clause 4.2 that the PEFC SFM certification holders shall determine the relevant needs and expectations of the affected stakeholders. This bullet b) refers to such identification, as reflected on the applicable national or regional certification system.</i></p> <p><i>c) how they are considered within the forest management</i></p> <p><i>6.6.3.2 The certification body shall consider such information when planning the audit.</i></p> <p><i>6.6.4 Public notification of the audit. 6.6.4.1 The certification body shall ensure that the dates of an initial or recertification audit are publicised to affected stakeholders, no less than 30 days prior to the audit.</i></p> <p><i>6.6.4.2 The announcement may be made by the client or by the certification body itself.</i></p> <p><i>6.6.4.3 The announcement shall explain that during the audit process, the auditors will assess the client's engagement with affected stakeholders and shall require the client to seek expressions of interest, in writing, from affected stakeholders.</i></p> <p><i>6.6.5 Engagement with affected stakeholders during the audit process. 6.6.5.1 The certification body shall consider feedback received and evaluate its relevance to the assessment of the certification requirements. The certification body shall consult with affected stakeholders as part of the audit process, as appropriate to the feedback received and to any requirements of the standards.</i></p> <p><i>6.6.5.2 The certification body shall employ effective, culturally appropriate means to consult affected stakeholders.</i></p>



No.	PEFC benchmark requirement		YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
				<p>6.6.5.3 <i>The audit plan should allocate sufficient time for engagement with affected stakeholders.</i></p> <p>6.6.6 <i>Summary of affected stakeholder engagement process in summary audit reports. 6.6.6.1 The summary audit report shall describe the affected stakeholder engagement process, including how affected stakeholder's comments were taken into account and any issues arising from the process.</i></p> <p>6.6.6.2 <i>The certification body shall ensure that the summary audit report does not include any confidential information provided by the affected stakeholders.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS documentation includes requirements for usage of information from external parties as the audit evidence.</p>
17.	Does the scheme documentation include additional requirements for certification procedures?	Annex 6, 4	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024. 7.1.4 <i>Risk-based approach. 7.1.4.4 The indicators to be considered as part of the risk assessment in Romania categorized by importance are: ... (Indufor: the document lists indicators for 12 different risk types).</i></p> <p>7.1.5.1 <i>Detailed requirements for determining audit time (Indufor: the document lists 12 different situations for determining audit time).</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS documentation includes additional requirements for certification procedures on risk-based approaches and for determining audit time in different situations.</p>
<b>Accreditation procedures</b>				
18.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification bodies carrying out forest management certification shall be accredited by a national accreditation body?	Annex 6, 5	Y	<p>PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024. 3 <i>Terms and definitions. 3.10 Certification body. A certification body is a third-party conformity assessment body operating certification against a PEFC endorsed forest certification</i></p>



No.	PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>system, which is accredited for that system according to ISO/IEC 17021 by an accreditation body member of IAF MLA.</p> <p>4.1.1.2 The certification agreement with the client shall clearly specify: ... b) The certification body's accreditation status, scope of accreditation, and the accreditation body that issued the accreditation;</p> <p>Appendix 2 (normative): Accreditations accepted by the PEFC Council. Forest management or product certification shall be carried out by certification bodies who are accredited by accreditation bodies that are signatories of the Multilateral Recognition Arrangement of IAF or a regional organisation such as the European co-operation for Accreditation (EA), Interamerican Accreditation Cooperation (IAAC), Asia Pacific Accreditation Cooperation (APAC) etc. The accreditation body shall be signatory to the IAF MLA with a main scope of ISO/IEC 17021-1.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS is applying the newly published international PEFC ST 1004:2024 on accreditation requirements in their standard PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024. Through these requirements the Scheme explicitly requires that CBs have accreditation by an AB that is signatory to IAF MLA agreement.</p>
19.	Does the scheme documentation require that an accredited certificate shall bear an accreditation symbol of the relevant accreditation body?	Annex 6, 5	<p>PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024. 6.2.1 Certification documents. 6.2.1.1 The certificate shall include, as a minimum, the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) identification of the certification body</li> <li>b) name and address of the client</li> <li>c) unique certificate code</li> <li>d) type of certificate (individual or group forest)</li> <li>e) place and date of issue</li> <li>f) the date of granting, extending or renewing certification and the expiry date or recertification due date</li> </ul>



No.	PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>g) logo and/or signature of issuing party            h) scope of certification and standard or standards against which certification is issued            i) accreditation mark of the accreditation body as prescribed by the accreditation number (including accreditation number where applicable)            j) the logo of the endorsed system and the PEFC logo with the certification body's PEFC trademarks licence number (with a link to the PEFC website and a note that indicates that information on endorsed systems by PEFC is publicly available on the PEFC website); and,            k) note indicating that the updated information on the number of hectares covered by the certificate and the number of participants (if group forest certificate) can be checked on the PEFC database.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The RFCS documentation requires that the certificate bear an accreditation mark of the accreditation body.</p>
20.	Does the scheme documentation require that the accreditation shall be issued by an accreditation body which is a part of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) umbrella or a member of IAF's special recognition regional groups and which implement procedures described in ISO 17011 and other documents recognised by the above mentioned organisations?	Annex 6, 5	<p>Y</p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024. <i>Appendix 2 (normative): Accreditations accepted by the PEFC Council. 1. Forest management or product certification shall be carried out by certification bodies who are accredited by accreditation bodies that are signatories of the Multilateral Recognition Arrangement of IAF or a regional organisation such as the European co-operation for Accreditation (EA), Interamerican Accreditation Cooperation (IAAC), Asia Pacific Accreditation Cooperation (APAC) etc. The accreditation body shall be signatory to the IAF MLA with a main scope of ISO/IEC 17021-1.</i></p> <p><a href="https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/single-market/goods/building-blocks/accreditation-conformity-assessment-bodies_en">https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/single-market/goods/building-blocks/accreditation-conformity-assessment-bodies_en</a></p> <p>ABs that are signatories to IAF MLA-agreement shall maintain the conformity to the valid version of the ISO 17011 standard on</p>



No.	PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>Conformity assessment — Requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The standard PEFC 1004:2024 that PEFC Romania applies in their standard PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024 on accreditation, requires that ABs are organised and operate in conformance to the ISO 17011 standard.</p>
21.	<p>Does the scheme documentation require that certification body undertake forest management certification as “accredited certification” based on ISO 17021 and the relevant forest management standard(s) shall be covered by the accreditation scope?</p>	Annex 6, 5	<p>PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024. <i>Appendix 2 (normative): Accreditations accepted by the PEFC Council. 1. Forest management or product certification shall be carried out by certification bodies who are accredited by accreditation bodies that are signatories of the Multilateral Recognition Arrangement of IAF or a regional organisation such as the European co-operation for Accreditation (EA), Interamerican Accreditation Cooperation (IAAC), Asia Pacific Accreditation Cooperation (APAC) etc. The accreditation body shall be signatory to the IAF MLA with a main scope of ISO/IEC 17021-1.</i></p> <p>...</p> <p><i>3. The scope of accreditation shall explicitly state the certification body is accredited against ISO/IEC 17021-1.</i></p> <p><i>Note: As part of the accreditation assessments, accreditation bodies should consider conducting stakeholder consultation of the performance of the certification body, in addition to in-field evaluation.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The accreditation requirements are compliant and the RFCS requires that the issued certificate demonstrates the accreditation status.</p>
22.	<p>Does the scheme documentation include a mechanism for PEFC notification of certification bodies?</p>	Annex 6, 6	<p>PREC-RO ST 8014:2024 is the RFCS’s principal notification document. It contains the sustainable forest management certification and audit body authorisation procedure. It includes the requirements</p>



No.	PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<p>relating to applying for authorization and the template authorization contract between PEFC Romania and the certification body.</p> <p>PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024. Appendix 3 (normative): PEFC notification of certification bodies. (Requirements are not applicable to the accreditation of the certification body)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Certification bodies operating PEFC recognised forest management certification shall be notified by the PEFC Council or the relevant PEFC authorised body of the specific country in which they operate.</li> <li>2. The notification shall require that the certification bodies shall have a valid accreditation according to Appendix 2 of this document.</li> <li>3. The certification body shall provide the relevant PEFC authorised body with information on granted certifications as specified by the relevant PEFC authorised body.</li> <li>4. If required by the relevant PEFC authorised body, the certification body shall pay a PEFC notification fee to the PEFC authorised body.</li> <li>5. To ensure the independence of certification bodies, the PEFC notification conditions implemented by the PEFC Council or the PEFC authorised body shall only cover:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) administrative conditions (e.g., communication of the certification body with the PEFC NGBs or the PEFC Council, transfer of information, etc.)</li> <li>b) financial conditions (fees imposed on certified entities)</li> <li>c) compliance with requirements for certification bodies verified through accreditation as described in this standard</li> </ol> </li> <li>6. The PEFC notification conditions shall not discriminate against certification bodies or create trade barriers.</li> <li>7. Notification contracts shall include any necessary clauses to cover obligations and responsibilities regarding confidentiality and data use.</li> </ol> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p>



No.	PEFC benchmark requirement	YES /NO	Reference to system documentation (including quotation of relevant text)
			<b>Justification:</b> The RFCS documentation includes a mechanism for PEFC notification of certification bodies.
23.	Are the procedures for PEFC notification of certification bodies non-discriminatory?	Annex 6, 6	<p>PEFC-RO ST 1004:2024. <i>Appendix 3 (normative): PEFC notification of certification bodies. ...</i></p> <p><i>6. The PEFC notification conditions shall not discriminate against certification bodies or create trade barriers.</i></p> <p><b>Conclusion: Conformity</b></p> <p><b>Justification:</b> The procedures for PEFC notification of certification bodies are non-discriminatory.</p>





Annex 2

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**Stakeholder Feedback Form**

Helsinki, October 2024

## **Stakeholder Questionnaire on the Revision of the Romanian Forest Certification Scheme**



**PEFC Romania completed the revision process of its forest management standard in May 2024.**

This questionnaire is prepared by Indufor as the 3<sup>rd</sup> party consultant to collect stakeholders' views on the development of **the revised scheme of PEFC Romania**.

The questionnaire focuses on stakeholder engagement in the forest management standard revision and the information sharing and decision-making processes. Your view is important because:

*PEFC requires, among others, that standard development shall be transparent and open to all interested stakeholders; different views shall be discussed and documented and decisions on certification criteria shall be made in consensus.*

The questionnaire will be sent to all invited and participating parties having an interest in forest certification standard revision, and potentially to other key interest groups. All answers will be treated as strictly confidential. The identity of the replier will not be disclosed in any instance.

We hope you can share your views on the standard revision process and thus improve the quality and value of impartial scheme assessment under the PEFC framework.

We highly appreciate your contribution and thank you in advance for your effort!

*Preliminary Question*

Please indicate the stakeholder category that best describes you and/or your organisation:

I represent:	Stakeholder categories
	Administration
	Authority
	Forest and timber industry
	Industry association/lobby organisation
	Forest owner/manager
	Research institute
	Environmental NGO
	Social NGO
	Trade Union
	Retailer
	Media
	Consumer organisation
	Financial sector
	Member Organisation
	Other ( <i>please specify</i> ):

## Questionnaire on the Revision of the Romanian Forest Certification Scheme

**1. Did you participate in the standard revision?**

Standard	Yes	No	Comments (If no – why not?)
PEFC Romania revised scheme (2024)			
Would you have been interested in participating?			

**2. By whom and when were you invited to participate in the standard revision?**

By whom:	Comments
When:	Comments

**3. What was your main interest in considering participation in standard revision?**

Comments

**4. In your view, have all interested parties relevant to standard development been proactively identified and invited and given the possibility to participate and contribute to the process? <sup>1)</sup>**

Yes	No	I don't know	Comments

<sup>1)</sup> Including also disadvantaged interest groups

**5. Did the organiser provide you with adequate material before the process?**

Yes	No	I don't know	Comments

**6. Did the stakeholders in the standard-setting working group represent the different interests in a balanced way?**

Yes	No	I don't know	Comments (If no – why not?)

**7. Did the revision process follow the procedures that were communicated with participants in advance?**

Yes	No	I don't know	Comments (If no – why not?)

**8. Were you aware of the dispute settlement procedures in case of conflicting views in the standard development?**

Yes	No	Comments

**9. Are you aware of whether any dispute settlement procedures in case of conflicting views in standard revision have been applied?**

Yes	No	Comments



**10. Do you believe any aspects of the standard or its revision process deserve further consideration?**

Yes	No	I don't know	Comments

**If you participated in standard development, please continue to questions 11 to 15.**

**11. Have you been given a meaningful opportunity to contribute to the standard formulation and to submit comments for further consideration?**

Yes	No	I don't know	Comments (If no – why not?)

**12. Were the views and comments submitted by any participant in the Standard Setting Working Group considered in an open and transparent way?**

Yes	No	I don't know	Comments (If no – why not?)

**13. Have all comments received in public consultations been discussed and addressed in an objective and transparent way?**

Yes	No	I don't know	Comments (If no – why not?)

**14. Were the criteria (requirements) in the standard agreed on in consensus?**

Yes	No	I don't know	Comments (If no – why not?)

**15. Other comments and/or remarks:**

Thank you for your time and contribution!

Please send your replies preferably by November 17, 2024, to [anni.blasten@induforgroup.com](mailto:anni.blasten@induforgroup.com) or [indufor@induforgroup.com](mailto:indufor@induforgroup.com)

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