



(PEFC FI 1006:2019)

Standard setting process for PEFC forest certification



PEFC STANDARD
IN ENGLISH

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The original version of this document is the Finnish-language version.

In the event of any inconsistencies between the original and the formally approved English-language version, the English-language version of the standard approved by the PEFC Council shall prevail.

Document name:	Standard setting process for PEFC forest certification
Document title:	PEFC 1006:2019
Approved by:	PEFC Finland – Finnish Forest Certification Council
Approval date:	7 March 2019 (layout update 7 February 2022)
Publication date:	12 March 2019
Application date:	12 March 2019
Transition date:	12 March 2019

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Foreword

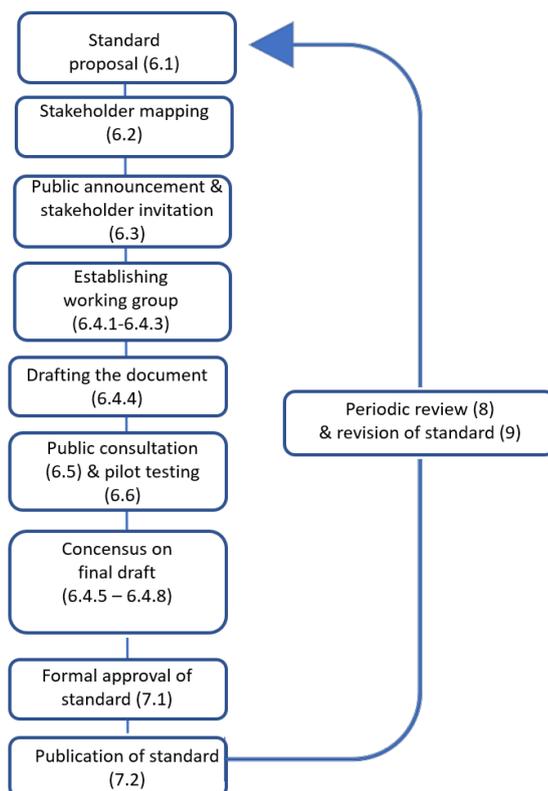
PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes) is an international forest certification system for promoting forest management that is ecologically, socially, economically and culturally sustainable. Forest certification verifies the sustainable management and use of forests. PEFC certification supports the attainment of goals set by society on the sustainable use of forests, and provides citizens with diverse opportunities to enjoy forests. For businesses and consumers, PEFC provides reliability regarding the responsible origin of forest products.

PEFC Finland – Finnish Forest Certification Council promotes and manages PEFC certification in Finland and organises the work of elaborating the PEFC standard on the sustainable management and use of forests, realized as broad-based stakeholder collaboration.

The Finnish PEFC system was endorsed by PEFC International in 2000.

Endorsement by PEFC International requires that the national system of forest certification meets the requirements of the international PEFC standards and the requirements set on the governance of the PEFC system.

Figure 1. Overview of the standard setting process and corresponding sections in this standard.



1. Scope

This standard describes the requirements for the work of PEFC Finland and the Standard Setting Working Group when setting the standard for the sustainable management and use of forests.

2. Normative references

The standards of the Finnish PEFC system are as follows:

- PEFC FI 1000:2022 (earlier PEFC FI 1000:2014) - Forest Certification Vocabulary;
- PEFC FI 1001:2022 (earlier PEFC FI 1001:2014) - Group forest management certification – Requirements
- PEFC FI 1002:2022 (earlier PEFC FI 1002:2014) - Sustainable forest management - Requirements;
- PEFC FI 1005:2022 (earlier PEFC FI 1005:2014) - Requirements for certification bodies operating PEFC forest management certification; and
- PEFC FI 1006:2019 - Standard setting process for PEFC forest certification.

3. Terms and definitions

3.1 Evaluation

Activity of checking a normative document to determine whether it is to be reaffirmed, changed or withdrawn.

3.2 Disadvantaged stakeholder

Stakeholder that may, for financial or other reasons, be in a weaker position as regards participation in the standard setting process.

3.3. Publicly available

Accessible to the general public in different forms, free of charge and without specific request.

NOTE 1: If information is only available on request, this shall be indicated in the document itself.

NOTE 2: Special solutions may be needed to ensure the availability of information to special groups; e.g., providing hard copies to stakeholders with no access to electronic media.

3.4 Key stakeholder

Stakeholder whose participation is critical to the outcome of the standard setting process.

3.5 Enquiry draft

Proposed document available for public consultation.

3.6 Final draft

Proposed document available for formal approval.

3.7. Normative document

Document that provides rules, guidelines or characteristics for activities or their results.

NOTE 1: Examples of normative documents include standards, technical specifications, codes of practice and legal instruments.

NOTE 2: "Document" is to be understood as any medium with information recorded on or in it.

3.8 Stakeholder

Individual, group, community or organisation with an interest in the subject of the standard.

3.9 Affected stakeholder

Stakeholder whose livelihood, living conditions and/or working conditions may be directly affected by the implementation of the standard; or stakeholder which may be a user of the standard and therefore is subject to the requirements of the standard.

NOTE 1: Solely having an interest in the subject matter of the standard (e.g., NGOs, scientific community and civil society) is not equal to being affected.

NOTE 2: A stakeholder which may be a user of the standard is likely to become a certified entity, e.g., a forest owner in the case of the forest management standard, or a wood processing enterprise in the case of the chain of custody standard.

3.10 Standard

Document established by consensus and approved by a standardising body, containing, for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for activities or their results.

NOTE 1: Standards are based on the results of science, technology and experience.

3.11 Standardising body

Body with recognized activities in standardisation.

NOTE 1: In forest certification, the standardising body is the organisation responsible for the maintenance and development of standards in the forest certification system. The standardising body may be a PEFC National Governing Body, such as PEFC Finland (in Finland) or a body separate from the governance of the forest certification system.

3.12 Review

Amending the content and presentation of a normative document to the extent necessary.

NOTE 1: The result of the review is made known by publishing a new version of the normative document.

3.13. Editorial changes

Changes to a system that do not affect the technical content.

NOTE 1: This may include clarifications, guidance or changes related to grammar and usage.

3.14 Working draft

Document version used to gather feedback and as the basis of voting.

3.15 Consensus

General agreement characterised by the absence of sustained opposition to substantial issues by any important part of the concerned interest and by a process that involves seeking to take into account the views of all stakeholders concerned and to reconcile any conflicting arguments.

NOTE 1: Consensus need not imply unanimity (ISO/IEC Guide 2).

4. Principles of standard setting

The standard setting process is governed by the key principles of:

- Stakeholder engagement – A process open to all stakeholders, providing an opportunity of meaningful participation in the process either as member of the Working Group or through public consultation.
- Balanced representation – No single stakeholder group shall dominate or be dominated in the process. While each party shall be free to decide whether to participate, the standardising body shall strive to ensure the representation of all relevant stakeholder groups and to pay attention to gender equality in the Working Group.
- Consensus – The standard shall be approved by consensus. Conflicts of opinion shall be resolved by means of dialogue.
- Improvement – The periodic review of the standard shall aim at continuous improvement and at ensuring that the standard continues to meet stakeholder expectations.
- Transparency – Relevant documents shall be publicly available, so that those interested shall be able to follow developments during and after the process.

5. Tasks of Finnish Forest Certification Council

5.1 Standard setting procedures

5.1.1 The Finnish Forest Certification Council (henceforth, 'PEFC Finland') shall have written procedures on standard setting, describing:

- a) PEFC Finland and its legal status, the Working Group that elaborates the standard on the sustainable management and use of forests (section **6.4**) and procedures for the formal approval of the standard (section **7.1**);
- b) Procedures for keeping documented information;
- c) Procedures for ensuring the balanced representation of stakeholders;

- d) The standard setting process;
- e) The mechanism for reaching consensus; and
- f) The review and revision of the standard.

5.1.2 PEFC Finland shall make the procedures of standard setting publicly available and shall review them at set intervals. The review shall take into account feedback from stakeholders.

5.2 Documented information

5.2.1 PEFC Finland shall keep documented information relevant to the to standard setting and review processes, which shall include:

- a) Procedures of standard setting,
- b) Stakeholder mapping,
- c) Stakeholders invited to the Standard Setting Working Group,
- d) Stakeholders involved in standard setting activities, including attendance at each working group meeting,
- e) Feedback received and a summary of how it was addressed,
- f) All drafts and final versions of the standard,
- g) Outcomes from Working Group considerations,
- h) Evidence of consensus on the final version of the standard,
- i) Evidence relating to the review process, and
- j) Final approval by PEFC Finland.

5.2.2 PEFC Finland shall keep documented information concerning standard setting and other records, until the completion of the next review or revision of the standard. All documented information shall be kept for a minimum of five years from the date of publication of the standard.

5.2.3 Documented information shall be obtainable on request from the PEFC Finland office.

5.3 Handling of complaints and appeals

5.3.1 Complaints concerning the substance of the standard or procedures related to standard setting, as well as appeals, shall be handled by a panel consisting of a chairperson and two members.

PEFC Finland shall appoint an independent chairman for the panel. The parties in a dispute or appeal shall each appoint one member to the panel to handle that specific case.

A written request to resolve a dispute or complaint shall be addressed to the General Secretary of PEFC Finland, who shall respond to enquiries concerning the handling of disputes or complaints and deliver the related material immediately to the chairperson of the panel, who shall without delay initiate the appropriate procedure in the matter. The contact information of PEFC Finland's General Secretary is found on PEFC Finland's website at pefc.fi.

On having received a complaint or an appeal, PEFC Finland shall:

- a) Acknowledge receipt of the complaint/appeal to the party sending it;
- b) Gather and verify all information necessary for validating the complaint or appeal, evaluate the substance impartially and objectively, and make a decision on the complaint or appeal; and
- c) Formally communicate the decision on the complaint or appeal to the complainant/appealant and describe the handling process.

5.3.2 Enquiries concerning the standard setting and complaints and appeal shall be answered by the General Secretary of PEFC Finland, whose contact information shall be found on the website pefc.fi.

6. Standard setting process

6.1 Standard proposal

6.1.1 For the creation of a new standard, PEFC Finland shall draft a proposal including the following:

- a) Scope of the standard;
- b) Justification of the need for the standard;
- c) Description of the intended outcomes;
- d) Risk assessment on the possible negative impact of implementing the standard; and
- e) Description of the stages of standard development and the expected timetable.

6.1.2 A proposal to revise the standard shall include, at a minimum, the information mentioned in sections **6.1.1. (a)** and **6.1.1. (e)**.

6.2 Stakeholder mapping

6.2.1 PEFC Finland shall identify stakeholders relevant to the objectives and scope of the standard setting activity. PEFC Finland shall determine the stakeholders relevant to the subject matter and present the arguments used. PEFC Finland shall identify the likely key issues for each stakeholder group, the key stakeholders and the most effective means of communication for reaching them.

6.2.2 As regards the elaboration of the standard for the sustainable management and use of forests, the key stakeholder groups in Finland are:

- Forest owners,
- Businesses and industry,
- Children and youth,
- Indigenous peoples,
- Non-governmental organisations,
- The scientific and technological community, and
- Workers and trade unions.

NOTE 1: The list drawn up for Agenda 21 of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) consists of the following nine major stakeholder groups: (i) businesses and industry, (ii) children and youth, (iii) forest owners, (iv) indigenous peoples, (v) local authorities, (vi) non-governmental organisations, (vii) scientific and technological community, (viii) women and (ix) workers and trade unions.

6.2.3 PEFC Finland shall identify disadvantaged stakeholders and key stakeholders, and address any constraints to their participation in standard setting activities.

NOTE 1: A stakeholder can be both a disadvantaged and a key stakeholder at the same time.

6.3 Public announcement of standard setting work

6.3.1 PEFC Finland shall make a public announcement of the start of the standard setting or review process and invite stakeholders to participate in the process. PEFC Finland shall make the announcement and send the invitation to all stakeholders identified in the stakeholder mapping exercise, not later than four weeks before the first meeting of the Standard Setting Working Group.

The announcement and invitation shall include:

- a) Overview of the standard setting process;
- b) Information of the standard proposal (see **6.1**);
- c) Information of the opportunities for stakeholder participation;
- d) Request to stakeholders to nominate a representative to the Standard Setting Working Group (see **6.4**). For disadvantaged stakeholders and key stakeholders, the request shall be conveyed in a manner that ensures its reaching the intended recipients and in a format that is easy to understand,
- e) Invitation to participate in the Standard Setting Working Group and instruction on how to send feedback on the scope and setting process of the standard, and
- f) Access to standard PEFC FI 1006:2019, which describes the standard setting process.

6.3.2 PEFC Finland shall review the standard setting process on the basis of the response to the public announcement.

6.4 Requirements for the Standard setting Working Group

6.4.1 The starting point of PEFC Finland shall be to provide all stakeholders interested in the sustainable management and use of forests an equal opportunity to participate in the Standard Setting working Group.

Those entitled to participate in the Standard Setting Working Group shall include all stakeholders identified in the stakeholder mapping exercise and who have communicated their intention to participate. During its activity, the Working Group shall be entitled to complement its membership.

The Standard Setting Working Group shall have a representation from stakeholder groups identified as relevant in the stakeholder mapping exercise (see **6.2.2**). The participation of several stakeholder groups shall ensure that no single stakeholder group can dominate.

Each stakeholder shall decide independently whether to participate and shall nominate a representative to the Standard Setting working Group.

PEFC Finland shall provide the Standard Setting Working Group with secretarial services and the technical resources for interaction between the participants; among other things, during the Working Group meetings and in eventual thematic groups deemed appropriate by the working Group.

The Standard Setting Working Group shall determine its detailed working procedure. The Working Group may establish an Executive Committee and invite experts, or otherwise organise its work as it deems appropriate.

The cost incurred by each representative through participation in the Standard Setting working Group shall be borne by the nominating stakeholder. As regards disadvantaged stakeholders, PEFC Finland shall make efforts to enable their participation (see **6.2.3**).

6.4.2 The following shall apply to the Standard Setting Working Group:

- a) The activity of the Standard Setting Working Group shall be based on the goals set by each participating stakeholder for its own activity and on interaction with the other members of the Working Group. The goals of the stakeholders may vary across the scope of the standard, depending on which particular aspect or geographical area, for example, is being examined.

When making decisions and eventually voting about decisions, each stakeholder shall have an equal opportunity to affect the outcome. No stakeholder group or single stakeholder alone can form a majority opinion, and no stakeholder group or single stakeholder shall be excluded from decision-making.

- b) The stakeholders shall contribute to the debate on substance issues through the expertise of their representatives, and by providing the rest of the Standard Setting Working Group written presentations or other materials, for example.

As regards substance issues, a special role may be held by groups which may be directly affected by the implementation of the standard or which may influence the implementation of the standard. Groups directly affected by the implementation of the standard shall be appropriately represented in the Standard Setting Working Group.

6.4.3 PEFC Finland shall strive to include as wide a range of stakeholders as possible in the work of the Standard Setting Working Group (see **6.2**) and to ensure a representation base as broad as possible

PEFC Finland shall strive to have each major stakeholder group and all key stakeholders represented in the Standard Setting Working Group.

If a stakeholder group is not represented in the Standard Setting Working Group or if it has not been possible to include all key stakeholders in the Working Group, PEFC Finland shall strive to complement the expertise of the Working Group as regards the issues most important for the stakeholder in question, by inviting experts for consultation to the Working Group, for example.

6.4.4 The Standard Setting Working Group shall act openly and transparently, observing the following practices:

- a) Working drafts shall be available to all members of the Working Group,
- b) Appropriate meeting arrangements and practices shall be implemented to ensure that all members of the Working Group shall be able to participate in its work, to make proposals, to give feedback and to comment on working drafts, and
- c) Feedback from and opinions of members of the Working Group shall be openly discussed in the Working Group and the outcome of the discussion shall be recorded.

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.

To determine whether there is consensus or sustained opposition, several practices conventionally used in meetings, including voting, can be used:

- a) In face-to-face meetings of the Working Group, by a voice vote, a show of hands or a ballot, etc.;
- b) In telemeetings, by a voice vote;
- c) In e-mail meetings, by a written acceptance or rejection of the proposal voted on; or
- d) By combining several methods, as approved by the Working Group.

In the absence of differences of opinion or conflicts preventing consensus, the Chair of the meeting shall conclude that there is consensus in the Standard Setting Working Group, and this shall be recorded as the decision taken by the meeting.

6.4.6 Where a vote is used in decision-making, the decision of the Standard Setting Working Group shall be the opinion supported by the majority of regular members present at the meeting.

However, a majority vote cannot override sustained opposition in order to achieve consensus.

For a decision to be deemed as based on consensus, eventual differences in opinion shall have been resolved by the means presented in **6.4.5** and **6.4.7** and, where necessary, applying practices described in **6.4.8**.

6.4.7 The reaching of consensus shall be promoted by an exchange of opinions between the members and, for example, bilateral dialogue, in order to reconcile differing opinions.

When there is sustained opposition to a substantial issue, the issue shall be resolved using the following methods:

- a) Finding a compromise in the dispute, through discussion and negotiation within the Working Group;
- b) Finding a compromise in the dispute, through direct negotiations between the stakeholders representing one opinion and those representing an opposing opinion;
- c) Where necessary, by arranging an additional round of public consultation, the stakeholder feedback from which can help to achieve a consensus in the matters to be resolved. PEFC Finland shall determine the scope and duration of the additional public consultation.

6.4.8 Where a substantial issue cannot be resolved and sustained opposition persists, PEFC Finland shall initiate a dispute resolution process based on an impartial examination of the matter (see **5.3**).

6.5 Public consultation

6.5.1 PEFC Finland shall organise a public consultation on the enquiry draft of the standard, ensuring the following:

- a) The beginning and ending dates of the public consultation shall be announced on the pefc.fi website and, at PEFC Finland's discretion, in other media, not later than the day preceding the beginning of the consultation;
- b) An invitation to comment on the enquiry draft shall be sent to all stakeholders identified in the stakeholder mapping exercise (see **6.2**);
- c) An invitation to provide comments on the enquiry draft shall be sent to disadvantaged stakeholders and key stakeholders by means that ensure its reaching the recipients;
- d) The enquiry draft shall be made publicly available;
- e) The minimum duration of the public consultation shall be 60 days;
- f) All feedback shall be considered by the Standard Setting Working Group objectively and appropriately; and
- g) A summary, dealing separately with each material issue, shall be compiled of the feedback and the outcome of discussions on it. The summary shall be publicly available on the PEFC Finland website and shall be sent to all those who have provided feedback.

6.5.2 For new standards, PEFC Finland shall arrange, in addition to the public consultation described under **6.5.1**, a second round of public consultation with the minimum duration of 30 days.

6.6 Pilot testing

PEFC Finland shall organize pilot testing of a new standard to assess the clarity, auditability and feasibility of the requirements.

For standard reviews, PEFC Finland shall arrange pilot testing if deemed appropriate by the Standard Setting Working Group.

The Standard Setting Working Group shall consider the outcome of pilot testing.

7. Approval and publication of the standard

7.1 Formal approval of the standard

PEFC Finland shall formally approve the standard when there is evidence of consensus regarding the substance of the standard among the Standard Setting Working Group.

7.2 Publication and availability of the standard

7.2.1 PEFC Finland shall publish the standard and make it publicly available free of charge within 14 days of its formal approval.

7.2.2 The standard shall include:

- a) Identification and contact information of PEFC Finland as the standardising body,
- b) Official language of the standard,
- c) The note that in the event of inconsistencies between language versions, the English-language version of the standard as formally approved by the PEFC Council shall prevail; and
- d) The dates of approval and of the next periodic review

NOTE 1: The interval between reviews may be less than five years, due to (for example) stakeholder expectations or other foreseeable needs.

7.2.3 Hard copies of the standard shall be available from the office of PEFC Finland at the cost of copying.

7.2.4 PEFC Finland shall make publicly available a report of the implementation of standard setting, referred to in the document PEFC GD 1007.

8. Periodic review of the standard

8.1 General

The standard shall be reviewed at intervals of no more than five years. The review shall be based on observations on the practical implementation of the standard and an analysis of the need to

develop its substance. Where necessary in order to receive feedback for the review, PEFC Finland shall arrange a stakeholder consultation.

8.2 Feedback mechanism

8.2.1 PEFC Finland shall establish and maintain a permanent mechanism to collect feedback. The directions for using this mechanism shall be available on the pefc.fi website.

8.2.2 All feedback received through any channel, such as meetings or training events, shall be recorded and considered.

8.3 Gap analysis

8.3.1 At the start of a review, PEFC Finland shall evaluate the substance of the standard against PEFC International standards, national legislation and other regulations, and other relevant standards, to identify potential gaps in the standard.

8.3.2 PEFC Finland shall consider the latest research information and relevant emerging issues.

8.4 Stakeholder consultation

8.4.1 Where feedback and gap analysis do not identify a need to revise the standard, PEFC Finland shall organise a stakeholder consultation in order to determine whether stakeholders see a need to revise the standard. PEFC Finland shall include the results of the gap analysis in the stakeholder consultation.

8.4.2 At the start of a review, PEFC Finland shall update the stakeholder mapping (see **6.2**).

8.4.3 PEFC Finland shall arrange the following:

- a) A public consultation period of at least 30 days (in line with **6.5.1**) and/or
- b) Stakeholder meetings.

8.4.4 PEFC Finland shall announce the review not later than 14 days before its commencement (see **6.3**).

8.5 Decision-making

8.5.1 On the basis of feedback during the period of the implementation of the standard, the outcome of the gap analysis and the public consultation, PEFC Finland shall make a decision to either reaffirm or review the standard.

8.5.2 The decision shall be made by an assembly of the members of PEFC Finland.

8.5.3 Where the standard is to be reaffirmed, PEFC Finland shall provide a justification for the decision and make the justification publicly available.

8.5.4 Where the standard is to be revised, PEFC Finland shall specify the type of revision (normal or editorial revision).

9. Revision of the standard

9.1 Normal revision

The procedures for revising the standard shall conform to those stated in **Section 6**.

A normal revision can occur at the periodic review, or between periodic reviews.

Editorial revisions and time-critical revisions shall not be deemed normal revisions.

9.2 Editorial revision

Editorial revisions may be carried out without triggering the normal revision process. PEFC Finland shall formally approve the editorial changes and publish an amendment or a new edition of the standard.

9.3 Time-critical revision

9.3.1 A time-critical revision is a revision between two periodic reviews using a fast-track process.

9.3.2 A time-critical revision shall only be conducted in the following situations:

- a) A change in national legislation or other regulations that affects compliance with PEFC International requirements
- b) An instruction by PEFC International to comply with specific or new PEFC requirements within a timescale that is too short for a normal revision.

9.3.3 A time-critical revision shall follow these steps:

- a) PEFC Finland shall draft a revised standard,
- b) At its discretion, PEFC Finland may consult stakeholders, though this is not mandatory,
- c) The revised standard shall be approved formally by an assembly of the members of PEFC Finland,
- d) PEFC Finland shall explain the justification for the urgent change(s) and make the justification publicly available.

9.4 Application and transition of the revised standard

9.4.1 A revision shall define the application date and transition period of the revised standard.

9.4.2 The application date shall not be later than one year after the publication of the standard.

9.4.3 The transition period shall not exceed one year. PEFC Finland may determine a longer period when justified by exceptional circumstances.