

Romanian Forest Certification Scheme 2017

PEFC-RO DST 8000:2017



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PEFC Romania

Romanian Forest Certification Scheme
System Description

March 2017

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1. Preamble

The PEFC standard setting procedure in Romania was initiated in 2012 by the Forest and Pasture Owners Federation from Romania NOSTRA SILVA.

1.1 PEFC Romania

PEFC Romania is the control body for the national certification scheme and the standardization body. Its tasks are, in particular, to draw up and further develop the Romanian certification scheme.

The founding members of PEFC Romania represent important interest groups in the branches of forestry, wood services, forest unions and mountain area. Further details on PEFC Romania can be found in the Statutes of PEFC Romania (Annex 6).

1.2 Structure of the Document

This document is structured as follows:

Preamble

Section 1: System Description

Section 2: Individual and Group Certification

2. System Description

2.1 Introduction

The Romanian PEFC certification scheme is based on the guidelines defined in the Technical Documents of the PEFC Council (Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes Council), which was adopted on 22nd November 2002, in its currently valid version.

PEFC Romania is a member of the PEFC Council and has obligated itself to continually improve its own national scheme. This includes revision of the system objectives in five-year intervals.

2.2 Objectives

The system for PEFC wood certification in Romania is based on the following Technical Document of the PEFC Council including all its annexes.

Technical Document of the PEFC Council

2.3 Targets

- Terms and Definitions
- Rules for Standard Setting
- Basis for Certification Schemes and their Implementation
- PEFC ST 2002: 2013 - Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products – Requirements
- PEFC ST 2001:2008 v2 - PEFC Logo Usage Rules – Requirements
- Certification and Accreditation Procedures
- Endorsement and Mutual Recognition of National Schemes and Their Revision

The Romanian Scheme for the certification of sustainable forestry was developed in accordance with the requirements of this document. It comprises the present system description with the following normative appendices:

Annex 1: PEFC-RO DST 8001:2017, **Criteria and Indicators for the Assessment of Sustainable Forestry in Romania**

Annex 2: PEFC-RO DST 8002:2017 **PEFC Guidelines for Sustainable Forestry in Romania**

Annex 3:

Annex 4: PEFC ST 2002: 2013, **PEFC Chain of Custody**

Annex 5: PEFC ST 2001:2008 v2, **PEFC Guidelines for Use of the PEFC Logo**

Annex 6: PEFC-RO DST 8006:2017, **PEFC Romania Statutes**

Annex 7: PEFC-RO DST 8007:2017, **PEFC Forest Owner's Declaration – Self-commitment**

Annex 8: PEFC-RO DST 8008:2017, **Standard setting procedures**

Annex 9: PEFC-RO DST 8009:2017, **Procedure for Arbitration**

Annex 10: PEFC-RO DST 8010:2017, **Group certification - Requirements**

Annex 11: PEFC-RO DST 8011:2017, **Measures and Consequences in the Case of Deficiencies**

Annex 12: PEFC-RO DST 8012:2017, **Requirements for Certification Bodies and Auditors - FM**

Annex 13: PEFC ST 2003:2012, **Requirements for Certification Bodies and Auditors - CoC**

Annex 14: PEFC-RO DST 8014:2017, **Notification of Certification Bodies**

Annex 15: PEFC-RO DST 8015:2017, **Issuance of Logo Licenses**

Annex 16: PEFC-RO DST 8016:2017, **Scale of Fees**

2.3 Targets

The present scheme describes the requirements for wood certification according to PEFC in Romania. Certification has the following targets:

- documenting and continuously improving forestry management
- improving the image of forestry management and its market partners
- promoting the use of wood, a renewable resource
- marketing of wood and wood products
- guaranteeing consumers and customers that PEFC- certified wood products originate from sustainably managed forests.

2.4 Scope

This system description applies to the certification of sustainable forest management.

The use of the word "shall" in this document is understood as meaning mandatory (in the sense of "must"). "Should" is understood as not being mandatory, however it is recommended that the requirement be implemented.

The standards, with normative character are those presented in Annex 01 – Annex 16, excepting Annex 03, which is reserved for the future.

The regulations of the international standards in PEFC ST 2002:2013 Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products – Requirements and PEFC ST 2003:2012, Requirements for Certification Bodies operating Certification against the PEFC International Chain of Custody Standard have been adopted for the certification of the chain of custody, and their implementation is mandatory.

The use of the logo is stipulated according to the "PEFC Logo Usage Rules" (PEFC ST 2001:2008 v2, PEFC Logo usage rules - requirements), these rules being mandatory.

2.5 Objectives of the Certification Scheme

2.5.1 Criteria and Indicators

The system's criteria and indicators are based on the six Helsinki criteria for sustainable forest management, the Pan-European indicators for sustainable forest management, and the Pan-European operational level guidelines (PEOLG) for the sustainable forest management. On this basis, concrete certification criteria have been defined, *considering* the specific national conditions and the legal situation in Romania, in particular the:

- Romanian Constitution,
- Forestry Code 2008 (in its current amended version) and subsequent legal regulations,
- Hunting Act 2008 (in its current amended version)
- Nature protection regulations, including the 2007 Protected Areas Act (in its current amended version)
- Water Act 1996 (in its current amended version)
- Legislation on plant protection products and substances
- Fiscal Code 2015 (in its current amended version)

2.5 Objectives of the Certification Scheme

- Labor Code 2003 (in its current amended version)
- Technical rules (Norms) in forestry
- International Treaties and Declarations ratified by Romania

Forest management shall comply with legislation applicable to forest management issues including forest management practices; nature and environmental protection; protected and endangered species; property, tenure and land-use rights for indigenous people; health, labor and safety issues; and the payment of royalties and taxes.

The criteria include economic, ecological and social aspects of forest management and apply to activities of all operators in the defined forest area who have a measurable impact on achieving compliance with the requirements.

2.5.2 Development and Further Development

The certification criteria will be developed by PEFC Romania with the input of all relevant interest groups. These relevant groups shall include interested parties in the fields of forestry, wood processing, paper production, trade, environment and social issues (e.g. trade unions).

Their positions will be documented and considered in an open and transparent process. The criteria and indicators will be revised and improved at regular intervals on the basis of the latest scientific findings; continuous improvement is the goal. For the purpose of revision, independent experts will be called upon.

PEFC Romania will regularly check whether it is necessary to make changes and continually improve the certification scheme (i.e. for consideration of new scientific findings). This includes, if required, the inspection and revision of the list of indicators and the "PEFC Guidelines for Sustainable Forestry in Romania" (Annex 2), which must take place after five years at the utmost. The national certification scheme is regularly evaluated on the basis of this analysis and improved upon, if necessary. The expertise of external scientists and other experts will flow into this process of revision.

The development and further development is to be done according to the principles of transparency, independence, cost effectiveness and credibility while taking into consideration all of the interest groups.

2.5.3 Continuous Improvement Process (CIP)

Continuous improvement of forestry management is an important objective of PEFC certification.

An important factor of CIP is that re-audits will evaluate whether targets have been achieved, as well as that the effectiveness of the measures will be assessed internally by the annual management evaluation and externally through regular control measures. Feedback to PEFC Romania takes place via the expert committee, which is responsible for system-relevant issues of content. PEFC Romania compiles information and adapts its system objectives whenever necessary. The certificate holders are to be notified by the

certification bodies of changes affecting them, and these certificate holders are to inform the participating forest owners.

The process of revising the Technical Documents is initiated by PEFC Romania.

2.6 Levels of Application

Based on the situation in Romania, there are two options of forest certification: These are

(1) Individual certification and

(2) Group certification.

Based on similar processes and requirements, the individual and the group certification in the following chapters are grouped together.

A forest owner can apply for his individual forest enterprise to be certified, or a group of forest owners can apply for certification as a group. All owners represented in the group are obliged to fulfill the requirements of the certification scheme. The participating area will be documented. The necessary data concerning the participants will be recorded in a list.

2.7 Requirements for Certification Bodies and Auditors

The requirements for certification bodies and auditors regarding the Certification of Forest Management and the Chain of Custody (CoC) are described in Annex 12 and Annex 13.

2.8 Dealing with Disputes

2.8.1 Complaints against a Forest Owner Participating in Group Certification

If a forest owner participating in group certification is suspected of non-compliance with the requirements of the scheme, a third party may file a request with the regional representative for special inspection of the circumstances. The suspicion must be substantiated in writing by the complainant. If in the course of this extraordinary examination the suspicion of a deficiency is confirmed by the group representative, the group representative will decide – possibly after consulting the members of the group committee and external experts – on the following consequences:

In the case of *serious* deficiencies, either:

- corrective measures will be agreed upon, which are suited to alleviate the deficiencies, and the implementation of these measures must be proven within the deadline set by the certification body, or
- the forest owner must be excluded from participation, if no improvement can be expected (i.e. irreversible effects, premeditated acts without agreeing to alter their behaviour)

In the case of *minor* deficiencies, the forest owner has to take corrective measures, which are suited to correct the problem or avoid its repetition.

The person filing the complaint is to be informed of the decision made upon inspection.

If it is impossible to make a clear decision in the course of the inspection, as to whether a serious or minor deficiency is involved, a special inspection can be demanded upon written request by the complaining party to the certification body. If the results of this evaluation are negative, i.e. the certification body determines that the deficiency is serious, the costs have to be covered by the forest owner; in the case of a positive result, the costs have to be covered by the complaining party, who will be duly informed of this.

If unwarranted complaints were made more than once by the same complaining party, these complaints no longer have to be investigated individually by the group representative, and the complaining party will be notified of this. In any event, the group representative shall inspect the situation on site at the next opportunity.

In any case, the receipt of all complaints must be documented, and this documentation has to be made available to the certification bodies.

2.8.2 Arbitration Bodies

In principle, accredited certification bodies must set procedures for arbitration, in order to be able to settle all complaints made by PEFC certificate holders brought against the certification body.

For the purpose of dealing with complaints regarding compliance with accreditation requirements, the accreditation body has set up the following procedure:

If it concerns:

- 1) Disputes, which are not under the competency of the certification or accreditation bodies, such as complaints regarding the process for drawing up the technical documents;
- 2) Complaints regarding implementation of regional or group certification;
- 3) Discrepancies regarding the interpretation of certification requirements,

which deal with sustainable forest management or the chain of custody, an Arbitration Body is established by PEFC Romania, if required. This procedure is regulated in Annex 9.

3. Certification Procedure for Individual and Group Certification

3.1 Protagonists, Tools, Principles

The options of individual and group certification are discussed together in this chapter. The procedures and requirements are more or less the same; any differences will be pointed out.

3.1.1 Basis

In addition to regional certification, PEFC also offers the options of group certification and individual certification.

A group is considered to be an alliance of forest owners, who undertake to adhere to defined management criteria. The forestlands of the participating enterprises do not have to be connected.

Forest-relevant data, which can be used on a regional level, are based on an Romanian-wide sampling grid. These data are not applicable for individual enterprises or a group. Thus, data collected from the enterprises have to be used for group certification and individual certification. Applicants for individual / group certification must have available adequate data material to provide evidence of the required criteria and indicators for the individual level / group level (Annex 1).

3.1.2 Application Procedure

The application for individual certification is made by the forest owner or the representative who has been appointed responsible for management.

In the case of group certification, an authorized representative has to be appointed by the group members, and he is responsible for all issues related to the certification.

3.1.2.1 Tasks of the Applicant

The tasks of the applicant include the following areas:

- arranging for the preparation of a sustainability report for the particular forest enterprise or for a group of companies, which also includes measures, or a plan of measures, for achieving the set sustainability goals
- drawing up and implementing regulations for stability of the system
- filing the application
- financing
- managing the list of participating forest owners (in the case of group certification) including the forest area of each participant

- acceptance or exclusion of participants and dissemination of relevant information to the certification body (in the case of group certification)
- conducting internal controlling
- dealing with complaints
- information on the results of certification and changes in the requirements of the certification scheme for the participating forest owners (in the case of group certification)
- upon request, making available a summary of the auditing results
- responsibility for organizational issues and contact for PEFC Romania

Participation has to cover the entire forest area of a forest owner, or the forest owners, in the case of group certification. Each forest owner also has to ensure that all the forestry work commissioned by him complies with the certification criteria.

3.1.2.2 Sustainability Report

A sustainability report is drawn up on the basis of the "criteria and indicators for sustainable forestry management" for the individual and group enterprise levels (Annex 1), and it has to adhere to the organization and structure thereof.

The sustainability report is based on the enterprise database, or data material, available from the participating enterprises in the case of group certification. It should convey an image of the sustainable forestry and formulate goals for continual improvement.

A sustainability report comprises the following elements:

- 1) Description of the current state of the forest / forest management in the enterprise / in the group (database) according to forestry data and other relevant data
- 2) Interpretation of the results
- 3) Resulting from items 1 and 2, there may be a call for action to improve sustainable forest management. Each indicator should be addressed in terms of the need for action. There is a differentiation between the two types of indicators:
 - a. indicators, whose development cannot be influenced by the forest management of the enterprise /the group
 - b. indicators, whose development can be influenced by the forest management of the enterprise/the group (system-relevant) Operational and measurable targets and suitable measures, or plans for measures, have to be defined for at least 10 system-relevant indicators (target indicators) for the purpose of achieving these targets. These targets include both long-term goals (such as the length of the rotation period), which set the direction of enterprise development, and short-term goals, which represent stages in achieving the long-term goals and can be implemented before the next re-audit. The target-indicators are stipulated by the applicant and include indicators, which are considered significant in the management.

Either a basic development procedure has to be defined for those system-relevant indicators, which cannot be covered by the targets and the measures, or the applicant must make a binding declaration that:

- no changes are sensible or necessary, and the status quo can be maintained without conducting any additional measures;
 - at present the management cannot influence the situation, which must be justified.
- 4) A target achievement analysis in the case of a re-audit, (status quo/target comparison)

A sustainability report has to be prepared by one or more qualified expert(s). If they are external experts, (neither the forest owner nor the authorized representative of the group), the targets and the measures for achieving these targets are to be worked out in agreement with and decided upon with the forest owner, or the group. Other interest groups or experts are also invited to participate in this process.

The achievement of the targets has to be investigated and evaluated in the re-audit conducted by the certification body.

3.1.2.3 Procedure for System Stability

In the forest enterprise or the group, effective procedures need to be implemented to contribute towards stability of the scheme. Measures and elements can serve towards system stability, which ensure that:

- in the case of individual certification, everyone undertaking forestry work is sufficiently informed of the PEFC requirements and the certification procedure
- in the case of group certification, the participating enterprises have to be sufficiently informed of the PEFC requirements and the certification procedure
- in the case of group certification, information on compliance with PEFC requirements in the participating enterprises has to be available and, if necessary, suitable measures are to be taken
- effort is made to achieve the targets formulated in the sustainability report, and suitable measures are taken, if necessary
- measures, tasks and responsibilities are established and documented. The functionality of the procedure for system stability has to be proven to the certification body. The exchange of information has to be documented.

3.1.2.4 Application Procedure

The forest owner, or the representative appointed responsible for management, or an authorized representative of the group, files an application for certification with the accredited certification body, submitting the required documents, which include:

- a written application
- description of the forest enterprise (individual certification), or the participating enterprises (location, size)
- sustainability report
- documented procedure for system stability
- in the case of group certification, a description of the applicant in charge (responsibility, training, etc.)

3.1.2.5 Internal Controlling and Management Evaluation

Internal controlling of the enterprise, or the group of enterprises in the case of group certification, is a major factor of system stability. Internal controlling should ensure:

- the adherence to PEFC guidelines for sustainable forestry in Romania (Annex 2)
- the adherence to the legal regulations for forestry (in particular Romanian Forest Law 2008, in the current version)
- ensure target achievement, or the corresponding contributions made by the individual forest owners, in the case of group certification

Internal controlling is to be conducted by qualified foresters. They must have proven experience with the content of the certification system, in particular with

- management guidelines
- targets and measures in the region
- the procedure for system stability

Internal controlling is conducted on an annual basis. In the event of group certification, each participating enterprise undergoes internal controlling before the initial certification, after which the selection and frequency of monitored participants should be oriented to the stipulations of the EA-regulations 7/01 on the application of EN 45012. The observations and results are to be documented. In the case of deficiencies, internal correction and improvement measures must be defined and implemented, such as on-site inspections (Annex 10). The certification body must be notified of the exclusion of a forest owner.

Once a year before the annual surveillance audit, the responsible person has to conduct a management evaluation. This involves the description and evaluation of the measures conducted in the preceding year and significant events or changes in target achievement, as well as the results of internal controlling.

3.2 Certification Process for Individual and Group Certification

In the following chapters, the requirements for the certification bodies are described concerning the certification process for individual and group certification. The procedures and requirements are similar; it will be indicated wherever they are different.

3.2.1 Appraisal of the Individual or Group Enterprise

3.2.1.1 Pre-Auditing

Upon request of the applicant, a pre-audit may be performed before the actual appraisal. This has to be agreed upon between the applicant and the certification body. This pre-audit can clarify whether the application documents are complete and meet the formal demands.

3.2.1.2 Auditing Plan

The certification body draws up an auditing plan, which defines the procedures that are to be followed during the appraisal.

3.2.1.3 Checking the System and Documents for Certification

The sustainability report of the regional unit under evaluation, and particularly the measures resulting from it, as well as the procedures for system stability, serve as the basis for certification. Before the actual appraisal for certification, the certification body evaluates:

- the sustainability report, in terms of the complete criteria and indications, the plausibility of the data, and the credibility of the results
- the measures taken and the measurability of the targets, effectiveness of the measures, and whether respective measures were taken for the criteria considered significant

The certification body draws up a written report on the results of the evaluation. If neither changes nor supplements are required in the sustainability report, then this report is considered final. In the case of required changes and supplements, these are to be included in the sustainability report by the applicant, which is then to be incorporated in the final report. In the case of a positive result of the evaluation, the report and the measures to be taken are considered standard documents based upon which certification and evaluation can be based.

The following points are comprised in the evaluation:

- procedures and processes are conducted in compliance with the system, particularly the procedures for reporting and drawing up a plan of measures
- the specification, planning, implementation and effectiveness of the procedures for system stability
- detailed planning for implementation of measures to ensure achievement of targets set in measures, i.e. suitability of instruments for achieving set targets
- fulfillment of targets (in the case of a re-audit)
- decision-making process that led to selection of the "target criteria"
- consideration of relevant information from external interest groups (government bodies, associations, environmental groups, etc.), in as far as sensible and appropriate

The appraisal comprises the entire area, which is to be certified. The evaluation of the on-site inspection will be incorporated in terms of implementing system stability and the activities taken for implementing the plan of measures.

3.2.1.4 On-Site Inspections in Participating Enterprises

The on-site inspections have to be performed on an annual basis. In the case of group certification, the selection and number of annually inspected participants should be oriented to the stipulations of the EA regulation 7/01 for application of EN 45012.

3.2.1.5 Evaluation

A positive evaluation of the inspection by the certification body results in a certificate being issued, i.e. declaration of conformity of the procedure with the requirements of the

certification scheme). In the case of a negative decision, the procedure is terminated. Annex 11 stipulates the procedure in the case of deficiencies.

3.2.1.6 Corrective Measures

If the certification body determines deviations from the PEFC requirements, which call for corrective measures, these must be implemented by the regional committee within a period of time that is defined by the certification body, or evidence must be provided that the deficiencies have been corrected.

3.2.1.7 Report by the Certification Body, Summary of Results

The certification body draws up a report on the evaluation and the results, which is sent to the applicant for the purpose of feedback. The applicant receives the final report, as well as a summary of the final report from the certification body. Summary of certification reports publicly available upon request.

3.2.2 Surveillance Audits

Once annually, surveillance audits are to be conducted. They comprise the evaluation of:

- procedures for system stability
- implementation of the plan of measures
- management evaluation
- on-site inspections (refer to Annex 10)
- implementation of corrections from the last surveillance audit (if required)

In the case of deficiencies, the procedure in Annex 11 has to be followed.

3.2.3 Re-audits

Every 5 year re-audits will be carried out for the purpose of extending the certification in the scope of the initial certification. This also includes investigating whether the set targets have been achieved. In the case of deficiencies, the procedure in Annex 11 has to be followed.

3.2.4 Issuing, Validity, Termination, Suspension and Withdrawal of the Certificate

After positive evaluation, the certification body issues the applicant a certificate, which comprises the following:

- designation of the certification body
- logo of the accreditation body and accreditation number
- name and address of the applicant
- the certification unit
- the regulations and the period of validity

3. Certification Procedure

3.2 Certification Process for Individual and Group Certification

In the case of group certification, the applicant is issued a certificate. Each enterprise in the group receives a document from the certification body confirming participation, which refers to the certificate. For group certification, all corresponding documents of the participating forest owners become invalid in the event of termination or withdrawal of the certificate.

The certificate holder may terminate his participation in certification with the certification body at any time.

In the event of serious deviations from the PEFC requirements, the certificate is suspended or withdrawn by the certification body.

4. Definitions

The following definitions are valid for the present document issued by PEFC Romania, as well as for all of the appendices (see chapter 2.2).

Accreditation

A procedure by which a correspondingly authorized body formally recognizes that an organization or a person is competent to carry out specific tasks.

Accreditation Body

A body, which implements and manages an accreditation system and grants accreditation

Audit

Systematic, independent and documented process for compiling auditing evidence, and the objective evaluation thereof, in order to determine the extent to which the auditing criteria have been fulfilled.

Audit report

Report of an audit

Auditor

Person, who is qualified to conduct audits

Certification

Acknowledgement by a third party concerning products, processes, systems or persons.

Certification body

An independent third party, accredited by a national accreditation body, which evaluates and confirms organizations with respect to standards and any supplementary documentation required.

Conformity

Fulfilment of set requirements for a product, a process or a service.

Criteria

Aspects, which are considered important and which can be used to evaluate success or failure. The role of criteria is to define and characterize important elements or conditions and processes according to which the implementation of sustainable forest management can be evaluated.

Deficiency

Serious deficiency: Deficiency that affects the functioning and effectiveness of forest certification, or which substantially encroaches upon evidence of sustainable forest management.

Minor deficiency: Deficiency that does not constitute a systematic risk for the effective functioning of forest certification, or which does not substantially encroach upon evidence of sustainable forest management.

Indicators

Quantitative, qualitative or descriptive parameters, which illustrate the direction of change, if they are measured or observed in periodical intervals.

Management Evaluation

Review of activities undertaken the previous year and significant events or changes in the achievement of objectives and on the results of internal audits by management in determining the possible need for change and opportunities for improvement.

On-Site Inspection

Inspection of the participating forest enterprises and the forestlands belonging to them.

PEFC Trademark

The PEFC logo (PEFC label) is registered and must only be used according to PEFC ST 2001:2008: PEFC Logo Usage Rules - Requirements.

PEFC Certificate

Document issued by an independent certification body, which declares conformity with the PEFC requirements listed in this document.

Region

Area within clearly defined natural and administrative borders.

Requirement

Demand or expectation, which is stipulated, usually a precondition or an obligation.

Sustainable Forest Management (SFM)

The stewardship and use of forests and forestland in a way and at a rate, which maintains their biodiversity, productivity, regeneration capacity, vitality and their potential to fulfil now, and in the future, relevant ecological, economic and social functions at local, national and global levels, and does not cause damage to other ecosystems (Definition of SFM in the Pan-European process). The PEFC-certified forests are certified in accordance with the six Pan-European criteria as defined and endorsed by the Pan-European Ministerial Conferences on the Protection of Forests in Europe.

Third Party

Person or body that is recognized as being independent of the parties involved, with concern to the issue in question.

Note: Parties involved are usually the supplier (first party) and the purchaser (second party) (ISO/IEC Guide 2).

Unit (of Certification)

Region, group of enterprises or individual enterprise

Voluntary Declaration of Participation

A declaration signed by a forest owner, or the representative of a forestry alliance, in which this person obligates himself to fulfil the require