

**PEFC GUIDE**

PEFC Procedure Document

**PEFC GD 1003:2009**

**Issue 1**

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**PEFC Council technical documents development  
procedures - requirements**



**PEFC Council**

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## **Foreword**

The PEFC Council (the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes) is the worldwide organisation promoting sustainable forest management through forest certification and labelling of forest based products. Products with PEFC claim and/or label deliver confidence that raw material originates in sustainably managed forests.

The PEFC Council provides endorsement of national forest certification schemes which are required to comply with the PEFC Council requirements subject to regular evaluations.

## **Introduction**

Technical documentation plays an important role in the PEFC Council's activities and consequently for the work of the PEFC National Governing Bodies and their schemes. The technical documentation sets up requirements and procedures for the PEFC Council itself, national forest certification schemes and their users and influences the trade and commerce of forest based products within and between all countries of the world.

The PEFC Council is committed to work with a broad range of stakeholders and to provide them with open and transparent opportunity for participation, and prepares its documentation in consensus process.

## 1 Scope

This document covers procedures for the development of the PEFC Council technical documents in order to ensure objectivity, efficiency, transparency and amongst the participating interested stakeholders.

The document's requirements are applicable to:

- a) development of new PEFC technical documentation or their parts,
- b) revision of the PEFC technical documentation,
- c) maintenance of the PEFC technical documentation, including its technical corrigenda and amendments.

Note:

The structure of the PEFC technical documentation is given in PEFC GD 1001:2009.

## 2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For both dated and undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendment) applies.

PEFC Council Statutes

PEFC GD 1001:2009, *Structure of the PEFC technical documentation – general requirements*

GL 7/2007, *PEFC Council procedures for the investigation and resolution of complaints and Appeals*

ISO/IEC Guide 2:1996, *Standardization and related activities - General vocabulary*

## 3 Definitions

## 4 Organisational Structure and Responsibilities for Standard Setting

### 4.1 PEFC Council General Assembly

The PEFC Council General Assembly shall be responsible for the formal approval of the PEFC Council international standards. The composition and decision making of the PEFC Council General Assembly shall be defined in the PEFC Council Statutes.

### 4.2 PEFC Council Board of Directors

The Board of Directors' responsibilities within the standard setting process shall be:

- a) approval of the project proposal,
- b) establishment and dissolution of Working Groups for the technical documentation project development work,
- c) formal approval of PEFC technical documentation,
- d) recommendation of the Final draft standards for formal approval by the General Assembly.

Note:

The various types of the PEFC technical documentation are formally approved by the Board of Directors or General Assembly. The structure of the PEFC technical documentation is given in PEFC GD 1001:2009.

The composition and decision making mechanisms of the Board of Directors are defined in the PEFC Council Statutes.

### **4.3 PEFC Council Secretariat**

The Secretariat shall be responsible, *inter alia*, for the implementation of the document procedures and other rules of the PEFC Council's technical activities. For this purpose, the Secretariat arranges all contacts between the Working Groups, Task Forces, the project leader, and the Board of Directors. In particular, the Secretariat shall be responsible for:

- a) preparation of the project development process and project proposal,
- b) accepting nominations for participation on Working Group (as delegated by the Board of Directors),
- c) providing secretarial and administration support to the Working Groups and Task Forces (if not carried out by the Working Groups and Task Forces themselves),
- d) announcing the start of the project development process,
- e) administration of the public and members consultations,
- f) publication of the approved documentation.

### **4.4 Project Leader**

The project leader is a person nominated by the Board of Directors to lead the development work and, in cooperation with the Secretariat, the Working Group and the Task Force to ensure realisation of the development project.

The project leader shall be responsible for:

- a) preparation of the working draft and consequent drafts of documents,
- b) preparation of agenda (or a part of the agenda) of the Working Group and Task Forces,
- c) records keeping (in cooperation with the Working Group Chair and/or Secretary).

### **4.5 Working Group**

A permanent or temporary Working Group shall be established and dissolved by the Board of Directors. The Working Group shall report to the Board of Directors.

The Working Group's composition shall provide for balanced representation of stakeholder categories where no single concerned interest shall be allowed to dominate the process. The Working Group's representation shall respect the subject matter of the standard setting of the specific project and includes representatives nominated by:

- a) PEFC National Governing Bodies,
- b) Members of the Stakeholder Forum,
- c) Extraordinary members of the PEFC Council,
- d) Board of Directors,
- e) PEFC Council Secretariat,
- f) Other stakeholder groups interested in the development process.

A Secretariat representative and the project leader shall be a member of any Working Group.

The objective of the Working Group is to build consensus amongst participating interested stakeholders and/or experts.

The Board of Directors may establish a joint Working Group with other organisations (for example IAF, International Accreditation Forum) for the purposes of avoiding or eliminating possible or actual overlap in the technical work.

## 4.6 Task Force

The Working Groups or the Secretariat may establish Task Forces for specific tasks. A Task Force shall report to its parent Working Group or the Secretariat.

A Task Force comprises a restricted number of experts individually appointed by the Working Group or the Secretariat based on nominations submitted by the PEFC members (PEFC National Governing Bodies, Stakeholder Forum and extraordinary members), Working Group members or the Secretariat. The Project Leader shall be a member of the Task Force.

## 5 Development of PEFC Technical Documentation

### 5.1 The project approach

The PEFC technical documentation shall be developed on the basis of a project approach.

The project approach is outlined below by reference to the following tables:

Table 1 – the stages of the project development with the associated documents for each stage;

Table 2 – a breakdown of each stage by action items together with the responsibility level within the PEFC Council; and

Table 3 – the stages and action items required for different categories of the PEFC technical documentation.

Table 1: Development process stages and associated documents

Project stage	Associated Documents	
	Name	Abbreviation
Proposal stage	Project proposal	PP
Preparatory stage	Working draft	WD
Working Group stage	Working Group draft	WGD
Enquiry stage	Enquiry draft	ED
Approval stage	Final draft	FD
Publication stage	PEFC International Standard or other document <sup>1)</sup>	PEFC ST <sup>1)</sup>

Note <sup>1)</sup>

The structure and identification of the PEFC technical documentation is included in PEFC GD 1001:2009.



Table 2: Development process stages and associated responsibilities

Project stages		Responsibility
Proposal stage	Project development	PEFC Secretariat
	Project approval	Board of Directors
Preparatory stage	Public announcement	PEFC Secretariat
	Invitation to PEFC members and interested stakeholders	PEFC Secretariat
	Working Group establishment or reconvening	Board of Directors/PEFC Secretariat
	Development of working draft	Project Leader
Working Group stage	Consideration of comments	Working Group / Project Leader
	Consensus building	Working Group / Project Leader
Enquiry stage	PEFC members consultation	PEFC Secretariat / Working Group / Project Leader
	Public consultation	PEFC Secretariat / Working Group / Project Leader
Approval stage	Development report	Project Leader
	Board of Directors approval	Board of Directors
	General Assembly approval	Board of Directors / General Assembly
Publication stage		PEFC Secretariat

Table 3: PEFC technical documentation and associated development stages<sup>1</sup>

Project stages		PEFC standard	PEFC Guides		PEFC Best Practice
			Proced.	Other	
Proposal stage	Project development	x		x	
	Project approval	x		x	
Preparatory stage	Public announcement	x			
	Invitation of PEFC members and stakeholders	x			
	Working Group setting	x			
	Development of working draft	x	x	x	x
Working Group stage	Consideration of comments	x			
	Consensus building	x			
Enquiry stage	PEFC members consultation	x	x	x	x
	Public consultation	x			
Approval stage	Development report	x	x	x	x
	Board of Directors approval		x	x	x
	General Assembly approval	x <sup>2</sup>			
Publication stage		x	x	x	x

Note 1:

Table 3 contains the minimum required stages, but additional stages can be added as appropriate.

Note 2:

The General Assembly approves the PEFC standards based on recommendation of the Board of Directors.

## **5.2 Proposal stage**

The Proposal stage of the project development process includes the development and approval of a Project proposal for the development of PEFC technical documentation.

The Project proposal shall be prepared by the Secretariat on a request from the PEFC members (PEFC National Governing Bodies, members of the Stakeholder Forum and extraordinary members), the Board of Directors, the Working Group or as the Secretariat's own initiative. The Project proposal shall be approved by the Board of Directors.

The Project proposal shall cover the following issues:

- a) clear identification of the issue (development of a new document or a new part or revision of an existing document),
- b) proposal for a Project Leader,
- c) proposal for allocation of the project to an existing Working Group or establishment of a new Working Group,
- d) requirements for representation of members and interested stakeholders and their balanced representation,
- e) description of the project development stages and expected timetable,
- f) resources required for the development work and their sources.

## **5.3 Preparatory stage**

### **5.3.1 Public announcement**

The start of the development work shall be announced by suitable media as appropriate to afford the PEFC members and interested stakeholders an opportunity to provide meaningful contributions to the project development. The announcement shall include the objective, content and expected timetable of the project development work and provide information on the opportunities for the PEFC members and the interested stakeholders to participate and contribute to the process. The development of PEFC international standards<sup>1)</sup> shall be made in publicly accessible media, including the PEFC website.

Note <sup>1)</sup>

The structure and identification of the PEFC technical documentation is included in PEFC GD 1001:2009.

### **5.3.2 Working Group invitation and confirmation**

The invitation to interested stakeholders and PEFC members to participate in the Working Group may be done as part of the announcement of the start of the project development work or separately. The Board of Directors or the Secretariat on its behalf shall be responsible for accepting the nominations for membership of and participation in the work of the Working Group taking into consideration expected balanced representation of the interested stakeholders and limits of the available resources.

The PEFC Secretariat shall inform the members of the Working Group of their membership and any administrative requirements.

### **5.3.3 Working draft**

The Project Leader shall prepare a working draft of the relevant PEFC technical document which will be supplied to the Working Group, including relevant implementation transition arrangements.

## 5.4 Working Group stage

### 5.4.1 Consideration of comments

The Working Group stage shall be the principal stage at which comments from PEFC members and interested stakeholders are taken into consideration, with a view to achieving consensus on the technical content of the Working Group draft document(s).

All comments shall be submitted using the form in Annex 1.

Comments and views submitted by any participation member of the Working Group shall be considered in an open and transparent way and their resolution and proposed changes to the working draft shall be recorded.

The working drafts shall be available to all members of the Working Group as well as to other interested stakeholders and PEFC members upon request.

### 5.4.2 Consensus building

The decision of the Working Group to circulate the working draft as an Enquiry draft (see 5.5) or to recommend a Final draft for formal Approval (see 5.6) shall be taken on the basis of the consensus principle.

It shall be the responsibility of the Chair of the Working Group, in consultation with the Secretary of the Working Group and, if necessary, the Project Leader, to judge whether there is sufficient support to move to the Enquiry stage or Approval stage, bearing in mind the definition of consensus given in ISO/IEC Guide 2:1996:

***"consensus:** General agreement, characterized by the absence of sustained opposition to substantial issues by any important part of the concerned interests and by a process that involves seeking to take into account the views of all stakeholders concerned and to reconcile any conflicting arguments.*

*Note:*

*Consensus need not imply unanimity."*

In order to reach consensus the Working Group can utilise the following alternative processes to establish whether there is opposition to the Working draft or Final draft:

- a) a face-to face or telephone conference meeting, or combinations of thereof, where there is a verbal yes/no vote;
- b) a face-to face meeting where there is a show of hands for a yes/no vote;
- c) a face-to face meeting where there is a "secret ballot" of members on a yes/no vote;
- d) a statement on consensus from the Chair at a face-to face meeting where there are no dissenting voices or hands (votes);
- e) an e-mail meeting where a request for agreement is provided to members and the members providing a written response (a proxy for a vote); or
- f) a formal balloting process where votes are collated for the collective consensus decision.

No single concerned interest shall be allowed to dominate the process.

In any case of a negative vote which represents sustained opposition of any important part of the concerned interests to a substantive issue, the issue shall be resolved using the following mechanism:

- a) discussion and negotiation on the disputed issue within the Working Group in order to find a compromise,
- b) direct negotiation between the stakeholder(s) submitting the objection and stakeholders with different view on the disputed issue in order to find a compromise,
- c) dispute resolution process.

Note:

The dispute resolution process shall be governed by GL 7/2007

In order to define what issues are substantial, the Working Group shall agree in the beginning which issues and areas shall be considered as substantial in the consensus building.

## **5.5 Enquiry stage**

### **5.5.1 PEFC members consultation**

The Enquiry draft shall be circulated to the PEFC members (PEFC National Governing Bodies, members of the Stakeholder Forum and extraordinary members) for a 4 week consultation period.

Where both PEFC members and public consultation are required, the consultation period and methods defined for the public consultation (5.5.2) shall also apply to the members' consultation.

Received comments and views shall be considered in an open and transparent way and these comments as well as changes resulting from the PEFC members consultation shall be communicated in a timely manner to the PEFC members through E-mail communication, intranet or other appropriate means. All comments shall be submitted using the form in Annex 1.

### **5.5.2 Public consultation**

The Enquiry draft shall be made available through the PEFC Council website and upon request by other appropriate means to interested stakeholders and the public for a 60 day public consultation. The invitation to the public consultation shall be made through its announcement on the PEFC Council website and E-mail distribution.

The received comments and views received shall be considered in an open and transparent way and these comments as well as changes resulting from the public consultation or their summaries shall be made available in a timely manner through the PEFC Council website or upon request. All comments shall be submitted using the form in Annex 1.

The public consultation may also be supported by seminars, public or stakeholder's presentations or conferences aimed at encouraging the submission of comments on the Enquiry draft.

## **5.6 Approval stage**

### **5.6.1 Development report**

The Final draft shall be presented for the formal Approval stage together with a development report which provides the following evidence on the process compliance with this document's procedures:

- a) timetable of the development process,
- b) information on the announcement of the start of the development process and invitation to stakeholders supported by a list of invited and participating interested stakeholders and/or PEFC members,
- c) information on public and/or PEFC members consultation(s) and summary of comments and views, and result of their consideration,
- d) evidence on the consensus, including a summary of presented oppositions and their resolution,
- e) a proposal for the transition period.

### **5.6.2 Formal approval by the Board of Directors**

The formal approval of the Final draft by the Board of Directors shall be governed by the PEFC Council Statutes.

Where the Final draft has not received a sufficient number of votes to be formally approved, the Board of Directors shall decide to:

- a) return the document to the Preparatory or Working Group stage or
- b) cancel the project.

Note:

The documents within the PEFC technical documentation structure which are formally approved by the Board of Directors are indicated in PEFC GD 1001:2009. See also Table 3.

### **5.6.3 Formal approval by the General Assembly**

The Final draft shall be submitted to the PEFC General Assembly based on the recommendation of the Board of Directors. The voting procedures of the PEFC General Assembly and the Board of Directors are governed by the PEFC Council Statutes.

Where the Final draft has not received a sufficient number of votes of the Board of Directors to be recommended for the formal approval or has not received sufficient number of votes of the General Assembly to be formally approved, the Board of Directors or the General Assembly shall decide to:

- c) return the document to the Preparatory or Working Group stage or
- d) cancel the project.

Note:

The documents within the PEFC technical documentation structure which are formally approved by the General Assembly are indicated in PEFC GD 1001:2009. See also Table 3.

## **5.7 Publication stage**

Within four weeks of the formal approval of the developed document, the Secretariat shall correct any errors in the formally approved document, and distribute the document amongst its members and make it publicly available at the PEFC website.

## **6 Technical corrigenda and amendments**

### **6.1 General**

A published technical document may subsequently be modified by the publication of:

- a) a technical corrigendum (or a corrected republication of the current edition);
- b) an amendment.

The Secretariat shall decide, bearing in mind both financial consequences and the interest of users of the document, whether to publish the technical corrigenda or amendment as a separate document or to incorporate them into a new edition of the corrected and updated document.

### **6.2 Technical corrigenda**

A technical corrigendum may be issued to correct either:

- a) a technical error or ambiguity in the PEFC document, inadvertently introduced either in Working Group or in Publication stage and which could lead to incorrect or unsafe application of the publication, or
- b) information that has become outdated since publication, provided that the modification has no effect on the technical normative elements of the technical document.

Note:

Technical corrigenda are not issued to correct errors that can be assumed to have no consequences in the application of the publication, for example minor printing errors.

Technical corrigenda shall be formally approved by the PEFC Secretariat, if necessary in consultation with the Project Leader or the respective Working Group.

### 6.3 Amendments

An amendment alters and/or adds to previously agreed technical provisions in an existing document.

The procedures for developing and publishing an amendment shall follow the stages outlined in chapters 5.3 – 5.7.

## 7 Revision of the PEFC technical documentation

The technical documentation shall be periodically reviewed at five years intervals and revised in a timely manner. The procedures for the review and revision of the technical documentation shall follow the stages outlined in chapter 5.

## 8 Appeals and complaints

Any substantive or procedural complaints or appeals shall be resolved using the PEFC Council complaints and appeals resolution procedures outlined in GL 7/2007 (as amended).

## 9 Records on the development process

The following records of the project development process as shown in Table 4 shall be prepared and maintained by the nominated responsible person.

Table 4:

Records	Responsibility
Minutes of the Board of Directors meeting	PEFC Secretariat
Minutes of the Working Group	Working Group Chair or Secretary (in consultation with the Project Leader)
Minutes of the PEFC General Assembly	PEFC Secretariat
Working Group members comments and their consideration <sup>1)</sup>	Project Leader (if not included in the Working Group minutes)
PEFC members comments and results of their consideration <sup>1)</sup>	Project Leader
Public comments and results of their consideration <sup>1)</sup>	Project Leader
Results of the consensus building and resolution of opposition	Project Leader (if not included in the Working Group minutes)
Complaints and appeals resolutions	PEFC Secretariat

Note <sup>1)</sup>:

The form in Annex 1 to this document should be used to record the comments and views of PEFC members and interested stakeholders, and their resolution.

## 10 Bibliography

ISO /IEC Guide 59:1994, *Code of good practice for standardization*



**Annex 1: Observations, comments and suggestions form**

Date:	Document:
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1	2	3	4	5	6
Organisation identification 1)	Clause No./ Subclause No./ Annex (e.g. 3.1)	Paragraph/ Figure/ Table/Note (e.g. Table 1)	Observations / Comments / Suggestions (including justifications)	Secretariat / Project Leader / Working Group observations	Proposed action


1 **Organisation identification:** Write abbreviation of the organisation making the comment