
Final Report

Conformity Assessment
Irish Forest Certification Scheme



13 October 2011

Client

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ACRONYMS

CoC	Chain of Custody
COFORD	Council for Forest Research and Development
FM	Forest management
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
ha	Hectare
IAF	International Accreditation Forum
IFCS	Irish Forest Certification Scheme
ILO	International Labour Organization
INFF	Irish Natural Forest Foundation
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
ITGA	Irish Tree Growers Association
MCPFE	Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forest in Europe
MRC	Minimum Requirements Checklist
PEFC	Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes
PEFCC	Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes Council
PEOLG	Pan-European Operational Level Guidelines
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SSP	Standard setting procedure
TD	Technical Document

1. INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of the evaluation of the PEFC Ireland Certification Scheme for Sustainable Forest Management (IFCS) against the PEFC Council (PEFCC) requirements for forest certification schemes. The PEFCC appointed FORM as the independent consultant to carry out the study. This assessment report will be the basis for the PEFCC's decision on the formal endorsement of the Irish PEFC Scheme.

The evaluation benefited from FORM's specific experience and expertise in Forest Certification and Sustainable Forest Management (SFM). FORM has implemented many studies in which national or international certification standards were analyzed versus another standard or scheme, for example for FSC, Keurhout and the Dutch system called BRL. FORM also carried out several conformity assessments for PEFC, such as Austria, Spain, Gabon, Czech Republic, Finland, Sweden, Canada, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

1.1 Scope of the assessment

The scope of this assessment is to compare the IFCS with the minimum requirements of PEFCC, by verifying the scheme against PEFCC's Minimum Requirement Checklist (MRC), version GL2/2010.

1.2 Assessment process

The assessment process has followed eight steps, namely:

- **Review of the documentation**

The IFCS documentation has been reviewed by two consultants of FORM, mentioned in chapter 1.5. The assessment was carried out against the final IFCS documentation that was adopted by the Board of PEFC Ireland on December 2010.

- **Verification of the checklist**

The IFCS was assessed against the PEFCC MRC, version GL 2/2010

- **Public consultation**

Public consultation started at 25 July 2011 and was until 23 September 2011. Comments of the public can be found in Annex 3.

- **Drafting of the interim report.**

This interim report was sent to PEFC Ireland and PEFCC on 30 August 2011.

- **Review of interim report**

The interim report was reviewed by PEFC Ireland and comments were sent to FORM international by 22 September 2011.

- **Drafting of the second interim report**

The second interim report was prepared based on the comments of PEFC Ireland and the revised documents (Annex 4). It was submitted 22 September 2011.

- **Review of the second interim report**

The second interim report was sent to the Panel of Experts (PoE), appointed by PEFC Council to review conformity assessment reports. They sent their comments on 6 October 2011.

- **Final analysis and reporting**

Based on the comments of the PoE comments, the report was finalized. The deadline for the final report was 13 October 2011.

1.3 Methodology adopted

The methodology which FORM proposed in the tender document has been used for the conformity assessment. The report has been written in line with the guidelines of PEFC for the content of an assessment report.

The assessment consisted of a desk study in which an evaluation of the conformity was conducted. This assessment enabled the consultants to get insight into the similarities and differences between the PEFC Ireland scheme documentation and the minimum requirements of PEFC, as well as into any missing information.

a) **Assessment of the standard setting procedure**

This aspect was evaluated on the basis of the information presented in Part I of PEFC's MRC and chapter 5 and Annex 2 of the PEFC Technical document. The checklist was used to assess the compliance of IFCS with the requirements of PEFC concerning the standard setting procedure.

The criteria for the standard setting procedure are assessed in two stages. The assessment of the standard setting is based on:

1. the compliance of the scheme documented procedures ('Procedures')
2. compliance of the standard setting process itself ('Process')

The documented procedures are required to govern the standard setting process and as such shall be in place before the standard setting process starts.

b) **Assessment of the scheme implementation procedures**

This part of the assessment was based on the procedures defined in chapter 6 and Annex 3 of the PEFC Technical document. Part II of the PEFC's MRC was used to assess the compliance of the IFCS against the PEFC standards.

c) **Assessment of the certification standards**

A comparison was conducted between the Pan European Operational Level Guidelines (PEOLG) as approved during the third Pan-European Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (Lisbon, June 1998) and the IFCS Standard. The IFCS compliance with the PEOLG was assessed against chapter 4 and Annex 3 of the PEFC Technical document, part III of the PEFC's MRC and the integrated PEOLG checklist (see Annex 2 of this document).

d) **Assessment of the Chain of Custody standard**

The PEFC Council procedures for Chain of Custody certification were adopted by PEFC Ireland within the IFCS against Annex 4 of the PEFC Technical Document.

e) **Assessment of the certification and accreditation procedures**

These procedures were assessed on the basis of the information presented in part VII of the PEFC's MRC and chapter 8 and Annex 6 of the PEFC Technical Document.

f) **Other aspects regarding functions and efficiency of the scheme**

The functions were evaluated on the basis of the description and analysis of these functions, as indicated in the information obtained and correspondence with PEFC Ireland, as well as during the visit to Ireland (annex 3).

1.4 Reference documents / sources

The PEFC Ireland documents, which FORM International used for the conformity assessment are:

#	Document	Date
1.	The PEFC Ireland Scheme for Sustainable Forest Management v2 (Scheme)	September 2011
2.	Annex 1: The Irish National Forest Standard	
3.	Annex 2: The Code of Best Forest Practice	
4.	Annex 3: Environmental Guidelines	
5.	Annex 4: The PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard v2	September 2011
6.	Minutes of all Standard Setting Forum and Technical Working Group Meetings	
7.	PEFC Guideline GL 2/2010 – MRC Checklist	

The PEFC Technical documents which FORM used are:

#	PEFC Council document	Date
1.	PEFC Technical Document	5 October 2007
2.	Annex 1: Terms and Definitions	27 October 2006
3.	Annex 2: Rules for Standard Setting	27 October 2006
4.	Annex 3: Basis for Certification Schemes and their Implementation	13 November 2009
5.	Annex 4: Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products- Requirements	17 June 2005
6.	ST 2001:2008 V2 Logo usage rules – requirements	21 November 2008
7.	Annex 6: Certification and Accreditation Procedures	5 October 2007
8.	Annex 7: Endorsement and Mutual Recognition of National Schemes and their Revisions	5 October 2007
9.	The PEFC Council Minimum Requirements Checklist for Certification Scheme Applications and references (GL 2/2010)	4 February 2010
10.	GL 6 / 2005 (<i>Content of the Consultant's Assessment Report for Forest Certification Schemes</i>)	

Internet resources used were:

- www.pefc.org
- www.ilo.org
- www.iso.org
- www.pefc.ie

1.5 Personnel

This conformity assessment was undertaken by Debora van Boven-Flier (Senior Consultant) and Rik Sools (Consultant).

2. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the results of this conformity assessment, FORM International recommends the PEFC Board of Directors to recommend to the General Assembly to endorse the Irish Forest Certification Scheme, since no non-conformities have been found against the PEFC's requirements for scheme endorsement.

3. SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

3.1 Overall

The Irish Forest Certification Scheme is a well-structured and complete scheme. All PEFC minimum requirements have been addressed adequately.

The criteria for the standard setting procedure are normally assessed in two ways. The assessment is based on:

1. the compliance of the scheme documented procedures ('Procedures')
2. compliance of the standard setting process itself ('Process')

The documented procedures are required to govern the standard setting process and as such shall be in place before the standard setting process starts.

This initial conformity assessment however, also included a mission to Ireland, which enabled:

- The clarification of any outstanding issues highlighted during the initial assessment.
- Discussions with the various stakeholders, involved in the standard setting process, and other external organisations who can provide input and feedback to the consultants.
- Insight into the practical implementation of the scheme, in the field, at forest management level in the Irish forests.

3.2 Standard Setting Procedures

The PEFC Ireland scheme documentation complies with all the minimum requirements for standard setting procedures.

The PEFC Ireland scheme documentation was submitted before the PEFC ST 1001:2010 became the Standard Setting standard, therefore the assessment was against Annex 2.

3.3 Scheme Implementation Procedures (SIP)

The PEFC Ireland scheme documentation complies with all the minimum requirements for scheme implementation procedures.

The PEFC Ireland scheme documentation was submitted before the PEFC ST 1002:2010 became the Group Forest Management Certification standard, therefore the assessment was against Annex 3.

3.4 Forest Management Standard (FMS)

The PEFC Ireland scheme documentation complies with all the PEOLG requirements.

The PEFC Ireland scheme documentation was submitted before the PEFC ST 1003:2010 became the Forest Management standard, therefore the assessment was against the PEOLG's.

3.5 Chain of Custody (CoC)

PEFC Ireland has adopted the PEFC requirements for Chain of Custody:

PEFC Ireland Scheme section 2.4:

‘Scope of the Scheme

- Certification of the sustainable management of all forest and woodland types and ownerships within Ireland to the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard.
- Certification of Chain of Custody in accordance with PEFC Council Annex 4: Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products: Requirements, as revised by PEFC ST 2002:200x
- Management and control within Ireland of the PEFC logo licensing requirements as set out in PEFC International Standard ST 2001:2008 - PEFC Logo Usage Rules – Requirements’

3.6 Logo Usage Rules

PEFC Ireland has adopted PEFC’s Logo usage rules without modification:

PEFC Ireland Scheme section 2.4:

‘Scope of the Scheme

- Certification of the sustainable management of all forest and woodland types and ownerships within Ireland to the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard.
- Certification of Chain of Custody in accordance with PEFC Council Annex 4: Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products: Requirements, as revised by PEFC ST 2002:200x
- Management and control within Ireland of the PEFC logo licensing requirements as set out in PEFC International Standard ST 2001:2008 - PEFC Logo Usage Rules – Requirements’

3.7 Certification and Accreditation Procedures

The PEFC Ireland scheme documentation complies with all the minimum requirements for certification and accreditation procedures as mentioned in Annex 6.

3.8 Areas of Improvement

No recommendations are made.

4. ANALYSIS OF THE IRISH FOREST CERTIFICATION SCHEME

In this chapter those main results from the conformity assessment have been discussed that PEFC Council considers to be most relevant for this report. The comparison of the IFCS with the other PEFC requirements (MRC) is presented in Annex 1.

4.1 Standard Setting Procedure

Req. 1 Has the development of the certification standards been independent from the certification and accreditation process?

Procedures

Scheme, Appendix 5, 2.2:

'The development, maintenance and revision of the Standard shall be independent from the certification and accreditation process.'

Conforms

Process

PEFC Ireland is not a certifying nor an accreditation body, nor were any of these bodies involved in the certification or accreditation process.

It was confirmed during the visit to Ireland that certification nor accreditation (bodies) are in any way linked with the standard setting process.

Conforms

Req. 3 Has the standard setting process been co-ordinated by the PEFC National Governing Body?

Procedures

Scheme, 6.11, Interpretation and Revision of the Standard:

'As the National Governing Body, PEFC Ireland coordinated the development of this standard.'

Conforms

Process

Confirmed during the visit to Ireland:

The secretary of PEFC Ireland was also the secretary of the Standard setting forum. During the visit it became apparent that the secretary arranged the meetings, took minutes and sent out invitations to the broader public and the possible participants in the standard setting forum.

Conforms

Req. 6 Have all relevant interested parties representing the different aspects of sustainable forest management been invited to participate in the standard setting process and a created Forum?

Procedures

Scheme, Appendix 5, 2.4.1

'The Forum shall represent the different aspects of sustainable forest management in Ireland. Relevant interested parties will be invited to participate in the standard setting process, including forest owners, forest industry, environmental and social non-governmental organisations, trade unions and retailers. The overall aim is that the Forum should provide a balanced representation of the various interest groups and organisations.'

Conforms

Process

Scheme, 6.2 Current Membership Base

'A wide range of organizations which would be considered to have an interest in forestry in Ireland was invited to participate in the standard setting process and no organization seeking membership was refused, however many of those contacted declined to accept the invitation. Vacancies remain on both the economic (1) and environmental (2) chambers. The criteria for membership of the Forum are set out in section 2.4 of the PEFC Irish Forestry Standard: Rules for Standard Setting (see Appendix 6).'

The following organisations were invited:

1. Forum members	2. Industry	3. Environment	4. Education
1. Inland Fisheries Ireland	1. Forest Service	1. Woodlands of Ireland	1. University College Dublin Dept. of Agriculture
2. Crann	2. Coillte	2. An Taisce	2. Waterford Institute of Technology
3. Tree Council	3. Woodland Managers Ltd	3. Birdwatch Ireland	3. Galway Mayo Institute of Technology
4. Coillte	4. Irish Timber Grower's Association	4. Irish Peatland Conservation Council	
5. Irish Timber Grower's Association	5. Private Forestry Certification Ireland Ltd	5. Heritage Council	
6. Forestry Management Companies	6. IFS Asset Managers Ltd	6. Irish Natural Forestry Foundation	
7. Irish Bioenergy Association	7. Teagasc	7. Environmental Protection Agency	
8. Irish Congress of Trade Unions	8. Dr. Niall O'Carroll	8. Just Forests	
9. Sports Council	9. IFA Farm Forestry Committee	9. Irish Environmental Network	
10. Leader	10. COFORD		
11. Irish Farmers' Association	11. Green Belt Ltd		
12. Society of Irish Foresters	12. South Western Forestry Services Ltd		

1. Forum members	2. Industry	3. Environment	4. Education
13. Sandy Greig (chairman) 14. Paddy Purser, PTR Ltd (Tech. Consultant)	13. The Forestry Company 14. Forestry Services Ltd 15. Mid-Western Forestry Services Ltd 16. Forestry Enterprises Ltd 17. Western Forestry Co-op 18. Forestry Consultants Association 19. Irish Forests and Forest Products Association 20. Wood Marketing Federation 21. Irish Timber Council 22. Irish Timber Trade Association 23. Panel Mills 24. Pro Silva Ireland 25. National Parks and Wildlife Service 26. RDS		

Conforms

Req. 7 Do consensus-building procedures of the Forum provide for balanced representation or interest categories?

Procedures

Scheme, Appendix 5, 2.4.2

‘The Forum shall be organised into 3 chambers – social, environmental and economic – and the aim will be to have 5 nominees for each chamber. The social chamber shall be made up of representatives of forest user and wider countryside organisations and trade union representatives. The environmental chamber shall be made up of representatives of environmental non-governmental organisations and other organisations and bodies whose primary interest is environmental. The economic chamber shall be made up of representatives of Coillte Teoranta, private forest owners, forest management companies and processors and retailers of Irish forest products.’

Conforms

Process

Scheme, Section 6.1

'In 2008 ITGA commenced communications with a number of representative organisations active in the environmental, social and economic sectors and with an interest in the forest industry to seek their participation in a standard setting process.'

As becomes clear from the answer to requirement 6, the parties of the Forum represented various stakeholders in the economic, ecological and social chamber.

Conforms

Req. 8. Have the views of all relevant parties been documented and considered in an open and transparent way?

Procedures

Scheme, Appendix 5, 2.7.2

'There shall be a formal consultation process on the draft certification standard, with a minimum consultation period of 60 days. A report, providing an analysis of the responses to the consultation, shall be prepared and made available to the Forum. The views of all relevant interested parties will be documented, discussed and considered in an open and transparent way following which the Forum will agree changes to be made to the draft standard.'

Conforms

Process

Confirmed during the visit to Ireland:

The views of all relevant interested parties were documented by Wilson Applied Consultancy. The company analysed and published the comments in the Wilson report. This report has been thoroughly examined by the standard setting forum during meetings where each comment was addressed by the Forum.

Conforms

Req. 9: Has the formal approval of standards been based on evidence of consensus?

Procedures

Scheme, Appendix 5, 2.4.6

'The aim shall be to make decisions by consensus, defined as a lack of sustained objection. Where there is sustained objection the chairman shall ensure that there is full discussion of the issue before putting the matter to a vote. If a consensus cannot be reached, then a decision will be taken by votes cast by the chambers with each chamber having one vote. Within each chamber decisions will be taken by a simple majority vote: if a majority is not obtained the chamber will abstain. When a decision is required to be put to a vote, the vote shall be deferred until the next meeting of the Forum.'

Conforms

Process

Scheme, 6.7 Approval

'The Standard was finalised and approved by the Forum at a meeting held on 13th October 2010. A copy of the approved version with the revisions resulting from the public consultation and

pilot testing highlighted was posted on the PEFC Ireland website and all respondents to the public consultation process notified.'

During the visit to Ireland it became clear that no voting took place at any point in time. The forum members explained that all important decisions were based on discussions and the formal approval took place in the same way. 'Everyone agreed to agree or disagree' according to the PEFC Ireland Secretary.

Conforms

Req. 10: Does the implementation of the consensus based approach comply with Guideline GL 5/2006: "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 parties concerned and to reconcile any conflicting arguments. Note: Consensus need not imply unanimity."

Procedures

Scheme, Appendix 5 2.4.6

'The aim shall be to make decisions by consensus, defined as a lack of sustained objection. Where there is sustained objection the chairman shall ensure that there is full discussion of the issue before putting the matter to a vote. If a consensus cannot be reached, then a decision will be taken by votes cast by the chambers with each chamber having one vote. Within each chamber decisions will be taken by a simple majority vote: if a majority is not obtained the chamber will abstain. When a decision is required to be put to a vote, the vote shall be deferred until the next meeting of the Forum.'

Conforms

Process

According to the submitted minutes and the questionnaires filled in by the Forum members and an email correspondence submitted during the visit to Ireland it becomes clear that implementation of consensus complies with the Guideline GL 5/2006. Consensus need not imply unanimity but in the case for PEFC Ireland it did demonstrate unanimity.

Conforms

Req. 11 Has the Forum defined its own written procedures which have been made available to interested parties upon request?

Procedures

Scheme, Appendix 5 contains the standard setting procedures.

Conforms

Process

The standard setting procedures are publicly available on www.pefc.ie

Conforms

Req. 12: Do the written procedures for standard setting contain an appeal mechanism for impartial handling of any substantive and procedural complaints?

Procedures

Scheme, appendix 5, 2.8

'Complaints, Appeals and Disputes

Any party who wishes to lodge a complaint regarding any aspect of the conduct of the Standard Setting Forum must do so in writing to the Secretary of the Standard Setting Forum. If the nature of the complaint is unclear the Secretary may seek further information from the complainant. The Secretary will maintain a documented record of all appeals, complaints and disputes raised against the Forum and the resultant actions.

The Forum will consider any complaint at its next full meeting and decide at that meeting how best to address the issues raised by the complainant. The complainant will be notified of the decision of the Forum in writing within 10 days of that decision.

In the event of the complainant not being satisfied with the decision of the Forum, the Board of PEFC (Ireland) Ltd will function as the final arbiter of appeal. An appellant should contact in writing the National Secretary of PEFC (Ireland) Ltd within 28 days of receiving notice of the Forum's decision informing PEFC (Ireland) Ltd of the background and details of the appeal.

The Board of PEFC (Ireland) Ltd may establish an Appeals Board to consider an appeal, the members of which must not be members of the Forum. The Appeals Board will report to the board of PEFC (Ireland) Ltd with its recommendations. The recommendations will be taken into consideration by the Board of PEFC (Ireland) Ltd in formulating its decision which it will issue within a period not exceeding three months from the date of receipt of the appeal. According to this decision, PEFC (Ireland) Ltd will take the recommended actions and communicate these to the appellant and other affected parties.'

Conforms

Process

During the visit in Ireland it was conformed that there has been one complaint. The way this complaint was handled was according to procedures. The way this complaint was handled was according to the IFCS's procedures. If the complainant would not have been satisfied with the way the complaint had been handled, he could have appealed. The appeal mechanism has been sent to the complainant and he was informed on the procedures in case he wanted to appeal.

Conforms

Req. 13: Has the start of the standard setting process been communicated to the public?

Procedures

Scheme, Appendix 5, 2.7.1

'The start of the standard setting process shall be communicated to the public.'

Conforms

Process

According to the secretary of PEFC Ireland and all the responses to the questionnaires the start of the standard setting process has been communicated to the public: 'Communicated to the public in the national press and by direct notification to key stakeholders.'

During the visit to Ireland copies of the various press releases were submitted and the findings were confirmed.

Conforms

Req. 14: Has the information on the development process been distributed and discussed?

Procedures

Scheme, Appendix 5 2.7

'Information on the standard development process and the minutes of the Forum meetings shall be made available to all interested parties on request.'

Conforms

Process

According to PEFC Ireland:

'Communicated to stakeholders by direct notification; advertised in the national press; final draft.'

According to replies to the questionnaires information on the process has indeed been distributed and discussed.

During the visit to Ireland it was confirmed by the stakeholders that information has been distributed and posted on the internet.

Conforms

Req. 15: Has the final draft standard been available to all interested parties, e.g. by posting it on the Internet?

Procedures

Scheme, Appendix 5, 2.7

'The draft certification standard, when agreed by the Forum, shall be posted on a website and information on the consultative process for the draft standard shall be communicated to the public.'

Conforms

Process

According to PEFC Ireland:

'Communicated to stakeholders by direct notification; advertised in the national press; final draft.'

According to the response to the questionnaires the final draft standard has been available to all interested parties and it was published on www.pefc.ie.

During the visit to Ireland, it was confirmed that all interested parties could download the final draft standard and, if requested, PEFC Ireland would have sent a hard copy to the various parties.

Conforms

Req. 16: Has the final draft standard been sent out for formal national consultation process?

Procedures

Scheme, Appendix 5, 2.7.2

There shall be a formal consultation process on the draft certification standard, with a minimum consultation period of 60 days.

Conforms

Process

According to PEFC Ireland and www.pefc.ie:

'The national public consultation commenced 25th March 2010 and closed on 11th June 2010.'

This finding was confirmed during the visit to Ireland.

Conforms

Req. 17: Have views of interested parties been discussed?

Procedures

Scheme, appendix 5, 2.7.2

'There shall be a formal consultation process on the draft certification standard, with a minimum consultation period of 60 days. A report, providing an analysis of the responses to the consultation, shall be prepared and made available to the Forum. The views of all relevant interested parties will be documented, discussed and considered in an open and transparent way following which the Forum will agree changes to be made to the draft standard.'

Conforms

Process

According to PEFC Ireland:

'Minutes record discussions, independent consultants report on consultation responses considered at SSF meetings.'

According to questionnaires all the comments were analyzed and discussed.

During the visit to Ireland it was confirmed that a report was made of all the comments received in which they were compiled and analyzed. The Forum members mentioned that the report was discussed during a Forum meeting and each comment was considered.

Conforms

Req. 18: Has the Forum given general information on the changes made as a result of a consultation process?

Procedures

Scheme, appendix 5, 2.7.2

'General information on the changes made as a result of the consultation process will be made publicly available.'

Conforms

Process

The final approved version of the IFCS with agreed amendments highlighted was posted on PEFC Ireland website and all respondents notified directly.

This was confirmed during the visit to Ireland by the Forum members and it is still posted on the website www.pefc.ie.

Conforms

Req. 19: Had the consultation been at least 60 days?

Procedures

Scheme, appendix 5, 2.7.2

'There shall be a formal consultation process on the draft certification standard, with a minimum consultation period of 60 days.'

Conforms

Process

According to PEFC Ireland:

'National public consultation commenced 25th March 2010 and closed on 11th June 2010.'

This finding was confirmed during the visit to Ireland.

Conforms

Req. 20-34: Requirements on Chain of Custody certification (only for scheme specific standards)

Not applicable for PEFC Ireland who have integrally adopted 'ST 2002:2010 Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products – Requirements'.

PEFC Ireland Scheme section 2.4:

'Scope of the Scheme

- Certification of the sustainable management of all forest and woodland types and ownerships within Ireland to the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard.
- Certification of Chain of Custody in accordance with PEFC Council Annex 4: Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products: Requirements, as revised by PEFC ST 2002:200x
- Management and control within Ireland of the PEFC logo licensing requirements as set out in PEFC International Standard ST 2001:2008 - PEFC Logo Usage Rules – Requirements'

Req. 35: Have the first results on the testing of the final drafts for national/sub-national forest certification standards and their implementation arrangements been available prior to submission of the scheme for the PEFC Council endorsement and mutual recognition?

Procedures

Scheme, Appendix 5

3. Pilot Testing

3.1 The final draft of the forest certification standard shall be assessed by means of a pilot study prior to submission to PEFC Ireland. This pilot study will be conducted on at least one private and one Coillte owned property.

3.2 Recommendations for improving the draft standard, resulting from the pilot testing, shall be discussed at a Forum meeting prior to final submission.

Conforms

Process

According to PEFC Ireland:

'Report [ed. on the pilot study] available. Final approved version of the IFCS with agreed amendments highlighted was posted on PEFC Ireland website.'

This finding was confirmed during the visit to Ireland.

Conforms

Req. 36: Has appropriate action been taken to incorporate improvements and recommendations prior to submission of the scheme for the PEFC Council endorsement and mutual recognition process?

Procedures

Scheme, section 3.2

'Recommendations for improving the draft standard, resulting from the pilot testing, shall be discussed at a Forum meeting prior to final submission.'

Process

According to PEFC Ireland:

'Report on pilot testing considered by SSF; amendments agreed and highlighted on version posted on PEFC Ireland website.'

This finding was confirmed during the visit to Ireland.

Conforms

Req. 37: Have the standards on forest and chain of custody certifications been reviewed at least every 5 years or is it foreseen to review these standards at least every 5 years?

Procedures

Scheme, Appendix 5

4. Review of the Forest Certification Standard

The certification standard and implementation arrangements shall be reviewed in the light of new scientific information and practical experience at least every 5 years. PEFC Ireland shall initiate the review process, making the timetable and arrangements for the review publicly available. The review will take into account revisions required by PEFC Council.

Conforms

Process

Not applicable

Req. 38: Does the scheme documentation indicate which organisation is responsible to initiate the revision work?

Procedures

Scheme, Appendix 5

4. Review of the Forest Certification Standard

PEFC Ireland shall initiate the review process, making the timetable and arrangements for the review publicly available. The review will take into account revisions required by PEFC Council.

Conforms

Process

Not applicable

4.2 Scheme Implementation Procedures

Req. 1: Are the criteria relevant to all types of forests and management systems, which exist in the nation/region they have been elaborated for?

Scheme, section 4

'The Irish National Forest Standard has been developed specifically for forestry in the Republic of Ireland.'

Conforms

Req. 2: Do the criteria clearly express the objectives for forest management that can be unambiguously verified by different auditors?

The IFCS provides for clear objectives and requirements that can be unambiguously verified by different auditors.

Conforms

Req. 3: Are management and performance requirements applicable at the level of a forest management unit?

IFCS Introduction paragraph 4

‘Certification options for forest owners

There are currently two different options open to forest owners seeking to attain PEFC certification for their forests in Ireland. These are as follows:

- Group certification
- Individual certification’

IFCS Introduction - Scale of Application of the Requirements

All requirements of this standard must be satisfied at Woodland Management Unit (WMU) level.

Conforms

Req. 4: Are management and performance requirements applicable optionally also at group and regional levels?

IFCS Introduction

‘Group certification schemes must satisfy management and performance requirement at FMU level.’

But group certification is possible and part of the scheme. Regional certification is not an option.

Conforms

Req. 5 Does the scheme require that property rights and land tenure arrangements shall be clearly defined, documented and established for the relevant forest area?

IFCS section 1.1.3

‘Property rights and land tenure arrangements shall be clearly defined, documented and established for the relevant forest area.’

Conforms

Req. 6: Does the scheme require the clarification, recognition and respect of legal, customary and traditional rights related to the forest land in compliance with chapter 3.5 of Annex?

IFCS section 7.2.1

‘Legal, customary and traditional use rights relating to forest access shall be clarified, recognized and respected.’

Conforms

Req. 7: Does the scheme require that a summary of the forest management plan or its equivalent, which contains information about the forest management measures to be applied, is publicly available, except for confidential business and personal information?

IFCS section 2.1.4

'While respecting the confidentiality of commercially and/or environmentally sensitive information, woodland managers, upon request, shall make publicly available management planning documentation or a summary of its primary elements, including those listed in 2.1.1'

Conforms

Req. 8: Are the national certification criteria in compliance with national laws programmes and policies?

The certification standard requires compliance with law:

IFCS 1.1.1 Requirement

'There shall be compliance with the law. There shall be no substantiated outstanding claims of legal non-compliance related to woodland management.

1.1.2 Requirement

There shall be compliance with any relevant codes of practice, guidelines or agreements.'

Certification standard is developed according to Irish national laws and legislation.

Conforms

Req. 9: Are the references to national laws, programs and policies indicated in the scheme documentation when relevant, e.g., if the requirement of the PEOLG is not addressed in the certification criteria but is included in normative regulations?

The PEOLG requirements have all been met, therefore no references to national laws, programs and policies were necessary.

Not applicable

Req. 10 Does the scheme include the requirement that any apparent violation of the legislation shall be taken into consideration in internal and external audits?

IFCS section 1.1.1 Requirement

'There shall be compliance with the law. There shall be no substantiated outstanding claims of legal non-compliance related to woodland management.'

and in the guidance to this requirement:

Guidance

'Certification is not a legal compliance audit. Certification authorities will be checking that there is no evidence of non-compliance with relevant legal requirements including:

Management and employees understand and comply with all legal requirements relevant to their responsibilities.

All documentation including procedures, work instructions and contracts meet legal requirements.

No issues of legal non-compliance are raised by regulatory authorities or other interested parties.'

Conforms

Req. 11: Are the Fundamental ILO Conventions ratified by the country and implemented through the legislative framework?

On the website of ILO (www.ilo.org) the core ILO conventions are mentioned including a list of countries that have ratified all or some of these conventions. Ireland has ratified all eight core conventions.

Conforms

Req. 12: Do the national certification criteria address the core elements of those Fundamental ILO Conventions, which have been not ratified by the country?

N/A. All core ILO conventions have been ratified.

Conforms

Req. 13: Has the ILO Code of Practice on Safety and Health in Forestry Work been considered in development of national and regional certification criteria?

IFCS section 8.1.1 Requirement

'There shall be:

- a) Compliance with primary Irish Health and Safety Legislation
- b) Compliance with the Irish HSA approved Codes Of Practices on Managing Safety and Health in Forestry Operations and the ILO approved Code of Practice on Safety and Health in Forestry Work
- c) Emergency Plans for fire and other plans appropriate to the safe management of forests, employees and contractors as set out in approved Codes of Practices
- d) Health and safety training, information and consultation to any forestry employees in the necessary skills for the safe operation of tasks'

Conforms

Req. 14: Are the international conventions relevant to forest management and ratified by the country and respected through the legislative framework?

The list of ratified international conventions is specified in appendix C of the IFCS. These are respected through the legislative framework.

Conforms

LEVEL OF APPLICATION – GENERAL

Req. 16: Are the applicants, the certified areas and participating forest owners/managers/other actors clearly identified in the scheme documentation?

-Applicants:

Scheme, section 7.3.2 Individual Certification

'Individual Certification is where forests belonging to a single forest owner (whether an individual, company or other entity) are assessed under a single process with a single certificate issuing

to successful forest owners. This method is available for any size and type of forest, however, an individually owned certificate may be particularly appropriate or the preferred option for larger management units.

Certification Bodies operating under the Scheme will be required to have clearly documented procedures for the assessment of individual certification applicants including all the key elements and components.

7.3.3 Group Certification

Group Certification is where a number of (usually small) forest owners group their forests together and make a single Forest Certification application. The group is co-ordinated by a single person (a group manager) who ensures that all members of the group are compliant with the relevant forest management standard. Forest Certification auditors then evaluate a sample of woodland properties. All woodland properties are evaluated over time / subsequent audits.'

7.3.9 Group Certificate

Under the Scheme, the systems and documentation of the Group Entity will be assessed against the Certification Body's requirements, whilst the Group Members' forest management practices will be assessed against the requirements of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard. If successful, the Group Entity will be issued with a group forest management certificate, not the individual Group Members. The Group Member will receive a Certificate of attestation from the Group manager to affirm the membership of the Group.

-Certified areas:

Scheme section 6.11 Area Specificity

The areas to be certified under the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard shall be individually identified and delineated Woodland Management Units (WMUs). A WMU is a forest property or properties covered under a single forest management plan and within a landscape unit. A WMU may be owned by an individual, a group of individuals. (sharing the one property), a company, a charity or any other legal entity. WMUs may contain smaller units e.g. compartments and sub-compartments but they should not be split for certification purposes. If the owner of a WMU owns other WMUs in different landscape units they need not necessarily be obliged to submit these for certification. The owner / manager of each WMU shall have made a formal commitment to meet the requirements of this standard.

7.3.4 'The fundamental basis of group certification under the Scheme is that **all members of the group** must formally commit to complying with **all the requirements** of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard in respect of **all forests areas** included within the scope of the particular group Scheme concerned.'

-Participating forest owners/managers/ other actors:

In section 7.3 the relevant actors are described (see quotes 7.3.3 and 7.3.9 above).

Conforms

Req. 17: Does the scheme documentation require that all actors involved in or operating in the certified area comply with the certification requirements?

Scheme, section 7.2.5

This will be carried out by an appropriately qualified team of assessors (auditors) appointed and formally contracted by the Certification Body.

The aim of the main assessment will be to assess the auditee's forest management and/or chain of custody operations and documentation for compliance with the relevant standard(s). All relevant data and information sources, including internal audits and other documentation, will be used by the assessor team to help inform the audit process. (In the case of forest

management certification, an appropriate sample of the auditee's forest operations should be evaluated by the assessor team in the field.)
Measures will be taken to ensure that all actors involved in or operating on the certified area comply with the certification requirements.

Conforms

Req. 18: Does the scheme documentation require that all actors individually certified or participating in regional/group certification are responsible for ensuring that contractors' activities and operations meet the respective forest management criteria?

In every requirement in the IFCS it is mentioned that the relevant requirement is also of relevance to the contractor and have to be met by them as well.

Conforms

LEVEL OF APPLICATION - REGIONAL CERTIFICATION

Requirements 22-33

Not applicable for the Irish Forest Certification Scheme

LEVEL OF APPLICATION – GROUP CERTIFICATION

Req. 35 Does the national definition for group certification comply with the PEFC Council definition?

Scheme, section 7.3.3

'Group Certification is where a number of (usually small) forest owners group their forests together and make a single Forest Certification application.'

Conforms

Req. 36 Does the scheme documentation clearly define who the applicant is for group certification?

Scheme, 7.3.7 Responsibilities of the Group Manager / Group Entity

'In order to be eligible to apply for group certification, the Group Entity must: 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.'

Conforms

Req. 37 Does the scheme documentation describe the applicant's responsibility to assure the compliance of all participants with the certification requirements?

Scheme, 7.3.7 Responsibilities of the Group Manager / Group Entity

'In order to be eligible to apply for group certification, the Group Entity must: establish connections with all participants based on a 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 participant from the scope of certification in the event of non-conformity with the sustainable forest management standard.'

Conforms

Req. 38 Does the scheme documentation describe the applicant's responsibility to ensure that credible registers are kept of participants to certification and certified forest area?

Scheme, 7.3.7 Responsibilities of the Group Manager / Group Entity

'In order to be eligible to apply for group certification, the Group Entity must keep records of:

- all participants, including their contact details, identification of their forest property and its/their size(s),
- the certified area,'

Conforms

Req. 39 Does the scheme documentation describe the applicant's responsibility to implement the rules for group certification?

Scheme, 7.3.7 Responsibilities of the Group Manager / Group Entity

'In order to be eligible to apply for group certification, the Group Entity must keep records of:

- the group entity and participants' conformity with the requirements of the sustainable forest management standard, and other applicable requirements of the forest certification scheme.'

Conforms

Req. 40 Does the scheme documentation require that total forest area participating in group certification is recorded?

Scheme, 7.3.7 Responsibilities of the Group Manager / Group Entity

'In order to be eligible to apply for group certification, the Group Entity must keep records of:

- all participants, including their contact details, identification of their forest property and its/their size(s),
- the certified area'

Conforms

Req. 41 Does the scheme documentation describe that forest owners should submit all the forest area under his management in the catchment area for the group certification? (no obligatory to be met but should be aimed at)

No longer a requirement in PEFC ST 1002:2010 and not obligatory in PEFCC Annex 3 either.

Not applicable

Req. 42 Does the scheme documentation define the responsibilities and authorities of the applicant and participating forest owners/managers for the inclusion of new participants and to inform the certification body thereof?

Scheme, 7.3.8 Certification Body Requirements for Group Certification

'Certification Bodies registered to operate under the Scheme will be required to have developed documented requirements and procedures specifically for the assessment of Group Certification Scheme applications.

These procedures and requirements would include, *inter alia*:

- responsibilities of the Group Entity for on-going communication with the Certification Body regarding Group membership, new and expelled group members and reasons for expulsion.'

Conforms

Req. 43 Does the scheme documentation define the responsibilities and authorities of the applicant and participating forest owners/managers for the internal control of conformity and follow up corrective and/or preventive measures?

7.3.7 Responsibilities of the Group Manager / Group Entity

'In order to be eligible to apply for group certification, the Group Entity must:

operate a review of conformity with the sustainable forest management standard, that includes reviewing the results of the internal monitoring programme and the certification body's evaluations and surveillance; corrective and preventive measures if required; and the evaluation of the effectiveness of corrective actions taken.

7.3.8 Certification Body Requirements for Group Certification

Certification Bodies registered to operate under the Scheme will be required to have developed documented requirements and procedures specifically for the assessment of Group Certification Scheme applications.

These procedures and requirements would include, *inter alia*:

- internal monitoring by the Group Entity of Group Members and their forest activities;'

Conforms

Req. 44 Does the scheme documentation describe that the forest management certificate is issued to the applicant (certificate holder)?

7.3.9 Group Certificate

Under the Scheme, the systems and documentation of the Group Entity will be assessed against the Certification Body's requirements, whilst the Group Members' forest management practices will be assessed against the requirements of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard. If successful, the Group Entity will be issued with a group forest management certificate, not the individual Group Members.

The Group Member will receive a Certificate of attestation from the Group manager to affirm the membership of the Group.

Conforms

Req. 45 Does the scheme documentation describe that participants in group certification shall receive either a copy of the regional certificate including the appendix (when applicable) listing all participating forest owners or an individual attestation issued by the certification body or the applicant which refers to the main certificate?

7.3.9 Group Certificate

'The Group Member will receive a Certificate of attestation from the Group manager to affirm the membership of the Group.'

Conforms

LEVEL OF APPLICATION – INDIVIDUAL CERTIFICATION

Req. 46 Does the scheme documentation describe that forest owner should submit all the forest area under his management in the catchment area of the certification scheme in the certification? (not obligatory to be met but should be aimed at)

IFCS Introduction

Area Specificity

'The areas to be certified under the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard shall be individually identified and delineated Woodland Management Units (WMUs). A WMU is a forest property or properties covered under a single forest management plan and within a landscape unit¹. A WMU may be owned by an individual, a group of individuals (sharing the one property), a company, a charity or any other legal entity. WMUs may contain smaller units e.g. compartments and sub-compartments but they should not be split for certification purposes. There is no obligation for a forest owner seeking certification of a WMU in one landscape unit, who may own a separate WMU in a separate landscape unit to seek certification for such a separate WMU. The owner / manager of each WMU shall have made a formal commitment to meet the requirements of this standard².'

This is not in conformance with the requirement, but since it is not obligatory, it has no impact on the conformance of the Scheme.

APPEALS, COMPLAINTS AND DISPUTE PROCEDURES

Req. 48: Has the PEFC National Governing Body set up or appointed an impartial and independent dispute settlement body on a permanent basis or does it have written procedures for the establishment of a dispute settlement body on an ad hoc basis?

PEFC Ireland has written procedures for the establishment of a dispute settlement body on an ad hoc basis:

Scheme, section 7:

'7.7.2 Interpretation of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard

In the event of a dispute relating specifically to interpretation of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard which cannot be satisfactorily resolved by the Certification Body's independent review panel as part of the certification process, such a matter will be referred to the steering group for a ruling.

7.7.4 Role of PEFC Ireland

The PEFC Ireland Board will function as the final arbiter of appeal in the case of disputes related to certification decisions, use of the PEFC logo and label and/or loss of the certificate. The entity that wishes to resort to this authority should contact, in writing, the National Secretary of PEFC Ireland normally, within one month of the grievance informing PEFC Ireland of the background and detail of the appeal.

The Board, or its nominated representatives, which may include non members who have specific expertise, will submit a report to the PEFC Ireland Board, who will issue a decision within a term of not more than two months. According to this decision, PEFC Ireland shall take the recommended actions and communicate these to the entities involved.'

Conforms

¹ A Landscape Unit is an area of broadly homogenous landscape character.

² This is detailed in requirement 1.1.4 of the standard.

Req. 49 Has the PEFC National Governing Body established and documented procedures for an independent dispute settlement body, either permanent or ad hoc, that takes care of those complaints arising from forest management or chain of custody scheme implementation that cannot be addressed in the dispute settlement procedures of the relevant certification or accreditation body?

PEFC Ireland has written procedures for the establishment of a dispute settlement body on an ad hoc basis:

Scheme, section 7:

'7.7.2 Interpretation of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard

In the event of a dispute relating specifically to interpretation of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard which cannot be satisfactorily resolved by the Certification Body's independent review panel as part of the certification process, such a matter will be referred to the steering group for a ruling.

7.7.4 Role of PEFC Ireland

The PEFC Ireland Board will function as the final arbiter of appeal in the case of disputes related to certification decisions, use of the PEFC logo and label and/or loss of the certificate. The entity that wishes to resort to this authority should contact, in writing, the National Secretary of PEFC Ireland normally, within one month of the grievance informing PEFC Ireland of the background and detail of the appeal.

The Board, or its nominated representatives, which may include non members who have specific expertise, will submit a report to the PEFC Ireland Board, who will issue a decision within a term of not more than two months. According to this decision, PEFC Ireland shall take the recommended actions and communicate these to the entities involved.'

Conforms

Req. 50 Can the dispute settlement body also resolve possible grievances in chain of custody certification that do not exclusively concern an applicant and a certification body?

PEFC Ireland has written procedures for the establishment of a dispute settlement body on an ad hoc basis:

Scheme, section 7:

'7.7.2 Interpretation of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard

In the event of a dispute relating specifically to interpretation of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard which cannot be satisfactorily resolved by the Certification Body's independent review panel as part of the certification process, such a matter will be referred to the steering group for a ruling.

7.7.4 Role of PEFC Ireland

The PEFC Ireland Board will function as the final arbiter of appeal in the case of disputes related to certification decisions, use of the PEFC logo and label and/or loss of the certificate. The entity that wishes to resort to this authority should contact, in writing, the National Secretary of PEFC Ireland normally, within one month of the grievance informing PEFC Ireland of the background and detail of the appeal.

The Board, or its nominated representatives, which may include non members who have specific expertise, will submit a report to the PEFC Ireland Board, who will issue a decision within a term of not more than two months. According to this decision, PEFC Ireland shall take the recommended actions and communicate these to the entities involved.'

Conforms

Req. 51 Does the scheme documentation require that the accredited certification body has procedures for dispute settlement for all grievances between the applicant and the certification body?

Scheme, section 7:

7.7.1 Certification Process

All Certification Bodies registered to operate under the Scheme will be required to have documented procedures for dealing with all appeals, complaints and disputes relating to the certification process - up to and including the point of award, suspension or withdrawal of forest management and/or chain of custody certificates.

Conforms

Req. 52 Does the scheme documentation require that the relevant accreditation body, whose accreditation covers the certification, deals with disputes and complaints concerning observance of the accreditation requirements?

Scheme, section 7:

7.7.3 Referral to Irish Accreditation Service

In the event of an appeal, complaint or dispute concerning the certification process or conduct of the Certification Body not being resolved to the satisfaction of the auditee, Certification Body or other third party, the matter will be referred to the relevant Accreditation Body, which in Ireland will normally be the Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB). Failing resolution by the Accreditation Body the matter will then be referred to PEFC Ireland for a final decision.

Conforms

4.3 Assessment of the Forest Management Standard

Detailed information regarding the IFCS assessment against the PEOLG criteria can be found in Annex 2 of this conformity assessment report.

Compatibility with the PEOLG (only for schemes to be assessed against the PEOLG) ^[*1]			
4	Criterion 1: Maintenance and appropriate enhancement of forest and their contribution to global carbon cycle	PEOLG 1.1.a	Yes
5		PEOLG 1.1.b	Yes
6		PEOLG 1.1.c	Yes
7		PEOLG 1.1.d	Yes
8		PEOLG 1.2.a	Yes
9		PEOLG 1.2.b	Yes
10		PEOLG 1.2.c	Yes
11	Criterion 2: Maintenance of forest ecosystem health and vitality	PEOLG 2.1.a	Yes
12		PEOLG 2.1.b	Yes
13		PEOLG 2.1.c	Yes
14		PEOLG 2.2.a	Yes
15		PEOLG 2.2.b	Yes
16		PEOLG 2.2.c	Yes
17		PEOLG 2.2.d	Yes
18	Criterion 3: Maintenance and encouragement of productive functions of forests (wood and non-wood)	PEOLG 3.1.a	Yes
19		PEOLG 3.1.b	Yes

20		PEOLG 3.1.c	Yes
21		PEOLG 3.2.a	Yes
22		PEOLG 3.2.b	Yes
23		PEOLG 3.2.c	Yes
24		PEOLG 3.2.d	Yes
25	Criterion 4: Maintenance, conservation and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity in forest ecosystems	PEOLG 4.1.a	Yes
26		PEOLG 4.1.b	Yes
27		PEOLG 4.2.a	Yes
28		PEOLG 4.2.b	Yes
29		PEOLG 4.2.c	Yes
30		PEOLG 4.2.d	Yes
31		PEOLG 4.2.e	Yes
32		PEOLG 4.2.f	Yes
33		PEOLG 4.2.g	Yes
34		PEOLG 4.2.h	Yes
35		PEOLG 4.2.i	Yes
36	Criterion 5: Maintenance and appropriate enhancement of protective functions in forest management (notably soil and water)	PEOLG 5.1.a	Yes
37		PEOLG 5.1.b	Yes
38		PEOLG 5.2.a	Yes
39		PEOLG 5.2.b	Yes
40		PEOLG 5.2.c	Yes
41	Criterion 6: Maintenance of other socio-economic functions and conditions	PEOLG 6.1.a	Yes
42		PEOLG 6.1.b	Yes
43		PEOLG 6.1.c	Yes
44		PEOLG 6.1.d	Yes
45		PEOLG 6.1.e	Yes
46		PEOLG 6.2.a	Yes
47		PEOLG 6.2.b	Yes
48		PEOLG 6.2.c	Yes

4.4 Assessment of the Chain of Custody

PEFC Ireland Scheme section 2.4

'Scope of the Scheme

- Certification of the sustainable management of all forest and woodland types and ownerships within Ireland to the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard.
- Certification of Chain of Custody in accordance with PEFC Council Annex 4: Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products: Requirements, as revised by PEFC ST 2002:200x
- Management and control within Ireland of the PEFC logo licensing requirements as set out in PEFC International Standard ST 2001:2008 - PEFC Logo Usage Rules – Requirements'

4.5 Logo usage rules

PEFC Ireland Scheme section 2.4

'Scope of the Scheme

- Certification of the sustainable management of all forest and woodland types and ownerships within Ireland to the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard.

- Certification of Chain of Custody in accordance with PEFC Council Annex 4: Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products: Requirements, as revised by PEFC ST 2002:200x
- Management and control within Ireland of the PEFC logo licensing requirements as set out in PEFC International Standard ST 2001:2008 - PEFC Logo Usage Rules – Requirements'

4.6 Certification and accreditation procedures

Req. 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?

Scheme, section 7.1.1

'PEFC certifications shall be carried out by impartial, independent third parties that cannot be involved in the standard setting process as governing or decision making bodies, or in the forest management and are independent of the certified entity.'

Conforms

Req. 2: Does the scheme documentation require that certification body for forest management certification or chain of custody certification against a scheme specific chain of custody standard shall fulfil requirements defined in ISO 17021 or ISO Guide 65?

Scheme, section 7.1.1

'The certification body carrying out forest management certification or chain of custody certification against a scheme specific chain of custody standard, shall fulfil requirements defined in: c) ISO Guide 65 (EN 45 011) (3) if the certification is carried out as product certification (the term "product" is used in its widest sense and includes also processes and services).'

Conforms

Req. 3: Does the scheme documentation require that certification body chain of custody certification against Annex 4 shall fulfil requirements defined in ISO Guide 65?

Scheme, section 7.1.1

'The certification body carrying out chain of custody certification against Annex 4 (Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products – Requirements) shall fulfil requirements defined in ISO Guide 65 (EN 45011) (3).'

Conforms

Req. 4: 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?

Scheme, section 7.1.1

'The certification body 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.'

Conforms

Req. 5: Does the scheme documentation require that certification bodies carrying out C-o-C certifications shall have technical competence in forest based products procurement and processing and material flows in different stages of processing and trading?

Scheme, section 7.1.1

'The certification body carrying out chain of custody certification shall have the technical competence in forest based product procurement and processing, material flows in different stages of processing and trading.'

Conforms

Req. 6: 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 or C-o-C certifications?

Scheme, section 7.1.1

'The certification body shall have a good understanding of the national PEFC system against which it carries out forest or chain of custody certification.'

Conforms

Req. 7: Does the scheme documentation require that certification bodies have the responsibility to use competent auditors who have adequate technical know-how on the certification process and issues related to forest management or chain of custody certification?

Scheme, section 7.1.6:

'Certification Bodies registered to operate under the Scheme are required to ensure that technical supervisors and auditors appointed by the Certification Body to carry out assessments against the requirements of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard and the PEFC Chain of Custody Standards meet the competence criteria for auditors developed by the appropriate Accreditation Body.'

Scheme section 7.1.1:

'The certification body carrying out forest management certification or chain of custody certification against a scheme specific chain of custody standard, shall fulfil requirements defined in: ... c) ISO Guide 65 (EN 45 011) (3) if the certification is carried out as product certification (the term "product" is used in its widest sense and includes also processes and services). The certification body carrying out chain of custody certification against Annex 4 (Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products – Requirements) shall fulfil requirements defined in ISO Guide 65 (EN 45011) (3).'

ISO Guide 65 section 5 requires that: 'the personnel of the certification body shall be competent for the functions they perform, including making required technical judgments, forming policies and implementing them.'

Conforms

Req. 8: 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?

Scheme, section 7.1.6**Competence Criteria for Auditors**

'Certification Bodies registered to operate under the Scheme are required to ensure that technical supervisors and auditors appointed by the Certification Body to carry out assessments against the requirements of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard and the PEFC Chain of Custody Standards meet the competence criteria for auditors developed by the appropriate

Accreditation Body. Auditors must fulfil the general criteria of ISO 19011 for Quality Management Systems auditors or for Environmental Management Systems auditors.'

Conforms

Req. 9: Does the scheme documentation include additional qualification requirements for auditors carrying out forest management or chain of custody audits? [¹]

Scheme, section 7.1.4

'As an integral part of such accreditation, certification bodies will be required to demonstrate the following: ability to carry out audits that are consistent and repeatable through the use of clear and precise procedures, and methods of recording and reporting;'

Scheme, section 7.3.2

'Certification Bodies operating under the Scheme will be required to have clearly documented procedures for the assessment of individual certification applicants including all the key elements and components.'

Scheme, section 7.3.8

'Certification Bodies registered to operate under the Scheme will be required to have developed documented requirements and procedures specifically for the assessment of Group Certification Scheme applications.'

Scheme, section 7.4

'Certification Bodies registered to operate under the Scheme will be required to have full knowledge of both Annex 4 and PEFC ST 2002:2010, and developed documented procedures for assessment of chain of certification applications.'

Conforms

Req. 10: Does the scheme documentation require that certification bodies shall have established internal procedures for forest management and/or chain of custody certification?

Scheme, section 7.1.4: 'As an integral part of such accreditation, certification bodies will be required to demonstrate the following: ability to carry out audits that are consistent and repeatable through the use of clear and precise procedures, and methods of recording and reporting;'

Scheme, 7.3.2: 'Certification Bodies operating under the Scheme will be required to have clearly documented procedures for the assessment of individual certification applicants including all the key elements and components.'

Scheme, 7.3.8: 'Certification Bodies registered to operate under the Scheme will be required to have developed documented requirements and procedures specifically for the assessment of Group Certification Scheme applications.'

Scheme, 7.4: 'Certification Bodies registered to operate under the Scheme will be required to have full knowledge of both Annex 4 and PEFC ST 2002:2010, and developed documented procedures for assessment of chain of certification applications.'

Conforms

Req. 11: Does the scheme documentation require that applied certification procedures for forest management certification or chain of custody certification against a scheme specific chain of custody standard shall fulfil or be compatible with the requirements defined in ISO 17021 or ISO Guide 65?

Scheme, section 7.1.1

'The certification body carrying out forest management certification or chain of custody certification against a scheme specific chain of custody standard, shall fulfil requirements defined in: c) ISO Guide 65 (EN 45 011) (3) if the certification is carried out as product certification (the term "product" is used in its widest sense and includes also processes and services).'

This requirement is broadly defined and does not exclusively refer to procedures, but these are covered as overall compliance with ISO Guide 65 is required.

Conforms

Req. 12: Does the scheme documentation require that applied certification procedures for chain of custody certification against Annex 4 shall fulfil or be compatible with the requirements defined in ISO Guide 65?

Scheme, section 7.1.1

'The certification body carrying out chain of custody certification against Annex 4 (Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products – Requirements) shall fulfil requirements defined in ISO Guide 65 (EN 45011) (3).'

This requirement is broadly defined and does not exclusively refer to procedures, but these are covered as overall compliance with ISO Guide 65 is required.

Conforms

Req.13: Does the scheme documentation require that applied auditing procedures shall fulfil or be compatible with the requirements of ISO 19011?

Scheme, section 7.1.1

'PEFC certifications shall be carried out by impartial, independent third parties that cannot be involved in the standard setting process as governing or decision making bodies, or in the forest management and are independent of the certified entity. Certification bodies considered competent by the PEFC Council to carry out forest and/or chain of custody verification shall apply auditing procedures that fulfil or are compatible with the requirements of ISO 19011.'

Conforms

Req. 14: Does the scheme documentation require that certification body shall inform the relevant PEFC National Governing Body about all issued forest management and chain of custody certificates and changes concerning the validity and scope of these certificates?

Scheme, section 7.2.13

'Certification Bodies operating under the Scheme will be required by PEFC Ireland to maintain and update documented records of all forest areas and chain of custody units certified by them under the Scheme, which register would include the following information, as a minimum: ... Certification Bodies are required to provide the above information to PEFC Ireland no later than a calendar month following the award, renewal, suspension or withdrawal of every certificate issued by them.'

Conforms

Req. 15: 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?

Scheme, section 7.1.5

'Certification bodies operating under the Scheme will have the following key roles: ... Monitoring the use of PEFC logo licence use by their clients as set out by PEFC Ireland;'

Conforms

Req. 16: Does a maximum period for surveillance audits defined by the scheme documentation not exceed more than one year?

Scheme, section 7.2.11

'Regular monitoring of the certificate holder will be carried out by the Certification Body at regular intervals (at least annually) following the main assessment in order to ensure continued compliance with the requirements of the certification standard(s).'

Conforms

Req. 17: Does a maximum period for assessment audit not exceed five years for both forest management and chain of custody certifications?

Scheme, section 7.2.10

'Certificates can only remain valid for a maximum period of five years from the date of issue.'

Conforms

Req. 18: Does the scheme documentation include requirements for public availability of certification report summaries?

Scheme, section 7.2.13

'Accordingly, PEFC Ireland will require those Certification Bodies registered to partake in the Scheme to produce a "Public Summary Report". This will take the form of an executive summary of the Certification Report containing key information and results of the main assessment except for material that is either commercial in confidence or considered of a confidential nature. The Public Summary Report will be made publicly available by both PEFC Ireland and the relevant Certification Body.'

Conforms

Req. 19: Does the scheme documentation include requirements for usage of information from external parties as the audit evidence?

Scheme, section 7.2.12

'As part of the Schemes commitment to accountability to, and participation by, the Irish forestry community and other legitimate stakeholders, an integral component of the Scheme's forest management certification process will be stakeholder consultation. ... The assessment will include verification that the auditee had provided an opportunity for, and where appropriate, taken account of, inputs from stakeholders with regard to the applicant's forest management. The Certification Body might initiate and take account of additional input from stakeholders during the course of the assessment, where it deems such action as being appropriate. ... It shall be the

responsibility of certification authorities to assess and verify stakeholder comments as part of the evaluation process using appropriate sampling independent of the applicant's own procedure each time a certificate is issued or renewed. Feedback shall be provided by the certification authority, on request, to respondents on how their comments have been addressed.'

Conforms

Req. 21: Does the scheme documentation require that certification bodies carrying out forest management and/or chain of custody certification shall be accredited by a national accreditation body?

Scheme, section 6.11

'Certification bodies conducting audits against the standard must be accredited to undertake woodland management certification by a national or international accreditation body. Accreditation bodies must be members of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) or a member of IAF's special recognition regional groups and implement procedures described in ISO/IEC 17011:2004 and other documents recognised by the above organisations.'

Conforms

Req. 22: Does the scheme documentation require that an accredited certificate shall bear an accreditation symbol of the relevant accreditation body?

Scheme, section 7.1.5

'Certification bodies operating under the Scheme will have the following key roles: ... To issue accredited Certificates which shall bear an accreditation symbol of the relevant Accreditation Body.'

Conforms

Req. 23: 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 and which implement procedures described in ISO 17011 and other documents recognised by the above-mentioned organisations?

Scheme, section 6.11

'Certification bodies conducting audits against the standard must be accredited to undertake woodland management certification by a national or international accreditation body. Accreditation bodies must be members of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) or a member of IAF's special recognition regional groups and implement procedures described in ISO/IEC 17011:2004 and other documents recognised by the above organisations.'

Conforms

Req. 24: Does the scheme documentation require that certification body undertake forest management or/and chain of custody certification against a scheme specific chain of custody standard as "accredited certification" based on ISO 17021 or ISO Guide 65 and the relevant forest management or chain of custody standard(s) shall be covered by the accreditation scope?

Scheme, section 7.1.3

'Under the Scheme, it is an implicit requirement that all external forest management and chain of custody certification audits will be carried out by third party, independent certification bodies.'

These bodies will in turn be required to have been accredited by accreditation bodies operating to internationally accepted standards (ISO Guides 61, 62 & 65)'

Scheme, section 7.1.4

'The scope of accreditation of Certification bodies will be required to explicitly include: - Certification of forests and woodland to the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard and / or Chain of custody certification to the PEFC Council requirements: Annex 4: Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products / PEFC ST 2002:2010, as applicable;'

Conforms

Req. 25: Does the scheme documentation require that certification body undertake chain of custody certification against Annex 4 as 'accredited certification' based on ISO Guide 65?

Scheme, section 7.1.3

'Under the Scheme, it is an implicit requirement that all external forest management and chain of custody certification audits will be carried out by third party, independent certification bodies. These bodies will in turn be required to have been accredited by accreditation bodies operating to internationally accepted standards (ISO Guides 61, 62 & 65)'

Scheme, section 7.1.4

'The scope of accreditation of Certification bodies will be required to explicitly include: Certification of forests and woodland to the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard and / or Chain of custody certification to the PEFC Council requirements: Annex 4: Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products / PEFC ST 2002:2010, as applicable;'

Conforms

Req. 26: Does the scheme documentation include a mechanism for PEFC notification of certification bodies?

Scheme, section 7.1.8

'PEFC Ireland adopts Section 6 of PEFC Council Annex 6 which states: "Certification bodies operating forest management and / or chain of custody certification against the PEFC endorsed national schemes / standards or the PEFC international chain of custody standard (Annex 4 Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products – Requirements) shall be notified by the PEFC National Governing Body of the relevant country. Certification bodies operating chain of custody certification against the PEFC international chain of custody standard (Annex 4 Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products – Requirements) in countries without a PEFC National Governing Body shall be notified by the PEFC Council.'

Conforms

Req. 27 Are the procedures for PEFC notification of certification bodies non-discriminatory?

Scheme, section 7.1.8

'The PEFC notification conditions shall not discriminate against certification bodies or create trade obstacles.'

Conforms

5. MISSION TO IRELAND

The purpose of the mission to the country of the applicant scheme is threefold:

- The clarification of any outstanding issues highlighted during the initial assessment.
- Discussions with the various stakeholders, involved in the standard setting process, and other external organisations who can provide input and feedback to the consultants.
- Insight into the practical implementation of the scheme, in the field, at forest management level.

These objectives led to the following schedule:

August 2011 PEFC Ireland – William Merivale (Secretary) FORM International – Debora van Boven-Flier (Senior Forestry Consultant)

Monday 22nd Discussion of desk study results

11.30 - 17.30 Go through the results of the desk study with the Secretary of PEFC Ireland.

Tuesday 23rd Meeting with Standard Setting Forum and Stakeholders

10.00 Meeting with Sandy Greig, Chairman of PEFC Ireland Standard Setting Process

11.00 Meeting with Standard Setting Forum members

14.30 Meeting with invited stakeholders

Wednesday 24th Visit to pilot test areas

10.00 Richard Whelan and Richard Jack, Coillte, to carry out site visit at the two Coillte forests where pilot testing was carried out;

14.00 James Bennett, private forest owner, where the private pilot testing was carried out.

Thursday 24th Finalizing mission report, discuss findings

9.00 – 15.00 Discuss the findings, phone calls to Environmental Groups.

The minutes of the mission to Ireland can be found in Annex 3.

The results of the desk study were discussed with the Secretary of PEFC Ireland, in order to prepare for the meeting with the standard setting Forum as well as to discuss the findings and a few possible non-conformities. The Secretary suggested a few alterations that he would propose to the Forum the following day.

The meeting with the Standard Setting Forum was attended by most of the members. The members of the Forum described the process, in what way the Forum meetings took place and elaborated on the details. All of them felt that the process took place in a transparent and fair manner and that every interested organization could be involved in the standard setting process if they wanted to. The changes to the Scheme documentation, as proposed by the Secretary based on the findings of FORM International were discussed and agreed upon.

The next meeting included both the Forum and the relevant stakeholders. An extensive mailing list, to which all the invitations to this meeting were sent, was shown to the consultant of FORM International, containing various organizations. The replies were also shown to the consultant and it appeared that most of the environmental NGO's declined the invitation, but from the social and economic organizations as well as research organizations there were representatives. Purpose of the meeting was to investigate whether the standard setting process had indeed been carried

out in a fair and transparent manner. During the meeting it became clear that half of the people present were Forum members and the other half were interested forest owners, wanting to learn more about forest certification. In the introduction phase of the meeting the Forum members confirmed the fairness and transparency of the standard setting process. Furthermore, the Chairman and the Secretary provided the interested forest owners with information about the PEFC Certification Scheme and Standard.

PEFC Ireland has run two pilots to test the PEFC Ireland Standard and certification thereof in practice. The two pilot test areas have also been visited during the week in Ireland. One pilot forest area was managed by Coillte, semi state organization, and the other by a private forest owner, James Bennet. The pilot test has been carried out by Control Union and the reports were published on the PEFC Ireland website. The pilot test reports have been considered by the Forum, along with the comments on the draft Standard and draft Scheme from the public consultation.

On the final day the meetings were discussed and the conclusions based on these. An attempt was made to get in touch with the environmental NGO's, but they were either still on holiday or the right persons were not available. An email correspondence eventually took place with An Taisce, one of the major ENGO's in Ireland, in which they explained their reason for abstaining from the process, but they do confirm they were invited to both the standard setting forum and the public consultation.

For more details on the visit to Ireland, please see the minutes, Annex 3.

6. PUBLIC CONSULTATION

In the public consultation that lasted from 25 July till 22 September 2011, no comments were received.

ANNEX 1 PEFC COUNCIL MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS CHECKLIST

Guidelines PEFC Council Minimum Requirements Checklist	Revised on 4 February 2010	GL 2/2010
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PART I: MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS CHECKLIST FOR STANDARD SETTING PROCESS (PEFCC ANNEX 2)

PEFC Ireland documents which are referred to in below mentioned checklist.

Nr	Document	Contents
1.	PEFC Ireland Certification Scheme for Sustainable Forest Management Appendix 5 Rules for Standard Setting v2	

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	Assess. basis*	Yes /No*	Reference to application documents
Standard setting for forest certification					
1	Has the development of the certification standards been independent from the certification and accreditation process? ^[*1]	Annex 2, 3.2	Doc.	Yes	Appendix 5 2.2: 'The development, maintenance and revision of the Standard shall be independent from the certification and accreditation process.'
			Process	Yes	PEFC Ireland is not a certifying or accreditation body, nor were any of these bodies involved in the certification or accreditation process. Confirmed by the consultant during the visit to Ireland that certification nor accreditation are in any way linked with the standard setting process.
2	Has the standard setting process been carried out at national and/or sub-national levels?	Annex 2, 3.3	Doc.	Yes	Appendix 5 2.3: 'A single national Standard shall be developed by a national standard setting Forum'
			Process	Yes	Confirmed during the visit to Ireland: The participants of the standard setting forum represented national organisations, the invitations for the public consultation were sent out throughout the country, there were no exclusions of certain areas or regions.
3.	Has the standard setting process been co-ordinated by the PEFC National Governing Body? ^[*1]	Annex 2, 3.3	Doc.	Yes	Scheme, 6.11, Interpretation and Revision of the Standard: 'As the National Governing Body, PEFC Ireland coordinated the development of

As the National Governing Body, PEFC Ireland coordinated the development of

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	Assess. basis*	Yes /No*	Reference to application documents
					this standard.'
			Process	Yes	Confirmed during the visit to Ireland: The secretary of PEFC Ireland was also the secretary of the Standard setting forum. During the visit it became apparent that the secretary arranged the meetings, took minutes and sent out invitations to the broader public and the possible participants in the standard setting forum.
4.	Has the certification standard been drafted to be applied at individual and/or group and/or regional level?	Annex 2, 3.3		Yes	Section 7.3 certification levels: 'There are two main levels at which a woodland owner(s) or forest enterprise(s) might wish to apply for forest management certification under the Scheme: - Individual certification - Group certification
5.	Has the development of certification criteria been initiated by national forest owners' organisations or national forestry sector organisations having support of the major forest owners' organisations in that country? [^{*1}]	Annex 2, 3.4.1		Yes	Section 6.1: 'The process was initiated by the Irish Timber Growers Association (ITGA), which also sponsored the formation of PEFC Ireland.'
6.	Have all relevant interested parties representing the different aspects of sustainable forest management been invited to participate in the standard setting process and a created Forum? [^{*1}]	Annex 2, 3.4.1	Doc.	Yes	Appendix 5 2.4.1 'The Forum shall represent the different aspects of sustainable forest management in Ireland. Relevant interested parties will be invited to participate in the standard setting process, including forest owners, forest industry, environmental and social non-governmental organisations, trade unions and retailers. The overall aim is that the Forum should provide a balanced representation of the various interest groups and organisations.'
			Process	Yes	6.2 Current Membership Base 'A wide range of organizations which would be considered to have an interest in forestry in Ireland was invited to participate in the standard setting process and no

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	Assess. basis*	Yes /No*	Reference to application documents
					organization seeking membership was refused, however many of those contacted declined to accept the invitation. Vacancies remain on both the economic (1) and environmental (2) chambers. The criteria for membership of the Forum are set out in section 2.4 of the PEFC Irish Forestry Standard: Rules for Standard Setting (see Appendix 6).'
7.	Do consensus-building procedures of the Forum provide for balanced representation of interest categories? [2]	Annex 2, 3.4.1	Doc.	Yes	<p>Appendix 5 2.4.2 'The Forum shall be organised into 3 chambers – social, environmental and economic – and the aim will be to have 5 nominees for each chamber. The social chamber shall be made up of representatives of forest user and wider countryside organisations and trade union representatives. The environmental chamber shall be made up of representatives of environmental non-governmental organisations and other organisations and bodies whose primary interest is environmental. The economic chamber shall be made up of representatives of Coillte Teoranta, private forest owners, forest management companies and processors and retailers of Irish forest products.'</p>
			Process	Yes	<p>Section 6.1 'In 2008 ITGA commenced communications with a number of representative organisations active in the environmental, social and economic sectors and with an interest in the forest industry to seek their participation in a standard setting process.'</p> <p>As becomes clear from the answer to requirement 6 the parties of the Forum represented various stakeholders in the economic, ecological and social chamber.</p>

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	Assess. basis*	Yes /No*	Reference to application documents
8.	Have the views of all relevant interested parties been documented and considered in an open and transparent way? ^[*3]	Annex 2, 3.4.1	Doc.	Yes	Appendix 5, 2.7.2: 'There shall be a formal consultation process on the draft certification standard, with a minimum consultation period of 60 days. A report, providing an analysis of the responses to the consultation, shall be prepared and made available to the Forum. The views of all relevant interested parties will be documented, discussed and considered in an open and transparent way following which the Forum will agree changes to be made to the draft standard.'
			Process	Yes	Confirmed during the visit to Ireland: The views of all relevant interested parties were documented by Peter Wilson and he analysed and published the comments in the Peter Wilson report. This report has been thoroughly examined by the standard setting forum during meetings, each comment was addressed.
9.	Has the formal approval of standards been based on evidence of consensus? ^[*3]	Annex 2, 3.4.1	Doc.	Yes	Appendix 5 2.4.6: 'The aim shall be to make decisions by consensus, defined as a lack of sustained objection. Where there is sustained objection the chairman shall ensure that there is full discussion of the issue before putting the matter to a vote. If a consensus cannot be reached, then a decision will be taken by votes cast by the chambers with each chamber having one vote. Within each chamber decisions will be taken by a simple majority vote: if a majority is not obtained the chamber will abstain. When a decision is required to be put to a vote, the vote shall be deferred until the next meeting of the Forum.'

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	Assess. basis*	Yes /No*	Reference to application documents
			Process	Yes	<p>6.7 Approval ‘The Standard was finalised and approved by the Forum at a meeting held on 13th October 2010. A copy of the approved version with the revisions resulting from the public consultation and pilot testing highlighted was posted on the PEFC Ireland website and all respondents to the public consultation process notified.’</p> <p>During the visit to Ireland it became clear that no voting took place at any point in time. The forum members explained that all important decisions were based on discussions and the formal approval took place in the same way. ‘Everyone agreed to agree or disagree’.</p>
10.	<p>Does the implementation of the consensus based approach comply with Guideline GL 5/2006</p> <p><i>“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 parties concerned and to reconcile any conflicting arguments. Note: Consensus need not imply unanimity.”</i></p>	GL 5/2006	Doc.	Yes	<p>Appendix 5 2.4.6: ‘The aim shall be to make decisions by consensus, defined as a lack of sustained objection. Where there is sustained objection the chairman shall ensure that there is full discussion of the issue before putting the matter to a vote. If a consensus cannot be reached, then a decision will be taken by votes cast by the chambers with each chamber having one vote. Within each chamber decisions will be taken by a simple majority vote: if a majority is not obtained the chamber will abstain. When a decision is required to be put to a vote, the vote shall be deferred until the next meeting of the Forum.’</p>
			Process	Yes	<p>According to the submitted minutes and the questionnaires filled in by the Forum members and an email correspondence submitted during the visit to Ireland it becomes clear that implementation of consensus complies with the Guideline GL 5/2006. Consensus need not imply unanimity but in the case for PEFC Ireland it did</p>

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	Assess. basis*	Yes /No*	Reference to application documents
					demonstrate unanimity.
11.	Has the Forum defined its own written procedures which have been made available to interest parties upon request? [2]	Annex 2, 3.4.1	Doc.	Yes	Appendix 5
			Process	Yes	They are publicly available on www.pefc.ie
12.	Do the written procedures for standard setting contain an appeal mechanism for impartial handling of any substantive and procedural complaints? [2]	Annex2, 3.4.1	Doc.	Yes	<p>Appendix 5 2.8:</p> <p>‘Complaints, Appeals and Disputes</p> <p>Any party who wishes to lodge a complaint regarding any aspect of the conduct of the Standard Setting Forum must do so in writing to the Secretary of the Standard Setting Forum. If the nature of the complaint is unclear the Secretary may seek further information from the complainant. The Secretary will maintain a documented record of all appeals, complaints and disputes raised against the Forum and the resultant actions.</p> <p>The Forum will consider any complaint at its next full meeting and decide at that meeting how best to address the issues raised by the</p>

complainant. The complainant will be notified of the decision of the Forum in writing within 10 days of that decision. 6
In the event of the complainant not being satisfied with the decision of the Forum, the

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	Assess. basis*	Yes /No*	Reference to application documents
					with its recommendations. The recommendations will be taken into consideration by the Board of PEFC (Ireland) Ltd in formulating its decision which it will issue within a period not exceeding three months from the date of receipt of the appeal. According to this decision, PEFC (Ireland) Ltd will take the recommended actions and communicate these to the appellant and other affected parties.'
			Process	Yes	During the visit in Ireland it was conformed that there has been one complaint. The way this complaint was handled was according to the IFCS's procedures. If the complainant would not have been satisfied with the way the complaint had been handled, he could have appealed. The appeal mechanism has been sent to the complainant and he was informed on the procedures in case he wanted to appeal.
13.	Has the start of the standard setting process been communicated to the public? [³]	Annex 2, 3.4.2	Doc.	Yes	Appendix 5 2.7.1: 'The start of the standard setting process shall be communicated to the public.'
			Process	Yes	According to PEFC IE and all the responses to the questionnaires the start of the standard setting process has been communicated to the public: 'Communicated to the public in the national press and by direct notification to key stakeholders.' During the visit to Ireland copies of the various press releases were submitted and the findings were confirmed.
14.	Has the information on the development process been distributed and discussed? [³]	Annex 2, 3.4.2	Doc.	Yes	Appendix 5 2.7: 'Information on the standard development process and the minutes of the Forum meetings shall be made available to all interested parties on request.'
			Process	Yes	According to PEFC Ireland: 'Communicated to stakeholders by direct notification; advertised

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	Assess. basis*	Yes /No*	Reference to application documents
					<p>in the national press; final draft.</p> <p>According to replies to the questionnaires information on the process has indeed been distributed and discussed.</p> <p>During the visit to Ireland it was confirmed by the stakeholders that information has been distributed and posted on the internet.</p>
15.	Has the final draft standard been available to all interested parties, e.g. by posting it on the Internet? ^[*3]	Annex 2, 3.4.2	Doc.	Yes	<p>Appendix 5, 2.7: ‘The draft certification standard, when agreed by the Forum, shall be posted on a website and information on the consultative process for the draft standard shall be communicated to the public.’</p>
			Process	Yes	<p>According to PEFC Ireland: ‘Communicated to stakeholders by direct notification; advertised in the national press; final draft.</p> <p>According to questionnaires the final draft standard has been available to all interested parties.</p> <p>During the visit to Ireland, it was confirmed that all interested parties could download the final draft standard and, if requested, PEFC Ireland would have sent a hard copy to the various parties.</p>
16.	Has the final draft standard been sent out for formal national consultation process? ^[*3]	Annex 2, 3.4.3	Doc.	Yes	<p>Appendix 5 2.7.2: There shall be a formal consultation process on the draft certification standard, with a minimum consultation period of 60 days.</p>
			Process	Yes	<p>According to PEFC Ireland: National public consultation commenced 25th March 2010 and closed on 11th June 2010.</p> <p>This finding was confirmed during the visit to Ireland.</p>

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	Assess. basis*	Yes /No*	Reference to application documents
17.	Have views of interested parties been discussed? [³]	Annex 2, 3.4.3	Doc.	Yes	Appendix 5, 2.7.2: 'There shall be a formal consultation process on the draft certification standard, with a minimum consultation period of 60 days. A report, providing an analysis of the responses to the consultation, shall be prepared and made available to the Forum. The views of all relevant interested parties will be documented, discussed and considered in an open and transparent way following which the Forum will agree changes to be made to the draft standard.'
			Process	Yes	According to PEFC IE: Minutes record discussions, independent consultants report on consultation responses considered at SSF meetings. According to questionnaires all the comments were analyzed and discussed. During the visit to Ireland it was confirmed that a report was made of all the comments received in which they were compiled and analyzed. The Forum members mentioned that the report was discussed during a Forum meeting and each comment was considered.
18.	Has the Forum given general information on the changes made as a result of a consultation process? [³]	Annex 2, 3.4.3	Doc.	Yes	Appendix 5 2.7.2: 'General information on the changes made as a result of the consultation process will be made publicly available.'
			Process	Yes	The final approved version of the IFCS with agreed amendments highlighted was posted on PEFC Ireland website and all respondents notified directly. This was confirmed during the visit to Ireland by the Forum members and it is still posted on the website.
19.	Had the consultation been at least 60 days? [³]	Annex 2, 3.4.3	Doc.	Yes	Appendix 5 2.7.2: 'There shall be a formal

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	Assess. basis*	Yes /No*	Reference to application documents
					consultation process on the draft certification standard, with a minimum consultation period of 60 days.'
			Process	Yes	According to PEFC IE: National public consultation commenced 25 th March 2010 and closed on 11 th June 2010. This finding was confirmed during the visit to Ireland.
Standards for chain of custody certification (only if the scheme includes a scheme specific C-o-C standard)					
20.	Has the development of certification standards been independent from the certification and accreditation process? [⁴]	Annex 2, 4.1	Doc.	NA	No scheme specific standard but adoption of International CoC standard as Normative document 2002:2010
			Process	NA	
21.	Has the process of development of national or sub-national chain of custody requirements been supported by the PEFC National Governing Body? [⁴]	Annex 2, 4.2.1		NA	
22.	Have all relevant interested parties representing different aspects of sustainable forest management, wood procurement, processing and retailing been invited to participate in the standard setting process? [⁴]	Annex 2, 4.2.1	Doc.	NA	
			Process	NA	
23.	Do consensus-building procedures of the Forum provide for balance representation of interest categories? [⁶]	Annex 2, 4.2.1	Doc.	NA	
			Process	NA	
24.	Have the views of all relevant interested parties been documented and considered in an open and transparent way? [⁵]	Annex 2, 4.2.1, 4.2.3	Doc.	NA	
			Process	NA	
25.	Has the formal approval of standards been based on evidence of consensus? [⁵]	Annex 2, 4.2.1	Doc.	NA	
			Process	NA	
26.	Does the implementation of the consensus based approach comply with Guideline GL 5/2006	GL 5/2006	Doc.	NA	
			Process	NA	
27.	Has the Forum defined its own written procedures which have been made available to interest parties upon request?	Annex 2, 4.2.1	Doc.	NA	
			Process	NA	

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	Assess. basis*	Yes /No*	Reference to application documents
	[⁶]				
28.	Do the written procedures for standard setting contain an appeal mechanism for impartial handling of any substantive and procedural complaints? [⁶]	Annex2, 4.2.1	Doc.	NA	
			Process	NA	
29.	Has the start of the standard setting process been communicated to the public? [⁵]	Annex 2, 4.2.2	Doc.	NA	
			Process	NA	
30.	Has the information on the development process been distributed and discussed? [⁵]	Annex 2, 4.2.2	Doc.	NA	
			Process	NA	
31.	Has the final draft standard been available to all interested parties, e.g. by posting it on the Internet? [⁵]	Annex 2, 4.2.2	Doc.	NA	
			Process	NA	
32.	Has the final draft standard been sent out for a formal national consultation process? [⁵]	Annex 2, 4.2.3	Doc.	NA	
			Process	NA	
33.	Has the Forum given general information on the changes made as a result of a consultation process? [⁵]	Annex 2, 4.2.3	Doc.	NA	
			Process	NA	
34.	Had the consultation period been at least 60 days long? [⁵]	Annex 2, 4.2.3	Doc.	NA	
			Process	NA	
Pilot testing					
35.	Have the first results on the testing of the final drafts for national/sub-national forest certification standards and their implementation arrangements been available prior to submission of the scheme for the PEFC Council endorsement and mutual recognition? [⁷]	Annex 2, 5	Doc.	Yes	Appendix 5 3. Pilot Testing 3.1 The final draft of the forest certification standard shall be assessed by means of a pilot study prior to submission to PEFC Ireland. This pilot study will be conducted on at least one private and one Coillte owned property. 3.2 Recommendations for improving the draft standard, resulting from the pilot testing, shall be discussed at a Forum meeting prior to final submission.
			Process	Yes	According to PEFC IE: 'Report available. Final approved version of the IFCS with agreed amendments highlighted was posted on PEFC Ireland website.'

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	Assess. basis*	Yes /No*	Reference to application documents
					This finding was confirmed during the visit to Ireland.
36.	Has appropriate action been taken to incorporate improvements and recommendations prior to submission of the scheme for the PEFC Council endorsement and mutual recognition process? [7]	Annex 2, 5	Doc.	Yes	3.2 Recommendations for improving the draft standard, resulting from the pilot testing, shall be discussed at a Forum meeting prior to final submission.
			Process	Yes	According to PEFC IE: 'Report on pilot testing considered by SSF; amendments agreed and highlighted on version posted on PEFC Ireland website.' This finding was confirmed during the visit to Ireland.
Review of standards					
37.	Have the standards on forest and chain of custody certifications been reviewed at least every 5 years or is it foreseen to review these standards at least every 5 years?	Annex 2, 6.1	Doc.	Yes	Appendix 5 4. Review of the Forest Certification Standard The certification standard and implementation arrangements shall be reviewed in the light of new scientific information and practical experience at least every 5 years. PEFC Ireland shall initiate the review process, making the timetable and arrangements for the review publicly available. The review will take into account revisions required by PEFC Council.
			Process	N/A	This is the initial endorsement.
38.	Does the scheme documentation indicate which organisation is responsible to initiate the revision work?	Annex 2, 6.1		Yes	Appendix 5 4. Review of the Forest Certification Standard PEFC Ireland shall initiate the review process, making the timetable and arrangements for the review publicly available. The review will take into account revisions required by PEFC Council.
39.	Has the revision procedures been participatory, fair and transparent? [8]	Annex 2, 6.1		N/A	This is the initial endorsement.
40.	Has the PEFC National Governing Body appropriately considered the revisions of the	Annex 2, 6.2		N/A	This is the initial endorsement.

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	Assess. basis*	Yes /No*	Reference to application documents
	general PEFC requirements for standard setting and implementation in the national standards? [⁸]				
41.	Has the PEFC National Governing Body indicated to the PEFC Council the appropriate considerations of the revisions induced by the PEFC Council in national standards? [⁸]	Annex 2, 6.2		N/A	This is the initial endorsement.

PART II: MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS CHECKLIST FOR CERTIFICATION SCHEMES AND THEIR IMPLEMENTATION (ANNEX 3)

PEFC Ireland documents which are referred to in below mentioned checklist.

Nr	Document	Contents
1	Scheme	Section 4 Forest policy and regulation in Ireland
2	Scheme	Section 7 Scheme governance
3	IFCS	Introduction

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	YES / NO*	Reference to scheme documentation
General requirements for certification criteria				
1	Are the criteria relevant to all types of forests and management systems, which exist in the nation/region they have been elaborated for?	Annex 3, 3.6	Yes	Section 4: 'The Irish National Forest Standard has been developed specifically for forestry in the Republic of Ireland.'
2	Do the criteria clearly express the objectives for forest management that can be unambiguously verified by different auditors?	Annex 3, 3.6	Yes	IFCS provides for clear objectives and requirements that can be unambiguously verified by different auditors.
3	Are management and performance requirements applicable at the level of a forest management unit?	Annex 3, 3.6	Yes	IFCS Introduction paragraph 4: 'Certification options for forest owners There are currently two different options open to forest owners seeking to attain PEFC certification for their forests in Ireland. These are as follows: - Group certification - Individual certification' IFCS Introduction - Scale of Application of the Requirements: 'All requirements of this standard must be satisfied at Woodland Management Unit (WMU) level.'
4	Are management and performance requirements applicable optionally also at group and regional levels? [*1]	Annex 3, 3.6	Yes	IFCS Introduction 'Group certification schemes must satisfy management and performance requirement at FMU level.' But group certification is possible and part of the scheme. Regional certification is not an option.
Other requirements for forest management criteria				
5	Does the scheme require that property rights and land tenure arrangements shall be clearly defined, documented and established for the relevant forest area?	Annex 3, 3.5	Yes	IFCS section 1.1.3: 'Property rights and land tenure arrangements shall be clearly defined, documented and established for the relevant forest area.'

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	YES / NO*	Reference to scheme documentation
6	Does the scheme require the clarification, recognition and respect of legal, customary and traditional rights related to the forest land in compliance with chapter 3.5 of Annex?	Annex 3, 3.5	Yes	IFCS section 7.2.1: 'Legal, customary and traditional use rights relating to forest access shall be clarified, recognized and respected.'
7	Does the scheme require that a summary of the forest management plan or its equivalent, which contains information about the forest management measures to be applied, is publicly available, except for confidential business and personal information?	Annex 3, 3.5	Yes	IFCS section 2.1.4: 'While respecting the confidentiality of commercially and/or environmentally sensitive information, woodland managers, upon request, shall make publicly available management planning documentation or a summary of its primary elements, including those listed in 2.1.1'
Laws and regulations				
8	Are the national certification criteria in compliance with national laws programmes and policies?	Annex 3, 3.2, 3.6	Yes	The certification standard requires compliance with law: IFCS section 1.1.1 'Requirement: There shall be compliance with the law. There shall be no substantiated outstanding claims of legal non-compliance related to woodland management. 1.1.2 Requirement: There shall be compliance with any relevant codes of practice, guidelines or agreements.' Certification standard is developed according to Irish national laws and legislation.
9	Are the references to national laws, programs and policies indicated in the scheme documentation when relevant, e.g., if the requirement of the PEOLG is not addressed in the certification criteria but is included in normative regulations?	Annex 3, 3.6	N/A	All PEOLG requirements have been addressed.

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	YES / NO*	Reference to scheme documentation
10	Does the scheme include the requirement that any apparent violation of the legislation shall be taken into consideration in internal and external audits?	Annex 3, 3.2	Yes	<p>IFCS section 1.1.1 'Requirement: There shall be compliance with the law. There shall be no substantiated outstanding claims of legal non-compliance related to woodland management.'</p> <p>and the guidance to this requirement:</p> <p>Guidance 'Certification is not a legal compliance audit. Certification authorities will be checking that there is no evidence of non-compliance with relevant legal requirements including: Management and employees understand and comply with all legal requirements relevant to their responsibilities. All documentation including procedures, work instructions and contracts meet legal requirements. No issues of legal non-compliance are raised by regulatory authorities or other interested parties.'</p>
ILO Conventions				
11	Are the Fundamental ILO Conventions ratified by the country and implemented through the legislative framework?	Annex 3, 3.3	Yes	All fundamental ILO conventions are ratified by Ireland.
12	Do the national certification criteria address the core elements of those Fundamental ILO Conventions, which have been not ratified by the country?	Annex 3, 3.3	N/A	
13	Has the ILO Code of Practise on Safety and Health in Forestry Work been considered in development of national and regional certification criteria?	Annex 3, 3.3	Yes	<p>IFCS section Requirement 8.1.1 'There shall be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Compliance with primary Irish Health and Safety Legislation b) Compliance with the Irish HSA approved Codes Of Practices on Managing Safety and Health in Forestry Operations and the ILO approved Code of Practice on Safety and Health in Forestry Work c) Emergency Plans for fire and other plans appropriate to the safe management of forests, employees and contractors as set out in approved Codes of Practices d) Health and safety training,

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	YES / NO*	Reference to scheme documentation
				information and consultation to any forestry employees in the necessary skills for the safe operation of tasks'
Other international conventions				
14	Are the international conventions relevant to forest management and ratified by the country respected through the legislative framework?	Annex 3, 3.4	Yes	The list of ratified international conventions is specified in appendix C of the IFCS. These are respected through the legislative framework.
15	Are the requirements agreed upon in the conventions, even if they are not ratified by the country, respected in the certification criteria to the degree that they are covered in PEOLG or other reference documents basis approved by the PEFC Council?	Annex 3, 3.4	N/A	All relevant conventions have been ratified.
Level of application – general				

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	YES / NO*	Reference to scheme documentation
16	Are the applicants, the certified areas and participating forest owners/managers/others actors clearly identified in the scheme documentation?	Annex 3, 4.1	Yes	<p><i>-Applicants:</i> Scheme, section 7.3.2 Individual Certification 'Individual Certification is where forests belonging to a single forest owner (whether an individual, company or other entity) are assessed under a single process with a single certificate issuing to successful forest owners. This method is available for any size and type of forest, however, an individually owned certificate may be particularly appropriate or the preferred option for larger management units. Certification Bodies operating under the Scheme will be required to have clearly documented procedures for the assessment of individual certification applicants including all the key elements and components.</p> <p>7.3.3 Group Certification Group Certification is where a number of (usually small) forest owners group their forests together and make a single Forest Certification application. The group is co-ordinated by a single person (a group manager) who ensures that all members of the group are compliant with the relevant forest management standard. Forest Certification auditors then evaluate a sample of woodland properties. All woodland properties are evaluated over time / subsequent audits.'</p> <p>7.3.9 Group Certificate Under the Scheme, the systems and documentation of the Group Entity will be assessed against the Certification Body's requirements, whilst the Group Members' forest management practices will be assessed against the requirements of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard. If successful, the Group Entity will be issued with a group forest management certificate, not the individual Group Members. The Group Member will receive a Certificate of attestation from the Group¹⁸ manager to affirm the membership of the Group.</p>

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	YES / NO*	Reference to scheme documentation
17	Does the scheme documentation require that all actors involved in or operating on the certified area comply with the certification requirements?	Annex 3, 4.1	Yes	7.2.5 Main certification assessment (audit) This will be carried out by an appropriately qualified team of assessors (auditors) appointed and formally contracted by the Certification Body. The aim of the main assessment will be to assess the auditee's forest management and/or chain of custody operations and documentation for compliance with the relevant standard(s). All relevant data and information sources, including internal audits and other documentation, will be used by the assessor team to help inform the audit process. (In the case of forest management certification, an appropriate sample of the auditee's forest operations should be evaluated by the assessor team in the field.) Measures will be taken to ensure that all actors involved in or operating on the certified area comply with the certification requirements.
18	Does the scheme documentation require that all actors individually certified or participating in regional/group certification are responsible for ensuring that contractors' activities and operations meet the respective forest management criteria?	Annex 3, 4.1	Yes	In every requirement in the IFCS it is mentioned that the relevant requirement is also of relevance to the contractor and have to be met by them as well.
Level of application – regional certification (only for schemes which include regional certification)				
19	Does the national definition of regional certification comply with the PEFC Council definition?	Annex 3, 4.1, a	N/A	Regional certification now included under group certification in next section.
20	Does the forest certification standard include criteria for the regional and also for forest management unit level?	Annex 3, 4.1, a		
21	Does the scheme documentation require that the assessment of the certification criteria defined for the regional level covers the whole region to be certified?	Annex 3, 4.1, a		
22	Does the scheme documentation require that sampling for the assessment of the certification criteria defined for the forest management unit level cover forest owners/managers/other actors participating in the regional certification?	Annex 3, 4.1, a		
23	Does the scheme documentation require that the applicant organisation shall be a legal entity?	Annex 3, 4.1, a		
24	Does the scheme documentation require that the applicant organisation should	Annex 3, 4.1, a		

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	YES / NO*	Reference to scheme documentation
	represent more than 50 % of forest area of the region? <i>(This does not need to be fulfilled by the time of the start of certification – see reference)</i>			
25	Does the scheme documentation describe the applicant's responsibility to assure the compliance of all participants with the certification requirements?	Annex 3, 4.1, a		
26	Does the scheme documentation describe the applicant's responsibility to ensure that credible registers of participants to certification and certified forest area are kept?	Annex 3, 4.1, a		
27	Does the scheme documentation describe the applicant's responsibility to implement rules for regional certification?	Annex 3, 4.1, a		
28	Does the scheme documentation define the responsibilities and authorities of the applicant and participating forest owners/managers for the inclusion of new participants and to inform the certification body thereof?	Annex 3, 4.1, a		
29	Does the scheme documentation define the responsibilities and authorities of the applicant and participating forest owners/managers for the internal control of conformity and follow up corrective and preventive measures?	Annex 3, 4.1, a		
30	Does the scheme documentation describe that forest management certificate is issued to the applicant (certificate holder)?	Annex 3, 4.1, a		
31	Does the scheme documentation describe that participants in regional certification shall receive either a copy of the regional certificate including the appendix (when applicable) listing all participating forest owners or an individual attestation issued by the certification body or the applicant which refers to the main certificate?	Annex 3, 4.1, a		
32	Does the scheme documentation require that forest owners/managers/other actors can participate in the regional certification either by (i) entering into an individually signed commitment, or (ii) based on the majority decision of a forest owner's organisation on behalf of forest owners they represent in the region?	Annex 3, 4.1, a		
33	Does the scheme documentation require that only participating forest owners / managers shall be considered as certified; their area counted as certified area and the forest raw material coming from thereof will be considered as certified raw material?	Annex 3, 4.1, a		
34	Does the scheme documentation describe that forest owners should submit all the forest area under his management in the	Annex 3, 4.1, a		

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	YES / NO*	Reference to scheme documentation
	region for certification? (<i>not obligatory to be met but should be aimed at</i>)			
Level of application – group certification (only for schemes which include group certification)				
35	Does the national definition for group certification comply with the PEFC Council definition?	Annex 3, 4.1 b	Yes	Scheme 7.3.3: 'Group Certification is where a number of (usually small) forest owners group their forests together and make a single Forest Certification application.'
36	Does the scheme documentation clearly define who the applicant is for group certification?	Annex 3, 4.1 b	Yes	7.3.7 Responsibilities of the Group Manager / Group Entity In order to be eligible to apply for group certification, the Group Entity must: 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;
37	Does the scheme documentation describe the applicant's responsibility to assure the compliance of all participants with the certification requirements?	Annex 3, 4.1 b	Yes	7.3.7 Responsibilities of the Group Manager / Group Entity In order to be eligible to apply for group certification, the Group Entity must: establish connections with all participants based on a 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 participant from the scope of certification in the event of non-conformity with the sustainable forest management standard;
38	Does the scheme documentation describe the applicant's responsibility to ensure that credible registers are kept of participants to certification and certified forest area?	Annex 3, 4.1 b	Yes	7.3.7 Responsibilities of the Group Manager / Group Entity In order to be eligible to apply for group certification, the Group Entity must: keep records of: – all participants, including their contact details, identification of their forest

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	YES / NO*	Reference to scheme documentation
				property and its/their size(s), - the certified area,
39	Does the scheme documentation describe the applicant's responsibility to implement the rules for group certification?	Annex 3, 4.1 b	Yes	7.3.7 Responsibilities of the Group Manager / Group Entity In order to be eligible to apply for group certification, the Group Entity must keep records of: - the group entity and participants' conformity with the requirements of the sustainable forest management standard, and other applicable requirements of the forest certification scheme,
40	Does the scheme documentation require that total forest area participating in group certification is recorded?	Annex 3, 4.1 b	Yes	7.3.7 Responsibilities of the Group Manager / Group Entity In order to be eligible to apply for group certification, the Group Entity must keep records of: - all participants, including their contact details, identification of their forest property and its/their size(s), - the certified area,
41	Does the scheme documentation describe that forest owners should submit all the forest area under his management in the catchment area for the group certification? <i>(no obligatory to be met but should be aimed at)</i>	Annex 3, 4.1 b	N/A	No longer a requirement in PEFC ST 1002:2010 and not obligatory in PEFC Annex 3 either.
42	Does the scheme documentation define the responsibilities and authorities of the applicant and participating forest owners/managers for the inclusion of new participants and to inform the certification body thereof?	Annex 3, 4.1 b	Yes	7.3.8 Certification Body Requirements for Group Certification Certification Bodies registered to operate under the Scheme will be required to have developed documented requirements and procedures specifically for the assessment of Group Certification Scheme applications. These procedures and requirements would include, <i>inter alia</i> : - responsibilities of the Group Entity for on-going communication with the Certification Body regarding Group membership, new and expelled group members and reasons for expulsion;
43	Does the scheme documentation define the responsibilities and authorities of the applicant and participating forest	Annex 3, 4.1 b	Yes	7.3.7 Responsibilities of the Group Manager / Group Entity In order to be eligible to apply for

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	YES / NO*	Reference to scheme documentation
	owners/managers for the internal control of conformity and follow up corrective and/or preventive measures?			<p>group certification, the Group Entity must:</p> <p>operate a review of conformity with the sustainable forest management standard, that includes reviewing the results of the internal monitoring programme and the certification body's evaluations and surveillance; corrective and preventive measures if required; and the evaluation of the effectiveness of corrective actions taken.</p> <p>7.3.8 Certification Body Requirements for Group Certification Certification Bodies registered to operate under the Scheme will be required to have developed documented requirements and procedures specifically for the assessment of Group Certification Scheme applications. These procedures and requirements would include, <i>inter alia</i>:</p> <p>- internal monitoring by the Group Entity of Group Members and their forest activities;</p>
44	Does the scheme documentation describe that the forest management certificate is issued to the applicant (certificate holder)?	Annex 3, 4.1 b	Yes	<p>7.3.9 Group Certificate Under the Scheme, the systems and documentation of the Group Entity will be assessed against the Certification Body's requirements, whilst the Group Members' forest management practices will be assessed against the requirements of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard. If successful, the Group Entity will be issued with a group forest management certificate, not the individual Group Members. The Group Member will receive a Certificate of attestation from the Group manager to affirm the membership of the Group.</p>
45	Does the scheme documentation describe that participants in group certification shall receive either a copy of the regional certificate including the appendix (when	Annex 3, 4.1 b	Yes	<p>7.3.9 Group Certificate The Group Member will receive a Certificate of attestation from the Group manager to affirm the</p>

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	YES / NO*	Reference to scheme documentation
	applicable) listing all participating forest owners or an individual attestation issued by the certification body or the applicant which refers to the main certificate?			membership of the Group.
Level of application – individual certification (only for schemes which include individual certification)				
46	Does the scheme documentation describe that forest owner should submit all the forest area under his management in the catchment area of the certification scheme in the certification? (<i>not obligatory to be met but should be aimed at</i>)	Annex 3, 4.1 c	No	PEFC Ireland indicates: 'The requirement is limited to forest management unit level, i.e. all the woodland within a single FMU must be submitted.' This is not in conformance with the requirement, but since it is not obligatory, it has no impact on the conformance of the Scheme.
Implementation of changes to the scheme				
47	Does the scheme documentation define transition period(s) for implementation of changes to the endorsed scheme in compliance with chapter 5 of Annex 3. (<i>This is not applicable to the initial endorsement of a scheme</i>)	Annex 3, 5	N/A	Initial endorsement of the scheme.
Appeals, complaints and dispute procedures				

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	YES / NO*	Reference to scheme documentation
48	Has the PEFC National Governing Body set up or appointed an impartial and independent dispute settlement body on a permanent basis or does it have written procedures for the establishment of a dispute settlement body on an ad hoc basis?	Annex 3, 6.1	Yes	<p>PEFC Ireland has written procedures for the establishment of a dispute settlement body on an ad hoc basis:</p> <p>7.7.2 Interpretation of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard In the event of a dispute relating specifically to interpretation of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard which cannot be satisfactorily resolved by the Certification Body"s independent review panel as part of the certification process, such a matter will be referred to the steering group for a ruling.</p> <p>7.7.4 Role of PEFC Ireland The PEFC Ireland Board will function as the final arbiter of appeal in the case of disputes related to certification decisions, use of the PEFC logo and label and/or loss of the certificate. The entity that wishes to resort to this authority should contact, in writing, the National Secretary of PEFC Ireland normally, within one month of the grievance informing PEFC Ireland of the background and detail of the appeal.</p> <p>The Board, or its nominated representatives, which may include non members who have specific expertise, will submit a report to the PEFC Ireland Board, who will issue a decision within a term of not more than two months. According to this decision, PEFC Ireland shall take the recommended actions and communicate these to the entities involved.</p>

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	YES / NO*	Reference to scheme documentation
49	Has the PEFC National Governing Body established and have documented procedures for an independent dispute settlement body, either permanent or ad hoc, that takes care of those complaints arising from forest management or chain of custody scheme implementation that cannot be addressed in the dispute settlement procedures of the relevant certification or accreditation body?	Annex 3, 6.1	Yes	<p>PEFC Ireland has written procedures for the establishment of a dispute settlement body on an ad hoc basis:</p> <p>7.7.2 Interpretation of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard</p> <p>In the event of a dispute relating specifically to interpretation of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard which cannot be satisfactorily resolved by the Certification Body"s independent review panel as part of the certification process, such a matter will be referred to the steering group for a ruling.</p> <p>7.7.3 Referral to Irish Accreditation Service</p> <p>In the event of an appeal, complaint or dispute concerning the certification process or conduct of the Certification Body not being resolved to the satisfaction of the auditee, Certification Body or other third party, the matter will be referred to the relevant Accreditation Body, which in Ireland will normally be the Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB). Failing resolution by the Accreditation Body the matter will then be referred to PEFC Ireland for a final decision.</p> <p>7.7.4 Role of PEFC Ireland</p> <p>The PEFC Ireland Board will function as the final arbiter of appeal in the case of disputes related to certification decisions, use of the PEFC logo and label and/or loss of the certificate. The entity that wishes to resort to this authority should contact, in writing, the National Secretary of PEFC Ireland normally, within one month of the grievance informing PEFC Ireland of the background and detail of the appeal.</p> <p>The Board, or its nominated representatives, which may include non members who have specific expertise, will submit a report to the PEFC Ireland Board, who will issue a decision within a term of not more than two months. According to this decision, PEFC Ireland shall</p>

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	YES / NO*	Reference to scheme documentation
50	Can the dispute settlement body also resolve possible grievances in chain of custody certification that do not exclusively concern an applicant and a certification body?	Annex 3, 6.1	Yes	<p>PEFC Ireland has written procedures for the establishment of a dispute settlement body on an ad hoc basis:</p> <p>7.7.2 Interpretation of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard In the event of a dispute relating specifically to interpretation of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard which cannot be satisfactorily resolved by the Certification Body's independent review panel as part of the certification process, such a matter will be referred to the steering group for a ruling.</p> <p>7.7.4 Role of PEFC Ireland The PEFC Ireland Board will function as the final arbiter of appeal in the case of disputes related to certification decisions, use of the PEFC logo and label and/or loss of the certificate. The entity that wishes to resort to this authority should contact, in writing, the National Secretary of PEFC Ireland normally, within one month of the grievance informing PEFC Ireland of the background and detail of the appeal.</p> <p>The Board, or its nominated representatives, which may include non members who have specific expertise, will submit a report to the PEFC Ireland Board, who will issue a decision within a term of not more than two months. According to this decision, PEFC Ireland shall take the recommended actions and communicate these to the entities involved.</p>
51	Does the scheme documentation require that the accredited certification body has procedures for dispute settlement for all grievances between the applicant and the certification body?	Annex 3, 6.2	Yes	<p>7.7.1 Certification Process All Certification Bodies registered to operate under the Scheme will be required to have documented procedures for dealing with all appeals, complaints and disputes relating to the certification process - up to and including the point of award, suspension or withdrawal of forest management and/or chain of custody certificates.</p>

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	YES / NO*	Reference to scheme documentation
52	Does the scheme documentation require that the relevant accreditation body, whose accreditation covers the certification, deals with disputes and complaints concerning observance of the accreditation requirements?	Annex 3, 6.2	Yes	7.7.3 Referral to Irish Accreditation Service In the event of an appeal, complaint or dispute concerning the certification process or conduct of the Certification Body not being resolved to the satisfaction of the auditee, Certification Body or other third party, the matter will be referred to the relevant Accreditation Body, which in Ireland will normally be the Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB). Failing resolution by the Accreditation Body the matter will then be referred to PEFC Ireland for a final decision.

* If the answer to any question is no, the application documentation shall indicate for each element why and what alternative measures have been taken to address the element in question.

[*1] This requirement is applicable only when a national scheme includes rules for regional and/or group forest management certification.

PART III: MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS CHECKLIST FOR SCHEME COMPLIANCE WITH PEOLG (ANNEX 3, CHAPTER 4.2)

Nr	Document	Contents
1.	PEFC Ireland Scheme	PEFC Ireland Certification Scheme for Sustainable Forest Management
2.	IFCS	PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	YES / NO*	Reference to scheme documentation
Basis for criteria development (only for schemes based on MCPFE)				
1	Are certification criteria used in the national or sub-national scheme based on Pan European Criteria and Indicators for SFM as a common framework?	Annex 3, 3.1.1	Yes	PEFC Ireland Scheme, Introduction: <i>'the [PEFC Ireland] Scheme has been constructed on the basis of the "Pan-European Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management" and the "Pan-European Operational Level Guidelines for Sustainable Forest Management" adopted as Resolution L2 at the 3rd Ministerial Conference for the Protection of Forests in Europe.'</i>
2	Have the Pan European Operational Level Guidelines (PEOLG) formed the reference base when the national and regional criteria were elaborated, amended or revised?	Annex 3, 3.1.2	Yes	PEFC Ireland Scheme, Introduction: <i>'the [PEFC Ireland] Scheme has been constructed on the basis of the "Pan-European Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management" and the "Pan-European Operational Level Guidelines for Sustainable Forest Management" adopted as Resolution L2 at the 3rd Ministerial Conference for the Protection of Forests in Europe.'</i>
Basis for criteria development (only for schemes based on inter-governmental processes other than MCPFE, ATO/ITTO and ITTO)				
3	Are the certification criteria based on the inter-governmental process other than MCPFE, ATO /ITTO and ITTO process (only for countries which participated in this process)?	Annex 3, 3.1.5		
Compatibility with the PEOLG (only for schemes to be assessed against the PEOLG)^[*1]				
4	Criterion 1: Maintenance and appropriate enhancement of forest and their contribution to global carbon cycle	PEOLG 1.1.a	Yes	See Annex 2
5		PEOLG 1.1.b	Yes	
6		PEOLG 1.1.c	Yes	
7		PEOLG 1.1.d	Yes	
8		PEOLG 1.2.a	Yes	
9		PEOLG 1.2.b	Yes	

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	YES / NO*	Reference to scheme documentation
10		PEOLG 1.2.c	Yes	
11	Criterion 2: Maintenance of forest ecosystem health and vitality	PEOLG 2.1.a	Yes	
12		PEOLG 2.1.b	Yes	
13		PEOLG 2.1.c	Yes	
14		PEOLG 2.2.a	Yes	
15		PEOLG 2.2.b	Yes	
16		PEOLG 2.2.c	Yes	
17		PEOLG 2.2.d	Yes	
18	Criterion 3: Maintenance and encouragement of productive functions of forests (wood and non-wood)	PEOLG 3.1.a	Yes	
19		PEOLG 3.1.b	Yes	
20		PEOLG 3.1.c	Yes	
21		PEOLG 3.2.a	Yes	
22		PEOLG 3.2.b	Yes	
23		PEOLG 3.3.c	Yes	
24		PEOLG 3.3.d	Yes	
25	Criterion 4: Maintenance, conservation and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity in forest ecosystems	PEOLG 4.1.a	Yes	
26		PEOLG 4.1.b	Yes	
27		PEOLG 4.2.a	Yes	
28		PEOLG 4.2.b	Yes	
29		PEOLG 4.2.c	Yes	
30		PEOLG 4.2.d	Yes	
31		PEOLG 4.2.e	Yes	
32		PEOLG 4.2.f	Yes	
33		PEOLG 4.2.g	Yes	
34		PEOLG 4.2.h	Yes	
35		PEOLG 4.2.i	Yes	
36	Criterion 5: Maintenance and appropriate enhancement of protective functions in forest management (notably soil and water)	PEOLG 5.1.a	Yes	
37		PEOLG 5.1.b	Yes	
38		PEOLG 5.2.a	Yes	
39		PEOLG 5.2.b	Yes	
40		PEOLG 5.2.c	Yes	
41	Criterion 6: Maintenance of other socio-economic functions and conditions	PEOLG 6.1.a	Yes	
42		PEOLG 6.1.b	Yes	
43		PEOLG 6.1.c	Yes	
44		PEOLG 6.1.d	Yes	
45		PEOLG 6.1.e	Yes	
46		PEOLG 6.2.a	Yes	
47		PEOLG 6.2.b	Yes	
48		PEOLG 6.2.c	Yes	

^[1] For the purposes of PEFC assessment and endorsement of national or sub national forest certification schemes the terms “should” used in the PEOLG shall be interpreted as “shall”.

PART VII: MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS CHECKLIST FOR CERTIFICATION AND ACCREDITATION PROCEDURES (ANNEX 6)

Name	Document	Contents
1	Scheme	PEFC Ireland Certification Scheme for Sustainable Forest Management

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	YES / NO*	Reference to scheme documentation
Certification Bodies				
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	Yes	Scheme, 7.1.1: 'PEFC certifications shall be carried out by impartial, independent third parties that cannot be involved in the standard setting process as governing or decision making bodies, or in the forest management and are independent of the certified entity.'
2.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification body for forest management certification or chain of custody certification against a scheme specific chain of custody standard shall fulfil requirements defined in ISO 17021 or ISO Guide 65?	Annex 6, 3.1	Yes	Scheme, 7.1.1: 'The certification body carrying out forest management certification or chain of custody certification against a scheme specific chain of custody standard, shall fulfil requirements defined in: c) ISO Guide 65 (EN 45 011) (3) if the certification is carried out as product certification (the term "product" is used in its widest sense and includes also processes and services).'
3.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification body chain of custody certification against Annex 4 shall fulfil requirements defined in ISO Guide 65?	Annex 6, 3.1	Yes	Scheme, 7.1.1: 'The certification body carrying out chain of custody certification against Annex 4 (Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products – Requirements) shall fulfil requirements defined in ISO Guide 65 (EN 45011) (3).'
4.	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	Yes	Scheme, 7.1.1: 'The certification body 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.'
5.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification bodies carrying out C-o-C certifications shall have technical competence in forest based products procurement and processing and material flows in different stages of processing and trading?	Annex 6, 3.1	Yes	Scheme, 7.1.1: 'The certification body carrying out chain of custody certification shall have the technical competence in forest based product procurement and processing, material flows in different stages of processing and trading.'
6.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification bodies shall	Annex 6, 3.1	Yes	Scheme, 7.1.1: 'The certification body shall have a good

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	YES / NO*	Reference to scheme documentation
	have a good understanding of the national PEFC system against which they carry out forest management or C-o-C certifications?			understanding of the national PEFC system against which it carries out forest or chain of custody certification.'
7.	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 or chain of custody certification?	Annex 6, 3.2	Yes	<p>Scheme, section 7.1.6: ' Certification Bodies registered to operate under the Scheme are required to ensure that technical supervisors and auditors appointed by the Certification Body to carry out assessments against the requirements of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard and the PEFC Chain of Custody Standards meet the competence criteria for auditors developed by the appropriate Accreditation Body.'</p> <p>Scheme section 7.1.1: 'The certification body carrying out forest management certification or chain of custody certification against a scheme specific chain of custody standard, shall fulfil requirements defined in: ... c) ISO Guide 65 (EN 45 011) (3) if the certification is carried out as product certification (the term "product" is used in its widest sense and includes also processes and services). The certification body carrying out chain of custody certification against Annex 4 (Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products – Requirements) shall fulfil requirements defined in ISO Guide 65 (EN 45011) (3).'</p> <p>ISO Guide 65 section 5 requires that: 'the personnel of the certification body shall be competent for the functions they perform, including making required technical judgments, faming policies and implementing them.'</p>
8.	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	Yes	Scheme, 7.1.6, Competence Criteria for Auditors: Certification Bodies registered to operate under the Scheme are required to ensure that technical supervisors and auditors appointed by the Certification Body to carry out assessments against the requirements of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard and the PEFC Chain of Custody Standards meet the competence criteria for

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	YES / NO*	Reference to scheme documentation
				auditors developed by the appropriate Accreditation Body. Auditors must fulfil the general criteria of ISO 19011 for Quality Management Systems auditors or for Environmental Management Systems auditors.
9.	Does the scheme documentation include additional qualification requirements for auditors carrying out forest management or chain of custody audits? ¹	Annex 6, 3.2	Yes	<p>Scheme, section 7.1.4 ‘As an integral part of such accreditation, certification bodies will be required to demonstrate the following: ability to carry out audits that are consistent and repeatable through the use of clear and precise procedures, and methods of recording and reporting;’</p> <p>Scheme, section 7.3.2 ‘Certification Bodies operating under the Scheme will be required to have clearly documented procedures for the assessment of individual certification applicants including all the key elements and components.’</p> <p>Scheme, section 7.3.8 ‘Certification Bodies registered to operate under the Scheme will be required to have developed documented requirements and procedures specifically for the assessment of Group Certification Scheme applications.’</p> <p>Scheme, section 7.4 ‘Certification Bodies registered to operate under the Scheme will be required to have full knowledge of both Annex 4 and PEFC ST 2002:2010, and developed documented procedures for assessment of chain of certification applications.’</p>
Certification procedures				
10.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification bodies shall have established internal procedures for forest management and/or chain of custody certification?	Annex 6, 4	Yes	<p>Scheme, section 7.1.4: ‘As an integral part of such accreditation, certification bodies will be required to demonstrate the following: ability to carry out audits that are consistent and repeatable through the use of clear and precise procedures, and methods of recording and reporting;’</p> <p>Scheme, 7.3.2: ‘Certification Bodies operating under the Scheme will be required to have clearly documented</p>

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	YES / NO*	Reference to scheme documentation
				<p>procedures for the assessment of individual certification applicants including all the key elements and components.'</p> <p>Scheme, 7.3.8: 'Certification Bodies registered to operate under the Scheme will be required to have developed documented requirements and procedures specifically for the assessment of Group Certification Scheme applications.'</p> <p>Scheme, 7.4: 'Certification Bodies registered to operate under the Scheme will be required to have full knowledge of both Annex 4 and PEFC ST 2002:2010, and developed documented procedures for assessment of chain of certification applications.'</p>
11.	Does the scheme documentation require that applied certification procedures for forest management certification or chain of custody certification against a scheme specific chain of custody standard shall fulfil or be compatible with the requirements defined in ISO 17021 or ISO Guide 65?	Annex 6, 4	Yes	<p>Scheme, 7.1.1: 'The certification body carrying out forest management certification or chain of custody certification against a scheme specific chain of custody standard, shall fulfil requirements defined in: c) ISO Guide 65 (EN 45 011) (3) if the certification is carried out as product certification (the term "product" is used in its widest sense and includes also processes and services)'. This requirement is broadly defined and does not exclusively refer to procedures, but these are covered as overall compliance with ISO Guide 65 is required.</p>
12.	Does the scheme documentation require that applied certification procedures for chain of custody certification against Annex 4 shall fulfil or be compatible with the requirements defined in ISO Guide 65?	Annex 6, 4	Yes	<p>Scheme, 7.1.1: 'The certification body carrying out chain of custody certification against Annex 4 (Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products – Requirements) shall fulfil requirements defined in ISO Guide 65 (EN 45011) (3)'. This requirement is broadly defined and does not exclusively refer to procedures, but these are covered as overall compliance with ISO Guide 65 is required.</p>
13.	Does the scheme documentation require that applied auditing procedures shall fulfil or be compatible with the requirements of ISO 19011?	Annex 6, 4	Yes	<p>Scheme, 7.1.1 General Requirements: 'PEFC certifications shall be carried out by impartial, independent third parties that cannot be involved in the standard setting process as governing or decision making bodies, or in the forest</p>

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	YES / NO*	Reference to scheme documentation
				management and are independent of the certified entity. Certification bodies considered competent by the PEFC Council to carry out forest and/or chain of custody verification shall apply auditing procedures that fulfil or are compatible with the requirements of ISO 19011.'
14.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification body shall inform the relevant PEFC National Governing Body about all issued forest management and chain of custody certificates and changes concerning the validity and scope of these certificates?	Annex 6, 4	Yes	Scheme, 7.2.13: 'Certification Bodies operating under the Scheme will be required by PEFC Ireland to maintain and update documented records of all forest areas and chain of custody units certified by them under the Scheme, which register would include the following information, as a minimum: ... Certification Bodies are required to provide the above information to PEFC Ireland no later than a calendar month following the award, renewal, suspension or withdrawal of every certificate issued by them.'
15.	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	Yes	Scheme, 7.1.5: 'Certification bodies operating under the Scheme will have the following key roles: ... Monitoring the use of PEFC logo licence use by their clients as set out by PEFC Ireland;'
16.	Does a maximum period for surveillance audits defined by the scheme documentation not exceed more than one year?	Annex 6, 4	Yes	Scheme, 7.2.11: 'Regular monitoring of the certificate holder will be carried out by the Certification Body at regular intervals (at least annually) following the main assessment in order to ensure continued compliance with the requirements of the certification standard(s).'
17	Does a maximum period for assessment audit not exceed five years for both forest management and chain of custody certifications?	Annex 6, 4	Yes	Scheme, 7.2.10: 'Certificates can only remain valid for a maximum period of five years from the date of issue.'
18	Does the scheme documentation include requirements for public availability of certification report summaries?	Annex 6, 4	Yes	Scheme, 7.2.13: 'Accordingly, PEFC Ireland will require those Certification Bodies registered to partake in the Scheme to produce a "Public Summary Report". This will take the form of an executive summary of the Certification Report containing key information and results of the main assessment except for material that is either commercial in confidence or considered of a confidential nature. The Public Summary Report will be made publicly available by both PEFC Ireland and the relevant Certification Body.'

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	YES / NO*	Reference to scheme documentation
19	Does the scheme documentation include requirements for usage of information from external parties as the audit evidence?	Annex 6, 4	Yes	Scheme, 7.2.12: 'As part of the Schemes commitment to accountability to, and participation by, the Irish forestry community and other legitimate stakeholders, an integral component of the Scheme's forest management certification process will be stakeholder consultation. ... The assessment will include verification that the auditee had provided an opportunity for, and where appropriate, taken account of, inputs from stakeholders with regard to the applicant's forest management. The Certification Body might initiate and take account of additional input from stakeholders during the course of the assessment, where it deems such action as being appropriate. ... It shall be the responsibility of certification authorities to assess and verify stakeholder comments as part of the evaluation process using appropriate sampling independent of the applicant's own procedure each time a certificate is issued or renewed. Feedback shall be provided by the certification authority, on request, to respondents on how their comments have been addressed.'
20.	Does the scheme documentation include additional requirements for certification procedures? ^[1]	Annex 6, 4	No	No additional requirements have been found. Since it is no obligatory requirement it does not affect the conformance of the scheme.
Accreditation procedures				
21.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification bodies carrying out forest management and/or chain of custody certification shall be accredited by a national accreditation body?	Annex 6, 5	Yes	Scheme, 6.11: 'Certification bodies conducting audits against the standard must be accredited to undertake woodland management certification by a national or international accreditation body. Accreditation bodies must be members of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) or a member of IAF's special recognition regional groups and implement procedures described in ISO/IEC 17011:2004 and other documents recognised by the above organisations.'

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	YES / NO*	Reference to scheme documentation
22.	Does the scheme documentation require that an accredited certificate shall bear an accreditation symbol of the relevant accreditation body?	Annex 6, 5	Yes	Scheme, 7.1.5: 'Certification bodies operating under the Scheme will have the following key roles: ... To issue accredited Certificates which shall bear an accreditation symbol of the relevant Accreditation Body.'
23.	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	Yes	Scheme, 6.11: 'Certification bodies conducting audits against the standard must be accredited to undertake woodland management certification by a national or international accreditation body. Accreditation bodies must be members of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) or a member of IAF's special recognition regional groups and implement procedures described in ISO/IEC 17011:2004 and other documents recognised by the above organisations.'
24.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification body undertake forest management or/and chain of custody certification against a scheme specific chain of custody standard as "accredited certification" based on ISO 17021 or ISO Guide 65 and the relevant forest management or chain of custody standard(s) shall be covered by the accreditation scope?	Annex 6, 5	Yes	Scheme, 7.1.3: 'Under the Scheme, it is an implicit requirement that all external forest management and chain of custody certification audits will be carried out by third party, independent certification bodies. These bodies will in turn be required to have been accredited by accreditation bodies operating to internationally accepted standards (ISO Guides 61, 62 & 65)' Scheme, 7.1.4: 'The scope of accreditation of Certification bodies will be required to explicitly include: Certification of forests and woodland to the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard and / or Chain of custody certification to the PEFC Council requirements: Annex 4: Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products / PEFC ST 2002:2010, as applicable;'
25.	Does the scheme documentation require that certification body undertake chain of custody certification against Annex 4 as "accredited certification" based on ISO Guide 65?	Annex 6, 5	Yes	Scheme, 7.1.3: 'Under the Scheme, it is an implicit requirement that all external forest management and chain of custody certification audits will be carried out by third party, independent certification bodies. These bodies will in turn be required to have been accredited by accreditation bodies operating to internationally accepted standards (ISO Guides 61, 62 & 65)' Scheme, 7.1.4: 'The scope of

No.	Question	Reference to PEFC Council doc.	YES / NO*	Reference to scheme documentation
				accreditation of Certification bodies will be required to explicitly include: Certification of forests and woodland to the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard and / or Chain of custody certification to the PEFC Council requirements: Annex 4: Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products / PEFC ST 2002:2010, as applicable;'
26.	Does the scheme documentation include a mechanism for PEFC notification of certification bodies?	Annex 6, 6	Yes	Scheme, 7.1.8: 'PEFC Ireland adopts Section 6 of PEFC Council Annex 6 which states: "Certification bodies operating forest management and / or chain of custody certification against the PEFC endorsed national schemes / standards or the PEFC international chain of custody standard (Annex 4 Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products – Requirements) shall be notified by the PEFC National Governing Body of the relevant country. Certification bodies operating chain of custody certification against the PEFC international chain of custody standard (Annex 4 Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products – Requirements) in countries without a PEFC National Governing Body shall be notified by the PEFC Council.'
27.	Are the procedures for PEFC notification of certification bodies non-discriminatory?	Annex 6, 6	Yes	Scheme, 7.1.8: 'The PEFC notification conditions shall not discriminate against certification bodies or create trade obstacles.'

* If the answer to any question is no, the application documentation shall indicate for each element why and what alternative measures have been taken to address the element in question.

[*1] This is not an obligatory requirement

ANNEX 2: PAN-EUROPEAN OPERATIONAL LEVEL GUIDELINES FOR SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT

PEFC Ireland documents which are referred to in below mentioned checklist.

Nr	Document	Contents
1.	PEFC Ireland Certification Scheme for SFM (IFCS)	
2.	Irish PEFC Standard (IPS)	

QUESTION	Yes/ No	PEFC IFCS documents reference
CRITERION 1. Maintenance and appropriate enhancement of forest resources and their contribution to global carbon cycles		
1.1 Guidelines for Forest Management Planning		
a. Forest management planning should aim to maintain or increase forest and other wooded area, and enhance the quality of the economic, ecological, cultural and social values of forest resources, including soil and water. This should be done by making full use of related services such as land-use planning and nature conservation.	Yes	PEFC Ireland Certification Scheme for SFM, section 4.4: <i>'it [the Irish National Forest Standard] is not a stand-alone document, but together with the Code of Best Forest Practice and the environmental guidelines, it forms the centrepiece of a system to guide and monitor forestry. The Standard is linked to the developing international protocols for sustainable forestry. It is used in Ireland as the basis for the development of forest monitoring and is also the basis from which the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard was developed.'</i> The INFS and Codes of best practise give ample guidance on maintenance and enhancement of economic, ecological, cultural and social values of forests and include the objective to expand national forest cover from 9% to 17% of the Irish land surface. Against this backdrop the IPS gives further requirements on how to deal with forest management planning, maintenance and enhancement of forest values in (amongst other) requirements: 1.1.2 (compliance with relevant codes, guidelines and agreements), 1.1.4 (maintain longterm ecological integrity), 3.2.1 (new woodlands shall be located and designed in ways that will maintain or enhance the visual, cultural and ecological value and character of the wider landscape), 4.1.1 (planning of woodland operations shall involve social, economic and ecological values, consider soils and watercourses), 6.3.1 (follow prescriptions of National Parks and Wildlife Service for semi-natural woodlands).
b. Inventory and mapping of forest resources should be established and maintained, adequate to the local and national conditions, and in correspondence with the topics described in these Guidelines.	Yes	IPS Req 2.1.1: <i>'Identification, inventory and mapping of the forest resources shall be established and maintained. These shall include: An inventory of the timber and non-timber resources Identification and mapping of designated areas (see also 3.1.1) special areas, features, characteristics and sensitivities of the forest management units'</i> .

<p>c. Management plans or their equivalents, appropriate to the size and use of the forest area, should be elaborated and periodically updated. They should be based on legislation as well as existing land use plans, and adequately cover the forest resources.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 2.1.2: <i>'The forest management plan shall incorporate a long term policy for the woodland in which forest management objectives are set and prioritised.'</i></p> <p>Req 2.1.3: <i>'There shall be an operational plan listing all the planned forest operations for a five year period. This shall include specific measures based on the appropriate assessment for any designated areas. It shall also include specific measures relating to any special areas, features, characteristics and sensitivities of the woodland as identified in the inventory. A rationale for prescribed management and operational techniques shall be provided. An outline felling and regeneration plan for a 20 year period shall also be provided. The five year operational plan shall be reviewed and updated every 5 years.'</i></p> <p>Guidance: <i>"The documentation and level of detail associated with the management plan should be appropriate to: The size of the woodland The intensity of management planned The ecological and social sensitivity of the woodland The context of the woodland in the landscape The likely impact of planned operations The management planning documentation should cover all elements of the requirement but may also refer to other documents as appropriate, including surveys or permissions from statutory or regulatory bodies.'</i></p>
<p>d. Monitoring of the forest resources and evaluation of their management should be periodically performed, and their results should be fed back into the planning process.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 2.3.2: <i>'The forest owner / manager shall implement a monitoring programme designed to measure progress in the achievement of the forest management objectives (2.1.2) and compliance with this certification standard.'</i></p> <p>Req 2.3.3: <i>'The implications of the results of monitoring (2.3.2) shall be taken into account by the forest owner / manager, particularly during revision of the management planning documentation.'</i></p>

1.2 Guidelines for Forest Management Practices		
<p>a. Forest management practices should safeguard the quantity and quality of the forest resources in the medium and long term by balancing harvesting and growth rates, and by preferring techniques that minimise direct or indirect damage to forest, soil or water resources.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 2.2.1: <i>‘Forest management systems and operations shall be planned and carried out in a way that maintains or enhances the health, vitality and productive capacity of the site.’</i></p> <p>Req 2.2.2: <i>‘Harvesting and regeneration plans shall not jeopardise the long-term productive potential of the woodland and are consistent with management objectives.’</i></p> <p>Req 4.1.1: <i>‘The planning of woodland operations shall involve: a) An assessment of the potential impacts of that operation on the woodland’s social, economic and ecological value. b) Identifying suitable equipment and systems to avoid negative impacts and enhance positive impacts. c) Giving special consideration and care to operations on soils which are particularly prone to erosion and compaction and where operations might lead to excessive erosion of soil into watercourses.’</i></p> <p>Req. 4.2.1: <i>‘Harvesting operations shall conform to best practice as detailed in the relevant sections of the Forest Service “Forest Harvesting and the Environment Guidelines” and “Forestry and Water Quality Guidelines”.’</i></p> <p>The best practise guidelines also refer to minimising damage to forest, soil and water.</p>
<p>b. Appropriate silvicultural measures should be taken to maintain the growing stock of resources at - or bring to - a level that is economically, ecologically and socially desirable.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 2.2.1: <i>‘Forest management systems and operations shall be planned and carried out in a way that maintains or enhances the health, vitality and productive capacity of the site. Where the inventory (2.1.1) has identified degraded forest ecosystems there shall be a plan to rehabilitate these, where possible and appropriate, by silvicultural means. Guidance: The productive capacity of the site refers to the ecological, social and economic functions of the woodland. This means that forest operations should adopt techniques that avoid direct or indirect damage to forest, soil or water resources.’</i></p>
<p>c. Conversion of abandoned agricultural and treeless land into forest land should be taken into consideration, whenever it can add economic, ecological, social and/or cultural value.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>In the INFS the national government objective is stated to expand national forest cover from 9% to 17% of the Irish land surface, which shows that there is a strong promotion of expansion of forests on treeless land. IPS is in line with this national standard and policy (PEFC Ireland Certification Scheme for SFM, section 4.4).</p> <p>In this context IPS, Req 3.2.1 also contributes to compliance with this PEOLG: <i>‘New woodlands shall be located and designed in ways that will maintain or enhance the visual, cultural and ecological value and character of the wider landscape.’</i></p>
CRITERION 2. Maintenance of forest ecosystem health and vitality		
2.1 Guidelines for Forest Management Planning		

<p>a. Forest management planning should aim to maintain and increase the health and vitality of forest ecosystems and to rehabilitate degraded forest ecosystems, whenever this is possible by silvicultural means.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 2.2.1: <i>'Forest management systems and operations shall be planned and carried out in a way that maintains or enhances the health, vitality and productive capacity of the site. Where the inventory (2.1.1) has identified degraded forest ecosystems there shall be a plan to rehabilitate these, where possible and appropriate, by silvicultural means.'</i></p>
<p>b. Health and vitality of forests should 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.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 2.3.2: <i>'The forest owner / manager shall implement a monitoring programme designed to measure progress in the achievement of the forest management objectives (2.1.2) and compliance with this certification standard.'</i></p> <p>Req 2.3.3: <i>'The implications of the results of monitoring (2.3.2) shall be taken into account by the forest owner / manager, particularly during revision of the management planning documentation. The monitoring results, similar to the multi-resource inventory, are important in informing management decisions. The management plan will be reviewed every 5 years and at this stage monitoring results should be formally incorporated into the revised plan.'</i></p> <p>Req 5.1.1: <i>'Risks to the forest from wind, fire, pests and diseases shall be assessed and measures to minimize these risks shall be incorporated in planting, design and management plans.'</i></p> <p>Req 5.1.2: <i>'Tree health and grazing impacts shall be monitored and results shall be incorporated into management planning together with guidance arising from national monitoring on plant health.'</i></p>
<p>c. Forest management plans or their equivalents should specify ways and means to minimise the risk of degradation of and damages to forest ecosystems. Forest management planning should make use of those policy instruments set up to support these activities.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 5.1.1: <i>'Risks to the forest from wind, fire, pests and diseases shall be assessed and measures to minimize these risks shall be incorporated in planting, design and management plans.'</i></p> <p>Req 5.1.2: <i>'Tree health and grazing impacts shall be monitored and results shall be incorporated into management planning together with guidance arising from national monitoring on plant health.'</i></p>

2.2 Guidelines for Forest Management Practices

<p>a. Forest management practices should make best use of natural structures and processes and use preventive biological measures wherever and as far as economically feasible to maintain and enhance the health and vitality of forests. Adequate genetic, species and structural diversity should be encouraged and/or maintained to enhance stability, vitality and resistance capacity of the forests to adverse environmental factors and strengthen natural regulation mechanisms.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 2.2.1: <i>'Forest management systems and operations shall be planned and carried out in a way that maintains or enhances the health, vitality and productive capacity of the site. Where the inventory (2.1.1) has identified degraded forest ecosystems there shall be a plan to rehabilitate these, where possible and appropriate, by silvicultural means.'</i></p> <p>Req 3.1.1: <i>'The potential environmental impact of new planting and other woodland plans shall be assessed before operations are implemented and shall be in full compliance with current Forest Service guidelines and regulations.'</i></p> <p>Req 3.2.2: <i>'New planting shall be designed in such a way as to ensure the creation over time of a diverse woodland.'</i></p> <p>Req 3.2.3: <i>'Even aged woodlands shall be gradually restructured to diversify ages and habitats using a design plan (See Requirement 3.2.4) which is reflected in the management plan.'</i></p> <p>Req 3.3.1: <i>'Species selected for new woodlands, natural regeneration and restocking shall be suited to the site and matched to the objectives b) Where broadleaves are being planted, native and naturalised species shall be preferred to non-native. If non-native species are used it shall be shown that they will clearly outperform native or naturalised species in meeting the objectives.'</i></p>
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<p>b. 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 should be applied. The spillage of oil through forest management operations or the indiscriminate disposal of waste on forest land should be strictly avoided.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 3.3.1: <i>'Species selected for new woodlands, natural regeneration and restocking shall be suited to the site and matched to the objectives b) Where broadleaves are being planted, native and naturalised species shall be preferred to non-native. If non-native species are used it shall be shown that they will clearly outperform native or naturalised species in meeting the objectives.'</i></p> <p>Req 4.1.1: <i>'The planning of woodland operations shall involve: a) An assessment of the potential impacts of that operation on the woodland's social, economic and ecological value. b) Identifying suitable equipment and systems to avoid negative impacts and enhance positive impacts. c) Giving special consideration and care to operations on soils which are particularly prone to erosion and compaction and where operations might lead to excessive erosion of soil into watercourses. ... e) A full briefing with staff / contractors with regard to the proposed operations and where heavy machinery is to be used, a written operational plan and map shall be provided to staff / contractors.'</i></p> <p>Req 5.4.1: <i>'Waste disposal shall be in accordance with current waste management legislation and regulations.'</i></p> <p>Req 5.4.2: <i>'Plans and equipment shall be in place to deal with accidental spillages.'</i></p>
<p>c. The use of pesticides and herbicides should be minimised, taking into account appropriate silvicultural alternatives and other biological measures.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 5.2.1: <i>'Where an assessment (see 5.1.1) identifies a significant risk from pests or diseases, an integrated pest management strategy shall be prepared and implemented. An integrated pest management strategy seeks to address the problem using a strategic approach based on the site conditions, the ecology of the pest and the status of the outbreak. It will use an appropriate combination of statutory, chemical, physical and biological measures.'</i></p> <p>Req 5.2.2: <i>'It shall be a forest management objective to minimise the use of chemical pesticides in the forest.'</i></p>
<p>d. In case fertilisers are used they should be applied in a controlled manner and with due consideration to the environment.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 5.2.5: <i>'Fertilisers (inorganic and organic): a) Fertilisers shall only be used where they are necessary to secure establishment or to correct subsequent nutrient deficiencies based on foliar analysis b) Where fertilisers are to be used the forest owner / manager, staff and contractors shall be aware of and shall be implementing legal requirements and best practice guidelines for their use in forestry. c) As detailed in Section 3.1, the potential environmental impact of fertiliser use shall be assessed prior to use. This assessment shall determine whether or not the use is appropriate and if it is appropriate, how it should be carried out in order to minimise adverse impacts and to secure or enhance environmental gains.'</i></p>

CRITERION 3. Maintenance and encouragement of productive functions of forests (wood and non-wood)		
3.1 Guidelines for Forest Management Planning		
a. Forest management planning should aim to maintain the capability of forests to produce a range of wood and non-wood forest products and services on a sustainable basis.	Yes	<p>IPS, Req 2.2.2: <i>'Harvesting and regeneration plans shall not jeopardise the long-term productive potential of the woodland and are consistent with management objectives.'</i></p> <p>Req 2.2.3: <i>'Authorised harvesting of non-timber woodland products shall not permanently exceed, or diminish, the long term productive potential of the woodland.'</i></p> <p>Req 3.3.2: <i>'The proportions of different species in new planting, or planned for the next rotation of an existing plantation, shall be as follows: <65% primary species >20% secondary species >10% open space >5% native or naturalised broadleaf The requirement in relation to open space does not apply to woodlands less than 10 hectares in size.'</i></p>
b. Forest management planning should aim to achieve sound economic performance taking into account possibilities for new markets and economic activities in connection with all relevant goods and services of forests.	Yes	<p>IPS, Req 2.2.2: <i>'Harvesting and regeneration plans shall not jeopardise the long-term productive potential of the woodland and are consistent with management objectives.'</i></p> <p>Req 7.4.1: <i>'The forest owner / manager shall promote the integration of woodlands into the local economy and respond positively to local requests for forest products and services subject to compliance with the management plan, the principle of sustained yield and an economic return for these products and services.'</i></p>
c. Forest management plans or their equivalents should take into account the different uses or functions of the managed forest area. Forest management planning should make use of those policy instruments set up to support the production of merchantable and non-merchantable forest goods and services.	Yes	<p>IPS, Req 2.2.1: <i>'Forest management systems and operations shall be planned and carried out in a way that maintains or enhances the health, vitality and productive capacity of the site.'</i></p> <p>Req 5.1.7: <i>'Areas that fulfill specific and recognized protective functions, either ecologically or for society, shall be mapped and forest management plans shall take full account of these.'</i></p> <p>In IPS various references are made to policy instruments such as codes of best practise, Forest Service guidelines and requirements and incentives dealing with the (good conditions of) production of merchantable and non-merchantable forest goods and services (e.g. req 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.2.1 and 3.2.2: <i>'The Forest Service Afforestation Grant Scheme, Forestry & Environment Protection Scheme (FEPS) and Native Woodland Scheme all require and provide incentives for the creation of diverse woodland through both the rules of each scheme and the requirement for compliance with the various Forest Service Guidelines and Code of Best Practice'</i>)</p>
3.2 Guidelines for Forest Management Practices		

<p>a. Forest management practices should be ensured in quality with a view to maintain and improve the forest resources and to encourage a diversified output of goods and services over the long term.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 2.2.2: <i>'Harvesting and regeneration plans shall not jeopardise the long-term productive potential of the woodland and are consistent with management objectives.'</i></p> <p>Req 3.3.2: <i>'The proportions of different species in new planting, or planned for the next rotation of an existing plantation, shall be as follows: <65% primary species >20% secondary species >10% open space >5% native or naturalised broadleaf The requirement in relation to open space does not apply to woodlands less than 10 hectares in size.'</i></p> <p>Req 4.1.1: <i>'The planning of woodland operations shall involve: a) An assessment of the potential impacts of that operation on the woodland's social, economic and ecological value. b) Identifying suitable equipment and systems to avoid negative impacts and enhance positive impacts.'</i></p>
<p>b. Regeneration, tending and harvesting operations should be carried out in time, and in a way that do not reduce the productive capacity of the site, for example by avoiding damage to retained stands and trees as well as to the forest soil, and by using appropriate systems.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 2.3.1: <i>'The implementation of operations shall be in close agreement with the details included in the management planning documentation.'</i></p> <p>Req 4.1.1: <i>'The planning of woodland operations shall involve: a) An assessment of the potential impacts of that operation on the woodland's social, economic and ecological value. b) Identifying suitable equipment and systems to avoid negative impacts and enhance positive impacts. c) Giving special consideration and care to operations on soils which are particularly prone to erosion and compaction and where operations might lead to excessive erosion of soil into watercourses. ... e) A full briefing with staff / contractors with regard to the proposed operations and where heavy machinery is to be used, a written operational plan and map shall be provided to staff / contractors. Guidance: Good forest management operations take into account all of the functions of the forest (social, ecological and economic) and ensure that these functions are positively served. For example, this means that forest operations should have low or positive impacts on: Soil structure Water quality Biodiversity Recreational values Timber quality Internal views Landscape Rate of water run-off Growth rates People.'</i></p> <p>Req 4.2.4: <i>'Timber shall be harvested efficiently and with minimum loss or damage. Harvesting should particularly seek to avoid: Damage to soil and water courses during felling and extraction Damage to standing trees during felling and extraction Timber degrade The breakage or loss of merchantable timber Damage to habitats / features identified in the inventory of resources.'</i></p>

<p>c. Harvesting levels of both wood and non-wood forest products should not exceed a rate that can be sustained in the long term, and optimum use should be made of the harvested forest products, with due regard to nutrient offtake.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 2.2.2: <i>'Harvesting and regeneration plans shall not jeopardise the long-term productive potential of the woodland and are consistent with management objectives.'</i></p> <p>Req 2.2.3: <i>'Authorised harvesting of non-timber woodland products shall not permanently exceed, or diminish, the long term productive potential of the woodland.'</i></p> <p>Req 4.2.2: <i>'Where harvesting operations which involve the removal of more than just the timber stem are planned and where there is a risk of significant negative effects on soil structure or productivity, an environmental appraisal shall be undertaken.'</i></p>
<p>d. Adequate infrastructure, such as roads, skid tracks or bridges should be planned, established and maintained to ensure efficient delivery of goods and services while at the same time minimising negative impacts on the environment.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 4.3.2: <i>'Roading operations shall conform to best practice as detailed in the COFORD Forest Road Manual and the relevant sections of the Forest Service "Forest Harvesting and the Environment Guidelines" and the "Forestry and Water Quality Guidelines".'</i></p>

CRITERION 4. Maintenance, conservation and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity in forest ecosystems

4.1 Guidelines for Forest Management Planning

<p>a. Forest management planning should aim to maintain, conserve and enhance biodiversity on ecosystem, species and genetic level and, where appropriate, diversity at landscape level.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 6.1.2: <i>'Features and small areas of high biodiversity value shall be identified, mapped and managed to maintain or enhance biodiversity as the primary management objective.'</i></p> <p>Req 6.1.3: <i>'Where a rare or endangered species is known to be present in the woodland, the relevant statutory authority shall be notified and appropriate management shall be agreed with them.'</i></p> <p>Req 6.2.1: <i>'A minimum of 15% of the WMU area shall be managed with conservation and biodiversity as the primary objective. This shall include a minimum of 10% retained woodland and/or scrub habitat.'</i></p>
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<p>b. Forest management planning and terrestrial inventory and mapping of forest resources should include ecologically important forest biotopes, taking into account protected, rare, sensitive or representative forest ecosystems such as riparian areas and wetland biotopes, areas containing endemic species and habitats of threatened species, as defined in recognised reference lists, as well as endangered or protected genetic <i>in situ</i> resources.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS Req 2.1.1: <i>'Identification, inventory and mapping of the forest resources shall be established and maintained. These shall include: An inventory of the timber and non-timber resources Identification and mapping of designated areas (see also 3.1.1) special areas, features, characteristics and sensitivities of the forest management units'</i></p> <p>Req 6.1.2: <i>'Features and small areas of high biodiversity value shall be identified, mapped and managed to maintain or enhance biodiversity as the primary management objective. Guidance: Examples of such features and areas include veteran trees, hollow trees, ponds, old hedgerows, rocky outcrops etc. More comprehensive lists are provided in the Forest Service "Forest Biodiversity Guidelines" and in the Forest Service "Forestry Schemes Manual". These features and areas may include other non woodland semi-natural habitats e.g. moorland, heathland, wood pasture or grassland that is adjacent to or influenced by the woodland. Management of these features and areas should be in accordance with the Forest Service "Forest Biodiversity Guidelines", and with Local Biodiversity Plans prepared by the Local Authority. Identification and mapping of these features may be carried out on an ongoing basis, provided that it has been completed prior to significant woodland management operations taking place.'</i></p> <p>Req 5.1.7: <i>'Areas that fulfill specific and recognized protective functions, either ecologically or for society, shall be mapped and forest management plans shall take full account of these Such areas may include: Riparian and buffer areas Sensitive catchments Steep forested slopes above roads, houses or built up areas Areas vulnerable to soil erosion Other designated areas.'</i></p> <p>Req 6.1.3: <i>'Where a rare or endangered species is known to be present in the woodland, the relevant statutory authority shall be notified and appropriate management shall be agreed with them. Rare and endangered species in Ireland are listed in Irish Red Data Books and Lists which are fully referenced in Appendix D.'</i></p>
<p>4.2 Guidelines for Forest Management Practices</p>		
<p>a. Natural regeneration should be preferred, provided that the conditions are adequate to ensure the quantity and quality of the forests resources and that the existing provenance is of sufficient quality for the site.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 6.3.3: <i>'Where appropriate and possible, forest owners / managers shall use natural regeneration or, in the case of native species, planting stock of native provenance.'</i></p>

<p>b. For reforestation and afforestation, origins of native species and local provenances that are well adapted to site conditions should be preferred, where appropriate. Only those introduced species, provenances or varieties should be used whose impacts on the ecosystem and on the genetic integrity of native species and local provenances have been evaluated, and if negative impacts can be avoided or minimised.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 3.3.1: '<i>a) Species selected for new woodlands, natural regeneration and restocking shall be suited to the site and matched to the objectives b) Where broadleaves are being planted, native and naturalised species shall be preferred to non-native. If non-native species are used it shall be shown that they will clearly outperform native or naturalised species in meeting the objectives.</i>'</p> <p>Req 3.3.3: '<i>a) Non native plant (non-tree) and animal species shall only be introduced if they are non-invasive and bring environmental benefits. b) All introductions shall be carefully monitored by owner / manager.</i>'</p> <p>Req 6.3.3: '<i>Where appropriate and possible, forest owners / managers shall use natural regeneration or, in the case of native species, planting stock of native provenance.</i>'</p>
<p>c. Forest management practices should, where appropriate, promote a diversity of both horizontal and vertical structures such as uneven-aged stands and the diversity of species such as mixed stands. Where appropriate, the practices should also aim to maintain and restore landscape diversity.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 3.2.1: '<i>New woodlands shall be located and designed in ways that will maintain or enhance the visual, cultural and ecological value and character of the wider landscape. Particular attention shall be paid to using naturally occurring and locally appropriate species to create a diverse woodland edge.</i>'</p> <p>Req 3.2.2: '<i>New planting shall be designed in such a way as to ensure the creation over time of a diverse woodland.</i>'</p> <p>Req 3.2.3: '<i>Even aged woodlands shall be gradually restructured to diversify ages and habitats using a design plan (See Requirement 3.2.4) which is reflected in the management plan.</i>'</p> <p>Req 3.3.2: '<i>The proportions of different species in new planting, or planned for the next rotation of an existing plantation, shall be as follows: <65% primary species >20% secondary species >10% open space >5% native or naturalised broadleaf.</i>'</p>
<p>d. Traditional management systems that have created valuable ecosystems, such as coppice, on appropriate sites should be supported, when economically feasible.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 3.4.2: '<i>Traditional management systems that have created valuable ecosystems, such as coppice, shall be maintained and where appropriate, developed.</i>'</p>
<p>e. Tending and harvesting operations should be conducted in a way that does not cause lasting damage to ecosystems. Wherever possible, practical measures should be taken to improve or maintain biological diversity.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 2.2.1: '<i>Forest management systems and operations shall be planned and carried out in a way that maintains or enhances the health, vitality and productive capacity of the site.</i>'</p> <p>Req 4.2.4: '<i>Timber shall be harvested efficiently and with minimum loss or damage. Guidance: Harvesting should particularly seek to avoid: Damage to soil and water courses during felling and extraction Damage to standing trees during felling and extraction Timber degrade The breakage or loss of merchantable timber Damage to habitats / features identified in the inventory of resources.</i>'</p>

<p>f. Infrastructure should be planned and constructed in a way that minimises 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.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 4.3.2: <i>'Roading operations shall conform to best practice as detailed in the COFORD Forest Road Manual and the relevant sections of the Forest Service "Forest Harvesting and the Environment Guidelines" and the "Forestry and Water Quality Guidelines".'</i> These guidelines include minimisation of damage to ecosystems, flora and fauna</p> <p>IPS, Req 6.1.3: <i>'Where a rare or endangered species is known to be present in the woodland, the relevant statutory authority shall be notified and appropriate management shall be agreed with them.'</i></p>
<p>g. With due regard to management objectives, measures should be taken to balance the pressure of animal populations and grazing on forest regeneration and growth as well as on biodiversity.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 5.1.1: <i>'Risks to the forest from wind, fire, pests and diseases shall be assessed and measures to minimize these risks shall be incorporated in planting, design and management plans.'</i></p> <p>Req 5.1.2: <i>'Tree health and grazing impacts shall be monitored and results shall be incorporated into management planning together with guidance arising from national monitoring on plant health.'</i></p>
<p>h. Standing and fallen dead wood, hollow trees, old groves and special rare tree species should be left in quantities and distribution necessary to safeguard biological diversity, taking into account the potential effect on health and stability of forests and on surrounding ecosystems.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 6.1.2: <i>'Features and small areas of high biodiversity value shall be identified, mapped and managed to maintain or enhance biodiversity as the primary management objective. Guidance: Examples of such features and areas include veteran trees, hollow trees, ponds, old hedgerows, rocky outcrops etc. More comprehensive lists are provided in the Forest Service "Forest Biodiversity Guidelines" and in the Forest Service "Forestry Schemes Manual".'</i></p> <p>Req 6.2.2: <i>'Standing and fallen deadwood habitats and some over-mature trees shall be retained throughout the woodland where this does not compromise the safety of the public or forestry workers or the health of the woodland.'</i></p>
<p>i. Special key biotopes in the forest such as water sources, wetlands, rocky outcrops and ravines should be protected or, where appropriate, restored when damaged by forest practices.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 6.1.1: <i>'National Parks and statutorily designated areas shall be identified and mapped. Management in the form of notifiable actions shall be agreed in consultation with the relevant statutory agency.'</i></p> <p>Req 6.1.2: <i>'Features and small areas of high biodiversity value shall be identified, mapped and managed to maintain or enhance biodiversity as the primary management objective. Guidance: Examples of such features and areas include veteran trees, hollow trees, ponds, old hedgerows, rocky outcrops etc. More comprehensive lists are provided in the Forest Service "Forest Biodiversity Guidelines" and in the Forest Service "Forestry Schemes Manual". These features and areas may include other non woodland semi-natural habitats e.g. moorland, heathland, wood pasture or grassland that is adjacent to or influenced by the woodland. Management of these features and areas should be in accordance with the Forest Service "Forest Biodiversity Guidelines", and with Local Biodiversity Plans prepared by the Local Authority.'</i></p>

CRITERION 5. Maintenance and appropriate enhancement of protective functions in forest management (notably soil and water)		
5.1 Guidelines for Forest Management Planning		
a. Forest management planning should aim to maintain and enhance protective functions of forests for society, such as protection of infrastructure, protection from soil erosion, protection of water resources and from adverse impacts of water such as floods or avalanches.	Yes	IPS, Req 5.1.7: ' <i>Areas that fulfill specific and recognized protective functions, either ecologically or for society, shall be mapped and forest management plans shall take full account of these. Guidance: Such areas may include: Riparian and buffer areas Sensitive catchments Steep forested slopes above roads, houses or built up areas Areas vulnerable to soil erosion Other designated areas Guidance on the management of riparian areas and sensitive catchments is given in the Forest Service "Forestry and Water Quality Guidelines", "Forestry and Otter Guidelines" .</i>
b. Areas that fulfil specific and recognised protective functions for society should be registered and mapped, and forest management plans or their equivalents should take full account of these areas.	Yes	IPS, Req 5.1.7: ' <i>Areas that fulfill specific and recognized protective functions, either ecologically or for society, shall be mapped and forest management plans shall take full account of these.</i>
5.2 Guidelines for Forest Management Practices		
a. Special care should be given to silvicultural operations on sensitive soils and erosion prone areas as well as on areas where operations might lead to excessive erosion of soil into watercourses. Inappropriate techniques such as deep soil tillage and use of unsuitable machinery should be avoided on such areas. Special measures to minimise the pressure of animal population on forests should be taken.	Yes	<p>IPS, Req 4.1.1: '<i>The planning of woodland operations shall involve: a) An assessment of the potential impacts of that operation on the woodland's social, economic and ecological value. b) Identifying suitable equipment and systems to avoid negative impacts and enhance positive impacts. c) Giving special consideration and care to operations on soils which are particularly prone to erosion and compaction and where operations might lead to excessive erosion of soil into watercourses.'... e) A full briefing with staff / contractors with regard to the proposed operations and where heavy machinery is to be used, a written operational plan and map shall be provided to staff / contractors.</i></p> <p>Req 5.1.1: '<i>Risks to the forest from wind, fire, pests and diseases shall be assessed and measures to minimize these risks shall be incorporated in planting, design and management plans.</i></p> <p>Req 5.1.2: '<i>Tree health and grazing impacts shall be monitored and results shall be incorporated into management planning together with guidance arising from national monitoring on plant health.</i></p> <p>Req 5.1.3: '<i>Management of wild deer shall be based on a written Deer Management Plan which includes the management objectives. Where there is evidence of significant damage to trees or ground flora, action to control the population shall be taken to protect the forest.</i></p>

<p>b. Special care should be given to forest management practices on forest areas with water protection function to avoid adverse effects on the quality and quantity of water resources.</p> <p>Inappropriate use of chemicals or other harmful substances or inappropriate silvicultural practices influencing water quality in a harmful way should be avoided.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 4.1.1: <i>'The planning of woodland operations shall involve: a) An assessment of the potential impacts of that operation on the woodland's social, economic and ecological value. b) Identifying suitable equipment and systems to avoid negative impacts and enhance positive impacts. c) Giving special consideration and care to operations on soils which are particularly prone to erosion and compaction and where operations might lead to excessive erosion of soil into watercourses.'... e) A full briefing with staff / contractors with regard to the proposed operations and where heavy machinery is to be used, a written operational plan and map shall be provided to staff / contractors.</i></p> <p>Req. 4.2.1: <i>'Harvesting operations shall conform to best practice as detailed in the relevant sections of the Forest Service "Forest Harvesting and the Environment Guidelines" and "Forestry and Water Quality Guidelines".'</i></p> <p>Req 5.1.7: <i>'Areas that fulfill specific and recognized protective functions, either ecologically or for society, shall be mapped and forest management plans shall take full account of these.'</i></p> <p>Req 5.2.4: <i>'Storage, handling, use and disposal of chemicals shall be in compliance with the Forest Service "Forest Protection Guidelines" and any other up to date published advice.'</i></p>
<p>c. Construction of roads, bridges and other infrastructure should be carried out in a manner that minimises bare soil exposure, avoids the introduction of soil into watercourses and that preserve the natural level and function of water courses and river beds. Proper road drainage facilities should be installed and maintained.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 4.3.2: <i>'Roading operations shall conform to best practice as detailed in the COFORD Forest Road Manual and the relevant sections of the Forest Service "Forest Harvesting and the Environment Guidelines" and the "Forestry and Water Quality Guidelines".'</i></p> <p>These guidelines cover the issues mentioned in this PEOLG.</p>
<p>CRITERION 6. Maintenance of other socio-economic functions and conditions 6.1 Guidelines for Forest Management Planning</p>		
<p>a. Forest management planning should aim to respect the multiple functions of forests to society, have due regard to the role of forestry in rural development, and especially consider new opportunities for employment in connection with the socio-economic functions of forests.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 7.3.1: <i>'Sites with recognised specific historical, cultural or spiritual significance shall be mapped and protected or managed in a way that takes due regard of the significance of the site.'</i></p> <p>Req 7.4.1: <i>'The forest owner / manager shall promote the integration of woodlands into the local economy and respond positively to local requests for forest products and services subject to compliance with the management plan, the principle of sustained yield and an economic return for these products and services. Means of verification: Evidence of reasonable provision for local employment and suppliers Evidence of action taken on local or specialist market opportunities Evidence of promoting or encouraging enterprises to strengthen and diversify the local economy.'</i></p>

<p>b. Property rights and land tenure arrangements should be clearly defined, documented and established for the relevant forest area. Likewise, legal, customary and traditional rights related to the forest land should be clarified, recognised and respected.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 1.1.3: <i>'Property rights and land tenure arrangements shall be clearly defined, documented and established for the relevant forest area.'</i></p> <p>Req 7.2.1: <i>'Legal, customary and traditional use rights relating to forest access shall be clarified, recognized and respected.'</i></p>
<p>c. Adequate public access to forests for the purpose of recreation should be provided taking into account the respect for ownership rights and the rights of others, the effects on forest resources and ecosystems, as well as the compatibility with other functions of the forest.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 7.2.2: <i>'The forest owner / manager will positively consider any reasonable and formal request for access to the forest for recreational or educational purposes. The forest owner / manager may refuse such a request in certain circumstances. Guidance: Examples of circumstances where access may be denied are: Small woodlands that are a private amenity Areas adjoining dwellings or private gardens Woodlands where there is evidence of serious and sustained abuse or damage Woodlands with features or areas that may be particularly vulnerable to disturbance Where there may be public safety concerns When access will jeopardise other enterprises or recreational activities on the land Where there is a cost to the forest owner.'</i></p>
<p>d. Sites with recognised specific historical, cultural or spiritual significance should be protected or managed in a way that takes due regard of the significance of the site.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 7.3.1: <i>'Sites with recognised specific historical, cultural or spiritual significance shall be mapped and protected or managed in a way that takes due regard of the significance of the site.'</i></p>
<p>e. Forest managers, contractors, employees and forest owners should be provided with sufficient information and encouraged to keep up to date through continuous training in relation to sustainable forest management.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 8.2.1: <i>'Only those with relevant qualifications, training and / or experience shall be engaged to carry out any work unless working under proper supervision if they are currently undergoing training.'</i></p> <p>Req 8.2.2: <i>'a) The forest owner / manager shall actively participate in training or education in order to keep up to date in relation to sustainable forest management. b) The forest owner / manager shall encourage and provide opportunities for employees to further develop their skills and knowledge in relation to sustainable forest management.'</i></p>
<p>6.2 Guidelines for forest management practices</p>		
<p>a. Forest management practices should make the best use of local forest related experience and knowledge, such as of local communities, forest owners, NGOs and local people.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 7.1.1: <i>'Local people and relevant organisations and interest groups shall be made aware that: New or revised management planning documentation, as specified in Section 2.1, is being produced A new or revised Forest Service scheme application and associated documents are available for inspection High impact operations i.e. clearfelling and road construction, are planned New or revised design plans are being produced The woodland is being evaluated for certification The forest owner / manager shall ensure there is full co-operation with the Forest Service and other statutory consultation processes. The owner / manager shall consult adequately with local people and relevant organisations and make a reasonable response to issues raised or requests for ongoing dialogue and engagement.'</i></p>

<p>b. Working conditions should be safe, and guidance and training in safe working practice should be provided.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 8.1.1: <i>'There shall be: a) Compliance with Irish Health and Safety Legislation b) Compliance with HSA approved Codes Of Practices c) Emergency Plans for fire and other plans appropriate to the safe management of forests, employees and contractors d) Health and safety training and information to any forestry employees in the necessary skills for the safe operation of tasks.'</i></p> <p>Req 8.2.1: <i>'Only those with relevant qualifications, training and / or experience shall be engaged to carry out any work unless working under proper supervision if they are currently undergoing training.'</i></p>
<p>c. Forest management operations should take into account all socio-economic functions, especially the recreational function and aesthetic values of forests by maintaining for example varied forest structures, and by encouraging attractive trees, groves and other features such as colours, flowers and fruits. This should be done, however, in a way and to an extent that does not lead to serious negative effects on forest resources, and forest land.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>IPS, Req 3.2.1: <i>'New woodlands shall be located and designed in ways that will maintain or enhance the visual, cultural and ecological value and character of the wider landscape. Particular attention shall be paid to using naturally occurring and locally appropriate species to create a diverse woodland edge.'</i></p> <p>Req 3.2.3: <i>'Even aged woodlands shall be gradually restructured to diversify ages and habitats using a design plan (See Requirement 3.2.4) which is reflected in the management plan.'</i></p> <p>Req 4.1.1: <i>'The planning of woodland operations shall involve: a) An assessment of the potential impacts of that operation on the woodland's social, economic and ecological value. b) Identifying suitable equipment and systems to avoid negative impacts and enhance positive impacts.'</i></p>

ANNEX 3: MINUTES MISSION TO IRELAND

PEFC Ireland

Conformity Assessment Meeting with FORM International 22nd to 25th August 2011

22nd August – PEFC Ireland, Cork

Present: Debora van Boven-Flier (FORM International); William Merivale (PEFC Ireland).

1/ PEFC Council Checklist

- Part 1, Q. 3: "Has the standard setting process been co-ordinated by the PEFC National Governing Body?" **Agreed** insert a new clause 2.4.1 at Appendix 5 (Rules for Standard Setting) stating that this is the case.

- Part 1 Q. 8: "Have the views of all relevant interested parties been documented and considered in an open and transparent way?" **Agreed** insert a sentence in clause 2.7.2 at Appendix 5 stating that this is the case. **Agreed** that this was adequately dealt with in the Process – see report from Wilson Applied and the highlighted changes to the Standard, both available on the PEFC Ireland website.

- Part 1, Q. 12: "Have there been any complaints? There was one complaint and copies of all the related correspondence were given to FORM.

- Part 1 Q. 13: Copies of all press releases were provided.

- Part 1 Q. 17: "Have views of interested parties been discussed?" **Agreed** insert a sentence in clause 2.7.1 to state this.

- Part 1 Q. 18: "Has the Forum given general information on the changes made as a result of a consultation process?" **Yes**, see clause 2.7.2 of Appendix 5.

- Part 2 Q. 13: "Has the ILO Code of Practise on Safety and Health in Forestry Work been considered in development of national and regional certification criteria?" **Agreed** this would be clarified by Frank Barry (ICTU) as soon as he returns from leave.

- Part 2 Q. 16: **Agreed** wording of 6.11 (Area Specificity) to be slightly amended to become clearer.

- Part 2 Q. 17: **Agreed** wording of 7.2.5 (main certification assessment) to be slightly amended to reflect the requirement more completely.

- Part 2 Q. 46: **Addressed** at the meeting with the Forum members on Tuesday 23rd (am).

- Part 7 Q. 8: "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?" **Agreed** insert the appropriate sentence at 7.1.6 (Competence Criteria for Auditors)

Part 7 Q. 13: "Does the scheme documentation require that applied auditing procedures shall fulfil or be compatible with the requirements of ISO 19011?" **Agreed** insert the appropriate sentence at 7.1.5 (Roles of the Certification Body) or 7.1.1

23rd August – Killeshin Hotel, Portlaoise

Morning session – Forum members and observers

Present:

Forum Members: Fiona Kelly (Inland Fisheries Ireland); Joe Barry (Crann); Pat Hennessy (Irish Farmers Association); Pat O'Sullivan (Society of Irish Foresters); Kevin Hutchinson (Coillte); Michael Veale (Irish Timber Growers Association); John Phelan (Forestry Management Companies); Sandy Greig (Chairman); Paddy Purser (Technical Consultant); William Merivale (Secretary).

Observers: Brendan Lacey (Irish Timber Growers Association); Richard Whelan (Coillte)

FORM International: Debora van Boven-Flier

Apologies: Mary Keenan (Tree Council); Frank Barry (Irish Congress of Trades Unions); Alistair Pfeifer (COFORD observer)

All parties introduced themselves.

1/ Start of the Process

DvB-F asked "how was the process started?" Background to Forest Certification in Ireland explained; FSC Ireland's difficult years with unrepresentative individuals succeeding in vetoing developments; ITGA took initiative to start an alternative under the PEFC banner (which resulted in a revitalised and more effective FSC approach as well); process of how organisations were selected and invited – decision taken to ensure genuinely representative organisations were asked to participate; Sandy Greig asked to chair the process, selected on basis of experience (former head of Sustainable Forestry, Forestry Commission, England), experience as a member of UKWAS steering group, and genuine independence from any Irish organisation.

2/ Forum and TWG meetings

Process explained, inaugural meeting in January 2009 – agreed a technical working group would do the bulk of the work, 2 members from within each chamber to be appointed by the chambers themselves; appointment of technical consultant to assist – tenders sought from 3 companies, PTR Ltd successful; Standard Setting Forum's Procedures and Rules explained –

organic process developed over several meetings by agreement following first draft prepared by Chairman, ratified by all members November 2009.

Voting process agreed upon, but never resorted to – all stages ultimately agreed by all parties.

Resignations during the course of the process by Irish Natural Forestry Foundation and Panel Mills (Kevin Hutchinson, Coillte, continued to keep a watching brief on behalf of the panel Mills); no replacement found for INFF; Irish BioEnergy Association joined August 2010.

Results of public consultation and pilot testing gone through line by line by the Forum, changes agreed and redrafted by TWG before final agreement by the Forum at the following meeting; reports prepared by Wilson Applied and Control Union posted on the internet with a copy of the Standard with all changes highlighted.

Afternoon Session – Stakeholders

Present: morning session attendees except Pat O'Sullivan (SIF), and Forest owners: Charles Delaney; Melanie Downes; Valerie Tong; Alec Tong; Stephen Paul; John Brennan; Bridget Horan; John Drummie; James Bennett; Billy Connell; John Kelly;

Others: Marie Doyle (University College Dublin); Tony Mannion (PFCI Ltd); George O'Malley (PFCI Ltd); Richard Gregg (Forest Service); Mick Keane (Coillte); Pat Neville (Coillte); Liam Kelly (Teagasc).

All present asked to introduce themselves. Explanation by WM of the purpose of the meeting, and background to PEFC for the benefit of the timber growers who know little about it. Some discussion relating to the need / perception / fact that it is a voluntary scheme but that the market increasingly demands certification. Costs discussed, but it was observed that these are difficult to estimate as there are so many variables. Question asked by DvB-F of all stakeholders present whether they felt they had been consulted / kept informed.

Overall the meeting proved to be more of an information seminar for the majority of the timber growers present rather than an information gathering exercise from the stakeholders for FORM International.

ANNEX 4: VERSION 2 OF IFCS DOCUMENTATION



Promoting Sustainable Forest Management

PEFC Ireland Certification Scheme for Sustainable Forest Management

December 2010

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Registered in Ireland: Number 461250**

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INTRODUCTION

The PEFC Ireland Certification Scheme for Sustainable Forest Management (December 2010)

The PEFC Ireland Certification Scheme for Sustainable Forest Management (the Scheme) was completed and adopted by PEFC (Ireland) Ltd in December 2010 and is hereby submitted to the PEFC Council for endorsement.

The Scheme has been drafted to meet the PEFC Council's current requirements, as detailed in PEFC International Standard ST 1003:2010, which defines the minimum requirements a scheme shall meet and rules for its implementation. This standard was adopted by the General Assembly of the PEFC Council in November 2010, cancelling and replacing Annex 3 of the PEFC Council Technical Document.

The Scheme is based on two documents – the Irish National Forest Standard, published by the Forest Service of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, which sets out the Government's approach to sustainable forestry; and the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard which is also hereby submitted for endorsement.

The Scheme is based on the subsidiary principle of the PEFC Council regarding the establishment of national certification schemes and will permit forest owners in Ireland to comply with minimum requirements ensuring sustainable forest management.

Its aim is to provide consumers with guarantees that products with PEFC certificates are derived from forests managed consistently in accordance with the principles of sustainability founded on the three basic pillars of social, environmental and economic understanding.

Within this setting, the Scheme has been constructed on the basis of the "Pan-European Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management" and the "Pan-European Operational Level Guidelines for Sustainable Forest Management" adopted as Resolution L2 at the 3rd Ministerial Conference for the Protection of Forests in Europe.

Confirmation of PEFC documentation:

The Board of PEFC Ireland agrees, as part of the PEFC Ireland Certification Scheme, that it will be referenced by and adopt all required implementation dates of PEFC Council documentation including Technical, Annexes and supporting Appendices and Guidelines, as currently approved and including all updates endorsed by the PEFC General Assembly on the 12th November 2010.

In particular the PEFC Ireland Scheme will recognise:

- Appendix 1 to Annex 4 (27 October 2006): PEFC Council specification for the origin for the purposes of PEFC label and declarations
- Appendix 6 to Annex 4 (27 October 2006): Specification of the origin for the purposes of PEFC label and declarations covering recycled raw material and this will be effective from 1st May 2007.
- Appendix 7 to Annex 4 (27 October 2006): Implementation of requirements for the avoidance of the procurement of raw material from controversial sources
- Appendix 8 to Annex 4 (27 October 2006): PEFC Council specification for the origin for the purposes of PEFC label and declarations for non wood forest products.
- PEFC Council International Standard ST 2002:2010 *Chain of Custody of Forest based Products – Requirements*, adopted by the General Assembly of the PEFC Council on 26 November 2010, and which replaces Annex 4 with a one year transition period.

Standard Setting Procedures of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard

The PEFC Irish Standard Setting Forum was formally convened at its inaugural meeting on 14th January 2009. The Forum was established in accordance with the Rules for Standard Setting contained in Annex 2 to the PEFC Council Technical Document (adopted by the General Assembly 22 November 2002, and amended 29 October 2004, 28 October 2005 and 27 October 2006).

[**NB** it is recognised that Annex 2 was replaced by PEFC International Standard ST 1001:2010 *Standard Setting – Requirements* at the General Assembly of the PEFC Council in November 2010, **after** the PEFC Irish Standard Setting Forum finalised and approved the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard. Accordingly the Board of PEFC Ireland asks the Board of the PEFC Council to recognise this and to accept that any corrective measures necessary to comply with the new requirements will be taken.]

The Forum membership was structured on a chamber basis, with one chamber each representing social, environmental and economic interests. The social chamber was made up of representatives of forest user and wider countryside organisations and trade union representatives. The environmental chamber was made up of representatives of environmental non-governmental organisations and other organisations and bodies whose primary interest is environmental. The economic chamber was made up of representatives of Coillte Teoranta, private forest owners, forest management companies and processors and retailers of Irish forest products.

The Forum formally adopted its Written Procedures on 25th November 2009 and a copy (Paper F 3/01) is included at Appendix 6.

A full list of the organisations represented on the Standard Setting Forum is included at Section 6.2.

PEFC (Ireland) Ltd
27 Wellington Road
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December 2010

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THE LAYOUT OF THE SCHEME DOCUMENTATION

The Scheme documentation has been set out the following order:

The SCHEME

Section 1: Key reference documentation

Section 2: The PEFC Ireland Certification Scheme for Sustainable Forest Management (The Scheme)

Section 3: History and Background to Forestry in the Republic of Ireland

Section 4: Forest Policy and Regulation in Ireland

Section 5: The Code of Best Forest Practice and Environmental Guidelines

Section 6: PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard October 2010

Section 7: Scheme Governance

Section 8: Appendices

APPENDIX 1: Pan-European Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management

APPENDIX 2: Forest Service Referral and Notification System

APPENDIX 3: Irish Laws, International Agreements and Protocols

APPENDIX 4: Certification Bodies operating in Ireland

APPENDIX 5: PEFC Irish Standard Setting Process

ANNEX DOCUMENTATION

Annex 1: The Irish National Forest Standard 2000

Annex 2: The Irish Code of Best Forest Practice

Annex 3: Suite of Environmental Guidelines

Annex 4: The PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard

**Annex 5: PEFC Council Annex 4
Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products: Requirements (27 October 2006)**

**Annex 6: PEFC International Standard ST 2002:2010
Chain of Custody of Forest based Products – Requirements (26 November 2010)**

Annex 7: PEFC Council Annex 6: Certification and Accreditation Procedures

Annex 8: PEFC Guidelines

SECTION 1: KEY REFERENCE DOCUMENTATION

Supporting Annex Documentation, included as part of the Scheme Submission

1.1 Annex 1: The Irish National Forest Standard

The Irish National Forest Standard, published by the Forest Service, sets out the Irish Government's approach to Sustainable Forest Management. It outlines the basic criteria and indicators relating to the implementation of SFM in Ireland. It lists a series of qualitative and quantitative measures by which progress towards the practice of SFM can be monitored under forest conditions.

1.2 Annex 2: The Code of Best Forest Practice

The Code of Best Forest Practice, also published by the Forest Service, is a listing of all forestry operations and the manner in which they should be carried out to ensure the implementation of SFM in Ireland, as agreed at the Third Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe, Lisbon, 1998.

1.3 Annex 3: Environmental Guidelines

The suite of six guidelines are the mechanisms by which the Forest Service will ensure that the environmental aspects of SFM are implemented. Adherence to the guidelines is a condition of grant aid and the issuing of a felling licence. The penalty for non-compliance is the withholding of approvals for grants and felling licences.

1.4 Annex 4: The PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard

The PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard sets out the requirements which woodland owners and managers must meet and the means of verification certification authorities must use to certify woodland management in the Republic of Ireland. The standard is the product of an inclusive and transparent process which has involved a balanced representation from the Irish forestry and environmental community. It has been designed to ensure that it reflects the requirements of the Government's Irish National Forest Standard and supporting documentation, and through this the guidelines adopted by European Forestry Ministers at Helsinki in 1993 and Lisbon in 1998.

1.5 Annex 5: PEFC Council Annex 4 Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products: Requirements

The text of this standard was developed by the Chain of Custody and Labelling Working Group of the PEFC Council and was officially adopted by the PEFC Council General Assembly on 29 October 2004 and amended on 17 June 2005. This standard can be endorsed and utilised by any forest certification or labelling scheme which includes chain of custody rules for the purposes of using declarations and/or labels referring to the origin of the raw material included in the forest based products. The objectives of the chain of custody are to create an information link between the raw material included in a forest based product and the origin of that raw material.

The following Appendices to Annex 4 have been adopted by PEFC Ireland:

On 27 October 2006, Appendix 1 and Appendix 6 were amended and new Appendix 7 and Appendix 8 added to Annex 4

- Appendix 1 to Annex 4 (27 October 2006): PEFC Council specification for the origin for the purposes of PEFC label and declarations
- Appendix 6 to Annex 4 (27 October 2006): Specification of the origin for the purposes of PEFC label and declarations covering recycled raw material and this will be effective from 1st May 2007.
- Appendix 7 to Annex 4 (27 October 2006): Implementation of requirements for the avoidance of the procurement of raw material from controversial sources

- Appendix 8 to Annex 4 (27 October 2006): PEFC Council specification for the origin for the purposes of PEFC label and declarations for non wood forest products.

1.5 Annex 6: PEFC International Standard ST 2002:2010 Chain of Custody of Forest based Products – Requirements

PEFC ST 2002:2010 replaced Annex 4 which was withdrawn on 26 November 2010 and was developed in an open, transparent, consultative and consensus based process covering a broad range of stakeholders. A transition period of one year applies, accordingly Annex 4 still applies under this Scheme for **existing** chain of custody certificate holders. From 26 November 2011 PEFC ST 2002:2010 only will apply.

1.6 Annex 7: PEFC Council Annex 6: Certification and Accreditation Procedures

PEFC Council recognises that certifications for forest management and chain of custody rely on international certification and accreditation procedures as defined in the documentation of the International Standardization Organisation (ISO) and European co-operation for Accreditation (EA) as well as in the Objectives International Accreditation Forum (IAF).

This document defines the certification and accreditation procedures for forest and chain of custody certifications adopted and considered credible and reliable by the PEFC Council. The PEFC Council does not set any requirements regarding the auditing and decision making in certification or accreditation. However, it may issue PEFC-trademark licenses only against specified types of certifications.

This document was adopted by the General Assembly of the PEFC Council on 22 November 2002 and amended on 31 October 2003, 11 April 2005, 28 October 2005 and 27 October 2006.

This document specifies the general competence requirements and tasks of certification bodies when applied to forest and chain of custody certification

1.7 Annex 8: PEFC Guidelines

- GL 5/2006: Interpretation of the PEFC Council Requirements for Consensus in the Standard Setting Process (cancelled by PEFC ST 1001:2010 on 26 November 2010 – see comment under “Standard Setting Procedures of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard” in the Introduction).
- GL 6/2006 PEFC Notification of Certification Bodies. 26 October 2006 and PEFC will adopt as from effective date of 1st June 2007.

1.8 PEFC Council Guideline: GL 2/2006 PEFC Council Minimum Requirements Checklist

The objectives of these guidelines are aimed to assist bodies, to develop or revise their forest certification schemes firstly by advising on the preparation of an application for PEFC Council endorsement and, secondly by facilitating the assessment of the compliance of a national or sub-national forest certification scheme against the PEFC Council requirements carried out by the PEFC Council as a part of its endorsement and mutual recognition process.

These guidelines cover the PEFC Council minimum requirements, which shall be met by national and sub-national schemes and standards applying for PEFC Council endorsement and mutual recognition, and are a part of the application for the PEFC Council endorsement and mutual recognition.

These guidelines were adopted by the PEFC Council Board of Directors in April 2003 and revised in January 2005, April 2005, January 2006 and 27 October 2006.

Supporting Reference Documentation

1.9 PEFC Council Statutes

PEFC Statutes is the highest document of the PEFC Council defining objectives, structure and basic procedures of the PEFC Council.

1.10 PEFC Council Annexes

1.10.1 PEFC Annex 1: Terms and Definitions

This Annex was adopted by the General Assembly of the PEFC Council in November 2002 and amended in October 2004 and 27 October 2006.

1.10.2 PEFC Annex 2: Rules for Standard Setting

The document provides the rules for the standard setting process that a certification scheme applying for PEFC endorsement and mutual recognition shall fulfill. The rules guide standard setting and scheme development at national or sub-national levels. The document was adopted by the General Assembly of the PEFC Council on 22 November 2002 and amended in October 2004, October 2005 and 27 October 2006. The document covers standard setting procedures for certification of sustainable forest management and chain of custody certification.

1.10.3 PEFC International Standard ST 1001:2010 Standard Setting – Requirements

The document cancels and replaces Annex 2 and GL 5/2006 (Interpretation of PEFC Council Requirements for Consensus in the Standard Setting Process) and was adopted by the General Assembly of the PEFC Council on 26 November 2010.

1.10.4 PEFC International Standard ST 1003:2010 Sustainable Forest Management - Requirements

The document cancels and replaces Annex 3 (basis for certification Schemes and their implementation) and was adopted by the General Assembly of the PEFC Council on 26 November 2010. This document covers requirements for forest management standards applicable to all types of forests. The interpretation of the requirements for various types of forests or geographical zones is included as an appendix to this document. The interpretation for forest plantations is included in Appendix 1 to this document.

The requirements laid out in this document must be reflected in the forest management standards submitted for PEFC endorsement. They constitute requirements for owners or managers applying for forest certification, as well as contractors and other operators operating in certified forests.

1.10.5 PEFC International Standard ST 2001:2008 PEFC Logo Usage Rules – Requirements (Second Edition)

This document cancels and replaces Annex 5 of the PEFC Council Technical Document (PEFC Logo usage rules).

The second edition incorporates Amendment No. 1, adopted by the PEFC General Assembly on 12th November 2010. The changes required by the amendment are indicated in the text by a marginal bar and amendment number against the clause, note, figure or part thereof affected.

1.10.6 PEFC Annex 6: Certification and Accreditation Procedures

PEFC Council recognised certifications for forest management and chain of custody, rely on international certification and accreditation procedures as defined in the documentation of the International Standardisation Organisation (ISO) and European co-operation for Accreditation (EA) as well as in the International Accreditation Forum (IAF)

This document defines the certification and accreditation procedures for forest and chain of custody certifications adopted and considered credible and reliable by the PEFC Council. The PEFC Council does not set any requirements regarding the auditing and decision making in certification or accreditation. However, it may issue PEFC-trademark licenses only against specified types of certifications.

This document was adopted by the General Assembly of the PEFC Council in November 2002 and amended in October 2003, April 2005, October 2005 and 27 October 2006.

This document specifies the general competence requirements and tasks of certification bodies when applied to forest and chain of custody certification.

1.10.7 PEFC Annex 7: Endorsement and Mutual Recognition of National Schemes and their Revision

Rules for the endorsement and mutual recognition of national or sub-national forest certification and chain of custody standards and schemes, to guide assessment and decision-making in the endorsement and mutual recognition process. The rules harmonize the documentation on the scheme and applications as well as the assessment processes carried out by the independent consultants or by the panel of experts. They also set the framework for the decision making process in the PEFC Council for the endorsement and mutual recognition of standards and schemes and thus provide fair and equal procedures for all applicants.

This document was adopted by the General Assembly of the PEFC Council in November 2002 and amended in October 2004, October 2005 and 27 October 2006. This document describes the endorsement and mutual recognition process and refers to the minimum requirements for standard setting and scheme documentation. Procedures for the endorsement and mutual recognition of reviewed, revised and amended schemes are also described.

The endorsement of a scheme means that the members of the PEFC Council have determined that the scheme meets the requirements of the PEFC Council. The election procedure ensures that each scheme votes on each other. Therefore the schemes mutually recognise each other under the PEFC Council mutual recognition umbrella.

1.11 Criteria for Sustainable Forest Management

1.11.1 Pan European Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management

The forest management performance standards of national forest certification schemes, which apply for the endorsement and mutual recognition within the PEFC framework, shall be based on Pan-European Criteria and Indicators adopted as Annex 2 to the Resolution L2 of the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) held in Lisbon in 1998

1.11.2 PEOLG: Pan European Operational Level Guidelines for SFM

The forest management performance standards of national forest certification schemes, which apply for endorsement and mutual recognition within the PEFC framework, shall be in full compliance with the requirements of the Pan-European Operational Level Guidelines (PEOLG) adopted as Annex 1 to the Resolution L2 of the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) held in Lisbon in 1998.

1.12 ISO Documentation

1.13.1 ISO 19011:2002: Guidelines for quality and/or environmental management systems auditing.

1.13.2 ISO/IEC Guide 61:1996 (EN 45 010:1998): General requirements for assessment and accreditation of certification/registration bodies.

1.13.3 ISO/IEC Guide 62:1996 (EN 45 012:1998): General requirements for bodies operating assessment and certification/registration of quality systems.

1.13.4 ISO/IEC Guide 65 (EN 45 011:1998): General requirements for bodies operating product certification systems.

1.13.5 ISO/IEC Guide 66:1999: General requirements for bodies operating assessment and certification / registration of environmental management systems (EMS).

1.13.6 ISO/PAS 17001 Conformity assessment Impartiality Principles and requirements

- 1.13 ILO Documents: Core ILO Conventions**
- 1.14 International Conventions**
 - 1.14.1 Cartagena Protocol on Bio-safety (Bio-safety Protocol)**
 - 1.14.2 Convention on Biological Diversity**
 - 1.14.3 Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora**
 - 1.14.4 Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**
- 1.15 PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard: Rules for Standard Setting**

Abbreviations and Acronyms

C and I	Criteria and Indicators
C o C	Chain of Custody
COFORD	The Programme of Competitive Forest Research for Development
EA	European Co-operation for Accreditation
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EN	European Norm
ENGO	Environmental non-government organisation
EMAS	Eco-Management and Audit Scheme
FMU	Forest Management Unit
FS	Forest Service
IAF	International Accreditation Forum
IFA	Irish Farmers Association
ILO	International Labour Organisation
INAB	Irish national Accreditation Board
ISEAL	International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling Alliance
ISO	International Standardisation Organisation
ITGA	Irish Timber Growers Association
MCPFE	Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe
NGO	Non-government organisation
NHA	Natural Heritage Area
PEC	Pan European Criteria
PEFC	Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification
PEFCC	Council for the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification
PEFC Ireland	Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification: Republic of Ireland
PEOLG	Pan-European Operational Level Guidelines
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SAC	Special Area of Conservation

SECTION 2: INTRODUCTION:

The PEFC Ireland Certification Scheme for Sustainable Forest Management (THE SCHEME)

2.1 PEFC (Ireland) Ltd

PEFC (Ireland) Ltd was established in August 2008. The Company is registered in Ireland, number 461250, and the Registered Office is located at 27 Wellington Road, Cork. The Company's administrative office is located at the same address.

The Articles of Association were adopted on 28 July 2008 and were subscribed by the Irish Timber Growers Association as a Company Limited by Guarantee and not having Share Capital.

The first board meeting was held in Kilkenny on 23rd April 2010 and one further board meeting has been held since then. Henceforth the Company intends to hold a minimum of two meetings of the Directors each year, including an Annual General Meeting. The audited company accounts for the first full period of trading ending 31st December 2009 have been lodged with the Companies Registration Office within the time scale required.

As of 2010 there are 2 directors, including the National Secretary and the Company Secretary.

The Company Secretary, who is a director, is James O'Brien, FCA, of 27 Wellington Road, Cork, and Percival Street, Kanturk, Co. Cork.

PEFC Council has recognised PEFC Ireland as a member country of the PEFC Council, and PEFC Ireland was formally admitted to membership of the PEFC Council at the General Assembly held in Canberra, Australia, in November 2008.

2.2 Scheme Governance and Structure

The Scheme is owned, governed and administered by a National Governing Body, PEFC (Ireland) Ltd, which is responsible for:

- Managing the Scheme to meet the endorsement requirements of PEFC Council.
- Developing and reviewing the design of the Scheme with a view to continuous improvement.
- Developing, implementing and reviewing the rules and requirements for participation in the Scheme by certification applicants, with particular reference to the requirements and conditions set out by PEFC Council in the published Annex documentation.
- Promoting the use and credibility of the Scheme and ensuring its accessibility to the forest industry and all interested stakeholders.
- Helping to promote the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard, as the PEFC certification standard for Sustainable Forest Management in the Ireland.
- Participating in the development, monitoring and review of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard.
- Issuing and updating of all documentation relating to administration and implementation of the Scheme.
- Setting and reviewing the eligibility criteria for certification bodies wishing to carry out third party audits under the Scheme.

- Maintaining a register of Accredited and Notified Certification Bodies and monitoring these bodies to ensure continued compliance with eligibility criteria.
- Establishing and maintaining records of all forest areas / organisations / enterprises certified under the Scheme and certified for Chain of Custody.
- Resolving appeals, complaints and disputes arising out of the operation of the Scheme that
- (a) cannot otherwise be resolved between the Certification Body and the auditee, or that
(b) arise out of the issue, suspension or withdrawal of a license to use a product label issued by a third party.
- Setting, collection and review of all legitimate costs / fees associated with participation in the Scheme by certification applicants.
- Licensing and control of the use of any logos, claims and labels used in association with the Scheme.

The document describes PEFC Ireland. Together with its annexes, it establishes the technical terms of reference that permit the certification of sustainable forest management and of the chain of custody. This document includes the description of the three levels of application of certification of sustainable forest management at individual forest unit and group level.

It also establishes the requirements for their recognition by PEFC Ireland, defining the various procedures and responsibilities of each of the parties involved.

2.3 Guiding Principles of the Scheme: Sustainable Forest Management (SFM)

This is defined in the context of this Scheme as:

“the stewardship and use of forests and forest land in a way, and at a rate, that 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.”

Governance and delivery of the Scheme is underpinned by the commitment of PEFC Ireland to the following guiding principles:

- **Quality** - through the stringency of criteria for technical and professional competencies with which to operate the Scheme.
- **Continuous Improvement** - through response to new knowledge and changes in demands.
- **Consistency** - with internationally recognised indicators and performance criteria of credible forest certification standards, schemes, and of the certification process itself.
- **Exclusive use and promotion of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard** - as the criteria and indicators for verification of sustainable forest management in Ireland.

- **Credibility** - through third party, independent auditing carried out by certification bodies accredited by the national accreditation service or other accreditation bodies operating to internationally accepted ISO standards and guidelines.
- **Transparency** - of all stages of both the certification Standard and the certification Scheme
- **Accountability to, and participation with** - Irish and wider forestry and timber using communities and stakeholders.
- **Cost effectiveness** - through minimising the administrative and financial burden to the Scheme's customers.
- **Accessibility** - via the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard and the PEFC Council Chain of Custody Standard - to a range of certification options to all forest and wood using types, ownerships and structures.

2.4 Scope of the Scheme

- Certification of the sustainable management of all forest and woodland types and ownerships within Ireland to the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard.
- Certification of Chain of Custody in accordance with PEFC Council Annex 4: Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products: Requirements, as revised by PEFC ST 2002:200x
- Management and control within Ireland of the PEFC logo licensing requirements as set out in PEFC International Standard ST 2001:2008 - PEFC Logo Usage Rules - Requirements
- Notification of Certification awards

2.5 The Role of the Secretariat

The co-ordination and everyday management of the Scheme is ensured by the Secretariat, whose functions are described in the statutes of the company. Additionally, within the scope of the certification system, the PEFC Ireland Secretariat is responsible for:

- Maintaining an up-to-date register and control of all entities using the PEFC logo and ensuring its correct use;
- Verifying the rules for logo use and their conformity with PEFC International Standard ST 2001:2008 – PEFC Logo Use Rules - Requirements and, whenever necessary, implementing corrective or preventive actions.
- Maintaining up to date relevant information about the PEFC process, making available and disseminating all the technical knowledge and providing support for the accreditation and standardisation activities.
- Managing the register of certifying bodies and of qualified auditors.
- Accompanying and reviewing the terms of reference of PEFC Ireland, whenever justified by relevant alterations in the scope of the PEFC Council or by results of the implementation of the system.
- Managing the PEFC requirement for the Notification of accredited Certification Bodies within the Ireland.

- Promoting actions for the dissemination and promotion of PEFC Ireland, being equally responsible for institutional relations.
- Accompanying the process of recognition of entities in the scope of the certification system.
- Promoting and supporting the definition of programmes for training courses for auditors.

As such, the responsibilities of PEFC Ireland are to:

- Define the accepted indicators of sustainable forest management, according to the specific characteristics of Irish forests;
- Define the levels of application of forest management certification
- Establish procedures for certifying the flows of raw material originating from certified forests (chain of custody);
- Establish and / or recognise guides to good forest practices, and
- Issue other technical documents to support the application of sustainable forest management.

2.6 Review of the Standard

The Standard Setting Process of the PEFC Irish Standard Setting Forum states:

“The certification standard and implementation arrangements shall be reviewed in the light of new scientific information and practical experience at least every 5 years. PEFC Ireland shall initiate the review process, making the timetable and arrangements for the review publicly available. The review will take into account revisions required by PEFC Council.”

PEFC Ireland shall monitor and ensure that the necessary timescales are achieved to meet this requirement. Revision of the Standard will be in accordance with the revised standard setting requirements contained in PEFC International Standard ST 1001:2010.

The review process should include as a minimum the following elements:

- a) An Interpretation Review – a consideration of any advice developed by the Interpretation Panel.
- b) A Technical Review – a consideration of any new scientific or technical knowledge.
- c) An International Benchmarking Review – a comparison with any equivalent accredited standards of a similar geographical or ecological scope of application, and an evaluation of whether there are any substantial differences in the overall cost / benefit balance of compliance for similar types of enterprise with similar forest conditions. (To be provided by the certification schemes.)
- d) A Standard Users’ Feedback Review - a consideration of feedback from certificate holders and accredited certification authorities. (To be provided by the certification schemes.)
- e) A Review of the Initial Stakeholders’ Consultation – a consideration of consultees’ comments and responses.

- f) A Small and Low Intensity Managed Woodlands Review – a consideration of the impact and applicability of the standard for small and low intensity operations.
- g) A Certification Schemes' Requirements Review – a consideration of advice (to be provided by the certification schemes) on any new or revised policies, procedures or guidance that is relevant to the revision. National certification schemes should seek advice and guidance from their international body when compiling their advice.

SECTION 3: HISTORY AND BACKGROUND OF FORESTRY IN IRELAND

3.1 Forest History

The woodlands of Ireland reflect changes in land-use over several thousand years. During this period the land, which was once largely covered with woodland, was cleared of trees and used to satisfy the demands of an increasing population for timber, fuel and agriculture. By the beginning of the 20th century woodland cover was around 1%. Today this figure has risen to approximately 10% (730,000 hectares), as the result of commitment to a steady programme of planting by successive governments, and a grant scheme designed to encourage farmers and landowners to afforest marginal agricultural land. As a result of these measures, forest cover in Ireland has increased by over 600,000 hectares over the last century, however it is still only 10 per cent, compared to the European average of 33 per cent.

The Forest Service, in the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, serves as the regulatory authority and is responsible for forest legislation and policy, and the administration of the various planting and other grant schemes. The Forestry Act of 1946 is the principle statute governing forestry practice, in addition to which the Forest Service has published the Irish National Forest Standard, the Code of Best Practice and a suite of environmental guidelines, which are mandatory for grant-aided projects. At present there is no internationally endorsed national forest certification standard.

For much of the last century the greater proportion of new planting was with exotic conifers, primarily Sitka Spruce and Lodgepole Pine. Since the early 1990s onwards there has been a greater emphasis on diversification with broadleaved species comprising up to 30% of annual afforestation during the last number of years.

In addition to the Afforestation Scheme, the objective of which is primarily commercial timber production, the Forest Service administers and promotes other schemes with objectives geared towards enhancing the environment. These include the Native Woodland Scheme, the Neighbourhood Scheme, the Forest Environment Protection Scheme and the Woodland Improvement Scheme, further details of which are available on the Forest Service website www.agriculture.gov.ie/forests-service

3.2 Ownership and Management

Approximately 55% of the total forest estate (c. 400,000 hectares) is publicly owned, most of this being divested in a semi-state company – Coillte Teoranta – which was established under the Forestry Act 1988. The greater proportion of Coillte forest comprises coniferous plantations established since the foundation of the State, and in the early years much of this was planted on poor upland and otherwise unproductive peatlands.

Other than Coillte forest, there are also some small areas of state-owned forest, mostly within the six National Parks. Some of these contain important areas of semi-natural woodland and the National Parks and Wildlife Service, the state agency responsible, is implementing a number of measures to ensure their conservation.

The private forest estate comprises about 330,000 hectares, of which 230,000 hectares (70%) have been planted since 1986. There are now approximately 16,000 private woodland owners in the country, most of them with limited experience of forest management. There are a number of forest management companies as well as private consultants offering management services and advice to farm-forest owners, and recent years have seen the emergence of a number of producer group initiatives around the country. The average size of private forest holding is 8 hectares.

Supply from the private sector of first and second thinnings is set to grow rapidly in the short to medium term, resulting in a corresponding development of a bio-energy sector which is starting to provide an alternative market to the panel board mills.

3.3 Semi-natural Woodland

Ireland has no natural forest, but it is estimated there are about 100,000 hectares remaining of semi-natural woodland. Much of this has been over-exploited over the years and has suffered at the hands of agriculture and commercial forestry. Today, semi-natural woodland is still a neglected and diminishing resource, about which there is little information on location, ownership, composition and classification. While a proportion of our semi-natural woodlands are protected under current legislation, and as already mentioned some areas are owned and managed by the State, a large proportion of privately owned semi-natural woodlands lies outside this protected sphere and requires protection and specialised management.

Provision for the retention of areas of semi-natural woodland is contained in the Forest Biodiversity Guidelines (referred to in section 5.3); and the Forest Service operates the Native Woodland Grant Scheme, which, while being a voluntary scheme, is designed to offer financial assistance towards the management of existing and the establishment of new native woodland.

The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) commissioned a national survey of native woodlands that was carried out from 2003-2008 by Botanical, Environmental and Conservation Consultants Ltd. This work included a survey of 1,217 sites across all 26 counties and the results are available from the NPWS.

3.4 Planted Woodlands

Broadleaved tree species are a traditional part of the largely man-made landscape of the Ireland, though the area of broadleaved woodland was very low as a proportion of the total for most of the last century. The area is now increasing again as a result of government incentives to increase the proportion of broadleaf planting and the number of owners now planting better quality land. Naturalised species such as Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) and Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*) have been included in many broadleaf planting schemes in addition to the common native species.

The commercial base of the forest industry relies heavily on introduced tree species, particularly Sitka spruce (*Picea sitchensis*) and Lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*) from North America. More recent years have seen an increasing emphasis on diversification, with a greater variety of commercial conifer species included in planting schemes.

3.5 Wood Supply and Wood Processing

The annual supply of roundwood from existing Irish forests is in the region 2 to 2.3 million hectares per annum. In 2008, the supply of roundwood available for processing was 2.272 million m³, of which Coillte supplied 2.05 million m³ (90%). As previously noted, the bulk of the private forest estate was established during the last 20 years and roundwood supplies from the private sector are predicted to rise to approximately 2.95 million m³ by 2028. Currently eight companies form the core of the Irish sawmilling industry. Most of the construction timber produced is consumed domestically, while pallet wood and fencing products make up the bulk of sawn timber exports. In addition there are four wood based panel (WBP) board mills, manufacturing chipboard, medium density fibre board (MDF), oriented strand board (OSB), and moulded panel products. More than 75% of all WBP products are exported.

The WBP mills are operating effectively at capacity and the increasing supply of small roundwood from mostly private woodlands is surplus to demand from the WBP sector. Consequently investment in a wood energy industry, with both large and small installations, is ongoing and demand for wood biomass is predicted to increase to 4 million green tonnes per annum by 2020 if biomass targets are to be met. It is unlikely that the forest sector alone will be able to supply more

than half this volume, thus highlighting the need to maintain a high rate of afforestation, an expansion in the area of short rotation coppice systems, and an increase in the utilisation of harvesting residues.

3.6 Employment

The forestry and primary wood processing industries provide employment for about 16,000 people, many of these jobs being provided in sometimes depressed rural areas. The total output from the industry is about €1.9 billion per annum, or about 1% of GDP.

3.7 Forest Recreation

Forests and woodlands provide an ideal environment for many recreational pursuits and, with appropriate planning, are able to absorb the pressures of large numbers of visitors. Most Coillte forests are open to the public and they include ten forest parks and more than 150 recreation areas.

3.8 Irish Forest Policy for Sustainable Forest Management

Irish forest policy on Sustainable Forest Management has evolved over the last decade in response to the commitments undertaken at the 1992 UNCED conference in Rio (the Earth Summit) and subsequently developed through the processes of the Ministerial Conferences on Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE).

For example, in 1998 a set of Pan-European Criteria for Sustainable Forest Management were adopted. These criteria are:

- Maintenance and appropriate enhancement of forest resources and their contribution to global carbon cycles
- Maintenance of forest ecosystem health and vitality
- Maintenance and encouragement of the productive functions of forests (wood and non-wood)
- Maintenance, conservation and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity in forest ecosystems
- Maintenance and appropriate enhancement of protective functions in forest management (notably soil and water)
- Maintenance of other socio-economic and cultural functions and conditions.

In Ireland, the criteria and standards for Sustainable Forest Management are codified in the Irish National Forest Standard. This document was published in 2000 and, in conjunction with the Code of Best Forest Practice and suite of environmental guidelines, summarises the Irish Government's approach to sustainable forest management.

SECTION 4: FOREST POLICY AND REGULATION IN IRELAND

4.1 Introduction

A consultative process was initiated in 1999 that involved the key interest groups in Irish forestry and culminated in the publication of the Irish National Forest Standard in 2000. The process involved the establishment of a steering committee chaired by the Forest Service and including representatives from timber groups, timber users, government departments and statutory bodies, farming organizations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Working parties were set up to consider environmental, economic, social and legal aspects of forestry and sustainable forest management. The groups were charged with developing indicators relating to the six criteria for sustainable forest management announced at Lisbon.

The Irish National Forest Standard applies to all forests in Ireland and is the framework within which the development and evaluation of sustainable forest management will take place and its underlying principles and key processes are outlined.

4.2 The National Strategic Framework:

“Growing for the Future: A Strategic Plan for the Development of the Forestry Sector in Ireland ”

In 1996 the Irish Government published *Growing for the Future: A Strategic Plan for the Development of the Irish Forestry Sector*. The Plan was launched with the overall aim of developing forestry to a scale and in a manner which maximizes its contribution to national economic and social well-being on a sustainable basis and which is compatible with the environment.

4.3 Background

With the rapid development and expansion of the forest industry and enlargement of the forest estate, the Irish Government has placed an increasing emphasis on developing codes of good environmental practice in forestry. Neither the Strategic Plan nor the Irish National Forest Standard are stand-alone documents but are to be read and used in conjunction with the Code of Best Forest Practice and the suite of environmental guidelines, all published by the Forest Service.

Growing for the Future: A Strategic Plan for the Development of the Irish Forestry Sector, published as it was in 1996, pre-dates the Pan-European Criteria for Sustainable Forest Management which were adopted at the MCPFE in Lisbon in 1998. While the aim of the Strategic Plan was to ensure development that was also compatible with the environment, it was clear that with the adoption of the PEC there was a need to produce a document that, while catering for the needs of the developing industry, included the PEC as well. Accordingly, the consultative process that resulted in the Irish National Forest Standard began in 1999, with publication of the Standard following in 2000.

4.4 The Irish National Forest Standard

The Irish National Forest Standard has been developed specifically for forestry in the Republic of Ireland. The history of Irish forestry and the nature of its woodlands differ fundamentally from those of the rest of Europe including Scandinavia. However, care has been taken to integrate the Standard with European and global protocols for sustainable development.

The purpose of the Irish National Forest Standard is to set out standards for the sustainable management of all forests and woodlands in the State. As previously stated, it is not a stand-alone document, but together with the Code of Best Forest Practice and the environmental guidelines, it

forms the centrepiece of a system to guide and monitor forestry. The Standard is linked to the developing international protocols for sustainable forestry. It is used in Ireland as the basis for the development of forest monitoring and is also the basis from which the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard was developed.

Guidelines agreed at Helsinki in 1993 and the subsequent Pan-European Criteria for sustainable forestry adopted at the third Ministerial Conference of the MCPFE in Lisbon in 1998 must be interpreted to put them into an Irish context. International criteria and guidelines are expressed in broad terms which have limited practical value for managers. In developing the Irish Forestry Standard, full account has been taken of existing guidelines and other publications which advise forest managers on recommended practice. The Standard takes into account the prime aspects of sustainable forest management: soils, water, air, production, biological diversity, workforce, communities, heritage and landscapes.

4.5 Policies

Throughout the period of forest expansion since the foundation of the State, successive Irish governments have had a commitment to the creation and management of forests as a renewable natural resource. There has been continuous monitoring and re-assessment of forestry policy to reflect changing public attitudes and the increased knowledge gained through research and forestry practice, and the impact of socio-economic changes such as those associated with the Common Agricultural Policy. After the commitments made at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, and at the second Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) in Helsinki (1993), the Government formally adopted the Pan-European Criteria and Indicators in the Irish National Forest Standard, with measures described for each indicator.

Over the years a range of regulatory instruments and incentives have been developed to assist implementation of forestry policy. Some draw on legislation which is specific to forestry; others are based on legislation which has wider application. Forest management in Ireland is subject to most of the legislation that regulates other commercial enterprises but, like agriculture, is outside the scope of planning law.

4.6 Powers

Regulatory mechanisms for forestry in Ireland are operated by the Forest Service, a division of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. The Forest Service no longer has the responsibility of the management of the State's forests, which were mostly vested in Coillte Teoranta, a commercial semi-State company, by the Forestry Act 1988. Tree felling and reforestation are controlled by the Forest Service under the Forestry Act 1946, and the Forest Service also implements the various forest grant and premium schemes and downstream support measures. It is responsible for relations with the European Commission and implements international agreements relating to forestry.

4.7 Procedures for Consultation

The Forest Service operates a referral and notification system for all applications received for grant aid (e.g. afforestation or forest roads) and for felling licences. This involves a consultation process which is summarized in Appendix 2 (also included as Appendix E to the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard).

4.8 Linkage to the Helsinki Guidelines and Pan-European Criteria (PEC)

The Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes (PEFC) was originally developed to provide a framework for national forest certification schemes adopting the concept of

sustainable forest management as defined in the Ministerial Conferences on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE). Consequently, the national schemes applying for PEFC endorsement were assessed against reference documents developed for European forestry. In the PEFC programme, the Pan European Criteria and Indicators and Pan European Operational Level Guidelines (PEOLG) establish the framework for the compatibility assessment.

PEOLG were endorsed by the Third Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) in 1998 as a framework of recommendations for SFM for practical use on a voluntary basis in European forests. They were to be adapted to local economic, ecological, social and cultural conditions with participation of stakeholders (based on Resolution L2).

According to the Resolution L2, the guidelines serve as a tool to improve communication and awareness building related to sustainable forest management. In addition, although certification and other quality assurance systems would remain independent from the Pan-European Process and are voluntary to the interested parties, the guidelines could provide an indicative reference for the establishment of standards for those systems.

PEOLG are based on the European social and cultural structures and forest management traditions. They also address specifically the issues of SFM relevant in the European context. European forests have been under heavy use for centuries, therefore e.g. presence of decaying wood, regulation on grazing of wild and domestic animals and maintenance of habitats created by traditional management systems are examples of important elements of biodiversity protection. The forests are mostly in boreal or temperate zones, often managed at a forest level, and it is accepted that there is a need to encourage, where appropriate, un-even aged stand management. The social and labour legislation in European countries is well developed and implemented with the result that these basic issues are not emphasised in PEOLG.

The Irish National Forest Standard is compatible with both the Helsinki Guidelines and the Pan European Criteria (PEC). These guidelines and criteria necessarily give weight to some issues (such as soil erosion and fire) that are globally important but not usually critical in Ireland. The use of native species is also an area of different emphasis: only one native conifer species (*Pinus sylvestris*) is commercially utilisable for timber, and as a consequence, non-native trees play a major part in Irish forestry. Hence, the Irish National Forest Standard and supporting documentation has less to say about fire and forests for soil protection, and more about non-native species, than might be expected in other European countries.

(See Appendix 1)

Environmental guidelines for forestry were published by the Forest Service at the same time as the Irish National Forest Standard and the Code of Best Forest Practice in 2000. The guidelines directly address practical management issues relating to major components of the forest ecosystem or human resource. While entitled “guidelines” their provisions are mandatory where they apply to all grant-aided projects and to all activities requiring a Felling Licence.

SECTION 5: THE CODE OF BEST FOREST PRACTICE AND SUITE OF ENVIRONMENTAL GUIDELINES

5.1 Introduction

The Code of Best Forest Practice was published in 2000 and is a companion document to, and an instrument of, the Irish National Forest Standard. It aims to ensure that forest operations in Ireland are carried out in a way which meet high environmental, social and economic standards.

Certain features distinguish Irish forestry from forestry practiced elsewhere in the world and these features are reflected in the Code. The lack of native conifer species with any significant commercial potential has meant that introduced species from Continental Europe, North America and Japan predominate. These species have been grown in Ireland for a considerable period amounting to several rotations, frequently undergo natural regeneration and have not succumbed to major pests and diseases.

The range of native broadleaf species with commercial potential is also somewhat limited, with oak, ash and, to a lesser extent, birch, alder, cherry and aspen, being capable of commercial development. Introduced species such as beech and sycamore can now be considered semi-natural.

Conifers suit a wide range of soils, from brown earths to peaty gleys and podsols. Broadleaves demand more fertile sites.

Ireland is a wet country traversed by streams and rivers, and this water resource is of major significance. In addition, Ireland has had an open landscape for centuries, and this factor has shaped cultural and social attitudes which must be respected in a period of change.

In Ireland, the establishment, management and harvesting of plantation forests for timber production dominate the forestry sector. The Code therefore focuses on the achievement of viable forests which conform to the principles of sustainable production and which are managed in a safe and environmentally acceptable manner respectful of society's expectations.

Forest products cover a range far wider than wood alone, e.g. carbon sequestration, biodiversity, water quality, and recreation. Material products should be produced to high quality standards. Other products should also attain high objective quality.

Implicit in the Code is the assumption that these practices will be observed. An evaluation process is therefore necessary and this should be unambiguous and easy to implement.

5.2 The Code of Best Forest Practice

The Code covers such general items as its development in the context of national and international criteria and principles of sustainable forest management, with reference to other national codes of forest practice, especially those from countries where environmental conditions or the type of forestry show some similarities with Ireland; the legal and regulatory framework; and impact appraisal. And it includes specific sections relating to forest management practice. These are:

5.2.1 Forest Reproductive Material

The use of good quality forest reproductive material derived from a suitable and traceable provenance is the key to the establishment of healthy and productive forests.

5.2.2 Nursery Practice

Good nursery practice is critical for the production of suitable planting stock under safe and environmentally controlled conditions.

5.2.3 New Planting Sites

Careful assessment of new planting sites is necessary to ensure that establishment can proceed and that environmental and other constraints can be properly incorporated. Both factors are essential to ensure the establishment of a viable forest.

5.2.4 Species Selection

Matching species with the site is crucial for successful forest establishment and facilitates enhanced diversity.

5.2.5 Site Preparation for Afforestation

Site preparation operations can take place on the basis that the necessary planning, identification of constraints and consultation have all been carried out.

5.2.6 Planting

Good quality trees suited to the site and planted at an adequate stocking density and in the appropriate mixtures, will ensure a viable and diverse crop which is in harmony with the landscape.

5.2.7 Vegetation Management

Natural vegetation presents a challenge to young developing trees. Competition from weeds and grasses is a serious cause of plant loss and reduced growth.

5.2.8 Forest Pests and Diseases

Trees can suffer from pest and disease attack at different stages of their development. Apart from endemic problems, there is a significant threat from exotic forest pests and diseases. Mammals can also cause considerable damage.

5.2.9 Forest Maintenance

Forests continue to require attention throughout their early development, from establishment through to the stage where a satisfactory crop begins to form.

5.2.10 Tending

Tending encompasses a number of forest operations which take place between establishment and first thinning with the aim of improving final crop quality in terms of tree form and wood quality. Brushing, intended to render the crop accessible, is also included.

5.2.11 Silviculture and Thinning

Thinnings are undertaken to concentrate growth onto the best quality and most vigorous trees as the crop matures. Thinnings also provide a source of intermediate production and income from the forest. As the operation is now largely mechanized, a high level of control is needed to ensure benefits to the forest and to avoid site damage.

5.2.12 Final Harvesting

Harvesting the mature trees is the final operation of the forest rotation. While many of the operational elements are similar to those for thinning, the environmental impacts are far greater. Due to the large number of even aged stands and Ireland's windy climate which constrains uneven aged management, the usual practice in this country is to clearfell or remove all trees from the site. Sites permitting, 'standards' are occasionally left to bridge the gap between felling and the establishment of the subsequent crop, usually for amenity, regeneration or conservation purposes. As the proportion of broadleaf woodlands and forest diversity increases, a trend towards more continuous cover forestry is likely.

5.2.13 Transport

The most common form of log transport from the forest to the processing facility is by articulated truck or truck and trailer. There may be intermediate stages where severe weight restrictions limit the size of the vehicle or, in the case of pulpwood, where logs are brought to a depot for further transport by rail.

5.2.14 Forest Roads

Forest roads feature in many operations and are referred to in other sections of the Code. This section focuses on particular issues which arise during their construction, maintenance and use.

Larger forests usually require a minimum road network for access and development. Forests over 10 ha in area normally require harvest roads for timber extraction. In most cases, harvesting tracks adequately cater for areas less than 10 ha.

5.2.15 Reforestation and Woodland Improvement

Although site conditions may be difficult when a crop has been removed, many features, such as roads, bridges and drains, are already in place for the next rotation. Reforestation represents an opportunity to improve the forest in terms of species diversity, production and cultivation. Reforestation also provides a unique opportunity to enhance the forest's biodiversity and landscape functions and to establish aquatic buffer and archaeological exclusion zones which may have been absent in the previous rotation.

The initial appearance of a reforested area is likely to be untidy, but this negative impact can be minimized by care in handling brush and by diversifying species in strategic locations. Entrances can also be redesigned at this time.

The improvement of other woodlands, particularly degraded broadleaf areas, will also increase productivity and enhance appearance.

5.2.16 Biodiversity and Specialised Woodlands

Numerous measures can be implemented to enhance the biodiversity function of Ireland's production forests. Protective measures are also needed for forests located in nationally designated conservation areas.

Specific activities are required for the management of forests for non-wood products, and also for specialised forests such as riparian and urban woodlands and short rotation crops.

5.2.17 Forest Planning

Managing a forest is a long term process and is subject to a range of influences. All forestry enterprises – from small woodlands to substantial forest areas – require some level of planning in order to anticipate and manage operational, production and environmental policies and objectives.

5.2.18 Training, Competence and Information

In a changing forestry environment, forest owners, managers and operators need access to professional services, advice, assessment, training and information to ensure that forest practice conforms to quality standards and adapts to continuous improvement.

5.3 Environmental Guidelines

The Forest Service has published further documentation in support of the Irish National Forest Standard and the Code of Best Forest Practice in the form of a suite of environmental guidelines. They were developed through extensive consultation with a wide range of relevant parties and they set out sound and practical measures based on the principles of sustainable forest management, and are firmly rooted in the best available scientific information.

The guidelines apply to all grant-aided projects and to all activities associated with a Felling Licence, and any breach may result in the forfeit of grant aid and premium payment, or the withdrawal of a Felling Licence. It follows that it is essential that all forest workers and machine operators, in addition to forest owners and managers, are made aware of and understand the guidelines as they apply to specific site conditions.

There are six guidelines in operation. These are:

- Forestry and Water Quality Guidelines
- Forestry and the Landscape Guidelines
- Forestry and Archaeology Guidelines
- Forest Biodiversity Guidelines
- Forest Harvesting and the Environment Guidelines
- Forest Protection Guidelines

The guidelines will be kept under review to facilitate amendment in the light of new research findings.

SECTION 6: PEFC IRISH FOREST CERTIFICATION STANDARD

6.1 Introduction

The PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard was developed over a two year period in accordance with the PEFC Council's Rules for Standard Setting as set out in Annex 2 to the PEFC Council Technical Document and adopted by the General Assembly of the PEFC Council in November 2002 and amended in October 2004, October 2005 and October 2006.

The process was initiated by the Irish Timber Growers Association (ITGA), which also sponsored the formation of PEFC Ireland. In 2008 ITGA commenced communications with a number of representative organisations active in the environmental, social and economic sectors and with an interest in the forest industry to seek their participation in a standard setting process.

A steering group was formed and a three chamber system adopted with the intention of there being 5 seats on each chamber. The final meeting of the steering group was held on 14th January 2009 at which the PEFC Irish Standard Setting Forum was formally convened. An independent Chairman was appointed, and the National Secretary of PEFC Ireland was appointed as Secretary to the Forum.

6.2 Current Membership Base

The past and current membership of the Forum is as follows:

<u>Economic:</u>	Coillte Teo Irish Timber Growers Association Forestry Management Companies Board Mills (resigned December 2009) Irish BioEnergy Association (joined August 2010)
<u>Environmental:</u>	Inland Fisheries Ireland (formerly the Central Fisheries Board) Crann Tree Council of Ireland Irish Natural Forestry Foundation (resigned September 2009)
<u>Social:</u>	Irish Congress of Trades Unions Irish Farmers Association Irish Sports Council Society of Irish Foresters Leader

A wide range of organizations which would be considered to have an interest in forestry in Ireland was invited to participate in the standard setting process and no organization seeking membership was refused, however many of those contacted declined to accept the invitation. Vacancies remain on both the economic (1) and environmental (2) chambers. The criteria for membership of the Forum are set out in section 2.4 of the PEFC Irish Forestry Standard: Rules for Standard Setting (see Appendix 5).

6.3 Conduct of Business

The Standard Setting Forum's Written Procedures are included at Appendix 5-6

Each chamber appointed two of its members to a Technical Working Group (TWG) charged with the task of meeting more frequently than the full Forum in order to draft the standard. Following each meeting of the TWG the work in progress was circulated to all the Forum members for comment/approval and further discussion at Forum meetings.

The Chairman and Secretary of the Forum were appointed as Chairman and Secretary of the TWG.

A firm of independent consultants was appointed to provide technical expertise and assistance to the Forum and the TWG.

On occasion, observers from Forest Service/COFORD and ITGA attended meetings, again to provide technical and expert assistance.

6.4 Forum and TWG Meetings

Six Forum meetings were held in total, in January, September, and November 2009, and February, July and October 2010.

Eight meetings of the TWG were held in total, in May, June, July, September, October and November 2009 (2), and August 2010.

6.5 Records

Minutes of all meetings are kept by PEFC Ireland on behalf of the Standard Setting Forum.

6.6 Public Consultation and Pilot Testing

In March 2010 the Forum agreed that the draft Standard was ready to go out to public consultation. The consultation period commenced on 25th March 2010 with an original deadline for receipt of submissions set at 28th May 2010, subsequently extended to 11th June, resulting in a 79 day period. Consultation was web-based, after being initially advertised in the Press and by notice sent direct to key stakeholders.

An independent consultant was engaged to analyse and collate the public submissions and report to the Forum. The report formed a key part to the Forum's and TWG's deliberations at their meetings in July, August and October 2010.

Pilot testing of the draft Standard was conducted by an accredited certification body in June 2010. Pilot testing was carried out on one private and two State (Coillte) forests, one of the latter comprising in part an Old Woodland Site. The report on the pilot testing also formed a key part to the Forum's and TWG's meetings in July, August and October 2010.

The reports on the analysis of the consultation responses and the pilot testing are available to view on the PEFC Ireland website.

6.7 Approval

The Standard was finalised and approved by the Forum at a meeting held on 13th October 2010. A copy of the approved version with the revisions resulting from the public consultation and pilot testing highlighted was posted on the PEFC Ireland website and all respondents to the public consultation process notified.

6.8 The Standard

The PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard sets out the requirements which woodland owners and managers and certification authorities can use to certify woodland management in the

Republic of Ireland. The standard is the product of an inclusive and transparent process which has involved a balanced representation from the Irish forestry and environmental community. It has been designed to ensure that it reflects the requirements of the Government's Irish National Forest Standard and supporting documentation, and through this the guidelines adopted by European Forestry Ministers at Helsinki in 1993 and Lisbon in 1998.

This certification standard has been designed primarily for use in the certification of Irish woodlands by independent certification authorities. It may also be used in conjunction with an ISO 14001 environmental management system to provide performance targets.

Conformance with the certification standard is voluntary. However, an independent third-party evaluation by an accredited certification authority (sometimes referred to as a 'certification body' or 'certifier') is necessary to confirm conformance, in order to obtain a forest management certificate from the certifying body. No woodland owner or manager is required by law or regulation to undergo such an audit. However, it should be noted that some requirements of the certification standard are also required by law, and so must be complied with by all woodland owners/managers. Other requirements are a condition of the Forest Service grant schemes and conditions attaching to felling licences and must be complied with by all relevant licensees and grant beneficiaries.

The structure of the certification standard relates to the way in which management is implemented in the woodland, addressing specific aspects of management or types of operation in turn.

6.9 The eight sections of the Standard are as follows:

- 1 Compliance with the law and conformance with the requirements of the certification standard**
- 2 Management planning**
- 3 Woodland design: creation, felling and replanting**
- 4 Operations**
- 5 Protection and maintenance**
- 6 Conservation and enhancement of biodiversity**
- 7 The community**
- 8 Forestry workforce**

6.10 Structure of the Certification Standard

The standard is set out as follows:

- **Requirements**
A requirement is a compulsory element of the standard. Woodland management must meet all relevant requirements and auditors will check that requirements are being met. Requirements are stated as "shall" implying that they are compulsory elements of the standard.
- **Means of verification**
These suggest the type of objective evidence, in the form of documents, actions, site conditions or discussions, that certification bodies may consider in order to verify that the requirement is being met. The verifiers suggested are not exclusive or exhaustive – certification bodies will not always use all the verifiers suggested, and may seek verification in other ways.
- **Guidance notes**
Guidance is provided to assist both the woodland owner / manager and the certification body to understand how requirements should be applied in practice. Guidance may also

suggest other sources of information which will help both parties understand a particular issue in more detail. Guidance may also elaborate on some requirements and explain the meaning of certain terms or phrases used in the requirements.

Note: Certification authorities shall take full account of the 'guidance notes' given for each 'requirement' when assessing conformance with the standard.

6.11 Procedures for Use of the Standard

The standard is used equally by both woodland owners / managers seeking certification and independent accredited auditors or certification bodies when assessing compliance. The following sections seek to provide clarity for all parties with regard to how the standard should be used and interpreted.

Accreditation

Accreditation is the process used to ensure that those who undertake the certification audit are truly independent and professionally competent. Certification bodies conducting audits against the standard must be accredited to undertake woodland management certification by a national or international accreditation body. Accreditation bodies must be members of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) or a member of IAF's special recognition regional groups and implement procedures described in ISO/IEC 17011:2004 and other documents recognised by the above organisations.

Area Specificity

The areas to be certified under the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard shall be individually identified and delineated Woodland Management Units (WMUs). A WMU is a forest property or properties covered under a single forest management plan and within a landscape unit¹. A WMU may be owned by an individual, a group of individuals (sharing the one property), a company, a charity or any other legal entity. WMUs may contain smaller units e.g. compartments and sub-compartments but they should not be split for certification purposes. There is no obligation for a forest owner seeking certification of a WMU in one landscape unit, who may own a separate WMU in a separate landscape unit to seek certification for such a separate WMU. The owner / manager of each WMU shall have made a formal commitment to meet the requirements of this standard².

Scale of Application of the Requirements

All requirements of this standard must be satisfied at Woodland Management Unit (WMU) level. This means that where, for example, there is a requirement for a percentage of the woodland area to be managed with biodiversity as a priority, this must be the case within each individual WMU. A WMU may be made up of a series of fragmented woodlands (e.g. on a farm or an estate) and in such cases requirements must be satisfied at WMU level and not necessarily within each fragmented parcel of woodland. However, in such cases:

- Plans for implementing a requirement unevenly in different parcels are based on good practice which aims to meet the purpose of the requirement.
- Wherever appropriate, management is based on a design plan

Application to Different Scales of Woodland

All woodlands seeking to obtain certification, regardless of size, must comply with the requirements of this standard. However, in some instances, specific thresholds for specific requirements are stated (e.g. Requirements 2.3.2, 3.2.3, 3.2.4, and 5.1.2).

¹ A Landscape Unit is an area of broadly homogenous landscape character.

² This is detailed in requirement 1.1.4 of the standard.

Flexibility in Meeting Requirements

It is recognised that a woodland owner or manager may feel that certain requirements of this standard are either inappropriate for or irrelevant to a particular woodland. In such circumstances, the professional judgement of the independent certification body will be called upon to assess whether flexibility should be shown in this regard. In making this assessment, the independent certification body may seek the opinion of an appropriate specialist and in all cases shall ensure that there is compliance with the spirit of the standard.

Timing for Full Implementation of the Requirements Relating to Woodland Structure & Layout

A special feature of woodland management is its long term nature. Decisions made in the past have a strong influence on the woodlands of today. Therefore, when assessing conformance with the certification standard, independent certification bodies will not evaluate woodlands solely on the present structure and layout, but will consider the plans for management in the short, medium and long term.

Where present structure and layout fail to meet the requirements, due to historic reasons, woodland owners / managers will need to demonstrate through management planning documentation, design plans and on-going activities in the woodland that they are taking active measures to achieve conformance with the requirements. They will also need to demonstrate that there is a time frame for achieving full conformance based on sound management principles.

Stakeholder Consultation

Certification to the PEFC Irish Standard shall provide an opportunity for, and take account of, inputs from stakeholders. Responsibility for undertaking consultation lies with the applicant in accordance with the requirements of this standard³. The applicant shall invite consultees, through direct communication and public notification, to copy their responses direct to the certification body. Where this is undertaken as an integral part of a wider consultation, such as by a government department, there should be no requirement to present a copy to the certification authority, provided that the information is available to the public. As part of the evaluation process, each time a certificate is issued or renewed, it shall be the responsibility of certification bodies to assess and verify stakeholder comments using appropriate sampling, independent of the applicant's own procedure. Feedback shall be provided by the certification body, on request, to respondents on how their comments have been addressed.

Peer Review

The certification body carrying out forest certification shall have technical competence in forest management, on its economic, environmental and social impacts, and on the forest certification criteria. Audit reports shall be subject to a separate independent review by competent experts. Peer reviewers shall have access to all comments from the stakeholder consultations, the applicant and the certification body, together with an assessment of how they have been addressed.

Transparency

The process of certification to the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard is transparent and includes the production of an informative, publicly available summary for each certificate. The summary shall provide information on how and why the certification decision was made, to allow stakeholders to see for themselves what happened. This should include an explanation of how any areas of non-conformity with the requirements of the standard have been addressed to the satisfaction of the certification body, and a clear statement of any outstanding conditions which need to be addressed.

³ Requirements with regard consultation are detailed in Section 7.1 of the standard.

Dispute Procedures

Certification bodies must have formal procedures for dealing with disputes. This must be open to all parties at any time to deal with non-conformance and challenges (ISO/IEC Guide 62:2.1.4; Guide 65:4.5 and the specific rules of the accreditation authority). This procedure shall be implemented when it has not been possible to resolve challenges regarding a decision made by the certification body in an assessment against this standard. Information on how a decision was made must be made available by the certification body on request in a way which does not breach commercial confidentiality,

PEFC Ireland has documented procedures for the establishment of an independent body for the settlement of disputes that may arise over the interpretation or implementation of the standard and that cannot be addressed in the dispute settlement procedures of the certification body, or the accreditation authority. If PEFC Ireland is concerned with the way in which a certification body is using the standard it shall raise a dispute through the certification body's own procedures. If this fails to resolve the matter then PEFC Ireland shall pursue it through the disputes procedure of the accreditation authority. If this fails to resolve the matter it shall be taken up through the disputes procedure of the International Accreditation Forum.

Any grievance relating to the standard setting process should be addressed to the Secretary of the Standard Setting Forum in accordance with Clause 2.8 of the Forum's Rules for Standard Setting and included at Appendix 5 below, and shall be considered and determined in accordance with the provisions contained therein.

As the Forum operates on the basis of consensus and represents all stakeholders, the decisions regarding dispute resolution in relation to any aspect of the Standard Setting Process are considered to meet the requirements of PEFC Council.

Periodic Monitoring

The standard and its implementation shall be periodically monitored and reviewed in the light of new scientific knowledge and practical experience. A full review of the standard will be undertaken at least every five years and the revision procedures shall be in accordance with the PEFC Council *Rules for Standard Setting*. Certification is normally valid for up to 5 years and is subject to periodic surveillance to ensure continued conformance with the standard. Surveillance shall be undertaken at a frequency and sampling intensity appropriate to the scale and intensity of management of the site. The expectation should be of an annual review (ISO/IEC Guide 65), but an annual site visit may not be mandatory in all cases. Re-assessment shall be carried out at least every 5 years.

Interpretation and Revision of the Standard

As the National Governing Body, PEFC Ireland coordinated the development of this standard. PEFC Ireland is a company limited by guarantee (Company Registration Number 461250) and is managed by a Board of Directors appointed by its members. Its objectives are "*to establish mechanisms for the recognition of schemes in Ireland for forest certification, for the certification of wood processing, manufacturing and associated activities, and for the certification of custody of materials used in the wood chain, which meet the criteria laid down by the Council of the PEFC*"

For the purposes of interpretation and revision of the standard, the members of PEFC Ireland will appoint a broadly based steering group which will have responsibility for interpreting the standard and ensuring its periodic revision, taking account of experience from its application and new information that arises. The steering group will provide advice to users of the standard on its interpretation.

Periodic revisions of the standard will be communicated by PEFC Ireland to the PEFC Council and the revisions will be dealt with by the PEFC Council in accordance with the rules relating to the *Endorsement and Mutual Recognition of National Schemes and their Revision*” (Annex 7 to the PEFC Council Technical Document).

Supporting Templates

Over time, PEFC Ireland may provide, by way of the website www.pefc.ie, sample templates of documentation that may assist forest owners / managers in preparing for certification. Such templates may include management plans, site monitoring forms, hazard identification and risk assessment forms, and any other relevant documents. It may also assist other stakeholders in understanding the nature of information required and procedures followed by forest owners / managers in preparing for certification.

6.12 IRISH LAWS AND INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS AND PROTOCOLS PERTINENT TO FOREST MANAGEMENT IN IRELAND

(See Appendix 3)

6.13 PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard: Rules for Standard Setting

(See Appendix 5)

SECTION 7: SCHEME GOVERNANCE

7.1 Accreditation & Certification Requirements

7.1.1 General Requirements

PEFC Ireland has adopted PEFC Council Annex 6: Certification and Accreditation Procedures.

This document was adopted by the General Assembly of the PEFC Council on 22 November 2002 and amended on 31 October 2003, 11 April 2005, 28 October 2005 and 27 October 2006.

In particular it recognises: PEFC certifications shall be carried out by impartial, independent third parties that cannot be involved in the standard setting process as governing or decision making bodies, or in the forest management and are independent of the certified entity. Certification bodies considered competent by the PEFC Council to carry out forest and/or chain of custody verification shall apply auditing procedures that fulfil or are compatible with the requirements of ISO 19011 and shall fulfil the following qualifications:

- The certification body carrying out forest management certification or chain of custody certification against a scheme specific chain of custody standard, shall fulfil requirements defined in:
 - a) ISO Guide 62 (EN 45 012) (1) if the certification is carried out as quality system certification,
 - b) ISO Guide 66 (2) if the certification is carried out as environmental management system certification,
 - c) ISO Guide 65 (EN 45 011) (3) if the certification is carried out as product certification (the term “product” is used in its widest sense and includes also processes and services)
 - d) Other requirements for certification bodies defined by the national accreditation body.
- The certification body carrying out chain of custody certification against Annex 4 (*Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products – Requirements*) shall fulfil requirements defined in ISO Guide 65 (EN 45011) (3)
- The certification body 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. The certification body carrying out chain of custody certification shall have the technical competence in forest based product procurement and processing, material flows in different stages of processing and trading.
- The certification body shall have a good understanding of the national PEFC system against which it carries out forest or chain of custody certification. Compliance of the certification body with the above requirements shall be verified by an accreditation as described in chapter 5.

7.1.2 Forest Management Certification

The PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard will be considered as the audit protocol for the Scheme. All new applicants to Forest Management Certification will adhere to the Standard.

7.1.3 Accreditation Bodies

Under the Scheme, it is an implicit requirement that all external forest management and chain of custody certification audits will be carried out by third party, independent certification bodies. These bodies will in turn be required to have been accredited by accreditation bodies operating to internationally accepted standards (ISO Guides 61, 62 & 65) and are members of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) or substantively equivalent bodies, as set out in PEFC Council Annex 6: Certification and Accreditation Procedures. An example will be the Irish national Accreditation Board (INAB), the national accreditation body for the Ireland.

7.1.4 Accreditation Criteria

The scope of accreditation of Certification bodies will be required to explicitly include:

- Certification of forests and woodland to the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard
and / or
- Chain of custody certification to the PEFC Council requirements: Annex 4: Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products / PEFC ST 2002:2010, as applicable;

As an integral part of such accreditation, certification bodies will be required to demonstrate the following:

- independence and objectivity;
- ability to carry out audits that are consistent and repeatable through the use of clear and precise procedures, and methods of recording and reporting;
- proven technical and professional competence and appropriate level of experience in forestry to hold the confidence of certification customers and the wider forest industry;
- proven professional competence and experience in certification procedures and auditing;
- thorough understanding of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard and the PEFC Chain of Custody Standards and the general requirements of Scheme;
- the maintenance of documented procedures for the competence, admission and training of auditors.

7.1.5 Roles of the Certification Body

Certification bodies operating under the Scheme will have the following key roles:

- carrying out independent, third party audits;
- awarding, suspending and withdrawing forest management and / or chain of custody certificates issued through the Scheme;
- controlling the use of certificates, through regular surveillance of the certificate holder;
- Notifying PEFC Ireland of the award, renewal and withdrawal of all certificates, within one month of all actions;
- Monitoring the use of PEFC logo licence use by their clients as set out by PEFC Ireland;

- To issue accredited Certificates which shall bear an accreditation symbol of the relevant Accreditation Body.

7.1.6 Competence Criteria for Auditors

Certification Bodies registered to operate under the Scheme are required to ensure that technical supervisors and auditors appointed by the Certification Body to carry out assessments against the requirements of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard and the PEFC Chain of Custody Standards meet the competence criteria for auditors developed by the appropriate Accreditation Body. Auditors must fulfil the general criteria of ISO 19011 for Quality Management Systems auditors or for Environmental Management Systems auditors?

7.1.7 Register of Certification Bodies

As Governing Body of the Scheme, PEFC Ireland will establish and maintain a register of Certification Bodies, approved by the Governing Body, as meeting the criteria to operate under the Scheme, which register would be made publicly available on request.

Accredited Certification Bodies will be required to establish and maintain a register of auditors appointed by them to carry out certification assessments on their behalf, which register would be made available to the Scheme Governing Body, if requested.

7.1.8 PEFC Notification of Certification Bodies

PEFC Ireland adopts Section 6 of PEFC Council Annex 6 which states:

“Certification bodies operating forest management and / or chain of custody certification against the PEFC endorsed national schemes / standards or the PEFC international chain of custody standard (*Annex 4 Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products – Requirements*) shall be notified by the PEFC National Governing Body of the relevant country.

Certification bodies operating chain of custody certification against the PEFC international chain of custody standard (*Annex 4 Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products – Requirements*) in countries without a PEFC National Governing Body shall be notified by the PEFC Council.

In order to ensure the independence of certification bodies the PEFC notification conditions decided by the PEFC National Governing Bodies or by the PEFC Council shall only cover:

- a) administrative conditions (e.g. communication of the certification body with the PEFC National Governing Bodies or the PEFC Council, transfer of information, etc.),
- (b) financial conditions (fees imposed on certified entities),
- (c) compliance with requirements for certification bodies verified through accreditation as described in chapter 5.

The PEFC notification conditions shall not discriminate against certification bodies or create trade obstacles.

7.2 Core Elements of the Scheme

7.2.1 Introduction

The following are the core elements of the certification process that will be required to be implemented by certification bodies carrying out audits under the Scheme. These elements will be common to both **forest management** and **chain of custody** certification:

7.2.2 Initial enquiry and application for certification

Whereby, the certification applicant or (“auditee”) requesting information about the certification process would be provided with documented information about the Scheme by the Scheme Governing Body and/or the Certification Body. This would be then followed by a formal application to the Certification Body from the auditee accompanied by all relevant documentation requested by the Certification Body.

7.2.3 Certification Quotation

Provided to the auditee by the Certification Body on the basis of the information provided in auditee’s application for certification. The quotation will indicate all costs chargeable by the Certification Body and will include a plan setting out the proposed scope and timetable for the certification assessment.

7.2.4 Voluntary “Pre-Assessment” or “Gap Analysis”

A voluntary process that may be requested by the auditee and/or recommended to the auditee by the Certification Body. Its purpose is to help ensure that the certification applicant fully understands the scope and requirements of the certification process. The pre-assessment should also serve to identify any significant shortfalls or “gaps” between the auditee’s current management systems and documentation and the requirements of the certification standard(s), giving the opportunity to the auditee to rectify these prior to the main assessment.

7.2.5 Main certification assessment (audit)

This will be carried out by an appropriately qualified team of assessors (auditors) appointed and formally contracted by the Certification Body.

The aim of the main assessment will be to assess the auditee’s forest management and/or chain of custody operations and documentation for compliance with the relevant standard(s). All relevant data and information sources, including internal audits and other documentation, will be used by the assessor team to help inform the audit process. (In the case of forest management certification, an appropriate sample of the auditee’s forest operations should be evaluated by the assessor team in the field. Measures will be taken to ensure that all actors involved in or operating on the certified area comply with the certification requirements)

7.2.6 Certification Report and Assessment (Auditor) Team recommendation.

Following the main assessment, the assessor (auditor) team will issue the auditee with a draft written certification report providing a summary of the key findings of the audit, including all non-compliances against the requirements of the standard(s). The auditee will then be given an opportunity to review the interim report. Thereafter, the auditee will be required to agree with the assessor team the corrective actions to be taken, or planned to be taken, against each of the non-compliances raised. These corrective actions will then be agreed with the Certification Body together with a defined time-scale for implementation.

Once the schedule of corrective actions is agreed and verified as having been carried out effectively, the assessor team submits the Report to the Certification Body with a recommendation as to whether or not a certificate should be awarded, together with any conditions.

A non-conformance will be raised when a requirement of the stated standard is not met. Non-conformances can be either major or minor. Major non-conformances mean that a certificate cannot be issued.

Certificates can be issued in the case of a minor non-conformance on the condition that the proposed corrective actions will be fully met within a stated time period.

7.2.7 Independent Review of the Certification Report

An appropriately qualified expert (or team of experts) is required to review the audit report for all forest certification assessments, in order to check the assessor team's methods and conclusions against the requirements of the certification standard(s), and to endorse or otherwise their certification recommendation. Such expert(s) will be appointed by, but operate independently from, the Certification Body.

7.2.8 Certification decision

The outcome of the certification will be based on the recommendation(s) made in the Certification Report and any subsequent comments made by the independent reviewer(s) (see above). The final decision whether or not to issue a certificate to the auditee will be taken by the independent review panel appointed by and acting on behalf of the Certification Body, but acting independently of the audit process.

The certification decision may be one of the following:

- approval with no conditions;
- approval but conditional upon specified corrective actions being implemented prior to award of the certificate
- deferred
- not approved

7.2.9 Award of Certificate

Issued to the auditee by the Certification Body in accordance with the procedures set out by the Certification body.

The Certificate awarded by the Certification body shall bear the symbol of the National Accreditation Body which has awarded the accreditation.

7.2.10 Period of certificate validity

Certificates can only remain valid for a maximum period of five years from the date of issue.

7.2.11 Surveillance audits

On-going surveillance (alternatively referred to as "monitoring" or "re-auditing") during the period covered by the Certificate.

Regular monitoring of the certificate holder will be carried out by the Certification Body at regular intervals (at least annually) following the main assessment in order to ensure continued compliance with the requirements of the certification standard(s). The Certification Body will identify any further non-compliance that may have arisen since the main assessment and check that appropriate corrective actions are implemented.

7.2.12 Stakeholder consultation

As part of the Scheme's commitment to accountability to, and participation by, the Irish forestry community and other legitimate stakeholders, an integral component of the Scheme's forest management certification process will be **stakeholder consultation**.

In Irish forestry, public "stakeholder" consultation is a process already widely engaged in by forest owners and managers as a condition of entry into Irish government forestry incentive Schemes. In the context of forest management certification under the Scheme, stakeholder consultation is thus a natural extension of the type of consultation already embarked on by many woodland owners /managers as an integral part of normal forest management practice.

A requirement for stakeholder consultation is explicitly stated within the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard and is thus the direct responsibility of the certification applicant. Under the Scheme, it would thus be the responsibility of the Certification Body, as part of the main certification assessment, to verify that an appropriate level of stakeholder consultation had been carried out by the auditee in accordance with the certification standard. The assessment will include verification that the auditee had provided an opportunity for, and where appropriate, taken account of, inputs from stakeholders with regard to the applicant's forest management. The Certification Body might initiate and take account of additional input from stakeholders during the course of the assessment, where it deems such action as being appropriate.

It shall be the responsibility of certification authorities to assess and verify stakeholder comments as part of the evaluation process using appropriate sampling independent of the applicant's own procedure each time a certificate is issued or renewed. Feedback shall be provided by the certification authority, on request, to respondents on how their comments have been addressed.

7.2.13 Public Summary Report

A guiding principle of the Scheme is to provide transparency of both the Scheme and the certification process to help underpin consumer confidence in certification as a whole. Accordingly, PEFC Ireland will require those Certification Bodies registered to partake in the Scheme to produce a "Public Summary Report". This will take the form of an executive summary of the Certification Report containing key information and results of the main assessment **except for material that is either commercial in confidence or considered of a confidential nature**. The Public Summary Report will be made publicly available by both PEFC Ireland and the relevant Certification Body.

Certification Bodies will be required to advise certification applicants of the Scheme requirement for the public summary report **at the outset of the certification process**. Applicants must give their **explicit written consent** to the publication of the public summary report. Such consent should be included as an element of the certification contract between the applicant and the Certification Body.

Certification "Register"

Certification Bodies operating under the Scheme will be required by PEFC Ireland to maintain and update documented records of all forest areas and chain of custody units certified by them under the Scheme, which register would include the following information, as a minimum:

For forest management certificates:

- Name of certificate holder.
- Date of issue of certificate and certification body reference number.
- Type of certificate issued i.e. forest management.
- Date of expiry of certificate.
- Area (in hectares) of forest certified.
- Location(s) of certified forest area(s).
- Annual timber production from certified forest area.

- Date of renewal of certificate.
- Date of suspension of certificate (if applicable). Date of withdrawal of certificate (if applicable).

For chain of custody certificates:

- Name of certificate holder.
- Date of issue of certificate.
- Type of certificate issued i.e. chain of custody and business grouping as specified by PEFC.
- Date of expiry of certificate.
- Location(s) of certified unit(s).
- Date of renewal of certificate.
- Date of suspension of certificate (if applicable).
- Date of withdrawal of certificate (if applicable).

Certification Bodies are required to provide the above information to PEFC Ireland no later than a calendar month following the award, renewal, suspension or withdrawal of every certificate issued by them.

PEFC Ireland shall maintain and update a central register of information of all forest management and chain of custody certificates issued under the Scheme, which register will be made publicly available on the Internet, via the PEFC Council website.

7.3 Forest Management: Certification Levels

7.3.1 Introduction

There are two main levels at which a woodland owner(s) or forest enterprise(s) might wish to apply for forest management certification under the Scheme:

- **Individual Certification**
- **Group Certification**

7.3.2 Individual Certification

Individual Certification is where forests belonging to a single forest owner (whether an individual, company or other entity) are assessed under a single process with a single certificate issuing to successful forest owners. This method is available for any size and type of forest, however, an individually owned certificate may be particularly appropriate or the preferred option for larger management units.

Certification Bodies operating under the Scheme will be required to have clearly documented procedures for the assessment of individual certification applicants including all the key elements and components.

7.3.3 Group Certification

Group Certification is where a number of (usually small) forest owners group their forests together and make a single Forest Certification application. The group is co-ordinated by a single person (a group manager) who ensures that all members of the group are compliant with the relevant forest management standard. Forest Certification auditors then evaluate a sample of woodland properties. All woodland properties are evaluated over time / subsequent audits.

Rationale: The rationale for group certification is to spread the costs of certification across a

number of owners, for whom the costs of being certified individually as small or medium sized owners might otherwise have been disproportionate to the benefits. The premise for this potential cost reduction is that only a sample of the forest areas within the group usually needs to be audited each year, however, this system of certification does require a degree of consistency of management systems and standards between the different forest holdings that make up the group. Where there is considerable variation and complexity in forest types within and between Group Members' forest areas, it may be necessary to significantly increase the intensity of sampling.

Certification costs will vary markedly depending on size and complexity of the forest areas involved. Ideally therefore, a group certificate is issued to an umbrella organisation or “**group entity**” that has the resources to carry out an adequate level of internal monitoring of the forest areas within the group to ensure full compliance with the certification standard and thus achieve certification.

7.3.4 Basis of Group Certification

The basis of Group Certification is in accordance with PEFC International Standard ST 1002:2010 *Group Forest Management Certification – Requirements* which was adopted by the General Assembly of the PEFC Council on 12 November 2010. This document cancels and replaces the requirements for group and regional certification as defined in Annex 3 of PEFC Council Technical Document.

The fundamental basis of group certification under the Scheme is that **all members of the group** must formally commit to complying with **all the requirements** of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard in respect of **all forests areas** included within the scope of the particular group Scheme concerned.

Responsibility for ensuring that all the participants in a group scheme are conforming to the terms of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard is centrally administered and is subject to central review and that all participants are subjected to an internal monitoring programme. Requirements of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard that are implemented at the local forest level (e.g. species choice, felling design, management of biodiversity etc) must be satisfied by each individual group member. Responsibilities for meeting elements of the Standard may not be “traded” between different group members or forest areas – e.g. with one group member meeting all biodiversity criteria whilst another member does not meet any.

7.3.5 Group Manager

The actual division of responsibilities may differ between different group certification Schemes. In some Schemes, the Group Entity may do little more than administer the group certification Scheme, with the individual members or their individual forest managers taking responsibility for all forest management activities. In these cases, the Group Entity is usually administered by a “**Group Manager**”. The kind of Scheme that is most appropriate for the Group Members concerned will depend on local circumstances.

7.3.6 Categories of Groups for Group Certification

There are various categories of “groups” for which group certification under the Scheme might be suitable, including for example:

- a formal or informal co-operative of neighbouring or other forest owners;
- a forest owners association or sub-set of the association;
- a forest manager/private practitioner or forest management company or other management practice managing woodlands on behalf of different owners;
- a timber marketing co-operative.

Applications for group certification will be made to the Certification Body by the Group Manager appointed to act on behalf of the Group Members.

7.3.7 Responsibilities of the Group Manager / Group Entity

In order to be eligible to apply for group certification, the Group Entity must:

- 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;
- provide a commitment on behalf of the whole group organisation to comply with the sustainable forest management standard and other applicable requirements of the forest certification scheme;
- establish written procedures for the management of the group organisation;
- keep records of:
 - the group entity and participants' conformity with the requirements of the sustainable forest management standard, and other applicable requirements of the forest certification scheme,
 - all participants, including their contact details, identification of their forest property and its/their size(s),
 - the certified area,
 - the implementation of an internal monitoring programme, its review and any preventive and/or corrective actions taken;
- establish connections with all participants based on a 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 participant from the scope of certification in the event of non-conformity with the sustainable forest management standard;

Note: The requirements for "participant' commitment" and "written contract or other written agreement with all participants" can also be satisfied by the commitment of and written agreement of the forest owners/managers' association, where the association 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.

- provide participants with a document confirming participation in the group forest certification;
- provide all participants with information and guidance required for the effective implementation of the sustainable forest management standard and other applicable requirements of the forest certification scheme;
- operate an annual internal monitoring programme that provides for the evaluation of the participants' conformity with the certification requirements, and;
- operate a review of conformity with the sustainable forest management standard, that includes reviewing the results of the internal monitoring programme and the certification body's evaluations and surveillance; corrective and preventive measures if required; and the evaluation of the effectiveness of corrective actions taken.

7.3.8 Certification Body Requirements for Group Certification

Certification Bodies registered to operate under the Scheme will be required to have developed documented requirements and procedures specifically for the assessment of Group Certification Scheme applications.

These procedures and requirements would include, *inter alia*:

- definition of the divisions of responsibility between Group Members and the Group Entity;
- requirements and responsibilities of the Group Entity;
- requirements and responsibilities of the Group Members;
- documentation and on-going administration of the group certification Scheme by the Group Entity, including criteria for eligibility for, and terms and conditions of, membership of the Group, suspension or expulsion of existing members and introduction of new Group Members;
- methodology for evaluation and on-going surveillance of the Group Entity's systems, documentation and control of the group Scheme;
- methodology for the sampling and auditing of the Group Members' forest areas at main assessment and at subsequent surveillance;
- internal monitoring by the Group Entity of Group Members and their forest activities;
- maintenance of Group Member records by the Group Entity;
- responsibilities of the Group Entity for on-going communication with the Certification Body regarding Group membership, new and expelled group members and reasons for expulsion;
- payment of group certification costs.

7.3.9 Group Certificate

Under the Scheme, the systems and documentation of the Group Entity will be assessed against the Certification Body's requirements, whilst the Group Members' forest management practices will be assessed against the requirements of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard. If successful, the **Group Entity** will be issued with a group forest management certificate, not the individual Group Members.

The Group Member will receive a Certificate of attestation from the Group manager to affirm the membership of the Group.

7.4 Chain of Custody

The Scheme adopts the PEFC Council Annex 4 and Appendices: Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products: Requirements; and PEFC International Standard ST 2002:2010 Chain of Custody of Forest based products - Requirements

NB: Annex 4 to the PEFC Council Technical Document was withdrawn and replaced by PEFC International Standard ST 2002:2010 (*Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products – Requirements*) on 26 November 2010. A one year transition period applies, accordingly Annex 4 will continue to apply to renewals of existing certificates during the transition period, but all new assessments for certification purposes will be carried against PEFC ST 2002:2010. At the end of the transition period, Annex 4 will cease to apply.

The text of Annex 4 was developed by the Chain of Custody and Labelling Working Group of the PEFC Council. It was officially adopted by the PEFC Council General Assembly on 29 October 2004 and amended on 17 June 2005. This standard can be endorsed and utilised by any forest certification or labeling scheme which includes chain of custody rules for the purposes of using declarations and/or labels referring to the origin of the raw material included in the forest based products.

PEFC ST 2002:2010 was developed in an open, transparent, consultative and consensus based process covering a broad range of stakeholders. The overall goal of the PEFC chain of custody is to provide customers of forest based products with accurate and verifiable information on the content of material originating in PEFC certified, sustainably managed forests or recycled material. Consumers in growing numbers are seeking evidence of environmentally sound business practices and demand reassurance and proof from forest-based industries that the wood they use comes from sustainably managed sources. Businesses therefore need a reliable and credible mechanism to provide their customers with information about the origin of the raw material. This chain of custody standard implemented together with forest certification and / or labelling schemes provides such a mechanism.

Under the Scheme, chain of custody certification will normally be carried out at the individual organisation / enterprise level.

Certification Bodies registered to operate under the Scheme will be required to have full knowledge of both Annex 4 and PEFC ST 2002:2010, and developed documented procedures for assessment of chain of certification applications. Such procedures would include, *inter alia*, methodologies for assessing that the applicant operates effective systems for:

- verifying that the origin of the wood raw material used in manufacturing and also procured products is from forests certified under PEFC endorsed Schemes;
- verifying the origin of certified raw materials before and after transport, handling and processing by appropriate documentation;
- ensuring that certified raw materials are clearly marked, physically separated or otherwise identified as certified when received;
- documentation and control;
- maintaining appropriate records of the suppliers of all wood based raw materials and products procured, processed and sold.
- Monitoring the correct use by certified bodies of PEFC logo contracts, if awarded

7.4.1 Multi-site or Group Chain of Custody Schemes

The requirements of PEFC Council Annex 4, Appendix 4: *Implementation of the chain of custody standard in multi-site organisations* and / or PEFC ST 2002:2010 Appendix 3: *Implementation of the chain of custody standard by multi-site organisations* shall be followed.

The aim of these appendices is to establish guidance for the implementation of the chain of custody requirements in an organisation with a network of sites, thus ensuring on the one hand, that the certification / registration of the chain of custody is practical and feasible in economic and operative terms and on the other, that the assessment provides adequate confidence in the conformity of the chain of custody. Certification of multi-site organisations also allows implementation and certification of the chain of custody in a group of typically small independent companies.

These appendices only include requirements applicable for the multisite organisation to implement the chain of custody requirements of this standard. Requirements and guidance for the certification / registration bodies for the assessment and certification of a multisite organisation are described in the IAF Guidance on the Application of ISO / IEC Guide 62:1996 and IAF Guidance on the Application of ISO / IEC Guide 66:1996.

Definitions

A multisite organisation is defined as an organisation having an identified central function (normally, and hereafter referred to as a “central office”) at which certain activities are planned, controlled and managed and a network of local offices or branches (sites) at which such activities are fully or partially carried out.

Such an organisation does not need to be a unique entity, but all sites shall have a legal or contractual link with the central office of the organisation and be subject to a common chain of custody which is subject to continuous surveillance by the central office. This means that the central office has the right to implement corrective actions when needed at any site. Where applicable this should be laid down in the contract between the central office and the sites.

Examples of possible multisite organisations are:

- organisations operating with franchises or companies with multiple branches where the sites are linked through a common ownership, management or other organisational link, and
- groups of independent legal enterprises established and functioning for the purposes of the chain of custody certification (producer group).

The producer group means a network of typically small independent enterprises associated together for the purpose of obtaining and maintaining chain of custody certification. The central office may be an appropriate trade association, or any other properly experienced legal entity that is either nominated for the purpose by a group of intending members or offers a group service managed for the purposes of and consistently with this standard. The central office can also be administered by one member of the group.

The Group Member will receive a Certificate of attestation from the Group manager to affirm the membership of the Group.

7.5 Award, Suspension & Withdrawal of Certificates

7.5.1 Responsibility

The award, suspension & withdrawal of forest management and chain of custody certificates under the Scheme will be the responsibility of the Certification Body concerned, as distinct from the licensing and control of use of any on-product and off-product labels which will be the explicit responsibility of the label licensing body. (see: PEFC ST 2001:2008 *Logo Usage Rules - Requirements*)

7.5.2 Procedures

All Certification Bodies registered by the Scheme Governing Body to operate under the Scheme will be required to have documented procedures which:

- describe the methodology for awarding certificates;
- describe the method by which legitimate certificates issued by the Certification Body are readily identifiable as such, and provide all the relevant information to facilitate use by the legitimate certificate holder;
- describe the conditions under which a certificate may be suspended or withdrawn;
- enable the Certification Body to exercise the right to suspend or withdraw a forest management or chain of custody Certificate if the terms and conditions of its issue are not met by the Certificate Holder;
- ensure that the relevant label or logo licensing body is informed within a specified time-scale about suspension or withdrawal of a certificate.

7.5.3 Information on Certificates

All certificates issued under the Scheme would include the following information:

- Certificate Number & Registration Code;

- name and address of the Certification Body;
- name and address of the Certificate Holder;
- scope of the certification;
- date of issue of the Certificate;
- statement to the effect that the named forest area(s) / Group Entity / Wood Processing Unit etc., meets the requirements of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard and/or Chain of Custody Code of Practice, independently audited by the relevant Certification Body;
- date of expiry of the certificate;
- signature of the issuing officer;
- the Certification Body mark and any other appropriate logo(s) which may be legitimately applied to the certificate.
- The Certificate awarded by the Certification body shall bear the symbol of the National Accreditation Body which has awarded the accreditation.

7.5.4 Renewal of Certificates

Certificates issued under the Scheme will be valid for a maximum of 5 years from date of issue, although continuation of certification during this period will be dependent on completion of a programme of satisfactory surveillance visits conducted by the Certification Body.

7.6 Use of Logos & Marks

7.6.1 Relating to Certification Bodies

Holders of certificates issued under the Scheme may use logos, marks or claims relating to the relevant Certification Body operating under the Scheme, provided that such usage is carried out in strict accordance with the rules and procedures issued by the Certification Body.

7.6.2 Relating to other Labels licensed by other Bodies

All usage of logo, trademarks and any associated claims made in connection with forest management certification and / or wood product chain of custody verification under the Scheme, will be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the appropriate third party licensing authority.

Such third party licensing bodies will be required to have documented procedures for the licensing, controlling and levying of fees for their respective logo usage under the Scheme.

The third party licensing bodies will be required to keep an up-to-date register of all on- and off-product logo users licensed in conjunction with the Scheme.

7.6.3 PEFC Logo Usage

The rules and guidance set out in PEFC International Standard ST 2001:2008 *Logo Usage Rules – Requirements* will be followed by all certificate holders)

7.7 Appeals, Complaints & Disputes

7.7.1 Certification Process

All Certification Bodies registered to operate under the Scheme will be required to have documented procedures for dealing with all appeals, complaints and disputes relating to the

certification process - up to and including the point of award, suspension or withdrawal of forest management and/or chain of custody certificates.

Such procedures will include the following:

- establishing and maintaining documented records of all appeals, complaints and disputes raised against the Certification Body and resultant actions;
- methodology, allocation of responsibilities and time-scales for responding to and addressing appeals, complaints and disputes and implementing and appropriate corrective actions;
- provision for periodic monitoring and review of procedures and case histories with a view to developing preventative action and continuous improvement in the certification process.

7.7.2 Interpretation of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard

For the purposes of interpretation and revision of the standard, the members of PEFC Ireland will appoint a broadly based steering group which will have responsibility for interpreting the standard and ensuring its periodic revision, taking account of experience from its application and new information that arises. The steering group will provide advice to users of the standard on its interpretation.

In the event of a dispute relating specifically to interpretation of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard which cannot be satisfactorily resolved by the Certification Body's independent review panel as part of the certification process, such a matter will be referred to the steering group for a ruling.

7.7.3 Referral to Irish Accreditation Service

In the event of an appeal, complaint or dispute concerning the certification process or conduct of the Certification Body not being resolved to the satisfaction of the auditee, Certification Body or other third party, the matter will be referred to the relevant Accreditation Body, which in Ireland will normally be the Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB). Failing resolution by the Accreditation Body the matter will then be referred to PEFC Ireland for a final decision.

7.7.4 Role of PEFC Ireland

The PEFC Ireland Board will function as the final arbiter of appeal in the case of disputes related to certification decisions, use of the PEFC logo and label and/or loss of the certificate. The entity that wishes to resort to this authority should contact, in writing, the National Secretary of PEFC Ireland normally, within one month of the grievance informing PEFC Ireland of the background and detail of the appeal.

The Board, or its nominated representatives, which may include non members who have specific expertise, will submit a report to the PEFC Ireland Board, who will issue a decision within a term of not more than two months. According to this decision, PEFC Ireland shall take the recommended actions and communicate these to the entities involved.

APPENDIX 1: PAN-EUROPEAN INDICATORS FOR SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT

Since the first set of Pan-European Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) were laid down in the early 1990s there has been a process of gradual improvement in knowledge and data collection systems, as well as understanding of information needs, that have led to refinements that were incorporated into an improved set of quantitative and qualitative Pan-European Indicators at the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) in 2003.

The details of the PEC are as follows. A section in [] is included under each criterion showing the interpretation of the PEC in relation to the delivery of forestry in Ireland

Criterion 1: Maintenance and Appropriate Enhancement of Forest Resources and their Contribution to Global Carbon Cycles

[The forest estate in Ireland has increased steadily over the past 50 years. This has been due to the afforestation of agricultural land. Government policy, as set out in *Growing for the Future*, is that the forest estate should continue to expand at a rate of 20,000 ha per annum to the year 2030.

Given that Irish forests are generally young and fast growing and that new land is planted each year, the potential of Ireland's forest estate to sequester carbon is quite high.]

1.1 Forest area

Area of forest and other wooded land, classified by forest type and by availability for wood supply, and share of forest and other wooded land in total land area

1.2 Growing stock

Growing stock on forest and other wooded land, classified by forest type and by availability for wood supply

1.3 Age structure and/or diameter distribution

Age structure and/or diameter distribution of forest and other wooded land, classified by forest type and by availability for wood supply

1.4 Carbon stock

Carbon stock of woody biomass and of soils on forest and other wooded land

Criterion 2: Maintenance of Forest Ecosystem Health and Vitality

[In a forest, the health and vitality of the dominant vegetation – the tree cover – reflect the condition of the ecosystem as a whole and its ability to sustain production into the future. While it may arise for diverse reasons, deterioration in forest health provides a warning signal which merits investigation. If deterioration is the result of some transitory influence, then it may give no cause for concern. However, if it is a response to deterioration in soil conditions or to some biotic or abiotic external influence, then it may indicate a long-term threat to the sustainability of the ecosystem.]

2.1 Deposition of air pollutants

Deposition of air pollutants on forest and other wooded land, classified by N, S and base locations

2.2 Soil condition

Chemical soil properties (pH, CEC, C/N, organic C, base saturation) on forest and other wooded land related to soil acidity and eutrophication, classified by main soil types

2.3 Defoliation

Defoliation of one or more main tree species on forest and other wooded land in each of the defoliation classes "moderate", "severe" and "dead"

2.4 Forest damage

Forest and other wooded land with damage, classified by primary damaging agent (abiotic, biotic and human induced) and by forest type.

Criterion 3: Maintenance and Encouragement of Productive Functions of Forests (Wood and Non-Wood)

[The sustainable concept links the environmental, the social and the productive functions of forests. To ensure that reserves are conserved while still maintaining a satisfactory flow of products, harvesting must not exceed long-term productive capacity. At the same time, a competitive climate must be maintained to ensure the flow of investment to forestry and to forest industries. The latter is an essential component of sustainable employment and income creation.]

3.1 Increment and fellings

Balance between net annual increment and annual fellings of wood on forest available for wood supply

3.2 Roundwood

Value and quantity of marketed roundwood

3.3 Non-wood goods

Value and quantity of marketed non-wood goods from forest and other wooded land

3.4 Services

Value of marketed services on forest and other wooded land

3.5 Forests under management plans

Proportion of forest and other wooded land under a management plan or equivalent

Criterion 4: Maintenance, Conservation and Appropriate Enhancement of Biological Diversity in Forest Ecosystems

[Biodiversity describes the variability among living organisms and the ecosystems of which they are part. Three conceptual levels of biodiversity are recognized – ecosystem, species and genetic. Forests are complex ecosystems and important sources of biodiversity. Production forests are undisturbed for phases during their rotation and are hosts to a wide range of plants and animals. Enhancing biodiversity through improved operational practices, planning guidelines, recommendations and training is a central component of sustainable forest management. Certain species and habitats are protected under EU Directives and national legislation, but there are numerous natural and semi-natural habitats within and associated with forests which will benefit from sustainable management practices. This in turn contributes to the quality and diversity of Irish forests. Forest ecosystems are poorly understood. Continued research will be required to evaluate the processes involved so that the best management practices can be developed. A National Biodiversity Plan, which accommodates forestry, is being drafted.]

4.1 Tree species composition

Area of forest and other wooded land, classified by number of tree species occurring and by forest type

4.2 Regeneration

Area of regeneration within even-aged stands and unevenaged stands, classified by regeneration type

4.3 Naturalness

Area of forest and other wooded land, classified by “undisturbed by man”, by “semi-natural” or by “plantations”, each by forest type

4.4 Introduced tree species

Area of forest and other wooded land dominated by introduced tree species

4.5 Deadwood

Volume of standing deadwood and of lying dead-wood on forest and other wooded land classified by forest type

4.6 Genetic resources

Area managed for conservation and utilisation of forest tree genetic resources (in situ and ex situ gene conservation) and area managed for seed production

4.7 Landscape pattern

Landscape-level spatial pattern of forest cover

4.8 Threatened forest species

Number of threatened forest species, classified according to IUCN Red List categories in relation to total number of forest species

4.9 Protected forests

Area of forest and other wooded land protected to conserve biodiversity, landscapes and specific natural elements, according to MCPFE Assessment Guidelines

Criterion 5: Maintenance and Appropriate Enhancement of Protective Functions in Forest Management (notably Soil and Water)

[The importance of forests in protecting soil and water has been recognized for a long time. In Ireland, concern has often focused on the negative impacts of forests and forest operations on soil and water. This particularly applies to compaction, erosion and acidification of soils and to eutrophication, acidification and sedimentation of surface waters. In order to ensure that terrestrial and aquatic systems are maintained, it is important that the appropriate soil and water quality indicators are carefully monitored.]

5.1 Protective forests – soil, water and other ecosystem functions

Area of forest and other wooded land designated to prevent soil erosion, to preserve water resources, or to maintain other forest ecosystem functions, part of MCPFE Class “Protective Functions”

5.2 Protective forests – infrastructure and managed natural resources

Area of forest and other wooded land designated to protect infrastructure and managed natural resources against natural hazards, part of MCPFE Class “Protective Functions”

Criterion 6: Maintenance of Other Socio-Economic and Cultural Functions and Conditions

[The concept of sustainable forest management transcends ecological and production criteria. It also relates to society values, the quality of life and the best interests of current and future generations. Thus, this criterion concerns the ability of forestry and forestry institutions to meet social goals and to deal with special or unique needs.]

6.1 Forest holdings

Number of forest holdings, classified by ownership categories and size classes

6.2 Contribution of forest sector to GDP

Contribution of forestry and manufacturing of wood and paper products to gross domestic product

6.3 Net revenue

Net revenue of forest enterprises

6.4 Expenditures for services

Total expenditures for long-term sustainable services from forests

6.5 Forest sector workforce

Number of persons employed and labour input in the forest sector, classified by gender and age group, education and job characteristics

6.6 Occupational safety and health

Frequency of occupational accidents and occupational diseases in forestry

6.7 Wood consumption

Consumption per head of wood and products derived from wood

6.8 Trade in wood

Imports and exports of wood and products derived from wood

6.9 Energy from wood resources

Share of wood energy in total energy consumption, classified by origin of wood

6.10 Accessibility for recreation

Area of forest and other wooded land where public has a right of access for recreational purposes and indication of intensity of use

6.11 Cultural and spiritual values

Number of sites within forest and other wooded land designated as having cultural or spiritual values

(35 indicators)

APPENDIX 2: FOREST SERVICE REFERRAL AND NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

The Forest Service in the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food operates a referral and notification system for all applications received for grant aid (e.g. afforestation or forest roads) and for felling licences. This involves a consultation process which is summarized as follows:

Areas	Consultation Type	Consultation Period
Areas of all Sizes	If proposed afforestation is within 60m of a dwelling or associated building the applicant must consult with the owner occupier.	N/A
Areas >2.5 ha.	The Forest Service supplies details to the public through an appropriate provincial paper of County, District Electoral Division, Townland and area for all proposals > 2.5 hectares.	1 month from date advertisement appears in the paper.
Areas > 5 ha.	Areas > 5 ha. Where there is a fisheries consideration designated sensitive for water quality considerations are referred to the relevant Regional Fisheries Board.	Normally 1 month
Areas > 25 ha.	All sites > 25 ha. Are sent to the relevant local authority for their observations.	Normally 1 month
Areas > 40 ha.	Areas > 40 ha. Where there is a fisheries consideration designated non sensitive for water quality are referred to the relevant Regional Fisheries Board.	Normally 1 month
Areas > 50 ha. ⁴	An EIA and planning permission is required for these areas.	Varies
Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) & Special Protection Areas (SPA) & Natural Heritage Areas (NHA)	Applications for operations in these areas received by the Forest Service are referred to the National Parks and Wildlife Service.	Normally 2 months
Outstanding Landscapes	The Forest Service refer these to the Local Authority.	Normally 1 month
Airport	The Forest Service refer these to the Aviation Authority.	Normally 1 month

More details of the types of situations where referral, notification and consultation is required by the Forest Service are provided in their Forestry Schemes Manual in the chapter entitled "Environmental Protection and Controls Consultation Process" That chapter sets out the environmental standards governing forestry and the consultative process undertaken when an application for approval is made to the Forest Service.

⁴ In accordance with SI No. 538 of 2001, all applications for afforestation are subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening process undertaken by the Minister. The screening determines whether an application requires an EIA. An Environmental Impact Assessment must accompany applications for the afforestation of areas of under 50 hectares where a proposed development is deemed by the Minister to have a significant environmental impact.

APPENDIX 3:

IRISH LAWS AND INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS AND PROTOCOLS PERTINENT TO FOREST MANAGEMENT IN IRELAND

The following is a list of Irish national laws pertinent to forest management.

Legislation	Potential Impact
<i>Wildlife Acts, 1976 and 1999 Wildlife Amendment Act (2000)</i>	<i>Flora, fauna, environment and forest management</i>
<i>Forestry Acts, 1946, 1956 and 1988</i>	<i>Forest management</i>
<i>Local Government (Planning and Development) Acts, 1963 to 1999</i>	<i>Control of development and forest management</i>
<i>Planning and Development Act, 2000 Commencement (No. 3) Order, (2001) S.I. No. 599 of 2001. Planning and Development Regulations (2001) S.I. No. 600 of 2001.</i>	<i>Control of development and forest management</i>
<i>National Monuments Acts, 1930 to 2004 (Including Approval of Consent (1) Order, 1995)</i>	<i>Forest management in relation to archaeology</i>
<i>National Cultural Institutions Act 1997</i>	<i>Forest management in relation to archaeology</i>
<i>Occupiers Liability Act, 1995</i>	<i>Forest management</i>
<i>Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005. Safety Health and Welfare at Work - General Application Regulations (2007) and Construction Regulations (2001)</i>	<i>Forest management both in forest and in office</i>
<i>Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992</i>	<i>Forest management and environment</i>
<i>Heritage Act, 1995</i>	<i>Heritage protection</i>
<i>Environmental Impact Assessment – S.I. No. 100 of 1996</i>	
<i>European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations, 1996. S.I. No. 101 of 1996.</i>	
<i>Fisheries Consolidation Act 1959 and all amendments, Fisheries Act 1980 and all subsequent amendments. S.I. regulation for the Water Framework Directive: S.I. No. 722 of 2003</i>	<i>Forest management in relation to water and fisheries</i>
<i>Local Government (Water Pollution) Acts, 1977 to 1990</i>	<i>Forest management and environment</i>
<i>European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations, 2001. S.I. No. 538 of 2001.</i>	
<i>Waste Management Act, 1996</i>	<i>Forest management and environment</i>
<i>Local Government (Special Amenity and Conservation Orders) Act, 1976</i>	
<i>Litter pollution Act, 1997</i>	<i>Forest management and environment</i>
<i>Occupiers Liability Act 1995</i>	<i>Forest Management</i>
<i>Roads Act, 1993</i>	<i>Haulage</i>
<i>Road Transport Acts, 1932 to 1999</i>	<i>Haulage</i>

The following is a list of European (EU) laws pertinent to forest management in Ireland.

Legislation	Potential Impact
<i>Council Directive (92/43/EEC) and amending directives on the conservation of natural habitats of wild fauna and flora</i>	<i>Flora and fauna and forest management</i>

<i>Council Directive (79/409/EEC) and amending directives on the conservation of wild birds</i>	<i>Wild birds and forest management</i>
<i>EU (Conservation of Wild Birds) (Amendment) Regulations 1999</i>	
<i>European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997</i>	
<i>European Communities (Natural Habitats) (Amendment) Regulations, 1998</i>	
<i>Council Directive (2000/60/EC) establishing a framework for community action in the field of water policy</i>	<i>Forest management and the environment</i>
<i>Council Directive (2000/29/EC) on protective measures against the introduction into the Member States of harmful organisms of plants or plant products and against their spread within the Community</i>	<i>Forest protection</i>
<i>Council Directive (1999/105/EC) on the marketing of forest reproductive material</i>	<i>Tree improvement and forest protection</i>
<i>Council Directive (85/337/EEC) and amending directives on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment</i>	<i>Control of development</i>
<i>Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC).</i>	<i>Preventing and Remediating Environmental Damage</i>
<i>EU Water Framework Directive (Directive 2000/60/EC)</i>	<i>Water</i>
<i>Council Regulation (EEC3528/86) on the protection of forests against atmospheric pollution</i>	<i>Environment</i>
<i>EU Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (Directive 2001/42/EC)</i>	<i>Environment</i>

Information in the above tables was resourced from the following two publications which contain a more detailed analysis of these laws:

- Maguire, B. 2001. A Review of Legislation that Impacts on Irish Forestry. COFORD, Dublin.
- McHugh, D and G. Gallagher. 2004. Trees, Forests and the Law in Ireland. COFORD, Dublin.

The following is a list of international agreements and protocols pertinent to forest management in Ireland:

a. International Labour Organisation - Conventions

- Freedom of Organization
Convention 87 on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise, 1948
Convention 98 on the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining, 1949
- Abolition of Forced Labour
Convention 29 on Forced Labour, 1930
Convention 105 on Abolition of Forced Labour, 1957
- Equal Rights / No Discrimination
Convention 100 on Equal Remuneration, 1951
Convention 111 on Discrimination (Employment and Occupation), 1958
- Child Labour
Convention 138 on Minimum Age for Admission to Employment, 1973

b. International Agreements

Ireland has signed the following international agreements, among others:

- the *Bern Convention* of 1979 for the preservation of Europe's wild animals and native plants and their natural habitats;
- the *Convention on Biological Diversity* of Rio de Janeiro of June 5, 1992, concerning biological diversity;
- the *Bonn Convention* of June 23, 1979, for the preservation of migrating wild animal species;
- the *Washington Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)* of March 3, 1973, concerning the international trade in endangered species of wild animals and plants.

- the *Ransar Convention on Wetlands*, 1971 - an intergovernmental treaty which provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. There are 45 Ramsar sites in Ireland.
- the *Kyoto Protocol*, negotiated by more than 160 nations in December 1997, aims to reduce net emissions of certain greenhouse gases (primarily carbon dioxide (CO₂)).
- the *International Tropical Timber Agreement* of 1994 which seeks to improve the international market conditions for sustainably grown tropical timber.
- the *Helsinki Protocols* resulting from the Ministerial Conference for Protection of Forests in Europe, 1994.
- the *Lisbon Protocols* resulting from the Ministerial Conference for Protection of Forests in Europe, 1998.
- The Vienna Protocols resulting from the Ministerial Conference for Protection of Forests in Europe, 2002.
- The United Nations *Framework Convention on Climate Change* in 1992.
- *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage*, Paris, 1972
- *the Aarhus Convention*
- *The European Landscape Convention*, 2000.
- *The European Convention on the Protection of Archaeological Heritage*

APPENDIX 4: **Certification bodies operating in Ireland**

BM TRADA Certification Ltd

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APPENDIX 5: PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard: Rules for Standard Setting

Version 3: Ratified by the Standard Setting Forum on the 25th November 2009

Rules for Standard Setting

1. Objectives and Scope

This document defines the procedures and process for the development, maintenance and revision of the forest management certification standard for Irish forestry, in conformance with the requirements of the PEFC technical documents in force.

2. Standard Setting Process for Forest Certification

2.1 Framework for Forest Certification

Forest certification shall be carried out against an Irish Forest Certification Standard endorsed by the PEFC Council.

2.2 Independence

The development, maintenance and revision of the Standard shall be independent from the certification or accreditation process.

2.3 Level for Standard Setting

A single national Standard shall be developed by a national standard setting Forum.

2.4 Standard Setting Forum

2.4.1 The Standard Setting Forum shall be co-ordinated by PEFC (Ireland) Ltd, the National Governing Body for the PEFC Council in Ireland.

2.4.2 The Forum shall represent the different aspects of sustainable forest management in Ireland. Relevant interested parties will be invited to participate in the standard setting process, including forest owners, forest industry, environmental and social non-governmental organisations, trade unions and retailers. The overall aim is that the Forum should provide a balanced representation of the various interest groups and organisations.

2.4.3 The Forum shall be organised into 3 chambers – social, environmental and economic – and the aim will be to have 5 nominees for each chamber. The social chamber shall be made up of representatives of forest user and wider countryside organisations and trade union representatives. The environmental chamber shall be made up of representatives of environmental non-governmental organisations and other organisations and bodies whose primary interest is environmental. The economic chamber shall be made up of representatives of Coillte Teoranta, private forest owners, forest management companies and processors and retailers of Irish forest products.

Note: in this clause “representative” denotes an organisation, not an individual.

2.4.4 If and when vacancies arise in any of the chambers through the withdrawal of an organisation, the Forum shall discuss and agree which organisations should be invited to fill the vacancies. Where a choice has to be made between 2 or more organisations or groups to fill a vacancy, all of which have an appropriate interest, preference shall be given to the organisation or group with the largest membership.

2.4.5 The Forum may agree to invite other individuals to attend Forum meetings as non-voting members.

2.4.6 The Forum shall elect an independent chairman and approve the appointment of a secretary.

2.4.7 The aim shall be to make decisions by consensus, defined as a lack of sustained objection. Where there is sustained objection the chairman shall ensure that there is full discussion of the issue before putting the matter to a vote. If a consensus cannot be reached, then a decision will be taken by votes cast by the chambers with each chamber having one vote. Within each chamber decisions will be taken by a simple majority vote: if a majority is not obtained the chamber will abstain. When a decision is required to be put to a vote, the vote shall be deferred until the next meeting of the Forum.

2.4.8 When a nominated representative of the Forum is unable to attend a Forum meeting he/she shall seek an alternate from his/her organisation. An alternate shall have the right to vote.

2.4.9 A meeting of the Forum shall be considered quorate when a minimum of 2 chambers are represented by at least one representative from each.

2.5 Conduct of Forum Meetings

2.5.1 Forum members will be notified of meeting dates at least 30 days in advance of meetings, and the agenda will be circulated at least 10 days before the meetings. Where possible papers for the meeting will be circulated with the agenda.

2.5.2 The secretary will produce a draft minute of the meetings and circulate this to members within 10 working days of the meeting. Any comments by the members regarding errors of fact must be communicated to the secretary within 10 working days of receipt of the draft minute. The minutes will be approved at the subsequent Forum meeting. Forum decisions will be recorded in the minutes. Decisions on substantial issues raised under AOB shall not be made until the subsequent meeting.

2.5.3 Members of the Forum shall act in a manner that is respectful of other members, refrain from unproductive argument and generally support the purpose of the Forum.

2.6 Technical Working Group

A Technical Working Group (TWG) will be appointed by the Forum, under an independent chairman. The TWG will consist of 2 representatives from each of the chambers, those representatives to be appointed by their respective chambers. The purpose of the TWG will be to discuss and agree a draft forest certification standard to be put to the Forum for their approval. Members of the TWG shall seek to ascertain the views of other Forum members within their chamber and represent these views at TWG meetings.

2.7 Transparency and Consultation

2.7.1 The start of the standard setting process shall be communicated to the public. Information on the standard development process and the minutes of the Forum meetings shall be made available to all interested parties on request. The draft certification standard, when agreed by the Forum, shall be posted on a website and information on the consultative process for the draft standard shall be communicated to the public.

2.7.2 There shall be a formal consultation process on the draft certification standard, with a minimum consultation period of 60 days. A report, providing an analysis of the responses to the consultation, shall be prepared and made available to the Forum. The views of all relevant interested parties will be documented, discussed and considered in an open and transparent way following which the Forum will agree changes to be made to the draft standard. General

information on the changes made as a result of the consultation process will be made publicly available.

2.8 Complaints, Appeals and Disputes

Any party who wishes to lodge a complaint regarding any aspect of the conduct of the Standard Setting Forum must do so in writing to the Secretary of the Standard Setting Forum. If the nature of the complaint is unclear the Secretary may seek further information from the complainant. The Secretary will maintain a documented record of all appeals, complaints and disputes raised against the Forum and the resultant actions.

The Forum will consider any complaint at its next full meeting and decide at that meeting how best to address the issues raised by the complainant. The complainant will be notified of the decision of the Forum in writing within 10 days of that decision.

In the event of the complainant not being satisfied with the decision of the Forum, the Board of PEFC (Ireland) Ltd will function as the final arbiter of appeal. An appellant should contact in writing the National Secretary of PEFC (Ireland) Ltd within 28 days of receiving notice of the Forum's decision informing PEFC (Ireland) Ltd of the background and details of the appeal.

The Board of PEFC (Ireland) Ltd may establish an Appeals Board to consider an appeal, the members of which must not be members of the Forum. The Appeals Board will report to the board of PEFC (Ireland) Ltd with its recommendations. The recommendations will be taken into consideration by the Board of PEFC (Ireland) Ltd in formulating its decision which it will issue within a period not exceeding three months from the date of receipt of the appeal. According to this decision, PEFC (Ireland) Ltd will take the recommended actions and communicate these to the appellant and other affected parties.

3. Pilot Testing

3.1 The final draft of the forest certification standard shall be assessed by means of a pilot study prior to submission to PEFC Ireland. This pilot study will be conducted on at least one private and one Coillte owned property.

3.2 Recommendations for improving the draft standard, resulting from the pilot testing, shall be discussed at a Forum meeting prior to final submission.

4. Review of the Forest Certification Standard

The certification standard and implementation arrangements shall be reviewed in the light of new scientific information and practical experience at least every 5 years. PEFC Ireland shall initiate the review process, making the timetable and arrangements for the review publicly available. The review will take into account revisions required by PEFC Council.



Promoting Sustainable Forest Management

PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard

Standard approved by the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard Forum on October 13th 2010

Introduction

Forest Certification

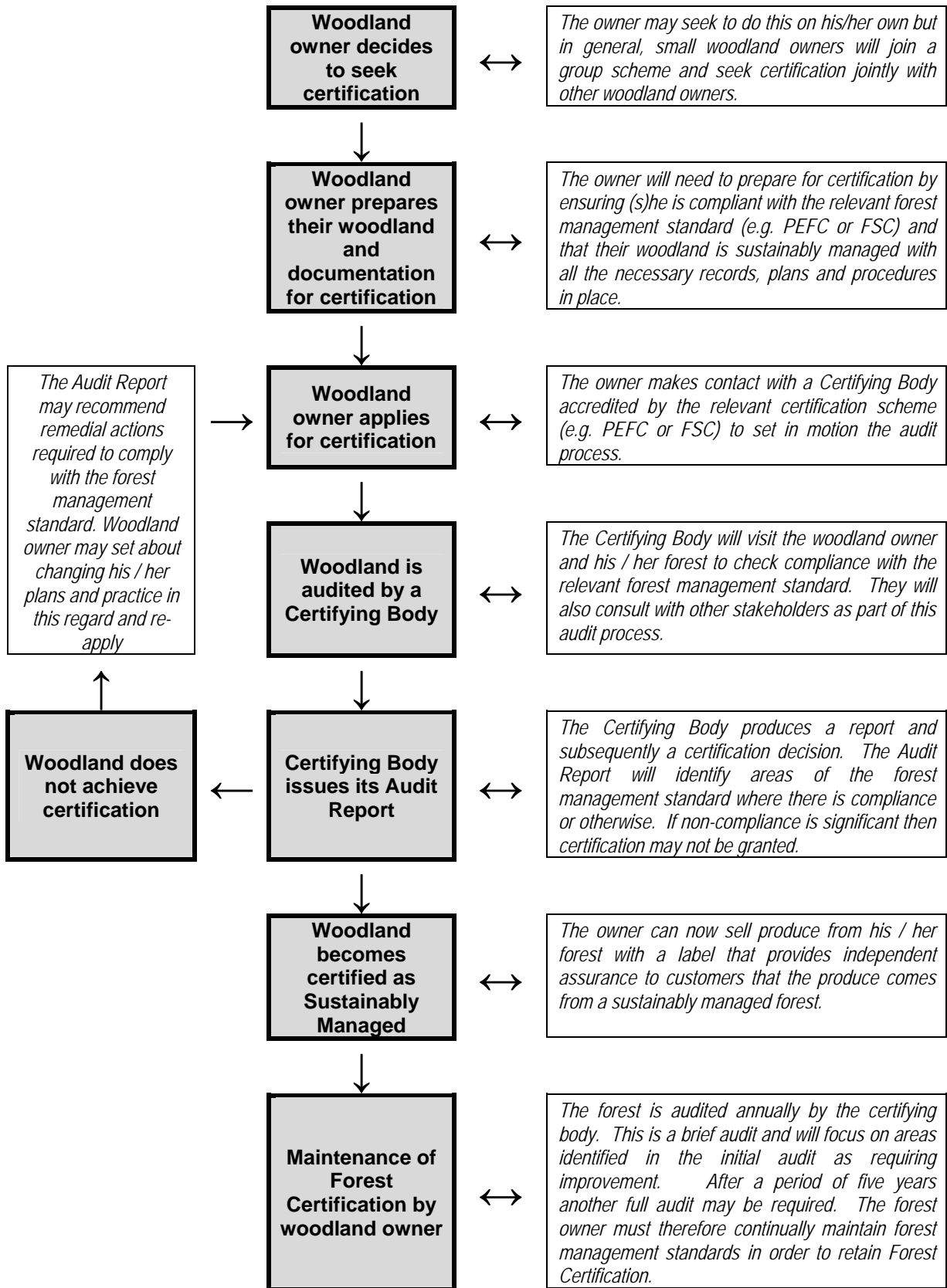
The international forest products market is increasingly seeking assurance about the quality, environmental and social impacts of forest management. One way to provide this assurance is through independent verification against a published standard which defines appropriate and effective forest management. Forest products from forests which meet these standards can then be identified as such when offered for sale in the market place. Consumers then have the option of buying forest products which they can be sure come from well managed forests. Forest certification is a voluntary process whereby forest owners decide whether or not to submit their forests for an audit carried out by an accredited certification body against an agreed forest management standard. There are a number of different forest certification schemes in operation around the world. In Europe, the two most active schemes are operated by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes (PEFC). This document is a draft forest management standard for Ireland for PEFC Certification. The Flow chart on the following page outlines in general terms the steps involved in forest certification.

Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes (PEFC)

The PEFC Council is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organisation, founded in 1999 which promotes sustainably managed forests through independent third party certification. The PEFC provides an assurance mechanism to purchasers of wood and paper products that they are promoting the sustainable management of forests. PEFC is a global umbrella organisation for the assessment of and mutual recognition of national forest certification schemes developed in a multi-stakeholder process.

PEFC (Ireland) Ltd (hereafter referred to as PEFC Ireland) is the National Governing Body of the PEFC in Ireland. The company was registered in August 2008 and became a full member of the PEFC Council at the General Assembly held in Canberra in October 2008. Sponsored by the Irish Timber Growers Association, and with members drawn from economic, environmental and social stakeholders, PEFC Ireland administers the PEFC Council's schemes and initiatives in Ireland, and promotes sustainable forest management and the use of credibly certified timber and wood-based products.

Flow Chart Outlining the Forest Certification Process



Preparation of the PEFC Ireland Forest Certification Standard

This document is a forest management standard for forests in Ireland being considered for certification under the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes (PEFC). The standard has been drawn up following an inclusive and transparent process which has involved a balanced representation from economic, social and environmental interests with knowledge of the Irish forestry sector. It has also been designed to comply with existing Irish and European forest management guidelines and legislation, including the Pan-European Operational Level Guidelines for Sustainable Forest Management agreed at the third Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe in Lisbon in 1998. The standard was developed in accordance with the *Rules for Standard Setting* contained in Annex 2 to the PEFC Council Technical Document, and with reference to a similar standard successfully developed and operational in the UK called the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS).

The standard was approved on 13th October 2010 by the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard Forum which is structured to have equal representation from those with environmental, social and economic interests in forest management. The draft standard was prepared by a Technical Working Group (TWG) appointed by the Forum. The TWG is also structured to have equal representation from those with environmental, social and economic interests in forest management. The Chairman of both the Forum and the TWG is independent.

The draft standard was submitted for public consultation on 25th March 2010. To encourage participation in the public consultation exercise, key stakeholders were notified directly and invited to respond, the process announced to the relevant media, and the draft standard was posted on the internet, together with a response form. The public consultation process lasted for a period of 79 days, closing on 11th June 2010, after which all responses were sent to an independent consultant for analysis. Following receipt of the analysis, the Forum discussed the findings and agreed amendments.

During the public consultation period, pilot testing of the draft standard was conducted in two State (Coillte) and one private forest by an accredited forest auditor. The results from the pilot testing were considered by the Forum and the agreed improvements and recommendations incorporated into the standard prior to submission to the PEFC Council for endorsement and mutual recognition by the national members organisations.

Certification Options for Forest Owners

There are currently two different options open to forest owners seeking to attain PEFC Certification for their forests in Ireland. These are as follows:

Group Certification

Group Certification is where a number of (usually small) forest owners group their forests together and make a single Forest Certification application. The group is coordinated by a single person who ensures that all members of the group are compliant with the relevant forest management standard. Forest Certification auditors then evaluate a sample of woodland properties. All woodland properties are evaluated over time / subsequent audits.

Individual Certification

Individual Certification is where forests belonging to a single forest owner (whether an individual, company or other entity) are assessed under a single process with a single certificate issuing to successful forest owners.

The Structure & Content of the Standard

The structure of the certification standard relates to the way in which forest management is implemented, addressing specific aspects of management or types of operations in turn. The sections of the standard are as follows:

Section 1: Compliance with the law and conformance with the requirements of the certification standard

- Section 2: Management planning
- Section 3: Woodland design: creation, felling and replanting
- Section 4: Operations
- Section 5: Protection and Maintenance
- Section 6: Conservation and enhancement of biodiversity
- Section 7: The community
- Section 8: The Forestry Workforce

Each section is broken down into sub-sections and within each sub-section are specific requirements. Each requirement is set out as follows:

<p>Requirement A requirement is a compulsory element of the standard. Woodland management must meet all relevant requirements and auditors will check that requirements are being met. Requirements are stated as “shall” implying that they are compulsory elements of the standard.</p>	<p>Guidance Guidance is provided to assist both the woodland owner / manager and the certification body to understand how requirements should be applied in practice. Guidance may also suggest other sources of information which will help both parties understand a particular issue in more detail. Guidance may also elaborate on some requirements and explain the meaning of certain terms or phrases used in the requirements.</p>
<p>Means of Verification These suggest the type of objective evidence, in the form of documents, actions, site conditions or discussions, that certification bodies may consider in order to verify that the requirement is being met. The verifiers suggested are not exclusive or exhaustive – certification bodies will not always use all the verifiers suggested, and may seek verification in other ways.</p>	

Procedures for Use of the Standard

The standard is used equally by both woodland owners / managers seeking certification and independent accredited auditors or certification bodies when assessing compliance. The following sections seek to provide clarity for all parties with regard to how the standard should be used and interpreted.

Accreditation

Accreditation is the process used to ensure that those who undertake the certification audit are truly independent and professionally competent. Certification bodies conducting audits against the standard must be accredited to undertake woodland management certification by a national or international accreditation body. Accreditation bodies must be members of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) or a member of IAF’s special recognition regional groups and implement procedures described in ISO/IEC 17011:2004 and other documents recognised by the above organisations.

Area Specificity

The areas to be certified under the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard shall be individually identified and delineated Woodland Management Units (WMUs). A WMU is a forest property or properties covered under a single forest management plan and within a landscape unit¹. A WMU may be owned by an individual, a group of individuals (sharing the one property), a company, a charity or any other legal entity. WMUs may contain smaller units e.g. compartments and sub-compartments but they should not be split for certification purposes. There is no obligation for a forest owner seeking certification of a WMU in one landscape unit, who may own a separate WMU in a separate landscape unit to seek certification for such a separate WMU. The owner / manager of each WMU shall have made a formal commitment to meet the requirements of this standard².

¹ A Landscape Unit is an area of broadly homogenous landscape character.

² This is detailed in requirement 1.1.4 of the standard.

Scale of Application of the Requirements

All requirements of this standard must be satisfied at Woodland Management Unit (WMU) level. This means that where, for example, there is a requirement for a percentage of the woodland area to be managed with biodiversity as a priority, this must be the case within each individual WMU. A WMU may be made up of a series of fragmented woodlands (e.g. on a farm or an estate) and in such cases requirements must be satisfied at WMU level and not necessarily within each fragmented parcel of woodland. However, in such cases:

- Plans for implementing a requirement unevenly in different parcels are based on good practice which aims to meet the purpose of the requirement.
- Wherever appropriate, management is based on a design plan

Application to Different Scales of Woodland

All woodlands seeking to obtain certification, regardless of size, must comply with the requirements of this standard. However, in some instances, specific thresholds for specific requirements are stated (e.g. Requirements 2.3.2, 3.2.3, 3.2.4, and 5.1.2).

Flexibility in Meeting Requirements

It is recognised that a woodland owner or manager may feel that certain requirements of this standard are either inappropriate for or irrelevant to a particular woodland. In such circumstances, the professional judgement of the independent certification body will be called upon to assess whether flexibility should be shown in this regard. In making this assessment, the independent certification body may seek the opinion of an appropriate specialist and in all cases shall ensure that there is compliance with the spirit of the standard.

Timing for Full Implementation of the Requirements Relating to Woodland Structure & Layout

A special feature of woodland management is its long term nature. Decisions made in the past have a strong influence on the woodlands of today. Therefore, when assessing conformance with the certification standard, independent certification bodies will not evaluate woodlands solely on the present structure and layout, but will consider the plans for management in the short, medium and long term.

Where present structure and layout fail to meet the requirements, due to historic reasons, woodland owners / managers will need to demonstrate through management planning documentation, design plans and on-going activities in the woodland that they are taking active measures to achieve conformance with the requirements. They will also need to demonstrate that there is a time frame for achieving full conformance based on sound management principles.

Stakeholder Consultation

Certification to the PEFC Irish Standard shall provide an opportunity for, and take account of, inputs from stakeholders. Responsibility for undertaking consultation lies with the applicant in accordance with the requirements of this standard³. The applicant shall invite consultees, through direct communication and public notification, to copy their responses direct to the certification body. Where this is undertaken as an integral part of a wider consultation, such as by a government department, there should be no requirement to present a copy to the certification authority, provided that the information is available to the public. As part of the evaluation process, each time a certificate is issued or renewed, it shall be the responsibility of certification bodies to assess and verify stakeholder comments using appropriate sampling, independent of the applicant's own procedure. Feedback shall be provided by the certification body, on request, to respondents on how their comments have been addressed.

³ Requirements with regard consultation are detailed in Section 7.1 of the standard.

Peer Review

The certification body carrying out forest certification shall have technical competence in forest management, on its economic, environmental and social impacts, and on the forest certification criteria. Audit reports shall be subject to a separate independent review by competent experts. Peer reviewers shall have access to all comments from the stakeholder consultations, the applicant and the certification body, together with an assessment of how they have been addressed.

Transparency

The process of certification to the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard is transparent and includes the production of an informative, publicly available summary for each certificate. The summary shall provide information on how and why the certification decision was made, to allow stakeholders to see for themselves what happened. This should include an explanation of how any areas of non-conformity with the requirements of the standard have been addressed to the satisfaction of the certification body, and a clear statement of any outstanding conditions which need to be addressed.

Dispute Procedures

Certification bodies must have formal procedures for dealing with disputes. This must be open to all parties at any time to deal with non-conformance and challenges (ISO/IEC Guide 62:2.1.4; Guide 65:4.5 and the specific rules of the accreditation authority). This procedure shall be implemented when it has not been possible to resolve challenges regarding a decision made by the certification body in an assessment against this standard. Information on how a decision was made must be made available by the certification body on request in a way which does not breach commercial confidentiality,

PEFC Ireland is documenting procedures for the establishment of an independent body for the settlement of disputes that may arise over the interpretation or implementation of the standard and that cannot be addressed in the dispute settlement procedures of the certification body, or the accreditation authority. If PEFC Ireland is concerned with the way in which a certification body is using the standard it shall raise a dispute through the certification body's own procedures. If this fails to resolve the matter then PEFC Ireland shall pursue it through the disputes procedure of the accreditation authority. If this fails to resolve the matter it shall be taken up through the disputes procedure of the International Accreditation Forum.

Periodic Monitoring

The standard and its implementation shall be periodically monitored and reviewed in the light of new scientific knowledge and practical experience. A full review of the standard will be undertaken at least every five years and the revision procedures shall be in accordance with the PEFC Council *Rules for Standard Setting*.

Interpretation and Revision of the Standard

As the National Governing Body, PEFC Ireland coordinated the development of this standard. PEFC Ireland is a company limited by guarantee (Company Registration Number 461250) and is managed by a Board of Directors appointed by its members. Its objectives are "*to establish mechanisms for the recognition of schemes in Ireland for forest certification, for the certification of wood processing, manufacturing and associated activities, and for the certification of custody of materials used in the wood chain, which meet the criteria laid down by the Council of the PEFC*"

For the purposes of interpretation and revision of the standard, the members of PEFC Ireland will appoint a broadly based steering group which will have responsibility for interpreting the standard and ensuring its periodic revision, taking account of experience from its application and new information that arises. The steering group will provide advice to users of the standard on its interpretation.

Periodic revisions of the standard will be communicated by PEFC Ireland to the PEFC Council and the revisions will be dealt with by the PEFC Council in accordance with the rules relating to the *Endorsement and Mutual Recognition of National Schemes and their Revision*” (Annex 7 to the PEFC Council Technical Document).

Supporting Templates

Over time, PEFC Ireland may provide, by way of the website www.pefc.ie, sample templates of documentation that may assist forest owners / managers in preparing for certification. Such templates may include management plans, site monitoring forms, hazard identification and risk assessment forms, and any other relevant documents. It may also assist other stakeholders in understanding the nature of information required and procedures followed by forest owners / managers in preparing for certification.

Certification Standard

Section 1

Compliance with the law and conformance with the requirements of the certification standard

1.1 Compliance and conformance

<p>1.1.1 Requirement There shall be compliance with the law. There shall be no substantiated outstanding claims of legal non-compliance related to woodland management.</p>	<p>Guidance Certification is not a legal compliance audit. Certification authorities will be checking that there is no evidence of non-compliance with relevant legal requirements including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Management and employees understand and comply with all legal requirements relevant to their responsibilities.• All documentation including procedures, work instructions and contracts meet legal requirements.• No issues of legal non-compliance are raised by regulatory authorities or other interested parties.
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No evidence of non-compliance from audit.	

<p>1.1.2 Requirement There shall be compliance with any relevant codes of practice, guidelines or agreements.</p>	<p>Guidance Appendix A lists relevant current guidelines and codes of practice. Certification authorities will be checking that there is no evidence of non-compliance with relevant codes of practice, guidelines or agreements and that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Management and employees understand and comply with all requirements relevant to their responsibilities.• All documentation including procedures, work instructions and contracts are in compliance.• No issues of non-compliance are raised by regulatory authorities or other interested parties.
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No evidence of non-compliance from audit	

<p>1.1.3 Requirement Property rights and land tenure arrangements shall be clearly defined, documented and established for the relevant forest area.</p>	<p>Guidance The forest owner must be able to prove legal ownership or tenure of the land for which certification is sought, if required. (See also Section 7.2)</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of folio documents or other legally accepted proof of ownership or tenure OR • A signed declaration from a solicitor detailing nature and status of tenure documentation. 	

<p>1.1.4 Requirement The forest owner, manager or occupier shall be committed to conformance to this certification standard and has declared an intention to protect and maintain the ecological integrity of the woodland in the long term.</p>	<p>Guidance In cases where there has been a previous substantial failure of compliance with this standard, resulting in the withdrawal of forest certification, then changes in ownership, control and management regime shall have been implemented, or a two year track record of conformance established before certification can be re-considered.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signed declaration of commitment. • Evidence of authority to act on behalf of the owner (where the commitment is signed by the manager / agent) 	

1.2 Protection from illegal activities

<p>1.2.1 Requirement The forest owner / manager shall take all reasonable measures to stop illegal or unauthorised uses of the woodland which could jeopardise fulfilment of the objectives of management.</p>	<p>Guidance Illegal and unauthorised uses of woodland may include activities such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dumping • Trespass of livestock • Anti-social behaviour
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The forest owner / manager is aware of potential and actual problems • Evidence of pro-active response to actual current problems 	

Section 2 Management planning

Forest management planning should aim to maintain or increase the area of forest or woodland, and enhance the quality of the economic, ecological, cultural and social values of forest resources, including soil and water. This should be done by making full use of available expertise in areas such as land-use planning and nature conservation. The forest management planning process shall incorporate:

- Inventory and mapping of the resource
- Setting of forest management objectives
- Stakeholder consultation
- Operational planning (for a defined planning period)
- Securing the productive potential of the forest
- Provision for revision of the plan

2.1 Documentation

<p>2.1.1 Requirement Identification, inventory and mapping of the forest resources shall be established and maintained. These shall include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An inventory of the timber and non-timber resources • Identification and mapping of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • designated areas (see also 3.1.1) • special areas, features, characteristics and sensitivities of the forest • management units 	<p>Guidance Inventory and mapping of the woodland resource shall include appropriate aspects of physical, silvicultural, ecological, archaeological, social and landscape issues and any special characteristics or designations.</p> <p>The documentation and level of detail associated with the forest management planning process should be appropriate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The size of the woodland • Its environmental and social sensitivity • The intensity of management • The likely impact of the planned operations • Context in the landscape <p>The PractiSFM Multi-Resource Inventory Manual provides guidance on the forest resources which should be considered as well as methodologies for data collection and data collection forms.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management plan • Maps and records • Field inspection 	
<p>2.1.2 Requirement The forest management plan shall incorporate a long term policy for the woodland in which forest management objectives are set and prioritised. A silvicultural system(s) best suited to achieve these objectives shall be nominated and a rationale provided for this selection.</p>	<p>Guidance The management objectives and priorities, in tandem with the multi-resource inventory will form the basis of decision making in the management plan.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management plan 	

<p>2.1.3 Requirement</p> <p>There shall be an operational plan listing all the planned forest operations for a five year period. This shall include specific measures based on the appropriate assessment for any designated areas. It shall also include specific measures relating to any special areas, features, characteristics and sensitivities of the woodland as identified in the inventory. A rationale for prescribed management and operational techniques shall be provided. An outline felling and regeneration plan for a 20 year period shall also be provided. The five year operational plan shall be reviewed and updated every 5 years.</p>	<p>Guidance</p> <p>The documentation and level of detail associated with the management plan should be appropriate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The size of the woodland • The intensity of management planned • The ecological and social sensitivity of the woodland • The context of the woodland in the landscape • The likely impact of planned operations <p>The management planning documentation should cover all elements of the requirement but may also refer to other documents as appropriate, including surveys or permissions from statutory or regulatory bodies.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management plan • Field inspection 	

<p>2.1.4 Requirement</p> <p>While respecting the confidentiality of commercially and/or environmentally sensitive information, woodland managers, upon request, shall make publicly available management planning documentation, or a summary of its primary elements, including those listed in 2.1.1, 2.1.2 & 2.1.3.</p>	<p>Guidance</p> <p>The public provision of management planning documentation is an important element in the fulfilment of sustainable forest management, particularly in relation to social responsibility.</p> <p>There is no requirement to make available financial information.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that the forest owner / manager has recorded and responded to any reasonable requests for copies of this documentation • Discussion with owner / manager 	

2.2 Productive Potential

<p>2.2.1 Requirement Forest management systems and operations shall be planned and carried out in a way that maintains or enhances the health, vitality and productive capacity of the site. Where the inventory (2.1.1) has identified degraded forest ecosystems there shall be a plan to rehabilitate these, where possible and appropriate, by silvicultural means.</p>	<p>Guidance The productive capacity of the site refers to the ecological, social and economic functions of the woodland. This means that forest operations should adopt techniques that avoid direct or indirect damage to forest, soil or water resources.</p> <p>Degraded forest ecosystems may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overgrazed woodlands • Woodlands where there has been considerable soil compaction • Woodlands that have been over-run with invasive species such as rhododendron or laurel
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management plan • Operational plans • Field inspection 	
<p>2.2.2 Requirement Harvesting and regeneration plans shall not jeopardise the long-term productive potential of the woodland and are consistent with management objectives.</p>	<p>Guidance Examples of growth and yield estimates include :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average growth rates or Yield Class for major species on different site types. • Forecasted harvest areas and yields (thinning and felling) for different crop types in future years. <p>Accuracy of growth and yield estimates should be appropriate to the scale and intensity of the operation.</p> <p>There may be some circumstances (e.g. during restructuring), where harvest levels will exceed the increment.</p> <p>There may be some circumstances (e.g. replacing exotic species with native species), where management intervention may legitimately reduce the productive potential of the woodland.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory records • Management plan • Growth and yield estimates • Production records • Demonstrated control of thinning intensity • Discussion with forest owner / manager • Field inspection 	

<p>2.2.3 Requirement Authorised harvesting of non-timber woodland products shall not permanently exceed, or diminish, the long term productive potential of the woodland.</p>	<p>Guidance Non-timber woodland products include foliage, moss, fungi, berries, seed, venison and other game products.</p> <p>The management plan should encompass the sustainable management of the non-timber resource if a significant quantity is being harvested.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion with forest owner / manager • Field inspection • Records of sales of non-timber woodland products • Management plan 	

<p>2.2.4 Requirement Harvesting and timber sales documentation shall enable all timber sold to be traced back to the woodland of origin.</p>	<p>Guidance This is to ensure that timber can be traced back to the point of sale from the woodland (standing, at roadside or delivered). The forest owner / manager is responsible for ensuring that, at this point of sale, sufficient documentation is provided to prove that timber is from his / her woodland. This is then used by other entities along the supply chain (known as the chain of custody) to identify and trace timber back to the forest of origin.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harvest records (contracts / output records / contractor invoices) • Timber invoices • Despatch dockets • Chain of custody codes on all invoices and delivery documents 	

2.3 Implementation and revision of the plan

<p>2.3.1 Requirement The implementation of operations shall be in close agreement with the details included in the management planning documentation. In cases where there is a material deviation from the planned rate of progress or methods used, this shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be justified by the forest owner / manager • be consistent with the overall forest management objectives • not compromise the ecological integrity of the woodland. 	<p>Guidance Changes in planned timing of operations may be justified on ecological, social or economic grounds if overall management practices continue to comply with the other requirements of this standard.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross correlation between management planning documentation and operations on the ground • Discussion with forest owner / manager • Field inspections 	

<p>2.3.2 Requirement</p> <p>The forest owner / manager shall implement a monitoring programme designed to measure progress in the achievement of the forest management objectives (2.1.2) and compliance with this certification standard.</p> <p>Monitoring procedures shall be consistent and replicable over time to allow useful comparison of results and assessment of change. To this end, the monitoring records shall be kept in a consistent format and shall be made publicly available, upon reasonable request.</p> <p>The parameters monitored will at a minimum include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harvesting yield • Woodland composition and structure • Fauna and flora, in particular key species • Other ecological, social and economic aspects 	<p>Guidance</p> <p>Monitoring should consist of :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision during forest operations to ensure compliance with the management plan • Regular management visits and systematic collection of information • Long term studies, where appropriate, particularly on changes to the woodland ecosystem. <p>Information from studies (particularly research programmes) carried out on one site can be extrapolated and the results used to assist management of other similar sites. For more complex long term studies it is often more important for the forest owner / manager to be aware of the results and conclusions of such studies than to try and replicate them in their own woodland.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <p>All Woodlands</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring records and / or field notes <p>Woodlands larger than 100 ha.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A documented monitoring plan • Baseline information from studies in similar woods • An analysis of data collected • Summary of results 	<p>Key species are regarded as those listed in Annex 2, 4 and 5 of the EU Habitats Directive and those listed in Irish Red Data Books and Lists (Appendix D)</p> <p>Detail of information collected should reflect the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size of the enterprise • Intensity of operations • Management objectives • Sensitivity of the site <p>Monitoring should include means to identify any significant changes, i.e. those likely to have sufficient impact to alter existing ecosystems or endanger the flora and fauna present, in particular any rare species.</p> <p>Sensitive data may be withheld where justified in the interest of protecting any special species or feature.</p>

<p>2.3.3 Requirement</p> <p>The implications of the results of monitoring (2.3.2) shall be taken into account by the forest owner / manager, particularly during revision of the management planning documentation.</p>	<p>Guidance</p> <p>The monitoring results, similar to the multi-resource inventory, are important in informing management decisions. The management plan will be reviewed every 5 years and at this stage monitoring results should be formally incorporated into the revised plan.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring records • Management planning documentation • Discussion with forest owner / manager • Field inspections 	

Section 3

Woodland design: creation, felling and replanting

3.1 Assessment of environmental impacts

<p>3.1.1 Requirement The potential environmental impact of new planting and other woodland plans shall be assessed before operations are implemented and shall be in full compliance with current Forest Service guidelines and regulations.</p>	<p>Guidance Environmental assessments are separate to the monitoring programme (see 2.3.2 and 2.3.3) as they are carried out in advance of any operations. These assessments include the checks listed below (as per Forest Service Requirements, Guidelines and Code of Best Practice). In many cases an initial environmental assessment by the forest owner / manager will lead to plans being referred to other expert agencies for their input. Situations where this is the case are indicated with an R.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In an acid sensitive area (R) • In an area sensitive for fisheries (R) • In a Local Authority designated water scheme area (R) • In or within 3 km of a designated area (pNHA, SAC, SPA or National Park) (R) • Identification of existing habitat areas or features of value • Identification of an aquatic zone • Identification of fauna and flora present on or frequenting the site • Presence or proximity of an archaeological site or feature (R) • In a designated prime scenic area or outstanding landscape (R) • Identification of areas of potentially high erosion risk <p>Thresholds for requirement of a full Environmental Impact Assessment are currently: Afforestation: > 50 ha. (or < 50 ha. where a proposed development is deemed by the Minister to have a significant environmental impact) New Forest Roads: > 2000 metres</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant and Felling Licence applications and approval documentation provided for and by the Forest Service • Environmental assessment documents (where relevant) • Discussions with forest owner / manager 	

<p>3.1.2 Requirement The results of the environmental assessments (as carried out in 3.1.1) shall be incorporated into planning and implementation in order to minimise adverse impacts and to secure and enhance environmental gains. This shall be done in full compliance with current Forest Service guidelines.</p>	<p>Guidance It is essential that the results of environmental assessments are fully integrated into management planning and decisions.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management planning documentation • Field inspections • Discussions with forest owner / manager • Review of contract documents and instructions provided to contractors 	

3.2 Location and design

<p>3.2.1 Requirement New woodlands shall be located and designed in ways that will maintain or enhance the visual, cultural and ecological value and character of the wider landscape. Particular attention shall be paid to using naturally occurring and locally appropriate species to create a diverse woodland edge.</p>	<p>Guidance Full guidance is given in the Forest Service "<i>Forestry and the Landscape Guidelines</i>" and this includes consideration of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size • Arrangement • Location • Shape • Pattern • Proportion • Edge • Margin, texture & colour • Roadsides • Waterbodies
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management planning documentation • Design plan • Maps • Field inspections 	

<p>3.2.2 Requirement New planting shall be designed in such a way as to ensure the creation over time of a diverse woodland.</p>	<p>Guidance A diverse woodland may be achieved through one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of diverse species and provenances • Planting mixed stands • Variation in site types and productivity • Phased planting • Retention of open ground • Design and creation of wind firm edges • Adoption of management systems that avoid the need for final felling over a short time period. <p>See also Requirement 3.3.2</p> <p>The Forest Service Afforestation Grant Scheme, Forestry & Environment Protection Scheme (FEPS) and Native Woodland Scheme all require and provide incentives for the creation of diverse woodland through both the rules of each scheme and the requirement for compliance with the various Forest Service Guidelines and Code of Best Practice.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management planning documentation • Discussions with the forest owner / manager • Maps • Field inspections 	

<p>3.2.3 Requirement Even aged woodlands shall be gradually restructured to diversify ages and habitats using a design plan (See Requirement 3.2.4) which is reflected in the management plan.</p> <p>This requirement does not apply to woodlands of < 5 hectares.</p>	<p>Guidance Restructuring should be planned and implemented following current best practice in forest design. Guidance on forest design and the landscape is provided in the Forest Service "<i>Forestry and the Landscape Guidelines</i>". For detailed guidance on undertaking forest design planning the Forestry Commission Great Britain Forestry Practice Guide, "<i>Forest Design Planning – A Guide to Good Practice</i>" should be used.</p> <p>The diversification of even aged woodland of all sizes is also influenced by the requirements set out in 3.2.4, 3.3.2, 6.1.2 & 6.2.1.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design plan • Management planning documentation • Maps • Discussions with the forest owner / manager • Field inspections 	

<p>3.2.4 Requirement</p> <p>Clearfelling and regeneration shall be in accordance with the principles and guidelines set out in the Forestry Commission GB Forestry Practice Guide, “<i>Forest Design Planning – A Guide to Good Practice</i>” and in Forest Service guidelines and policy documents.</p> <p>All felling and replanting shall be in accordance with a design plan appropriate to the scale of the proposed felling and the sensitivity of the landscape.</p> <p>The rate of felling shall be in accordance with the design plan and shall not exceed 25% of the woodland area in any five year period except in one of the following circumstances:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The wind hazard classification is ≥ 4 There is a strong landscape reason for felling > 25% in a 5 year period Where felling is being undertaken to enhance environmental values and satisfies Requirement 3.5.1 Where the owner / manager can demonstrate that there is a substantial financial penalty in premature or delayed felling to achieve re-structuring. 	<p>Guidance</p> <p>Guidance on forest design and the landscape is also provided in the Forest Service “<i>Forestry and the Landscape Guidelines</i>”.</p> <p>The Forest Service allow a maximum coupe size of 25 hectares. Felling is regulated by the Forest Service under the Felling Licence system in which statutory bodies and Local Authorities are consulted before the issuing of a licence.</p> <p>Where a woodland area is made up of contiguous stands under different ownerships, this requirement should be applied to the total woodland area.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management plan Design plan Discussions with the forest owner / manager Field inspection 	

3.3 Species selection

<p>3.3.1 Requirement</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Species selected for new woodlands, natural regeneration and restocking shall be suited to the site and matched to the objectives Where broadleaves are being planted, native and naturalised species shall be preferred to non-native. If non-native species are used it shall be shown that they will clearly outperform native or naturalised species in meeting the objectives. 	<p>Guidance</p> <p>Results of research into site suitability of different species shall be used to assist in species selection. Because of the uncertain effects of climate change, selecting a range of reproductive material may be prudent.</p> <p>Where appropriate and possible use natural regeneration or planting stock from parental material growing in the local native seed zone (native species) or region of provenance (non-native species).</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussions with the forest owner / manager demonstrate that consideration has been given to a range of species, including native species, in meeting management objectives Provenance certificates Field inspection 	<p>A list of naturalised species in Ireland is provided in Appendix F.</p>

<p>3.3.2 Requirement</p> <p>The proportions of different species in new planting, or planned for the next rotation of an existing plantation, shall be as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <65% primary species >20% secondary species >10% open space >5% native or naturalised broadleaf <p>The requirement in relation to open space does not apply to woodlands less than 10 hectares in size.</p>	<p>Guidance</p> <p>Refer to Section 6.2.1 which gives the requirements relating to areas managed with biodiversity as a major objective. Additional open space and / or native shrubs can be provided instead of native broadleaved trees if they are not suited to the site. Open space with wildlife value contiguous with the woodland can be counted towards the requirement if it is managed as part of the woodland.</p> <p>Where appropriate and possible, use natural regeneration or planting stock of native provenance for native species.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management planning documentation • Field inspections 	

<p>3.3.3 Requirement</p> <p>a) Non native plant (non-tree) and animal species shall only be introduced if they are non-invasive and bring environmental benefits.</p> <p>b) All introductions shall be carefully monitored by owner / manager</p>	<p>Guidance</p> <p>The requirement includes the re-introduction of once native animals not currently present in Ireland.</p> <p>Forest owners are not held responsible for introductions prior to entering into the certification process.</p> <p>Appendix G provides a list of banned invasive species in Ireland.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documented impact assessment of any introductions made after the first certification • Discussions with the forest owner / manager • Field inspections 	

3.4 Silvicultural systems

<p>3.4.1 Requirement</p> <p>a) A silvicultural system(s) best suited to achieve the forest management policy and objectives as set out in 2.1.2 shall be selected and a rationale provided for this.</p> <p>b) For WMUs greater than 100 hectares in size, 10% of this area will be identified and plans made for the phased implementation of low impact silvicultural systems with a preference for use of natural regeneration where parent seed is suitable.</p> <p>c) Where there are a range of silvicultural options on wind-firm sites, lower impact silvicultural systems shall be increasingly favoured where they are suited to the soil conditions and species.</p>	<p>Guidance</p> <p>Low impact silvicultural systems are ones other than clearfelling which use natural structures and processes to maintain and enhance the health and vitality of forests and in so doing the multiple products and services they provide. The choice of silvicultural system should take into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Silvicultural characteristics of the species • Site limitations including potential growth rates and wind firmness • Intended stem size and quality • Current and future markets for timber products • Impacts on the landscape and wildlife • Age structure and felling plan of nearby woodlands • Ecological processes and natural disturbance regime for that woodland type • Historical management practices • Views of local people <p>The 10% of area in WMUs greater than 100 ha. where low impact silvicultural systems are required can be inclusive of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • areas satisfying requirement 6.2.1 • areas retained as part of the restructuring requirements outlined in 3.2.3 and 3.4.2 • areas being restored to semi-natural woodland or non-woodland habitats as outlined in requirements 3.5.1, 6.3.1, and 6.3.2.
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management Plan • Rationale for selected silvicultural system(s) • Discussions with the forest owner / manager 	
<p>3.4.2 Requirement</p> <p>Traditional management systems that have created valuable ecosystems, such as coppice, shall be maintained and where appropriate, developed.</p>	<p>Guidance</p> <p>Traditional management systems may, in addition to being associated with valuable ecosystems, be play an important social or cultural function worthy of being supported and maintained.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management Plan • Map showing any areas of traditional systems • Discussions with the forest owner / manager • Field inspection 	

3.5 Conversion to non-forested land

<p>3.5.1 Requirement</p> <p>Felling of part of a woodland and restoration and/or transformation of that part to non-forested land shall only be carried out:</p> <p>a) Where planning permission has been obtained for the change</p> <p>Or</p> <p>b) Where both of the following conditions are met:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. there is approval from relevant authorities2. the new land use meets at least one of the following criteria:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the new land use will be more ecologically valuable than the woodland• the new land use constitutes an improvement in the landscape• the new land use is required for cultural or archaeological maintenance or restoration	<p>Guidance</p> <p>Tree felling in Ireland is regulated by the Forest Service under the terms of the 1946 Forestry Act. While it is normal for the Minister to attach a replanting obligation as a condition of felling permission, it can be waived at the Minister's discretion.</p> <p>In many cases, particularly on sensitive sites or for larger areas, felling licence applications are referred by the Forest Service to other expert agencies for their input.</p> <p>This requirement does not apply in cases where the state has compulsorily purchased the area in question.</p> <p>See Section 3.1.1 for guidance on threshold requirements of an EIA.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Management Plan• Records of consultations, felling licence and associated conditions• Consultation with interested parties• Ecological assessments• Field inspection	

Section 4 Operations

4.1 General

<p>4.1.1 Requirement The planning of woodland operations shall involve:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> An assessment of the potential impacts of that operation on the woodland's social, economic and ecological value. Identifying suitable equipment and systems to avoid negative impacts and enhance positive impacts. Giving special consideration and care to operations on soils which are particularly prone to erosion and compaction and where operations might lead to excessive erosion of soil into watercourses. Obtaining relevant permission(s), consultation with directly affected local people and giving any formal notification required. A full briefing with staff / contractors with regard to the proposed operations and where heavy machinery is to be used, a written operational plan and map shall be provided to staff / contractors. 	<p>Guidance Good forest management operations take into account all of the functions of the forest (social, ecological and economic) and ensure that these functions are positively served. For example, this means that forest operations should have low or positive impacts on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soil structure Water quality Biodiversity Recreational values Timber quality Internal views Landscape Rate of water run-off Growth rates People
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management Plan Operational Plan Documented permissions Consultation records Discussions with forest owner / manager Documented environmental appraisal 	
<p>4.1.2 Requirement Implementation of operational plans shall be monitored by the forest owner / manager.</p>	<p>Guidance Appropriate monitoring may range from regular supervision of active operations to internal audits of active and completed sites. The scale and intensity of monitoring operations will be determined by the scale of the forestry enterprise and the intensity of the operations being carried out.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussions with forest owner / manager Monitoring records 	

4.2 Harvesting operations

<p>4.2.1 Requirement Harvesting operations shall conform to best practice as detailed in the relevant sections of the Forest Service “<i>Forest Harvesting and the Environment Guidelines</i>” and “<i>Forestry and Water Quality Guidelines</i>”.</p>	<p>Guidance The relevant part of the Forest Service “<i>Forest Harvesting and the Environment Guidelines</i>” is in the section titled Harvesting Operation Guidelines.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field Inspections • Discussions with forest owner / manager / employees / contractors • Completed harvesting site monitoring forms • Contract documents and instructions provided to contractors 	<p>The relevant part of the Forest Service “<i>Forestry and Water Quality Guidelines</i>” is in the section titled Harvesting.</p>
<p>4.2.2 Requirement Where harvesting operations which involve the removal of more than just the timber stem are planned and where there is a risk of significant negative effects on soil structure or productivity, an environmental appraisal shall be undertaken.</p>	<p>Guidance This requirement refers to whole tree harvesting, residue bundling and any other form of harvesting involving more than just the timber stem.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field Inspections • Management Plan • Documented environmental appraisal 	<p>Potential significant negative effects include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaching • Soil compaction • Nutrient loss • Loss of soil carbon • Run-off
<p>4.2.3 Requirement There shall be no burning of lop and top.</p>	<p>Guidance</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field Inspections 	
<p>4.2.4 Requirement Timber shall be harvested efficiently and with minimum loss or damage.</p>	<p>Guidance Harvesting should particularly seek to avoid:</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field Inspections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damage to soil and water courses during felling and extraction • Damage to standing trees during felling and extraction • Timber degrade • The breakage or loss of merchantable timber • Damage to habitats / features identified in the inventory of resources (See 2.1.1)

4.3 Forest roads

<p>4.3.1 Requirement For new roads, all legal consents shall be obtained.</p>	<p>Guidance New roads that are greater than 2 km in length require the completion of an Environmental Impact Assessment.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record of consents • Field inspection 	<p>Where new entrances are being made onto public roads planning permission from the local authority may be required.</p>

<p>4.3.2 Requirement Roading operations shall conform to best practice as detailed in the COFORD Forest Road Manual and the relevant sections of the Forest Service “<i>Forest Harvesting and the Environment Guidelines</i>” and the “<i>Forestry and Water Quality Guidelines</i>”.</p>	<p>Guidance The relevant section of the Forest Service “<i>Forest Harvesting and the Environment Guidelines</i>” is the section titled Roading. The relevant section of the Forest Service “<i>Forestry and Water Quality Guidelines</i>” is the section titled Roads.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field Inspections • Discussions with the forest owner / manager • Completed forest road monitoring forms 	<p>The Key Construction and Operational Issues identified in the COFORD Forest Road Manual are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree clearance • Road drainage • Formation methods • Construction guidelines (reversal roads) • Completion • Construction problems • Construction materials • Quarries, pits and spoil disposal areas • Embankments • Access to the road from the forest • Streams and water crossings • Road curves, junctions, passing and turning places • Interaction with public roads • Loading bays along public roads

Section 5 Protection and Maintenance

5.1 Planning

<p>5.1.1 Requirement Risks to the forest from wind, fire, pests and diseases shall be assessed and measures to minimize these risks shall be incorporated in planting, design and management plans.</p>	<p>Guidance Examples of risks and appropriate mitigation measures are provided in the Forest Service "<i>Forest Protection Guidelines</i>". These risks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competing vegetation • Livestock, including trespassing livestock • Deer • Rabbit • Hare • Grey squirrel • Bank vole • Large pine weevil • "Fomes" butt rot • Fire • Wind • Spring frost
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management planning documents • Discussions with forest owner / manager • Field inspection 	
<p>5.1.2 Requirement Tree health and grazing impacts shall be monitored and results shall be incorporated into management planning together with guidance arising from national monitoring on plant health.</p>	<p>Guidance The Forest Service, through their Forest Protection Division, oversee a national tree / forest health monitoring programme.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions with forest owner / manager shows awareness of potential risks • Evidence of unhealthy trees is noted and appropriate action taken <p>Woodlands over 100 ha. in size</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documented systems for assessing tree health • Notes or records of monitoring and responses to problems 	

<p>5.1.3 Requirement Management of wild deer shall be based on a written Deer Management Plan which includes the management objectives.</p> <p>Deer population control shall be carried out by competent deer hunters who have completed the HCAP and shall where possible be in co-operation with adjoining landowners.</p> <p>Where there is evidence of significant damage to trees or ground flora, action to control the population shall be taken to protect the forest.</p>	<p>Guidance The Hunter Competency Assessment Programme (HCAP) is an agreed deer hunting standard drawn up by a joint forum including Coillte, the Deer Alliance, the National Parks and Wildlife Service, The Forest Service, An Garda Siochana, the Irish Farmers Association and the Irish Timber Growers Association. Deer hunters can be trained, assessed and certified against this standard.</p> <p>See also Section 6.4.1.</p> <p>A template Deer Management Plan and guidance for drawing up a Deer Management Plan are available from the English Deer Initiative website (www.thedeerinitiative.co.uk)</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written deer management plan • Awareness of potential problems and description of appropriate action • Evidence of liaison with adjoining landowners • Evidence of cull targets and achievements • Written agreement with deer hunter • Evidence of HCAP training and certification 	

<p>5.1.4 Requirement Management of damaging wild mammals (other than deer) shall where possible be in co-operation with adjoining landowners.</p>	<p>Guidance Damaging wild animals are described in the Forest Service "<i>Forest Protection Guidelines</i>" and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rabbit • Hare • Grey squirrel • Bank vole
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of potential problems and description of appropriate action taken • Records of liaison with adjoining landowners • Records of liaison with local NPWS Conservation Ranger 	

<p>5.1.5 Requirement On becoming aware of the presence or new arrival of invasive mammals in the WMU, the owner / manager shall report this to the National Parks and Wildlife Service.</p>	<p>Guidance The owner / manager should also consider reporting such incidences to the Forest Service and other authorities as appropriate.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records of liaison with NPWS 	

<p>5.1.6 Requirement When, following an assessment (see 5.1.1), a significant risk of fire is identified, a fire plan shall be prepared.</p>	<p>Guidance A fire plan should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A fire plan map – 6” scale or metric equivalent showing features such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Firebreaks ○ Access routes (vehicular and pedestrian) ○ Water sources ○ Hazards • A location map – Ordnance Survey Discovery Series • A document showing the location of necessary equipment, site features and contact details of the fire brigade and people who can be called upon to help if a fire occurs
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire plan • Discussions with forest owner / manager 	

<p>5.1.7 Requirement Areas that fulfill specific and recognized protective functions, either ecologically or for society, shall be mapped and forest management plans shall take full account of these.</p>	<p>Guidance Such areas may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Riparian and buffer areas • Sensitive catchments • Steep forested slopes above roads, houses or built up areas • Areas vulnerable to soil erosion • Other designated areas <p>Guidance on the management of riparian areas and sensitive catchments is given in the Forest Service “<i>Forestry and Water Quality Guidelines</i>”, “<i>Forestry and Otter Guidelines</i>” .</p> <p>Guidance is also provided in the programme of supplementary measures for forestry in the River Basin Management Plans under the EU Water Framework Directive.</p> <p>Guidance on the identification, design, establishment and management of native riparian woodland is provided in the Woodlands of Ireland Publication “<i>Native Riparian Woodlands – A Guide to Identification, Design, Establishment and Management</i>”.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maps • Management plan • Field inspection 	

5.2 Pesticides, biological control agents and fertilisers

<p>5.2.1 Requirement Where an assessment (see 5.1.1) identifies a significant risk from pests or diseases, an integrated pest management strategy shall be prepared and implemented.</p>	<p>Guidance An integrated pest management strategy seeks to address the problem using a strategic approach based on the site conditions, the ecology of the pest and the status of the outbreak. It will use an appropriate combination of statutory, chemical, physical and biological measures.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated pest management strategy • Discussion with forest owner / manager • Management plan • Field inspection 	
<p>5.2.2 Requirement It shall be a forest management objective to minimise the use of chemical pesticides in the forest.</p>	<p>Guidance This requirement is associated with requirement 5.2.1 whereby pesticide use, where necessary, is only used as part of an integrated pest management plan and not as the only solution to a pest problem.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written forest management objective in management plan • Discussion with forest owner / manager • Field inspections 	
<p>5.2.3 Requirement Where pesticides and/or biological control agents are to be used:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) The forest owner / manager shall justify the reasons for selecting the chosen method b) The forest owner / manager, staff and contractors shall be aware of and implement legal requirements and non-legislative guidance for use of pesticides in forestry. c) The forest owner / manager shall keep records of pesticide usage and biological control agents as required by current legislation. 	<p>Guidance Guidelines for the use of pesticides in Irish forests are clearly laid out in the Forest Service "<i>Forest Protection Guidelines</i>" and the Guidelines for the Use of Herbicides in Forestry (Ward, 1998).</p> <p>Usage of pesticides should be recorded in a clear and consistent manner that facilitates year on year comparison. The record should include details of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pesticide used • The amount used • The reasons for use • The date of use • The site and area it was used on • The soil type • The prevailing weather conditions <p>This will enable the recognition of any trends which will inform future planning and operations.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pesticide use records • Evidence that personal protective equipment is used • Discussion with forest owner / manager • Field inspections 	

<p>5.2.4 Requirement Storage, handling, use and disposal of chemicals shall be in compliance with the Forest Service “<i>Forest Protection Guidelines</i>” and any other up to date published advice.</p>	<p>Guidance Guidelines for the use of pesticides in Irish forests are clearly laid out in the Forest Service “<i>Forest Protection Guidelines</i>” and the Guidelines for the Use of Herbicides in Forestry (Ward, 1998).</p> <p>Disposal of empty containers to be in accordance with procedures as set out in 5.4.1.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit to chemical store • Discussion with forest owner / manager • Disposal records • Field inspections 	

<p>5.2.5 Requirement Fertilisers (inorganic and organic):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Fertilisers shall only be used where they are necessary to secure establishment or to correct subsequent nutrient deficiencies based on foliar analysis b) Where fertilisers are to be used the forest owner / manager, staff and contractors shall be aware of and shall be implementing legal requirements and best practice guidelines for their use in forestry. c) As detailed in Section 3.1, the potential environmental impact of fertiliser use shall be assessed prior to use. This assessment shall determine whether or not the use is appropriate and if it is appropriate, how it should be carried out in order to minimise adverse impacts and to secure or enhance environmental gains. 	<p>Guidance Unnecessary use of fertiliser may be avoided through the use of appropriate species.</p> <p>Appropriate fertiliser use is described in the Forest Service “<i>Code of Best Forest Practice – Ireland</i>” and in the Forest Service “<i>Forestry and Water Quality Guidelines</i>”.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion with forest owner / manager • Records of fertiliser use • Field inspections • Documented environmental appraisal 	

5.3 Fencing

<p>5.3.1 Requirement Where appropriate, wildlife management and control shall be used in preference to fencing. Where fences are used, opportunities shall be taken to minimise negative impacts on access, landscape, wildlife and sites of public interest.</p>	<p>Guidance Decisions to erect fences, their alignment and specification should take account of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape • Public rights of way • Existing users of the woodland • Wildlife • Archaeology
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion with forest owner / manager demonstrates and awareness of impacts of fence alignments and the alternatives • Field inspections 	

5.4 Waste Management

<p>5.4.1 Requirement Waste disposal shall be in accordance with current waste management legislation and regulations.</p>	<p>Guidance Waste includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surplus or out of date chemicals • Chemical containers • Plastic waste • Fuels and lubricants • Planting bags <p>Plastic tree shelters should not be allowed to create a litter problem at the end of their effective life.</p> <p>The relevant waste management legislation is the Waste Management Act (1996), The Litter Pollution Act (1997) and the Waste Management (Amendment) Act (2001).</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No evidence of impacts from waste disposal • Documented policy on waste disposal including segregation, recycling, return to manufacturer 	

<p>5.4.2 Requirement Plans and equipment shall be in place to deal with accidental spillages.</p>	<p>Guidance Detailed guidance on this requirement is provided in the Forest Service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Forest Harvesting and the Environment Guidelines”</i> • <i>“Forests and Water Quality Guidelines”</i> • <i>“Code of Best Forest Practice – Ireland”</i>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions with forest owner / manager, staff and contractors • Appropriate equipment available in the field • Reports of any accidental spillage to relevant authority • Contract documents and instructions provided to contractors • Any post spillage event monitoring records 	

Section 6 Conservation and enhancement of biodiversity

6.1 Protection of rare species and habitats

<p>6.1.1 Requirement National Parks and statutorily designated areas shall be identified and mapped. Management in the form of notifiable actions shall be agreed in consultation with the relevant statutory agency.</p>	<p>Guidance Statutorily designated areas include established and proposed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) • Special Protection Areas (SPAs) • Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) • Nature Reserves <p>Notifiable Actions are certain activities or operations In Designated Areas that might be damaging. Notifiable Actions can only be carried out with the permission of the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. These vary depending on the type of habitat that is present on the site. Such activities or operations are not prohibited but require the landowner/occupier to consult (in practice with the local Conservation Ranger) in advance. Notifiable Actions do not apply where a licence or permission is needed from a planning authority (e.g. planning permission) or another Minister (e.g. a felling licence or afforestation approval)</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maps showing designated areas • Management Plans • Field Inspection • Documented evidence of consultation with statutory agencies 	
<p>6.1.2 Requirement Features and small areas of high biodiversity value shall be identified, mapped and managed to maintain or enhance biodiversity as the primary management objective.</p>	<p>Guidance Examples of such features and areas include veteran trees, hollow trees, ponds, old hedgerows, rocky outcrops etc. More comprehensive lists are provided in the Forest Service "<i>Forest Biodiversity Guidelines</i>" and in the Forest Service "<i>Forestry Schemes Manual</i>".</p> <p>These features and areas may include other non woodland semi-natural habitats e.g. moorland, heathland, wood pasture or grassland that is adjacent to or influenced by the woodland.</p> <p>Management of these features and areas should be in accordance with the Forest Service "<i>Forest Biodiversity Guidelines</i>", and with Local Biodiversity Plans prepared by the Local Authority.</p> <p>Identification and mapping of these features may be carried out on an ongoing basis, provided that it has been completed prior to significant woodland management operations taking place.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maps indicating presence of features / areas of high biodiversity value • Evidence of a pro active approach to the identification of these features and areas • Field Inspection • Management Plans 	

<p>6.1.3 Requirement Where a rare or endangered species is known to be present in the woodland, the relevant statutory authority shall be notified and appropriate management shall be agreed with them.</p>	<p>Guidance Rare and endangered species in Ireland are listed in Irish Red Data Books and Lists which are fully referenced in Appendix D.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of consultation and agreement with statutory authority 	<p>For some rare and endangered species, the National Parks and Wildlife Service has prepared Species Action Plans (SAPs) and Threat Response Plans (TRPs). For these species, the SAP and TRP should be consulted and conformed with.</p>

6.2 Maintenance of biodiversity and ecological functions

<p>6.2.1 Requirement A minimum of 15% of the WMU area shall be managed with conservation and biodiversity as the primary objective. This shall include a minimum of 10% retained woodland and/or scrub habitat.</p>	<p>Guidance Management in these areas should be in accordance with the Forest Service "<i>Forest Biodiversity Guidelines</i>".</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maps showing areas where biodiversity is a primary objective Field inspections Management plan 	<p>This area can be inclusive of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> areas and features identified in 6.1.1 and 6.1.2 areas retained as part of the restructuring requirements outlined in 3.2.3 and 3.4.2 areas being restored to semi-natural woodland or non-woodland habitats as outlined in requirements 3.5.1, 6.3.1, and 6.3.2.

<p>6.2.2 Requirement Standing and fallen deadwood habitats and some over-mature trees shall be retained throughout the woodland where this does not compromise the safety of the public or forestry workers or the health of the woodland.</p>	<p>Guidance Guidance on the retention of standing and fallen deadwood and over-mature trees is provided in the Forest Service "<i>Forest Biodiversity Guidelines</i>".</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harvesting contracts Field inspections Management plan Discussions with forest owner / manager, staff and contractors 	

6.3 Conservation of semi-natural woodlands and plantations on old woodland sites

<p>6.3.1 Requirement Woodland areas identified as semi-natural woodland shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) not be converted to plantations or non-forest land. b) be managed using a low impact silvicultural system c) follow the prescriptions of any plan agreed in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service <p>Adverse ecological impacts of non-native species shall be monitored in semi-natural woodlands.</p> <p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maps showing any semi-natural woodlands • Field inspections • Management planning documentation agreed with the National parks and Wildlife Service • Monitoring records 	<p>Guidance A National Survey of Native Woodlands was completed in 2009 on behalf of the National Parks and Wildlife Service.</p> <p>Areas of semi-natural woodland not identified in the above survey will also exist and this survey should not be regarded as an exhaustive record.</p>
<p>6.3.2 Requirement Forest owners and managers shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify action which will progressively improve the biodiversity, environmental and cultural values of plantations on old woodland sites (POWS), considering the site, landscape context and management objectives. • maintain and enhance remnant features of old woodlands on all POWS. This process shall be achieved by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Undertaking field assessment and evaluation of the biodiversity, environmental and cultural value of POWS to identify threats, ongoing declines and potential gains ○ Prioritising action taking account of the degree and immediacy of threats to remnant features and potential biodiversity gains at a site and landscape level • identify management prescriptions that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ maintain old woodland features by addressing threats and ongoing decline on all POWS ○ secure potential gains identified as a priority ○ adopt appropriate silvicultural systems that minimise negative impacts and have an emphasis on gradual change • implement management prescriptions that ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ field assessments are carried out prior to 	<p>Guidance For the purpose of this standard, plantations on old woodland sites (POWS) are considered to be plantations on sites that were recorded as woodland on the 1830's Ordnance Survey Map Series.</p> <p>A more detailed definition of POWS in Ireland may be agreed at a future date but in the meantime the above definition is agreed.</p> <p>The overriding principle for POWS is that their current biodiversity and heritage values should be enhanced. This will probably be best achieved over a long period with a gradual process of change favoured over sudden changes.</p> <p>It is essential that the forest owner / manager has a strategy to achieve this based on a good knowledge of the current state of the site and a precautionary approach to operations. The effect of all operations on the biodiversity and heritage values of the site are to be monitored. If, despite careful planning, the operations are adversely affecting these values then they should be halted and a new strategy adopted.</p>

<p>planned operations to ensure remnant features are safeguarded</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ operations are implemented in a manner that does not adversely impact the sites' values ● implement a monitoring plan that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ monitoring and reviewing the condition of old woodland features and the effect of forest management actions on them ○ monitoring the status of threats ○ monitoring the condition of cultural heritage features 	<p>Remnant features of old woodland may include for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Flora (including fungi and microbial flora) and/or fauna associated with a particular type of woodland ● Old coppice or other stumps ● Veteran trees retained in hedgerows, copses or inaccessible areas such as gullies, ravines and crags.
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maps showing any POWS and highlighting remnant features ● Assessment of current state of biodiversity and heritage value of POWS and associated features ● Written management strategy for any POWS ● Field inspections ● Monitoring plan and completed records 	

<p>6.3.3 Requirement</p> <p>Where appropriate and possible, forest owners / managers shall use natural regeneration or, in the case of native species, planting stock of native provenance.</p> <p>In the case of semi-natural woodlands, natural regeneration and seed / planting stock of native provenance shall be the only means of regeneration used.</p> <p>In the case of POWS, where native species are being sown or planted, only seed and planting stock of native provenance shall be used.</p>	<p>Guidance</p> <p>Forest nurseries trace the source of all seed used in their production of transplants and provide provenance certificates for all transplants sold.</p> <p>The island of Ireland is considered a single provenance for all native species.</p> <p>In the case of use of non-native species and provenances there should be clear justification on grounds such as tree vigour or timber quality.</p> <p>A list of tree species native to Ireland is provided in Appendix F.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provenance certificates ● Field inspections 	

6.4 Game management

<p>6.4.1 Requirement Hunting, game rearing and shooting and fishing shall be carried out in accordance with licence conditions and in a sustainable manner that does not threaten the viability of the local population of any particular species.</p> <p>In the case of deer hunting, all hunters shall have successfully completed a Hunter Competency Assessment Programme (HCAP) (see 5.1.3).</p>	<p>Guidance Wildlife management is legislated for in the Wildlife Act (1976) and the Wildlife Amendment Act (2000).</p> <p>Deer hunting licences are issued by the National Parks and Wildlife Service and require written permission from the landowner in question.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licences from National Parks & Wildlife Service and Gardaí • Letting agreements • Records of hunters qualifications • Field inspections • Hunting records (including dates, numbers, species, ages, sex and location) • Insurance records • Discussions with forest owner / manager 	
<p>6.4.2 Requirement Game management shall not be so intense as to cause long-term or widespread negative impacts on the woodland ecosystem.</p>	<p>Guidance Feeding and rearing areas should be located in areas where there will be low impact on ground flora.</p> <p>Some predator species are legally protected and predator control should only be carried out if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In compliance with the law • Carefully planned • Species specific • Only carried out when essential • Aimed at reducing rather than eradicating predator populations
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management planning documentation and specific game management plans • Field inspections 	

Section 7 The community

7.1 Consultation

<p>7.1.1 Requirement Local people and relevant organisations and interest groups shall be made aware that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New or revised management planning documentation, as specified in Section 2.1, is being produced • A new or revised Forest Service scheme application and associated documents are available for inspection • High impact operations i.e. clearfelling and road construction, are planned • New or revised design plans are being produced • The woodland is being evaluated for certification <p>The forest owner / manager shall ensure there is full co-operation with the Forest Service and other statutory consultation processes. The owner / manager shall consult adequately with local people and relevant organisations and make a reasonable response to issues raised or requests for ongoing dialogue and engagement.</p> <p>At least 30 days shall be allowed for people to respond to notices, letters or meetings before certification.</p>	<p>Guidance For all grant and felling licence applications, the Forest Service operate a referral and notification system the details of which are presented in Appendix E.</p> <p>The forest owner / manager should be able to justify the level of consultation undertaken and the certification body will look for corroborating evidence.</p> <p>Examples of methods for making people and relevant organisations aware include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory consultations by the Forest Service on the forest owner's behalf • Voluntary consultation with relevant bodies • Letters to individuals or groups • Temporary or permanent signs in or near the affected woodland • Information in local press / media (including internet) • Meetings <p>The certification body is also required to consult with relevant stakeholders as part of the certification audit</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with the Forest Service and other statutory agencies • Evidence of communication with stakeholders 	
<p>7.1.2 Requirement Records shall be kept of consultation undertaken, resulting actions and responses.</p>	<p>Guidance Records can be in the form of a log or diary but should clearly record the identity of the consultee, the matter discussed, the views of the consultee and any resulting actions from the meeting or reasons for non-acceptance of the consultees suggestions.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation records • Discussions with stakeholders 	

7.2 Woodland Access and Recreation Including Traditional and Permissive Use Rights

<p>7.2.1 Requirement Legal, customary and traditional use rights relating to forest access shall be clarified, recognized and respected.</p>	<p>Guidance See also Section 1.1.3.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation or maps of all existing permissive and traditional uses of the woodland • Evidence of discussions with interested parties • Field observations of public rights of way • Evidence presented to justify any restriction to permissive or traditional uses 	
<p>7.2.2 Requirement The forest owner / manager will positively consider any reasonable and formal request for access to the forest for recreational or educational purposes. The forest owner / manager may refuse such a request in certain circumstances.</p>	<p>Guidance Examples of circumstances where access may be denied are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small woodlands that are a private amenity • Areas adjoining dwellings or private gardens • Woodlands where there is evidence of serious and sustained abuse or damage • Woodlands with features or areas that may be particularly vulnerable to disturbance • Where there may be public safety concerns • When access will jeopardise other enterprises or recreational activities on the land • Where there is a cost to the forest owner
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of discussions with interested parties • Field observations • Evidence presented to justify any refusal of access following a formal request • Discussions with the forest owner / manager 	

7.3 Sites with Recognised Specific Historical, Cultural or Spiritual Significance

<p>7.3.1 Requirement Sites with recognised specific historical, cultural or spiritual significance shall be mapped and protected or managed in a way that takes due regard of the significance of the site.</p>	<p>Guidance Such sites may include archaeological sites, historic monuments, holy wells, mass paths etc.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maps • Field inspections • Management Plans 	

7.4 Rural Economy

<p>7.4.1 Requirement The forest owner / manager shall promote the integration of woodlands into the local economy and respond positively to local requests for forest products and services subject to compliance with the management plan, the principle of sustained yield and an economic return for these products and services.</p>	<p>Guidance Promotion of integration into the local economy may be achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making reasonable provision for local employment for contractors and suppliers to provide services and supplies. • Allowing local or specialist markets opportunities to purchase small scale or specialist products • Promoting and encouraging enterprises which will strengthen and diversify the woodland or local economy <p>An example of how the forest owner / manager might help to diversify the processing industry is that a proportion of timber parcels are advertised and sold by open tender or auction.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of reasonable provision for local employment and suppliers • Evidence of action taken on local or specialist market opportunities • Evidence of promoting or encouraging enterprises to strengthen and diversify the local economy 	

7.5 Minimising Adverse Impacts

<p>7.5.1 Requirement The forest owner / manager shall mitigate the risks to public health and safety and the wider impacts of woodland operations on local people.</p>	<p>Guidance Examples of impacts include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smoke • Timber haulage on minor roads close to the woodland • Natural hazards to operators and public e.g. unsafe trees
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that complaints have been recorded and dealt with constructively • Discussions with interested parties • Risk assessment records • Tree safety inspection records • Evidence of actions taken in response to identified risks 	

Section 8 The Forestry Workforce

8.1 Health and Safety

<p>8.1.1 Requirement There shall be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Compliance with primary Irish Health and Safety Legislation Compliance with the Irish HSA approved Codes Of Practices on Managing Safety and Health in Forestry Operations and the ILO approved Code of Practice on Safety and Health in Forestry Work Emergency Plans for fire and other plans appropriate to the safe management of forests, employees and contractors as set out in approved Codes of Practices Health and safety training, information and consultation to any forestry employees in the necessary skills for the safe operation of tasks 	<p>Guidance Guidance on the legal requirements relating to health and safety is provided in the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) Code of Practice for Managing Safety and Health in Forestry Operations.</p> <p>The Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005, Part 3 details the following requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> S18. Protective and Preventative measures S19. Hazard Identification and risk assessment. S20. Provision of the Safety statement S21. Duties of Employees to cooperate with employers
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field observations to ensure that health and safety practices and procedures set out in safety statement and method statements are being implemented. Discussions with employees and contractors to determine that they have had sight of and are aware and understand the requirements of relevant safety statements and method statements for tasks being carried out in the forest. Copies of the risk assessments and hazard identification are available to staff and contractors Records of training and the provision of appropriate information provided to employees and contractors. Copies of all certification of competencies required in connection with the safe operation, use of equipment and control of forest operations Record of contractors safety and methods statements Records of insurance for Public and Employers liability 	<p>Relevant legislation and guidance also includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The safety, health and welfare at work, General Applications Regulations 2007. The safety, health and welfare at work, General Applications Regulations 1993 (S.I. No. 44/1993), Part X which covers regulation with regard to notification of accidents and dangerous occurrences. The Safety toolkit and short guide to the general Application regulations 2007 (Small business edition) HSA Guidelines on Risk Assessments and Safety Statements HSA Guide to the Safety, Health and welfare at Work Act 2005 HSA Guide to workplace Safety and Health Management.

8.2 Training and Continuing Development

<p>8.2.1 Requirement Only those with relevant qualifications, training and / or experience shall be engaged to carry out any work unless working under proper supervision if they are currently undergoing training.</p>	<p>Guidance There are a number of different training providers in Irish forestry and training courses are co-ordinated by Forest Training and Education Ireland (FTEI) who are funded by the Forest Service.</p>
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of appropriate certificates of competence • Discussions with staff and contractors • System to ensure that only contractors who are appropriately trained or supervised work in the woodland • No evidence of personnel without relevant training, experience or qualifications working in the woodland • Documented training programme for staff • Documented system to ensure that only contractors who are appropriately trained or supervised work in the woodland • Training records for staff 	
<p>8.2.2 Requirement</p> <p>a) The forest owner / manager shall actively participate in training or education in order to keep up to date in relation to sustainable forest management.</p> <p>b) The forest owner / manager shall encourage and provide opportunities for employees to further develop their skills and knowledge in relation to sustainable forest management.</p>	<p>Guidance In addition to formal training courses there are a number of different forestry organisations in Ireland that run informative field days and forest visits which provide opportunities for forest owners / managers to keep up to date with developments in sustainable forest management. These organisations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Society of Irish Foresters • The Irish Farmers Association • The Irish Timber Growers Association • Pro Silva Ireland • Teagasc • Irish Natural Forestry Foundation • The Tree Council of Ireland
<p>Means of Verification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions with staff and contractors • Records of training courses / field days attended 	

8.3 Workers Employment Rights

8.3.1 Requirement Employers shall conform with all Irish related employment legislation, regulations, codes of practice and guidelines.	Guidance Workers employment rights are enshrined in law and in a number of International Labour Organisation (ILO) Conventions as detailed in Appendix C.
Means of Verification <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No evidence of non-compliance• Discussions with workers	Employers, in the discharge of their responsibilities to their employees, must take into consideration all fair employment practice.

8.4 Insurance

8.4.1 Requirement Forest Owners / managers, employers and contractors shall hold adequate public liability and employer's liability insurance, copies of which are available for inspection.	
Means of Verification <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Insurance documents	

Glossary of terms

Accreditation: Accreditation is the process used to ensure that those who undertake the certification audit are truly independent and professionally competent. Certification bodies conducting audits against the standard must be accredited to undertake woodland management certification by a national or international accreditation body.

Appropriate Assessment: An appropriate assessment is an assessment carried out under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive of the implications of a plan or project, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, on a Natura 2000 site in view of the site's conservation objectives.

Auditor: A competent professional engaged by a Certification Body (qv), to conduct the assessment on which the outcome of an application for forest management certification will be determined.

Biodiversity: The variety of ecosystems and living organisms (species), including genetic variation within species.

Biological Control Agents: Living organisms used to eliminate or regulate the population of other living organisms.

Broadleaves: Broadleaved trees are characterized by their broad leaves and most are deciduous. They produce hardwood timber.

Certification Body: An organisation that is accredited by an accreditation authority to certify (by giving written assurance) that forest management conforms to the specific requirements of a forest management standard.

Clearfelling: Cutting down of all or the vast majority of trees in an area of woodland.

Conifers: Coniferous trees are characterised by their needle or scale like leaves and most are evergreen. They produce softwood timber.

Designated Areas: Designated areas are areas statutorily designated for conservation or protection and include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), National Parks and Nature Reserves.

Environmental Impact Assessment: Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is the process and documentation associated with the statutory requirement under the EU Environmental Assessment Directive.

Forest: Predominantly tree covered land. When in large tracts it is generally referred to as forest and when in smaller units as woodland. The terms woodland and forest are used interchangeably throughout the standard.

Forest Service: The Forest Service is part of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and is the regulatory authority with regard to forestry practice in Ireland.

Game: Animals, either wild or reared, managed for hunting or shot for food.

IAF: International Accreditation Forum. The IAF is the world association of Conformity Assessment Accreditation Bodies and other bodies interested in conformity assessment in the fields of management systems, products, services, personnel and other similar programmes of conformity assessment. Its primary function is to develop a single worldwide programme of conformity assessment which reduces risk for business and its customers by assuring them that accredited certificates may be relied upon. Accreditation assures users of the

competence and impartiality of the body accredited. IAF members accredit certification or registration bodies that issue certificates attesting that an organisation's management, products or personnel comply with a specified standard (called conformity assessment).

ILO: International Labour Organisation. The ILO is the specialised agency of the United Nations which seeks the promotion of social justice and internationally recognised human and labour rights. The ILO formulates international labour standards in the form of Conventions and Recommendations setting minimum standards for basic labour rights.

ISO: International Organisation for Standardisation. ISO is the world's largest developer and publisher of International Standards. It is a network of the national standards institutes of 158 countries with a central secretariat based in Geneva that coordinates the system.

Invasive Species: Introduced, non-native species which spread readily and dominate native species.

Landscape Unit: An area of broadly homogenous landscape character.

Lop and Top: Woody debris from felling operations, mainly consisting of branches and tree tops.

Low Impact Silvicultural Systems: Forest Management Systems that do not involve clearfelling and that use relatively un-intensive management interventions, if any.

Notifiable Actions: Notifiable Actions are certain activities or operations in Designated Areas that might be damaging. Notifiable Actions can only be carried out with the permission of the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. These vary depending on the type of habitat that is present on the site. Such activities or operations are not prohibited but require the landowner/occupier to consult (in practice with the local Conservation Ranger) in advance. In the case of NHAs, 3 months written prior notice is required to be given to the Minister before undertaking any notifiable activities. Notifiable Actions do not apply where a licence or permission is needed from a planning authority (e.g. planning permission) or another Minister (e.g. a felling licence or afforestation approval).

Pesticides: Any substance used to protect plants or other plant products from harmful organisms, to regulate the growth of plants, to give protection against harmful creatures, or to render such creatures harmless.

Plantations on Old Woodland Sites (POWS): Plantations on old woodland sites (POWS) are plantations on sites that were recorded as woodland on the 1830's Ordnance Survey Map Series.

Provenance: Location of trees from which seed or cuttings are collected. Designation of Regions of Provenance under the Forest Reproductive Materials regulations is used to help nurseries and growers select suitable material.

Regeneration: Regeneration refers to the establishment of new young trees on a site whether using planting of nursery raised stock, sowing of seed or using seed dispersed naturally from trees already present on the site.

Thinning: Tree removal, which results in a temporary reduction in basal area, made after canopy closure to promote growth and greater value in the remaining trees.

Windthrow: Uprooting of trees by the wind.

Wind Hazard Classification: A classification system used for determining the risk of windthrow on any particular site.

Woodland: (see forest)

Woodland Management Unit (WMU): A WMU is a forest property or properties covered under a single forest management plan and within a Landscape Unit (qv). A WMU may be owned by an individual, a group of individuals (sharing the one property), a company, a charity or any other legal entity. WMUs may contain smaller units e.g. compartments and sub-compartments but they should not be split for certification purposes. If the owner of a WMU owns other WMUs in different landscape units they need not necessarily be obliged to submit these for certification.

Appendix A

Forest Service Guidelines, Other Industry Codes of Practice and Rules and Selected Bibliography

The following are the current Forest Service Guidelines and Other Industry Codes of Practice and Rules relevant to this standard. The list is presented under different subject categories although many of these codes and guidelines are relevant across a number of categories.

Biodiversity

Forest Service (2000). Forestry Biodiversity Guidelines. Published by the Forest Service in the Department of Marine & Natural Resources.

General Forestry Practice & Management

Forest Service (2000). Code of Best Forest Practice – Ireland. Published by the Forest Service in the Department of Marine & Natural Resources.

Forest Service (2003). Forestry Schemes Manual. Published by the Forest Service in the Department of Marine & Natural Resources.

Forest Service (2001). Forestry and Aerial Fertilisation Guidelines. Published by the Forest Service in the Department of Marine & Natural Resources.

Forest Service (2000). Irish National Forest Standard. Published by the Forest Service in the Department of Marine & Natural Resources.

Forest Service (2000). Forestry & Archaeology Guidelines. Published by the Forest Service in the Department of Marine & Natural Resources.

Forest Service (2002). Forest Protection Guidelines. Published by the Forest Service in the Department of Marine & Natural Resources.

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Forest Planning

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Forest Roads, Harvesting & Haulage

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Appendix C: Irish Laws and International Agreements and Protocols Pertinent to Forest Management in Ireland

The following is a list of Irish national laws pertinent to forest management.

Legislation	Potential Impact
<i>Wildlife Acts, 1976 and 1999 Wildlife Amendment Act (2000)</i>	<i>Flora, fauna, environment and forest management</i>
<i>Forestry Acts, 1946, 1956 and 1988</i>	<i>Forest management</i>
<i>Local Government (Planning and Development) Acts, 1963 to 1999</i>	<i>Control of development and forest management</i>
<i>Planning and Development Act, 2000 Commencement (No. 3) Order, (2001) S.I. No. 599 of 2001. Planning and Development Regulations (2001) S.I. No. 600 of 2001.</i>	<i>Control of development and forest management</i>
<i>National Monuments Acts, 1930 to 2004 (Including Approval of Consent (1) Order, 1995)</i>	<i>Forest management in relation to archaeology</i>
<i>National Cultural Institutions Act 1997</i>	<i>Forest management in relation to archaeology</i>
<i>Occupiers Liability Act, 1995</i>	<i>Forest management</i>
<i>Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005. Safety Health and Welfare at Work - General Application Regulations (2007) and Construction Regulations (2001)</i>	<i>Forest management both in forest and in office</i>
<i>Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992</i>	<i>Forest management and environment</i>
<i>Heritage Act, 1995</i>	<i>Heritage protection</i>
<i>Environmental Impact Assessment – S.I. No. 100 of 1996</i>	
<i>European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations, 1996. S.I. No. 101 of 1996.</i>	
<i>Fisheries Consolidation Act 1959 and all amendments, Fisheries Act 1980 and all subsequent amendments. S.I. regulation for the Water Framework Directive: S.I. No. 722 of 2003</i>	<i>Forest management in relation to water and fisheries</i>
<i>Local Government (Water Pollution) Acts, 1977 to 1990</i>	<i>Forest management and environment</i>
<i>European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations, 2001. S.I. No. 538 of 2001.</i>	
<i>Waste Management Act, 1996</i>	<i>Forest management and environment</i>
<i>Local Government (Special Amenity and Conservation Orders) Act, 1976</i>	
<i>Litter pollution Act, 1997</i>	<i>Forest management and environment</i>
<i>Occupiers Liability Act 1995</i>	<i>Forest Management</i>
<i>Roads Act, 1993</i>	<i>Haulage</i>
<i>Road Transport Acts, 1932 to 1999</i>	<i>Haulage</i>

The following is a list of European (EU) laws pertinent to forest management in Ireland.

Legislation	Potential Impact
<i>Council Directive (92/43/EEC) and amending directives on the conservation of natural habitats of wild fauna and flora</i>	<i>Flora and fauna and forest management</i>

<i>Council Directive (79/409/EEC) and amending directives on the conservation of wild birds</i>	<i>Wild birds and forest management</i>
<i>EU (Conservation of Wild Birds) (Amendment) Regulations 1999</i>	
<i>European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997</i>	
<i>European Communities (Natural Habitats) (Amendment) Regulations, 1998</i>	
<i>Council Directive (2000/60/EC) establishing a framework for community action in the field of water policy</i>	<i>Forest management and the environment</i>
<i>Council Directive (2000/29/EC) on protective measures against the introduction into the Member States of harmful organisms of plants or plant products and against their spread within the Community</i>	<i>Forest protection</i>
<i>Council Directive (1999/105/EC) on the marketing of forest reproductive material</i>	<i>Tree improvement and forest protection</i>
<i>Council Directive (85/337/EEC) and amending directives on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment</i>	<i>Control of development</i>
<i>Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC).</i>	<i>Preventing and Remedying Environmental Damage</i>
<i>EU Water Framework Directive (Directive 2000/60/EC)</i>	<i>Water</i>
<i>Council Regulation (EEC3528/86) on the protection of forests against atmospheric pollution</i>	<i>Environment</i>
<i>EU Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (Directive 2001/42/EC)</i>	<i>Environment</i>

Information in the above tables was resourced from the following two publications which contain a more detailed analysis of these laws:

- Maguire, B. 2001. A Review of Legislation that Impacts on Irish Forestry. COFORD, Dublin.
- McHugh, D and G. Gallagher. 2004. Trees, Forests and the Law in Ireland. COFORD, Dublin.

The following is a list of international agreements and protocols pertinent to forest management in Ireland:

a. International Labour Organisation - Conventions

- Freedom of Organization
Convention 87 on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise, 1948
Convention 98 on the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining, 1949
- Abolition of Forced Labour
Convention 29 on Forced Labour, 1930
Convention 105 on Abolition of Forced Labour, 1957
- Equal Rights / No Discrimination
Convention 100 on Equal Remuneration, 1951
Convention 111 on Discrimination (Employment and Occupation), 1958
- Child Labour
Convention 138 on Minimum Age for Admission to Employment, 1973

b. International Agreements

Ireland has signed the following international agreements, among others:

- the *Bern Convention* of 1979 for the preservation of Europe's wild animals and native plants and their natural habitats;
- the *Convention on Biological Diversity* of Rio de Janeiro of June 5, 1992, concerning biological diversity;
- the *Bonn Convention* of June 23, 1979, for the preservation of migrating wild animal species;
- the *Washington Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species* (CITES) of March 3, 1973, concerning the international trade in endangered species of wild animals and plants.
- the *Ramsar Convention on Wetlands*, 1971 - an intergovernmental treaty which provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. There are 45 Ramsar sites in Ireland.
- the *Kyoto Protocol*, negotiated by more than 160 nations in December 1997, aims to reduce net emissions of certain greenhouse gases (primarily carbon dioxide (CO₂)).
- the *International Tropical Timber Agreement* of 1994 which seeks to improve the international market conditions for sustainably grown tropical timber.
- the *Helsinki Protocols* resulting from the Ministerial Conference for Protection of Forests in Europe, 1994.
- the *Lisbon Protocols* resulting from the Ministerial Conference for Protection of Forests in Europe, 1998.
- The Vienna Protocols resulting from the Ministerial Conference for Protection of Forests in Europe, 2002.
- The United Nations *Framework Convention on Climate Change* in 1992.
- *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage*, Paris, 1972
- *the Aarhus Convention*
- *The European Landscape Convention, 2000.*
- *The European Convention on the Protection of Archaeological Heritage*

Appendix D

Irish Red Data Books and Lists

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) in the 1960's developed the first established approach in dealing with the presentation of information on rare and threatened species.

More formal IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria were developed in the early nineties to further objectively assess and prioritise species for conservation purposes at a global scale. A review of these categories and criteria was completed in 1998 and 1999 and the current version the IUCN Red list categories and criteria (Version 3.1) is now widely used around the world for species assessments. The IUCN also produce regularly updated guidelines for using the categories and criteria, and have produced guidelines for applying the criteria at a regional level.

The following are the currently published Irish Red Data Books and Lists.

Invertebrates

Byrne, A., Moorkens, E.A., Anderson, R., Killeen, I.J. & Regan, E.C. (2009). Ireland Red List No. 2: Non-marine Molluscs, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin, Ireland.

Foster, G. N., Nelson, B. H. & O Connor, Á. (2009). Ireland Red List No. 1: Water beetles, National Parks & Wildlife Service, Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government, Dublin, Ireland.

Fitzpatrick, U., Murray, T.E., Byrne, A., Paxton, R.J. & Brown, M.J.F. (2006). The Regional Red List of Irish Bees 2006.

Vertebrates

Marnell, F., Kingston, N. & Looney, D. (2009). Ireland Red List No. 3: Terrestrial Mammals, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin, Ireland.

Whilde, A. (1993) Irish Red Data Book 2: Vertebrates

Vascular Plants

Curtis, T. G. F & McGough, N. (1988) Irish Red Data Book 1: Vascular Plants (Out of Print, but the list can be downloaded from the website of the National Botanic Gardens.

Birds

BirdWatch Ireland and the RSPB NI have produced a list of Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCCI) in Ireland. This was updated by: Lynas, P., Newton, S.F. & Robinson, J.A. (2009) The status of birds in Ireland: an analysis of conservation concern 2008-2013. *Irish Birds*, 8(2): 149-166.

The National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency are currently formulating All-Ireland red lists and books, which will include many more Irish species in need of conservation assessment. Red data lists and books are underway for the following groups; Fish, Moths, Butterflies, Dragonflies, Lichens, Bryophytes, and Seaweeds as well as an update of the Red list for Vascular Plants.

Appendix E

Forest Service Referral and Notification System

The Forest Service in the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food operate a referral and notification system for all applications received for grant aid (e.g. afforestation or forest roads) and for felling licences. This involves a consultation process which is summarized as follows:

Areas	Consultation Type	Consultation Period
Areas of all Sizes	If proposed afforestation is within 60m of a dwelling or associated building the applicant must consult with the owner occupier.	N/A
Areas >2.5 ha.	The Forest Service supplies details to the public through an appropriate provincial paper of County, District Electoral Division, Townland and area for all proposals > 2.5 hectares.	1 month from date advertisement appears in the paper.
Areas > 5 ha.	Areas > 5 ha. Where there is a fisheries consideration designated sensitive for water quality considerations are referred to the relevant Regional Fisheries Board.	Normally 1 month
Areas > 25 ha.	All sites > 25 ha. Are sent to the relevant local authority for their observations.	Normally 1 month
Areas > 40 ha.	Areas > 40 ha. Where there is a fisheries consideration designated non sensitive for water quality are referred to the relevant Regional Fisheries Board.	Normally 1 month
Areas > 50 ha. ⁴	An EIA and planning permission is required for these areas.	Varies
Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) & Special Protection Areas (SPA) & Natural Heritage Areas (NHA)	Applications for operations in these areas received by the Forest Service are referred to the National Parks and Wildlife Service.	Normally 2 months
Outstanding Landscapes	The Forest Service refer these to the Local Authority.	Normally 1 month
Airport	The Forest Service refer these to the Aviation Authority.	Normally 1 month

More details of the types of situations where referral, notification and consultation is required by the Forest Service are provided in their Forestry Schemes Manual in the chapter entitled "Environmental Protection and Controls Consultation Process" That chapter sets out the environmental standards governing forestry and the consultative process undertaken when an application for approval is made to the Forest Service.

⁴ In accordance with SI No. 538 of 2001, all applications for afforestation are subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening process undertaken by the Minister. The screening determines whether an application requires an EIA. An Environmental Impact Assessment must accompany applications for the afforestation of areas of under 50 hectares where a proposed development is deemed by the Minister to have a significant environmental impact.

Appendix F

Native and Naturalised Tree Species in Ireland

Native Tree Species⁵

Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*)
Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*)
Common birch (*Betula pendula*)
Downy birch (*Betula pubescens*)
Hazel (*Cotylus avellana*)
Elder (*Sambucus nigra*)
Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*)
Strawberry tree (*Arbutus unedo*)
Sessile oak (*Quercus petraea*)
Pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur*)
Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*)
Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*)
Alder buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*)
Buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*)
Wild cherry (*Prunus avium*)
Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*)
Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*)
Irish whitebeam (*Sorbus hibernica*)
Common whitebeam (*Sorbus aria*)
Crab apple (*Malus sylvestris*)
Aspen (*Populus tremula*)
White willow (*Salix alba*)
Yew (*Taxus baccata*)
Wych elm (*Ulmus glabra*)
Bird Cherry (*Prunus padus*)

Naturalised Tree⁶ Species

Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*)
Scottish laburnum (*Laburnum alpinum*)
Sweet chestnut (*Castanea sativa*)
Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*)
Horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*)
Devon whitebeam (*Sorbus devoniensis*)
English whitebeam (*Sorbus anglica*)
Wild pear (*Pyrus pyraester*)
Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*)

⁵ Native tree species are as listed in E. Charles Nelson and Wendy F. Walsh (1993) "*Trees of Ireland Native and Naturalized*" and in "*Our Trees – A Guide to Growing Ireland's Native Trees in Celebration of a New Millenium*", the People's Millennium Forests Project, 2000.

⁶ Naturalised tree species are as listed in E. Charles Nelson and Wendy F. Walsh (1993) "*Trees of Ireland Native and Naturalized*"

Appendix G

Invasive Species of Threat in Ireland

Under the Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2010, the species listed below are cited as invasive in Ireland. Greater detail is available from:

<http://www.environ.ie/en/Legislation/Heritage/NatureConservation/FileDownload,23675,en.pdf>

and in an explanatory note found at:

<http://www.environ.ie/en/Legislation/Heritage/NatureConservation/FileDownload,23676,en.pdf>

Part 1: PLANTS

Three Cornered leek *Allium triquetrum*

Cape pondweed *Aponogeton distachyos*

Water fern *Azolla filiculoides*

Hottentot-fig *Carpobrotus edulis*

Red valerian *Centranthus ruber*

New Zealand pigmyweed ; Australian swamp-stonecrop *Crassula helmsii*

Large-flowered waterweed *Egeria densa*

Waterweeds *Elodea* (all species)

Japanese knotweed *Fallopia japonica*

Giant knotweed *Fallopia sachalinensis*

A red algae *Grateloupia doryphora*

Brazilian giant-rhubarb *Gunnera manicata*

Giant-rhubarb *Gunnera tinctoria*

Giant hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzianum*

Spanish bluebell *Hyacinthoides hispanica*

Floating pennywort *Hydrocotyle ranunculoides*

Himalayan balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*

Curly waterweed *Lagarosiphon major*

Water-primrose *Ludwigia* (all species)

Parrot's feather *Myriophyllum aquaticum*

Fringed water-lily *Nymphoides peltata*

Wild Rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum*

Wireweed *Sargassum muticum*

Wakame *Undaria pinnatifida*

Dwarf eel-grass *Zostera japonica*

Sea-buckthorn *Hippophae rhamnoides*

Cord-grasses *Spartina* (all species and hybrids)

Part 2: ANIMALS

Muntjac deer *Muntiacus reevesi*

Chinese Water deer *Hydropotes inermis*

Roe deer *Capreolus capreolus*

Brown hare *Lepus europaeus*

Grey squirrel *Sciurus carolinensis*

American mink *Neovison vison*

Wild boar *Sus scrofa*

Ruddy duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*

Tawny owl *Strix aluco*

Common toad *Bufo bufo*

A colonial sea squirt *Didemnum spp.*

A colonial sea squirt *Perophora japonica*

Stalked sea squirt *Styela clava*

Asian oyster drill *Ceratostoma inornatum*

American oyster drill *Urosalpinx cinerea*

Asian river clam *Corbicula fluminea*

Slipper limpet *Crepidula fornicata*

Asian rapa whelk *Rapana venosa*

Japanese skeleton shrimp *Caprella mutica*

Chinese mitten crab *Eriocheir sinensis*
Bay barnacle *Balanus improvisus*
Chub *Leuciscus cephalus*
All freshwater crayfish species except the whiteclawed crayfish *Austropotamobius pallipes*
Greylag Goose *Anser anser*
Canada Goose *Branta Canadensis*
Dace *Leuciscus leuciscus*
Roach *Rutilus rutilus*
Carp *Cyprinus carpio*

Part 3: VECTOR MATERIALS

Blue mussel (*Mytilus edulis*) seed for aquaculture taken from places (including places outside the State) where there are established populations of the slipper limpet (*Crepidula fornicata*) or from places within 50 km. of such places

Soil or spoil taken from places infested with Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) or giant knotweed (*Fallopia sachalinensis*)

ANNEX 5 ASSESSMENT OF THE IRELAND FOREST CERTIFICATION SCHEME - PANEL OF EXPERTS REVIEW

#	Report chapter / page	Consultant's report statement	PoE member comment	Consultant's response
1.			<p>General Comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The report is well constructed and is well supported by expansive comments in Annex 1 for conformity against the PEFC requirements. It provides the evidentiary requirements for the Consultant to make the appropriate decisions on conformance. 2. I'm a bit confused as to the status of Annex 4 (CoC) and PEFC ST 2003:2010 in regards to the PEFC Irish scheme. I believe a statement is required to clarify the status of the two documents as it applies to the PEFC Irish scheme i.e. in terms of when the PEFC Irish scheme was submitted against the PEFC's requirement to use the PEFC's International CoC standard 3. My comments are in italics and suggested changes to text are underlined – any deleted text isn't shown. 4. If there are lifts from the IFCS documents, ensure that they are in quotation marks to distinguish from consultant's comments 5. Whilst the MRC answered all 	

#	Report chapter / page	Consultant's report statement	PoE member comment	Consultant's response
			<p>questions in each part, there is text missing in the report to correspond to the MRC –</p> <p>4.1 – 2, 4, 5, 39, 40, 41</p> <p>4.2 – 15, 19, 20, 21, 47</p> <p>4.3 – 1, 2, 3</p> <p>4.6 - 20</p>	
2.		Table of Contents Annexes	Annex 4 wasn't provided in the report which has been reviewed – presume it has minimal impact on the consultant's assessment?	That was an omission at the part of the consultant. Our apologies, we'll make sure they'll accompany the final report.
3.	Acronyms (Before Pg 1)		Missing COFORD, INFS, ITGA, PEFC and SSF Also, IFCS is not in correct alphabetical order	Adjusted in the report..
4.	1. Introduction; 1st para Pg 2	The PEFCC appointed FORM as the independent consultant to carry out the study. This assessment report will be the basis for the PEFCC's decision on the formal endorsement of the Irish PEFC standard.	The PEFCC appointed FORM as the independent consultant to carry out the evaluation. The evaluation is documented in this assessment report which will be the basis for the PEFCC's decision on the formal endorsement of the [Irish PEFC standard.] The evaluation is for the scheme not just a standard; please use correct term or the abbreviation for the correct term.	Adjusted in the report.
5.		The assessment benefited from FORM's specific	The evaluation benefited from FORM's specific	Adjusted in the report.
6.		FORM also carried out several conformity assessments for PEFC, such as Austria, ...	FORM has also carried out conformity assessments for the PEFC, such as Austria, ... Canada, Finland and Sweden are mentioned twice – is it initial endorsement	Adjusted in the report, it's not our habit to mention schemes twice.

#	Report chapter / page	Consultant's report statement	PoE member comment	Consultant's response
			and re-endorsement?	
7.	1.2 Assessment process Pg 1		The consultant indicates 'six steps' but there are eight dot points?	Adjusted in the report.
8.		Public consultation is until 13 September 2011. Comments of the public can be found in Annex 3.	Public consultation commenced on [insert date] until 13 September 2011. Comments of the public can be found in Annex 3. Need to insert commencement date to demonstrate for the 60 days	Adjusted in the report
9.		This interim report will be sent to PEFC Ireland and PEFCC at the latest on 30 August 2011.	This first interim report was sent to PEFC Ireland and PEFCC at the latest by 30 August 2011.	Adjusted in the report.
10.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of interim report. 	There is no information provided for this 'step' or dot point?	Adjusted in the report.
11.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drafting of the second interim reportIt is submitted 22 September 2011. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drafting of the second interim reportIt was submitted to the PEFC on 22 September 2011. 	Adjusted in the report.
12.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the second interim report 	Ensure change tense of this comment after PoE review ie 'will be' to 'was'	Adjusted in the report.
13.	1.3 Methodology adopted 2nd para Pg 2	The work consisted of a desk study in which an evaluation of the conformity is conducted.	The assessment consisted of a desk study in which an evaluation of the conformity was conducted. Separate the 1st and 2nd paragraphs	Adjusted in the report.
14.		a), b) & c)	Change the 'is' to 'was' as is all in past tense	Adjusted in the report.
15.		a) The checklist was used to assess the	The checklist was used to assess the compliance of IFCS with the requirements	Adjusted in the report.

#	Report chapter / page	Consultant's report statement	PoE member comment	Consultant's response
		compliance of IFCS with the demands of PEFC concerning the standard setting procedure.	of PEFC concerning the standard setting procedure.	
16.		c) , part III of the MRC , part III of the PEFC's MRC	Adjusted in the report.
17.		d) The PEFC Council procedures for Chain of Custody certification were integrally adopted by PEFC Ireland against Annex 4 of the PEFC Technical Document.	The PEFC Council procedures for Chain of Custody certification Annex 4 of the PEFC Technical Document were adopted by PEFC Ireland within the IFCS. Note that the PEFC's Annex 4 isn't in the list of PEFC documents under 1.4!	Adjusted in the report.
18.		e) These procedures were assessed on the basis of the information presented in part VII of the PEFC Council MRC and chapter 8 and Annex 6 of the PEFC Technical Document.	These procedures were assessed on the basis of the information presented in part VII of the PEFC's MRC and chapter 8 and Annex 6 of the PEFC Technical Document.	Adjusted in the report.
19.		f) and correspondence with PEFC Ireland, as well as during the visit to Ireland. and correspondence with PEFC Ireland, as well as during the visit to Ireland (Annex 3).	Adjusted in the report.
20.	1.4 Reference documents/ sources Pg 3	The PEFC Ireland documents, which FORM International used for the conformity assessment:	PEFC Ireland's documents, which FORM International used for the conformity assessment are:	Adjusted in the report.
21.		The PEFC Ireland Scheme for Sustainable Forest Management v2	The PEFC Ireland Scheme for Sustainable Forest Management v2 (Scheme)	Adjusted in the report.
22.		ST 2001:2008 Logo usage rules –	PEFC ST 2001:2008 Logo usage rules –	Yes it is. Adjusted in the report.

#	Report chapter / page	Consultant's report statement	PoE member comment	Consultant's response
		requirements	requirements Is it v2 as per the PEFC website?	
23.		PEFC Guideline GL 2/2010 – Checklist	PEFC Guideline GL 2/2010 – MRC Checklist	Adjusted in the report.
24.		The PEFC Technical documents which FORM used:	The PEFC Technical documents which FORM used are:	Adjusted in the report.
25.			There is no mention of the PEFC's CoC Standard in the PEFC Council documents!	Adjusted in the report.
26.		Internet resources used:	Internet resources used were:	Adjusted in the report.
27.	1.5 Personnel Pg 3	This conformity assessment was implemented by Debora van Boven-Flier (Senior Consultant) and Rik Sools (Consultant).	This conformity assessment was undertaken by Debora van Boven-Flier (Senior Consultant) and Rik Sools (Consultant).	Adjusted in the report.
28.	2. Recommendation Pg 4	Based on the results of this conformity assessment, FORM International recommends the PEFC Board of Directors to recommend to the General Assembly to endorse the Irish Forest Certification Scheme, since no non-conformities have been found.	Based on the results of this conformity assessment, FORM International recommends that the PEFC Board of Directors recommend to the PEFC General Assembly that it should endorse the Irish Forest Certification Scheme, since no non-conformities have been found against the PEFC's requirements for scheme endorsement.	Adjusted in the report.
29.	3.1 Overall Pg 5	1st par	Delete the extra full stop!	Adjusted in the report.
30.		Insight into the practical implementation of the scheme, in the field, at forest management level.	Insight into the practical implementation of the scheme at forest management level in the Irish forests.	Adjusted in the report.
31.	3.4 Forest Manage		Maybe a Note to this finding to indicate that the PEFC Irish scheme was submitted prior to PEFC ST 1003:2010	Adjusted in the report.

#	Report chapter / page	Consultant's report statement	PoE member comment	Consultant's response
	ment Standard		became the PEFC's Forest Management Standard and hence the evaluation was against the PEOLGs	
32.	3.5 Chain of Custody		Similarly, a Note to this finding to indicate that the PEFC Irish scheme was submitted prior to PEFC ST 1002:2010 became the PEFC's Forest Management Standard and hence the evaluation was against the Annex 4 of the Technical Document	Adjusted in the report. You mean Annex 3, I presume?
33.	4. Analysis of the Irish Forest Certification Scheme Pg 7	In this chapter those main results from the conformity assessment have been discussed that PEFC Council considers to be most relevant for this report.	The use of 'main results' – not all the questions from the MRC are set out in the text – why? The 'that PEFC Council considers to be most relevant' – where is this set out in the PEFC documentation?	This has been discussed with the PEFC Council two years ago. We received a checklist containing highlighted requirements which need to be described in the main report, while the rest can be discussed in the Annexes.
34.	4.1 Standard Setting Procedure Pg 7	Req.1, Process 1st para	'these bodies' – what is this reference to?	This refers to certification or accreditation bodies, mentioned earlier in the paragraph.
35.	Pg 8	Req. 6, Process	Is the reference to 'PEFC Irish Forestry Standard' the same as Document 5 under the PEFC Ireland documents in 1.4? If so, use a consistent term. Maybe need to spell out those organisations which are only in abbreviations!	This is a quote from the applicant scheme documentation, therefore we have not changed the reference. Adjusted in the report. The first column are the Forum

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			The '1. Forum members' – what sort of chamber is this one? Aren't all four columns the Forum members?	participants, the other three are stakeholders in the various area's, who were invited to comment on the drafts and provide their input but who are not in the actual standard setting forum.
36.	Pg 9	Req. 7, Process	This requirement relies on requirement 6 and should be linked to indicate that the membership was balanced on the whole.	Adjusted in the report
37.	Pg 10	Req. 8, Process	This report has been thoroughly examined by the standard setting forum during meetings where each comment was addressed by the Forum.	Adjusted in the report
38.		Req. 9, Process 2nd para	During the visit to Ireland it became clear that no voting took place at any point in time. The forum members explained that all important decisions were based on discussions to reach consensus and the formal approval took place in the same way. 'Everyone agreed to agree or disagree'. The comment on 'no voting' – why, is it based on consensus for decisions? The quote at the end – whose quote is it?	Yes, by means of various discussions consensus was reached and discussions took as long as necessary to ensure unanimity. The quote is of the PEFC Ireland secretary.
39.	Pg 11	Req. 10, Process	Consensus need not imply unanimity but in the case for PEFC Ireland it did demonstrate unanimity.	Adjusted in the report
40.	4.2/19 Req. 10	... Certification authorities will ...	The certification bodies are not authorities. Change to bodies .	This is a quote from the IFCS scheme documentation. The consultant will not adapt the documentation of an applicant scheme.
41.				
42.	Pg 12	Req. 12, ProcessThe way this complaint was handled	Adjusted in the report

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			was according to the IFCS's procedures. If the complainant would not have been satisfied with the way the complaint had been handled.	
43.		Req. 13, Process	Presume that 'PEFC IE' is meant to be the PEFC Ireland web site? If so, either say so or use the correct URL	Adjusted in the report: it referred to PEFC Ireland, not to the website.
44.	Pg 13	Req. 14 & 15, Process	Req 14 uses 'According to PEFC Ireland' whereas Req 15 uses 'According to PEFC IE' – presume its one or the other for the correct source – pick a consistent term or use the term from Req 16 which covers both	Adjusted in the report.
45.		Req. 15, Process	During the visit to Ireland, it was confirmed that all interested parties could download the final draft standard and, if requested, PEFC Ireland would have sent a hard copy to the various parties.	Adjusted in the report.
46.	74.3/33 Req. 19	... by the certification authority, on ...	The certification body is not authority. Change to body .	This is a quote from the IFCS scheme documentation. The consultant will not adapt the documentation of an applicant scheme.
47.	Pg 15	Req 20-34	Not applicable for PEFC Ireland who have adopted 'ST 2002:2010 Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products – Requirements' within the IFCS. See comment on 3.5 – this should be commented on by the consultant here to provide context for the PEFC Irish scheme	Adjusted in the report.
48.		Req 35, Process	Presume that the 'Report available' is on the Pilot Study?	Yes, adjusted in the report.

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49.	4.2 Scheme Implementation Procedures Pg 17	Req 2	Is this a consultant comment?	Yes, this is a consultant comments.
50.		Req 3	This seeks a response to the FMU level – is there such a statement available? 'forest owners' could be construed at that level but not specific to the requirement	Added in Annex 1 and report the following text: IFCS Introduction - Scale of Application of the Requirements All requirements of this standard must be satisfied at Woodland Management Unit (WMU) level.
51.		Req 4	There is a No in the MRC but it conforms in the text! The quote should be in Req 3 as it contributes to its conformance. A statement that there is no regional certification could be useful.	Adjusted in the report.
52.		Req 9	This is about the first part of the requirement not the PEOLGs!	Adjusted in the report: The PEOLG requirements have all been met, therefore no references to national laws, programs and policies were necessary.
53.		Req 16 Certified areas	The 2nd sentence has a 1 after unit. Presume it's a footnote but not in the text – see Req 46, is this the footnote?	Adjusted in the report.
54.	4.2/20, 22 Req. 16/22	7.3.3 Group Certification ... The group is co-ordinated by a single person (a group manager) ... 7.3.7 Responsibilities of the Group	The only place where group manager is referred to is in 7.3.3 and in the following headlines. I the following text is only Group Entity mentioned as responsible for	The term Group Manager is also used in sections 7.3.5 and 7.3.9. The consultant has interpreted the terms Group Manager and Group Entity in this context as equal

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	Req. 36 – 40/22	<p>Manager / Group Entity In order to eligible to apply for group certification, the Group Entity must: ...</p>	<p>the group. Compare with the requirement in EA-6/04 on Producer Group, 3.11 and Umbrella Organisation, 3.12, which require a legal entity or person managing the activities in the Group.</p> <p>Compare also Req. 45 below.</p>	<p>terms, but understands the point raised. Therefore the following quote is added:</p> <p>7.3.9 Group Certificate Under the Scheme, the systems and documentation of the Group Entity will be assessed against the Certification Body's requirements, whilst the Group Members' forest management practices will be assessed against the requirements of the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard. If successful, the Group Entity will be issued with a group forest management certificate, not the individual Group Members. The Group Member will receive a Certificate of attestation from the Group manager to affirm the membership of the Group.</p>
55.	4.6/34 Req. 24 and 25	... operating to internationally accepted standards (ISO Guides 61, 62 & 65)'	ISO/IEC 17021 cancels and replaces ISO/IEC Guides 61 and 62. Please change in the documentation and in the report or delete the reference to ISO/IEC Guides 61 and 62 because IFCS do not use certification bodies for management systems.	We will advise this to the IFCS.
56.		Req 41	What Annex 3 is it – PEFC documents or the IFCS documents?	PEFCC, adjusted accordingly in the report.
57.	4.2/24 Req. 45	... from the Group Manager ...	It would be better to refer to "Group Entity" as above in Req. 16, 36-40 because the Group Entity seems to be responsible for the group.	We will advise this to the IFCS.
58.		Req 46	This is not in conformance with the	Adjusted in the report.

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			requirement, but since it is not obligatory, it has no impact on the conformance of the Scheme.	
59.		Req 48 7.7.2 7.7.4	What is 'the steering group' in terms of the IFCS? Is it the Forum? This seems to indicate that it's the PEFC Ireland board - may not be seen as 'independent' but can perform the task of dispute settlement body or can delegate which better responds to the requirement	Yes, the steering group is the standard setting Forum (see Introduction to the IFCS Forestry Standard). Added to the report for further clarification: '7.7.3 Referral to Irish Accreditation Service In the event of an appeal, complaint or dispute concerning the certification process or conduct of the Certification Body not being resolved to the satisfaction of the auditee, Certification Body or other third party, the matter will be referred to the relevant Accreditation Body, which in Ireland will normally be the Irish National Accreditation Board (INAB). Failing resolution by the Accreditation Body the matter will then be referred to PEFC Ireland for a final decision.
60.	4.2/25-26 Req. 48, 49 and 50	7.7.4 Role of PEFC Ireland The PEFC Ireland Board will function as the final arbiter of appeal in the case of disputes related to certification decisions, use of the PEFC logo and label and/or loss of the certificate. The entity that wishes to resort to this authority should contact, in writing, the National Secretary	According to EN 45011 (and ISO/IEC Guide 65) 4.2 <i>Organization</i> , " <i>The structure of the certification body shall be such as foster confidence in its certification. In particular the certification body shall:</i> <i>... b) be responsible for decisions relating to its granting ...</i>	The consultant does not agree that 'the certification body should be sovereign in its decision.' PEFCC has a requirement that states the following: Has the PEFC National Governing Body established and have documented procedures for an

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		of PEFC Ireland normally, within one month of the grievance informing PEFC Ireland of the background and detail of the appeal.	... p) <i>have policies and procedures for the resolution of complaints, appeals and disputes received from suppliers or other parties about the handling of certification or any other related matters.</i> It is against the standard that "The PEFC Ireland Board will function as the final arbiter ..." because the certification body is sovereign in its decision. The document needs to be changed.	independent dispute settlement body, either permanent or ad hoc, that takes care of those complaints arising from forest management or chain of custody scheme implementation that cannot be addressed in the dispute settlement procedures of the relevant certification or accreditation body? See answer to PoE comment 60.
61.		Req 49 & 50	See comment to 7.7.4 in Req 48	See answers to PoE comments 60 and 61.
62.	4.3 Assessment of the Forest Management Standard Pg 27		Detailed information regarding the IFCS assessment against the PEOLG criteria can be found in Annex 2 of this document. Is this a reference to Annex 4 of the IFCS? If so, state it categorically.	No, to the conformity assessment report. Adjusted correspondingly.
63.	4.4 and 4.5		Please insert the correct year for PEFC ST 2002! Is the consultant sure that PEFC ST 2002 revised PEFC TD Annex 4 or did it supersede it? Confirm text with PEFC Technical Unit.	Since it's a quote from the applicant's scheme documentation, the consultant can merely advise PEFC Ireland to adjust this in their scheme documentation.
64.	4.6 Certification and accreditation	Req 1	If this is the case, it is partial which could be a condition of the recommendation. It would appear to be a simple fix for PEFC Ireland so as to avoid any doubt.	It was already adjusted by PEFC Ireland in their version 2 of the document. Omission on the consultant's part, adjusted accordingly in the report.

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	procedures Pg 29			
65.		Req 2	There is no mention of ISO 17021 – this is for management systems which is required for forest management certification. The reference to ISO G65 or EN 45 011 only relates to CoC certification. Also, the 2nd point of the requirement doesn't apply to the IFCS as PEFC Ireland has adopted the PEFC's CoC standard!	The consultant does not agree, based on PEFCC Annex 6, section 3.1: '1) The certification body carrying out forest management certification or chain of custody certification against a scheme specific chain of custody standard, shall fulfil requirements defined in: a) ISO 17021(1) if the certification is carried out as management system certification, b) ISO Guide 65 (EN 45 011)(2) if the certification is carried out as product certification (the term "product" is used in its widest sense and includes also processes and services)(2), c) Other requirements for certification bodies defined by the national accreditation body.'
66.		Req 9	Need a space between the Scheme, 7.3.8 and Scheme, section 7.4 Also, is it 'section 7.3.8' to be consistent with other references?	Adjusted in the report.
67.		Req 10	This requirement is missing but it is in the MRC (Annex1)!	Added to the report.
68.		Req 11	See 1st comment to Req 2	
69.		Req 24	ISO 17021 has replaced ISO G 62 and ISO 17011 has replaced ISO G61! Needs clarification in the PEFC Ireland's documentation	Consultant can merely advise this to PEFC Ireland.

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70.	5. Mission to Ireland Pg 36	1st para	'the proposal' – does this relate to paragraphs 1 & 2 of 1.3?	This relates to the tender proposal as sent to the PEFCC. Reference removed from the report.
71.		5th para The changes as proposed by the Secretary based on the findings of FORM International were discussed and agreed upon.	Changes to what?	The changes to the scheme documentation, adjusted accordingly in the report.
72.		6th para An elaborate mailing list, to which all the invitations to this meeting were sent, was shown to the consultant of FORM International, containing various organizations. ...	Do you mean 'extensive'?	Yes, adjusted in the report.
73.	Pg 37	9th para Since this report is still in the interim phase, FORM will keep trying to get in touch with the relevant organizations.	This needs to be clarified in the Final Report to ensure currency of consultant's attempts to get in touch with these organisations	It has been clarified.
74.	6. Public Consultation Pg 38	In the public consultation that lasted from 25th July till 13th September 2011, no comments have been received.	During the public consultation period which lasted from 25th July till 13th September 2011, no comments [have been/were] received by the consultant. In square brackets, which is better?	Were, adjusted In the report.
75.	Annex 3: Minutes Mission to Ireland Pg 39		There is no information provided in the report supplied, so no comment but would be factual information only	
76.	Annex I	PEFC Ireland Certification Scheme for	Is this v2 as indicated in 1.4?	Indeed, adjusted in the report.

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	MRC Pg 1	Sustainable Forest Management Appendix 5 Rules for Standard Setting		
77.	Pg 10-11		The reference is to Normative document 1003:2009 but the text at Req 20-34 is to 'ST 2002:2010' and 3.5 indicates Annex 4 to the PEFC Technical Document – a mix of three documents on CoC – needs clarification in context of the IFCS	Adjusted in Annex 1, MRC
78.	Pg 12		There is no comment on the Process – refer to Req 37 as it will be the same.	Adjusted in Annex 1, MRC
79.	Pg 12-13	Req 39-41	Whilst the N/A is the correct assessment, a comment that this is first endorsement and not a revision would avoid any doubt as to the assessment status	Adjusted in Annex 1, MRC
80.	Pg 14	Req 4	The YES/NO is a No but in the report text at Pg 18, it is 'Conforms'!	Adjusted in Annex 1, MRC
81.	Pg 24	Req 46	The YES/NO is a Yes but in the report text at Pg 24, it is a 'This is not conform the requirement, ...'!	Adjusted in Annex 1, MRC
82.	Pg 29	Req 9	There is no information provided against this requirement yet there is nearly half a page (four references) in the report text at Pg 31	Adjusted in Annex 1, MRC
83.	Pg 35	Req 20	If it is Not Applicable, this comment should be included with a brief explanation as to why this is so	Adjusted in Annex 1, MRC
84.	Annex II PEOLGs for SFM		General comments: 1. Under the heading, would it be helpful to indicate the source of the evidence? 2. Each requirement from the IFCS used as evidence should start on a new line to separate for ease of	1. Adjusted in Annex 2, PEOLG 2. Adjusted in Annex 2, PEOLG 3. Adjusted in Annex 2, PEOLG 4. Adjusted in Annex 2, PEOLG 5. Adjusted in Annex 2, PEOLG 6. Adjusted in Annex 2, PEOLG

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			<p>checking/reading</p> <p>3. Any consultant's comments should be on a new and separate line to distinguish from evidence provided by consultant</p> <p>4. There is variable font size used – it should be standardised!</p> <p>5. Decide on Req or req – it looks better as Req similar to the assessment report</p> <p>6. Any Guidance used to support a requirement should be indicated as such</p> <p>7. The noun is 'practice' in UK English as 'practise' is the verb – in context used, it is a noun</p>	7. Adjusted in Annex 2, PEOLG
85.		All 13 pages	<p>The abbreviation IFCS has been used which is for the scheme – so do the scheme elements as per 1.4 become the documentation for conformance against the PEOLGs rather than the forest management standard.</p> <p>Having checked the forest management standard – it should be the document referred to in all response i.e. the PEFC Irish Forest Certification Standard (or an abbreviation of the standard's title)</p>	Adjusted in Annex 2, PEOLG
86.	Pg 3	1.2 b.	My view is that this is 'Partial' as it mainly deals with 2.1 a!	<p>Added quote from req 2.1.1 guidance in Annex 2, 1.2b to cover the complete PEOLG:</p> <p>Guidance <i>The productive capacity of the site refers</i></p>

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				<i>to the ecological, social and economic functions of the woodland. This means that forest operations should adopt techniques that avoid direct or indirect damage to forest, soil or water resources.</i>
87.		3.1 a.	There is no direct mention of NWFP's in the evidence provided – can this be clarified	Added in Annex 2, under 3.1a: Req 2.2.3: <i>'Authorised harvesting of non-timber woodland products shall not permanently exceed, or diminish, the long term productive potential of the woodland.'</i>
88.	Acronyms	PEFCC:	Programme for <u>the</u> Endorsement...	Adjusted in the report
89.	p.1,1.2	It is submitted	<u>on</u> 22 Sept. ...	Adjusted in the report
90.	p.4,2	FORM recommends to	PEFCC's BOD (not to the G.A.)	Adjusted in the report
91.	p.7,4.1 Req.1	... to Ireland that	Neither certif. nor accred.	Adjusted in the report
92.	p.8	composition of the Forum	was Science and research included?	No
93.	p.9 2.4-2.5	""	Pro Silva and the Nat. Parks do not belong to industry!?	No
94.	p.11	a (theoretical) voting result of 1:1:0	What would have happened?	No voting has ever taken place and is also not the working method of the Forum.
95.	p.12		Writing to the Nat. Secr. ...	What is meant with this comment?
96.	p.18 req.		delete: but	Cannot find this location.

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	4			
97.	p.24,46		This does not conform with...	Not sure where this refers to.
98.	p.36,5	3 rd chapt. from the bottom	as well as to the <u>discussion</u> of	Adjusted in the report.
99.	p.37	2. chapt.,3.line	... forest area was...	Adjusted in the report.
100.	p.38,6		46 days (25.7.-13.9.)	Adjusted in the report: the exact period was from 25 July to 22 September.

Additional comments from one of the Panel members:

The assessment by FORM Internat. is based on a desk study and a 3 days field visit to Ireland (including meetings, review of documentation, excursions etc.). It is clear, well structured and robust, almost unique in so far, that it does not point to any non-conformities.

It still points to the ongoing process and its attempts to get in contact with Irish ENGOS. The recommendation to PEFC's BOD (not to the G.A. directly, as stated on p.4,2!) is fully supported.

The consultant's assessment (as well as the scheme itself) lists and answers the relevant questions by referring to legislation, guidelines of statutory bodies etc. in general, rather than listing precise items (f.e. "all conventions..." rather than CBD, WA etc., p.17 checklist), or: damage to water and soil shall be avoided, rather than what is really being done, and further quotations. Maybe this can serve as an example for other assessments (and schemes).

At some places, however, I would have welcomed a few more details, f.e. in connection with public access for leisure and outdoor recreation (because this is an issue in Ireland!), or management of wild deer (roe-, fallow- and red-?), checklist p.11, or extension of forest cover from 9-17% (in which period?, very ambitious, p.)

With more support from the ENGOS some results would have turned out quite different. To completely refuse participation and involvement is a severe mistake of the ENGOS, no matter whether they prefer FSC or not. The system and its development have given them a very good chance.