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Rules of Standard Setting

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1 Standardising body

- 1.1 The standardising body shall have written procedures for standard-setting activities describing:
 - a) its status and structure, including a body responsible for consensus building (see 1.5) and for formal adoption of the standard (see 2.11),
 - b) the record-keeping procedures,
 - c) the procedures for balanced representation of stakeholders,
 - d) the standard-setting process,
 - e) the mechanism for reaching consensus, and
 - f) revision of standards/normative documents.
- 1.2 The standardising body shall make its standard-setting procedures publicly available and shall regularly review its standard-setting procedures including consideration of comments from stakeholders.
- 1.3 The standardising body shall keep records relating to the standard-setting process providing evidence of compliance with the requirements of this document and the standardising body's own procedures. The records shall be kept for a minimum of five years and shall be available to interested parties upon request.
- 1.4 The standardising body shall establish a permanent or temporary working group/committee responsible for standard-setting activities. The working group/committee shall:
 - a) be accessible to materially and directly affected stakeholders,
 - b) have balanced representation and decision-making by stakeholder categories relevant to the subject matter and geographical scope of the standard where single concerned interests shall not dominate nor be dominated in the process, and
 - c) include stakeholders with expertise relevant to the subject matter of the standard, those that are materially affected by the standard, and those that can influence the implementation of the standard. The materially affected stakeholders shall represent a meaningful segment of the participants.
- 1.5 The standardising body shall establish procedures for dealing with any substantive and procedural complaints relating to the standardising activities which are accessible to stakeholders. Upon receipt of the complaint, the standard-setting body shall:
 - a) acknowledge receipt of the complaint to the complainant,
 - b) gather and verify all necessary information to validate the complaint, impartially and objectively evaluate the subject matter of the complaint, and make a decision upon the complaint, and
 - c) formally communicate the decision on the complaint and of the complaint handling process to the complainant.
- 1.6 The standardising body shall establish at least one contact point for enquiries and complaints relating to its standard-setting activities. The contact point shall be made easily available.

2 Standard-setting process

- 2.1 The standardising body shall identify stakeholders relevant to the objectives and scope of the standard-setting work.

Note: A stakeholder mapping exercise that includes defining which interest sectors are relevant and why, and for each sector what are likely to be the key issues, who are the key stakeholders, and what means of communication will best reach them, is a recognised means of meeting the requirement.

- 2.2 The standardising body shall identify disadvantaged and key stakeholders. The standardising body shall address the constraints of their participation and proactively seek their participation and contribution in the standard-setting activities.
- 2.3 The standardising body shall make a public announcement of the start of the standard-setting process and include an invitation for participation 15 days prior to the start on its website and in the major forestry related internet new sites and printed magazines to afford stakeholders an opportunity for meaningful contributions. The announcement and invitation shall include:
- a) information about the objectives, scope and the steps of the standard-setting process
 - b) and its timetable,
 - c) information about opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the process, an invitation to stakeholders to nominate their representative(s) to the working group/committee. The invitation to disadvantaged and key stakeholders shall be made in a manner that ensures that the information reaches intended recipients and in a format that is understandable,
 - d) an invitation to comment on the scope and the standard-setting process, and
 - e) reference to publicly available standard-setting procedures.
- 2.4 The standardising body shall review the standard-setting process based on comments received from the public announcement and establish a working group/committee or adjust the composition of an already existing working group/committee based on received nominations. The acceptance and refusal of nominations shall be justifiable in relation to the requirements for balanced representation of the working group/committee and resources available for the standard-setting.
- 2.5 The work of the working group/committee shall be organised in an open and transparent manner where:
- a) working drafts shall be available to all members of the working group/committee,
 - b) all members of the working group shall be provided with meaningful opportunities to contribute to the development or revision of the standard and submit comments to the working drafts, and
 - c) comments and views submitted by any member of the working group/committee shall be considered in an open and transparent way and their resolution and proposed changes shall be recorded.
- 2.6 The standardising body shall organise a public consultation on the enquiry draft and shall ensure that:
- a) the start and the end of the public consultation is announced in a timely manner in suitable media,
 - b) the invitation of disadvantaged and key stakeholders shall be made by means that ensure that the information reaches its recipient and is understandable,
 - c) the enquiry draft is publicly available and accessible,
 - d) the public consultation is for at least 60 days,
 - e) all comments received are considered by the working group/committee in an objective manner,
 - f) a synopsis of received comments compiled from material issues, including the results of their consideration, is publicly available, for example on a website.
- 2.7 The standardising body shall organise pilot testing of the new standards and the results of the pilot testing shall be considered by the working group/committee.

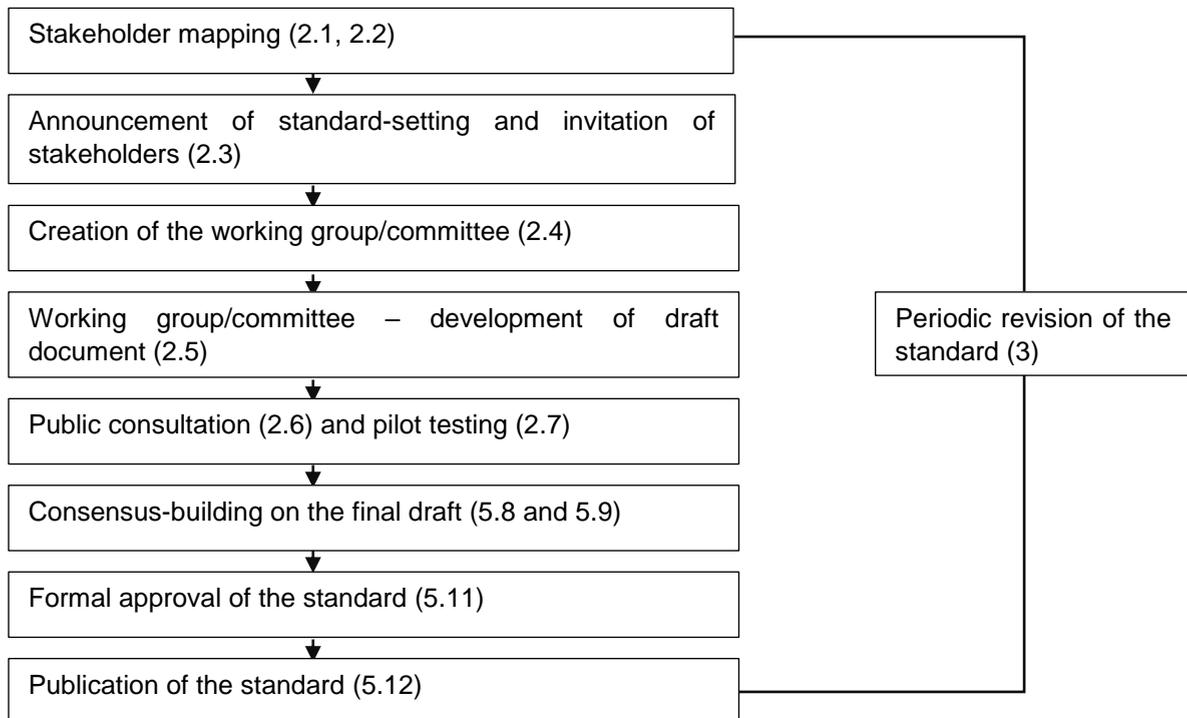
Note: Pilot testing is not required in case of revision of a standard where experience from its usage can substitute for pilot testing.

- 2.8 The decision of the working group to recommend the final draft for formal approval shall be taken on the basis of a consensus. In order to reach a consensus the working group/committee can utilise the following alternative processes to establish whether there is opposition:
- a) a face-to face meeting where there is a verbal yes/no vote, show of hands for a yes/no vote; a statement on consensus from the Chair where there are no dissenting voices or hands (votes); a formal balloting process, etc.,
 - b) a telephone conference meeting where there is a verbal yes/no vote,
 - c) an e-mail meeting where a request for agreement or objection is provided to members with the members providing a written response (a proxy for a vote), or
 - d) combinations thereof.
- 2.9 In the case of a negative vote which represents sustained opposition to any important part of the concerned interests surrounding a substantive issue, the issue shall be resolved using the following mechanism(s):
- a) discussion and negotiation on the disputed issue within the working group/committee in order to find a compromise,
 - b) direct negotiation between the stakeholder(s) submitting the objection and stakeholders with different views on the disputed issue in order to find a compromise,
 - c) dispute resolution process.
- 2.10 Documentation on the implementation of the standard-setting process shall be made publicly available.
- 2.11 The standardising body shall formally approve the standards/normative documents based on evidence of consensus reached by the working group/committee.
- 2.12 The formally approved standards/normative documents shall be published in 15 days and made publicly available.

3 Revision of standards/normative documents

- 3.1 The standards/normative documents shall be reviewed and revised at intervals that do not exceed a five-year period. The procedures for the revision of the standards/normative documents shall follow those set out in chapter 3.
- 3.2 The revision shall define the application date and transition date of the revised standards/normative documents.
- 3.3 The application date shall not exceed a period of one year from the publication of the standard. This is needed for the endorsement of the revised standards/normative documents, introducing the changes, information dissemination and training.
- 3.4 The transition date shall not exceed a period of one year except in justified exceptional circumstances where the implementation of the revised standards/normative documents requires a longer period.

4 Flowchart of standard setting process



5 General requirements for the sustainable forest management standards

5.1 The requirements for sustainable forest management defined by regional, national or sub-national forest management standards shall:

- a) include management and performance requirements that are applicable at the forest management unit level, or at another level as appropriate, to ensure that the intent of all requirements is achieved at the forest management unit level;
- b) be clear, objective-based and auditable;
- c) apply to activities of all operators in the defined forest area who have a measurable impact on achieving compliance with the requirements;
- d) require record-keeping that provides evidence of compliance with the requirements of the forest management standards.