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1. Objective.

To establish the parameters for the accreditation and notification of the organisms of forest certification.

2. Scope.

All the organisms that certify by the PEFC Uruguay Scheme.

3. Accreditation of the organisms of certification.

The organisms of certification must:

- a. be endorsed by the Uruguayan Organism of Accreditation (Organismo Uruguayo de Acreditación, OUA) or other organisms recognized by the IAF (International Accreditation Forum);
- b. include in their scope the Sustainable Forest Management Scheme (**UNIT 1152**) and Chain of Custody (**ST 2002:2013**);
- c. In the case of Sustainable Forest Management Scheme or Chain of Custody, the organism must have a quality system in place, according to the requirements of the **Norm ISO/IEC 17021**, adjusted to the type, range and volume of the work;
- d. In the case Chain of Custody, to have a quality system in place according to the requirements of the **Guide ISO 65**, adjusted to the type, range and volume of the work;
- e. have received notification of PEFC Uruguay or PEFC International of being endorsed.

4. Notification PEFC Uruguay for organisms of forest certification

a. Notification procedure

- i. The certification organisms presents to PEFC Uruguay a request of notification, including all the relevant information
- ii. PEFC Uruguay will evaluate the request and the documentation and make a decision
- iii. PEFC Uruguay and the certification organism will sign a notification contract for the Forest Management certification and/or Chain of Custody. The contract must include:
 1. Administrative conditions (i.e. transfers of information and communication between PEFC Uruguay and the certification organism)

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2. Compliance of the requirements for the certification organisms with a valid accreditation according to the Annex 6 of the PEFC Technical documentation about Certification and Accreditation Procedures.

3. Financial conditions

4. The certification organism and PEFC Uruguay will sign an independent contract with each one of the companies to be certified. This principle applies both for the forest management and the chain of custody.

b. Validity of PEFC Notification

The notification emitted by PEFC Uruguay is valid through the period that the certifying organism is accredited and the period established in the Accreditation and Notification contracts.

5. General requirements for the certifying organisms

The criteria used for the evaluation of the Forest Management Scheme or Chain of Custody of the applicant are established in the norms of Sustainable Forest Management Scheme (**UNIT 1152**) and Chain of Custody (**ST 2002:2013**) and those specific of PEFC Uruguay.

The certification organisms must restrict the requirements, audits and decisions to the specific aspects of Forest Management Scheme or Chain of Custody related with the scope of the certification.

The policies and procedures that guide the functioning of the certification organisms in relation with the PEFC certification must not be discriminatory. The services of a certification organism must be accessible to any forestry company applying. No company or entity should be prevented from applying, unless for cases specified in this document. No financial or any kind of improper conditions should be demanded.

6. Organization of the certification organisms

The structure of the certification organism of Forest Management Scheme or Chain of Custody must provide confidence in its certifications.

In particular the organisms must:

- a.** have documents prove it is a lawful entity;
- b.** to be well-informed on the PEFC Uruguay Scheme for the certification of Forest Management Scheme and/or Chain of Custody
- c.** Not to be involved in any process of normalization or be part of PEFC Uruguay,

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- d. be impartial and independent and have a structure to ensure these principles in relation to the Forestry Management;
- e. be responsible for the decisions taken in relation to granting, extending, reducing, suspending or withdrawing the certification;
- f. have an structure that allows the participation of all parts significantly involved in the development of policies and principles related to the content and functioning of the certification system;
- g. have rights and responsibilities referring the certification activities;
- h. have proper measures to cover the legal responsibilities that can derive from the certification activity;
- i. have financial stability and the resources necessary to the certification functioning;
- j. have a certification team with the responsibility to:
 - 1. ensure that the audits and decisions are taking place as described in this document;
 - 2. formulate and supervise the implementation of policies related to the functioning of the certification organism;
 - 3. take decisions on certification matters;
 - 4. supervise the finances of the certification organism, to ensure the its solvency and continuity;
 - 5. delegate on work groups or individuals, if needed, the authority to take care of specific tasks in their name;
- k. ensure that each decision of certification is taken by a person or persons different than those that took part in the audit;
- l. have enough personnel well prepared and with experience in forestry management, social, economic and environmental impacts according to the Forest Management Scheme and Chain of Custody to take care of the certifications under the responsibilities of an executive director or certification manager (see **DG 04 – Criteria for Auditor Qualifications**);
- m. For the or Chain of Custody certification, to have implemented a system that complies with the requirements of the **ISO 65 Guide** for the certification of products, according to the type, range and volume of work;
- n. have a certification statute, implemented and documented that includes:
 - 1. procedures for evaluation and certification of Forest Management systems;
 - 2. procedures for the emission, follow up, renovation and withdraw of certificates;

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3. control of use and application of the documentation used in the Forest Management Scheme or Chain of Custody certification

o. have internal procedures established and documented, compatible with the requirements of the **ISO 17021 or ISO 65 Guide**, available if requested for:

1. initial audit of the Forest Management Scheme or Chain of the applicant according to **ISO 19011 Norms** and **other applicable documents**;
2. follow up audits (no more than a year) and renovation (no more than 5 years of the Forest Management Scheme or Chain of Custody of the applicant according to **ISO 19011 Norms**, to ensure that the requirements are being complied with. Also to verify and register that the applicant adopts corrective actions in the established times by its procedures, in order to correct the no conformities.
3. identify and verify the no conformities and the need of the entities to adopt corrective action, in the established times by their procedures for incorrect referents to the certification, or the incorrect use of the logo or certification information;

4. communicate to PEFC Uruguay, in writing:

- the results of the audit processes to the companies to be certified
- emission of certificates
- annual information about the certified companies (certified area, total area, contact information, certificate validity)
- periodical actualizations of the information

p. have audit procedures according to the **ISO 19011** requirements.

q. establish policies and procedures that differentiate among the certification activities of Forest Management Scheme or Chain of Custody and any other activity by the certification organism;

r. ensure that the activities of the certification organism and its personnel have no technical, financial, commercial or any other kind of ties that might affect its independence and affect the certification process and result ;

s. not certify Forest Management Scheme or Chain of Custody when they have participated in the implementation or previous advising on certification activities;

t. ensure that the activities for physical or judicial parts implicated in the certification process, do not affect the confidentiality, objectivity or impartiality of the process;

u. have policies and procedures for the resolution of claims, disputes, litigations received by any interested party in the certification;

v. inform PEFC Uruguay about all certificates of Forest Management Scheme and Chain of Custody emitted and changes concerning the scope and validity of the certificates;

w. control the proper use of the PEFC logo by the certified entities;

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7. Information specified in the PEFC certificates

PEFC certificates must include:

- a) Name and address of the company or group for forest management certification/ name of the company for chain of custody certification
- b) Reference to the Standard:
 - i. Individual certifications of forest management: Standard PEFC of Forest Management, Norm UNIT 1152
 - ii. Group certifications, Standard PEFC of Forest Management, Norm UNIT 1152
 - iii. Companies certified chain of custody: ST 2002:2013
- c) Product, group of products or processes specifications
- d) Number of certificate
- e) Date of certificate
- f) Validity of certificate
- g) Name and number of accreditation of the organism of certification
- h) Include the logo of OUA accreditation

8. Third parties contracts

When a certification organism decides to contract third parties for certification jobs, there must be an agreement in writing, signed by both parties to cover all aspects, including confidentiality and conflict of interests.

At all moments, certification organisms must comply with the requirements established by the **ISO/IEC 17021 Norm**.

The certification organism must:

- a. Assume total responsibility about the hired job and keep its responsibility in the expedition, maintenance, extension, reduction, suspension or withdrawal of the certification;
- b. Ensure that the hired person or entity is competent and complies with the requirements established in this document and the qualifications for the task (see **DG 04. Criteria for the Auditor qualifications**) and that it is not implicated, directly or indirectly, in the design and implementation or maintenance of Forest Management or Chain of Custody systems so that its impartiality might be compromised.
- c. Obtain the agreement of the certification applying entity.

9. Conditions for the concession of certificates

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The certification organism must specify the conditions for the endorsement of the certificates according to the parameters established in this document.

The certification organism must demand that the applying entity have a documented Forest Management Scheme or Chain of Custody system.

The certification organism must have documented procedures for:

- a. Concession, maintenance, suspension and withdrawal of the certificates;
- b. The extension or reduction of the scope of the certification;
- c. To re-evaluate the system in case of significant changes to the criteria defined in the reference norms (**UNIT 1152** or **ST 2002:20013**).

10. Internal Audits and Revisions by the Management

The certification organism must have periodic internal audits in a planned and systematic way that cover all the procedures, to verify that the quality system implemented is properly applied and efficient.

The certification organism must ensure that the requirements of the **ISO IEC 17021 Norm** are met, and further more:

- a. The credited personnel as Forestry Auditor or Chain of Custody maintain their capacity to audit;
- b. The personnel responsible for the audited area is informed of the result of the audit;
- c. Proper correction measures are taken in the proper time span; and
- d. The audit results are registered (audit reports).

The management of the certification organism, with executive responsibility, must review the quality system at defined intervals, enough to ensure its validity and efficiency to comply with the requirements established by PEFC Uruguay and the policy and objectives established.

Records of the revisions must be kept.

11. Documentation

The certification organism must establish and keep procedures to control all documents and information related to the certification activities.

The documents must be reviewed and approved by the authorized personnel before publication and modification.

A list of current documents applicable must be kept, indicating the number of revision and state of modification.

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The distribution of all these documents must be controlled to ensure that all personnel of the certification organism have the proper documents.

The certification organism must facilitate, at request, via publications, electronically or others:

- a. Information about the persons responsible of the functioning of the certification organism for the Forest Management Scheme or Chain of Custody systems.
- b. A description of their certification system, including rules and procedures to grant, maintain, extend, reduce, suspend or withdraw certifications;
- c. Information about the evaluation processes and certification;
- d. Description of the source of financial support and general information about the fees applicable to the applying entities and certified entities;
- e. Description of the rights and obligations of the applying certified entities, including the requirements, restrictions or limitations in the use of the certificate and logo of the representative organism of PEFC Uruguay;
- f. Information about the procedures of claims, disputes and;
- g. Public availability of summaries of the certification.

12. Registers

The certification organism must keep a registration system adequate to its particular circumstances that complies with the legal requirements applicable. The registers must show that the certification procedures have been followed, especially in relation to the applying documentation, audit reports and other documents related to the endorsement, maintenance, extension, reduction, suspension or withdrawal of the certification.

The registers must be identified in a way that guarantees the integrity of the process (including the relevant information by third parties, such as Government Agencies, NGOs, Community Groups, others) and must be kept for at least a complete certification cycle (5 years).

The certification organism must establish procedures to conserve the register during a period according to the contract obligations, legal or any other kind and procedures referring to the access to these records.

13. Confidentiality

The certification organism must adopt proper measures to protect the confidentiality of the information acquired in the process of certification at all levels of its organization, including committees and external entities or persons acting on their name.

The information about an applying entity in particular, must not be revealed to a third party without the agreement of the entity.

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If any legal requirement demands the revelation of information to a third party, the applying entity must be informed of the information transmitted, as long as the law allows it.

14. Personnel with responsibilities in the process of Forestry Certification (Forest Management Scheme or Chain of Custody systems)

The certification organism personnel that takes part in the certification must be competent for the tasks, according to the requirements established by the representative organism of PEFC Uruguay (see **DG 04 Criteria for Auditor qualifications**).

The competence of the personnel must be reviewed periodically by the certification organism, at least once during the complete certification cycle (5 years).

The certification organism must have a procedure for:

- a. Selection of auditors according to their qualifications, experience background and competence;
- b. Initial evaluation of the conduct of the auditors and technical experts during audits and posterior evaluation of their performance.

The certification organism must keep information about the qualifications, background and experience relevant of each member of the personnel that participates in the certification process and must keep such registers updated.

The personnel must receive instructions clearly documented that describe their obligations and responsibilities. These instructions must be updated.

When selecting the auditor group, the certification organism must ensure the proper competence of the persons assigned.

The certification organism must establish procedures to ensure that all auditor personnel hired, complies with the requirements.

15. Claims, disputes and litigations

The claims, disputes and litigations presented to the certification organism by an applying entity or other parties, must be treated according with the procedures of the certification organism.

The certification organism must:

- a. Keep a register of all claims, disputes and litigations and corrective actions in relation to the certification;
- b. Take proper corrective and preventive actions;

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c. Document the actions taken and evaluate their efficiency.

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