

1. Objective.

To establish the parameters for Group Certification by PEFC Uruguay

2. Scope.

All the organisms that certify by the PEFC Uruguay Scheme.

All forestry entities certified or in the process of certification by PEFC Uruguay.

3. Group Certification

The Group Certification requires the grouping of the interested parties, that will be administered by a legally constituted entity (company, association or person), or through an agreement, legally documented, where the Group Administrator will be appointed.

The following terms are defined for the application of the present document:

- a) **Certified area:** the forest area covered by a **group forest certificate** representing the sum of the forest areas of the **participants**.
- b) **Group entity:** an entity that represents the **participants**, with overall responsibility for ensuring the conformity of forest management in the **certified area** to the sustainable forest management standard and other applicable requirements of the forest certification scheme.
- c) **Group forest certificate:** a document confirming that the **group organization** complies with the requirements of the sustainable forest management standard and other applicable requirements of the forest certification scheme.
- d) **Group forest certification:** certification of the **group organization** under on **group forest certificate**.
- e) **Group organization:** a group of participants represented by the group entity for the purposes of implementation of the sustainable forest management standard and its certification.
- f) **Participant:** a forest owner/manager or other entity covered by the **group forest certificate**, who has the legal right to manage the forest in a clearly defined forest area, and the ability to implement the requirements of the sustainable forest management standard in that area.
- g) **Document confirming participation in group forest certification:** a document issued to an individual **participant** that refers to the **group forest certificate** and that confirms the participant as being covered by the scope of the **group forest certification**.

4. Functions of the Group Administrator

The Group Administrator, qualified in the Forestry management Certification Scheme, will be responsible for applying to the certification organism and the custody of the Group Certificate. The Group Administrator functions are:

1. To guarantee that all activities related with the certification take place according to the requirements of the Sustainable Forestry Management System.
2. To comply and make comply with the norms of the Sustainable Forest Management by all the members of the group individually.
3. To establish and implement a written procedure for monitoring annually that each member of the group complies with its obligations.
 - a. The internal monitoring will be done annually
 - b. Each member of the group will be monitored annually
 - c. The Group Administrator will revise the conformities of the monitoring with the Scheme of Forestry Management. This revision will include the results of the annual monitoring program, the corrective and preventive measures if required; and evaluate the effectiveness of the corrective measures applied
 - d. The Group Administrator will keep a written register of all the steps of the annual monitoring (report of monitoring, no conformities, and corrective actions).
4. To inform the members and interested parties about the group certification, their rights and obligations and provide the information and assistance necessary for the effective implementation for the Sustainable Forestry Management
5. To guard the Group Certificate, endorsed by the certification organism after the favorable report of the audit.
6. To keep a register of all forested areas and group members included in the group certificate, identifying the owner, manager and surface as well as keeping written registers of conformity agreements of the members with the requirements of the group certification scheme and the realization and evolution of the internal audits of each one of the members.
7. To technically assist the certification organism during the audit process.
8. To have written procedures of incorporation, suspension and expulsion of group members and implement them according to the guidelines established in the **DG 07**:
 - a. Item 5. Members of the Group Certification
 - b. Item 6. Rights of the members of the Group Certification
 - c. Item 7. Duties of the members of the Group Certification.
 - d. Item 8. Loss of the conditions of member of the Group Certification
9. To place a request with PEFC – Uruguay, after obtaining the certification, of an official license to use the PEFC logo.
10. To process an accreditation document of the forested areas under certification to all group members that request it.
11. Communicate to the certification organism of the incorporation and dismissals of group members.

5. Members of the Group Certification

All persons, physical or judicial, public or private, interested in the group certification of their forested areas can be part of the group. Each group member must express in writing to the Group

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Administrator its interest in participating in the process and commit to comply with the requirements of the Sustainable Forestry Management System in a written agreement.

6. Rights of the members of the Group Certification

The members of the Group Certification have the right to:

1. obtain a document from the Group Administrator stating their participation in the Group Certification,
2. receive information from the Group Administrator all the necessary and up to date information about the certification process as well as the information and necessary assistance for the effective implementation of the sustainable forestry management scheme and other requirements applicable to the certification system;
3. receive a list of all the group members, company names and areas included in the certification;
4. request to PEFC – Uruguay a license of use of the PEFC logo, once all the requirements for the Group Certification have been met;
5. make claims to the certification organism or PEFC – Uruguay about the certification process or the system.

7. Duties of the Group Certification members

The group members must:

1. present in writing, to the Group Administrator, all forested areas under management that they wish to include in the Group Certification (it is recommended to include the totality of the forested areas);
2. commit to comply with the obligations imposed by the Sustainable Forestry Management System;
3. commit to correct the no conformities identified during the audits and take preventive and corrective measures;
4. to have less than 10 000 ha of forested areas, total, to be certified by each member;
5. when forestry jobs in the areas under certification are done by third parties, to demand that these jobs are executed according to the requirements of the Sustainable Forestry Certification System;
6. supply for the Group Administrator and certification organism all documents and facilities required for the certification audits;
7. inform, the Group Administrator of all treatments done on the forested areas under certification.
8. Provide the Group Administrator the audit reports done under other certification systems that the member is associated to.

8. Loss of the condition of member of the Group Certification

A member of the Group Certification can be expelled if there has been a grave fault in the compliance with the system and no corrective action was implemented. Expulsion follows a written notification.

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The member expelled can re-join the group after a specified period, if the corresponding corrective actions have been applied.

The Group Administrator has the power to decide about the expulsion and the period of restriction.

If the member does not agree with the decision, it may submit a claim with PEFC – Uruguay.