

SLOVAK FOREST CERTIFICATION SYSTEM

September 1, 2008

**REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION
BODIES CONDUCTING FOREST
CERTIFICATION AND CHAIN - OF -
CUSTODY OF WOOD VERIFICATION****SFCS
1005:2004**

Effective as of September 1, 2008

Requirements for Certification Bodies Conducting Forest certification and Chain - of - Custody of Wood Verification

Les critères de la qualification pour les auditeurs et organes de la certification réalisant la certification de gestion dans les forêts et vérification de C – o – C (traçabilité)

Anforderungen auf die Zertifizierungsorgane, die die Zertifizierung der Waldbewirtschaftung und Verifizierung des C – o – C (der Holzverbraucherflusses) vollziehen

Foreword

Document "Requirements for Certification Bodies Conducting Forest Certification and Chain - of - Custody of Wood Verification" was prepared by an expert group established at Lesoprojekt Zvolen to create Slovak National Certification System PEFC and in close cooperation with all main stakeholders. Document was submitted to the national governing body of the Slovak Forest Certification System for formal approval. It was approved as SFCS 1005:2004 on October 19, 2004 and amended on October 19, 2005, January 1, 2007 and September 1, 2008.

Slovak Forest Certification Association (SFCA) is the national governing body of the Slovak Forest Certification System. It constitutes of the representatives of forestry and wood processing industries as well as other stakeholder groups.

Annotation

The certification body responsible for the assessment of quality system of forest management and the chain - of - custody of wood verification under the Slovak Forest Certification System shall act as a third independent party. Requirements for the certification bodies conducting the assessment of forest management and chain - of - custody of wood are based on the provisions of STN EN ISO/IEC 17021 as well as the knowledge and practical experience from the areas assessed. Furthermore, experience gathered from the Slovak Forest Certification System is also drawn upon.

Certification body is accreditation and its scope follow the provisions of STN EN ISO/IEC 17021 standard.

Table of Contents

	Page
1 Scope.....	3
2 Normative reference	3
3 Definitions	4
4 Certification bodies	4
5 Requirements for certification bodies.....	4
6 Auditors.....	5
7 Qualification requirements for auditors	5
7.1 Forest certification.....	5
7.2 Chain - of - custody of wood verification	5
8 Certification procedure.....	6
9 Accreditation	6
10 PEFC notification of certification bodies.....	7

Introduction

This document defines general responsibilities and duties of the certification bodies in forest and chain - of - custody certification processes and forms an integral part of the technical documentation of Slovak Forest Certification System. The system is in force on the territory of the Slovak Republic only and has been developed in a close cooperation between major stakeholders representing the interests of forestry, wood processing, paper and pulp industries as well as other interested parties involved. Upon its completion, the system was formally approved by the SFCA General Assembly.

Advances in theoretical knowledge as well as practical experience and continual improvement of the whole certification system all necessitate regular reviews of documents conducted at least in a 5-year cycle. Both form and scope of the review are within the responsibility of the national governing body of the Slovak Forest Certification System.

Other documents of the Slovak certification system of sustainable forest management define the general principles of certification procedure, criteria and procedures of the forest certification and chain - of - custody of wood verification.

1 Scope

This document defines requirements on the certification bodies as well as qualification criteria for the auditors and certification bodies conducting external audit within the Slovak Forest Certification System that are necessary for the :

- (a) forest certification,
- (b) Chain - of - custody of wood verification.

2 Normative reference

This document also contains provisions of the documents and norms referred to further in the text to which there are due references made throughout the text. Advances in theoretical knowledge as well as practical experience and continual improvement of the whole certification system all necessitate regular reviews of both documents and norms that are conducted on a 5-year basis at minimum. National governing body of the Slovak Forest Certification System is the body responsible for the review's form and scope. For this very reason, participants entering into agreements based on this document shall use the latest editions of the following norms and documents:

SFCS 1001:2003: Forest Management Certification: Certification System Description

SFCS 1002:2003: Criteria and Indicators of Sustainable Forest Management

SFCS 1003:2003: Guidelines for Forest Management Auditing

SFCS 1004:2003: Chain - of - custody of Wood Verification Rules

SFCS 1006:2003: Guidelines for the Participation of Individual Forest Owners/Users in Regional Certification

STN EN ISO 14012:2000: Environmental Audit Guidelines - Qualification Criteria for Environment Auditors

STN EN ISO/IEC 17021:2006 Conformity assessment. Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems

STN EN 45012:2000: General Requirements on the Bodies Conducting Quality System Assessment and Certification

3 Definitions

For the purpose of this document, definitions given in the SFCS document 1001:2004 of the Slovak Forest Certification System duly apply.

4 Certification bodies

PEFC certification as a part of the Slovak Forest Certification System can be conducted by impartial, independent third parties with sufficient know-how in the area of certification subject. Certification bodies themselves cannot participate in the standard setting process as governing or decision-making bodies. Furthermore, bodies directly involved in the forest management or with direct links to the subject being certified are also excluded from the practical conduct of certification. Certification bodies competent to carry out forest certification and chain - of - custody verification shall fulfil the following requirements:

1/ Certification body shall meet the criteria defined in the STN EN ISO/IEC 17021 ⁽¹⁾ if the certification is carried out as quality system certification.

2/ Certification body conducting forest certification shall have the technical competence in the area of forest management and forest certification criteria and be able to assess its economic, social and environmental impacts.

3/ Certification body conducting chain - of - custody certification shall the technical competence in the following areas:

- a) timber procurement and processing, material flows in different stages of processing,
- b) trading with timber and wood-based products.

4/ Certification body shall possess adequate knowledge of the national system PEFC against which the forest and chain - of - custody certification are carried out.

5 Requirements for certification bodies

Qualification standards for certification bodies conducting the assessment and certification of both forest management and chain - of - custody under the Slovak Forest Certification System are based on the standard STN EN ISO/IEC 17021 Conformity assessment. Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems

Certification body shall:

- (a) declare its independence and impartiality,
- (b) provide unbiased information,
- (c) possess documents proving its legal credibility,
- (d) possess sufficient number of employees with adequate qualification, training, technical competence and practical certification experience,
- (e) possess technical competence in the area of quality system assessment,
- (f) demonstrate technical (professional) competence in the area of forestry and the area of forest management assessment procedures as defined in the Slovak Forest Certification System documents (only for the forest management assessment and certification),
- (g) demonstrate technical (professional) competence in the area of wood processing industry and the area of chain - of - custody assessment procedures as defined in the Slovak Forest Certification System documents (only for the chain - of - custody of wood assessment and certification).

6 Auditors

Certification bodies are responsible for the selection of qualified auditors that possess adequate technical knowledge of the certification process and are competent to deal with the issues related to the forest or chain - of - custody certification.

Auditors shall meet the requirements for the Quality Management Systems auditors as defined in the ISO standard 19011:2002⁽⁵⁾ (Guidelines for Auditing of Quality Management System and/or Environmental Management System – mainly Chapter 7 of the document).

Additional qualification requirements for auditors conducting forest management or chain - of - custody audit are further defined in the SFCS documentation.

Qualification and expertise of the auditors are verified in the process of accreditation.

7 Qualification requirements for auditors

7.1 Forest certification

Qualification criteria for the auditors assessing standard of forest management against the Slovak Forest Certification System requirements are based on the requirements for the quality system auditors as well as on theoretical knowledge and practical experience gained in the field of forest management.

Auditors shall:

- (a) meet general criteria placed upon the assessors / auditors of the quality systems as defined in the standard ISO 19011:2002⁽⁵⁾,
- (b) possess sufficient qualification and practical experience in the area of forest management,
- (c) prove sufficient knowledge of the Slovak Forest Certification System.

Under sufficient qualification and practical experience listed under the letter (b) we understand a full university degree in forestry accompanied by at least 6 years of practical forestry experience and certified forestry manager licence or the licence authorising the holder to design forest management plans (both licences are valid on the territory of the Slovak Republic only). Sufficient training provided in this area is also necessary. Level of expertise as requested under the letter (b) can also be ensured through external technical expert joining the auditor's team if the person meets the criteria specified.

As for professional credits listed under the letter (c) fully qualified person shall hold the certificate confirming successful completion of the training course on the technical documentation SFCS that is organised by the national governing body of the Slovak Forest Certification System.

7.2 Chain - of - custody of wood verification

Requirements for the auditors responsible for the verification of the quality systems necessary for the Chain - of - custody of wood are based on the requirements for the quality system auditors as well as on expertise and practical experience in the area of logistics and wood processing industry.

Auditors shall:

- (a) meet general criteria for assessors / auditors of quality systems as defined in the standard ISO 19011:2002⁽⁵⁾,
- (b) possess sufficient qualification and practical experience in the area of wood processing industry,
- (c) prove sufficient knowledge of the Slovak Forest Certification System.

Under adequate qualification and practical experience listed under the letter (b) we understand full university degree in one of the areas related to wood processing (wood technology, forestry, chemical engineering, economics, etc.) and at least 6 years of relevant professional experience.

Professional credibility in the area of wood processing industry can be ensured by including Slovak technical expert meeting the criteria set under the letter (b) into the team of auditors.

As a proof of the knowledge of Slovak Forest Certification System specified under the letter (c), certificate confirming successful completion of the training course on the technical documentation of SFCS organised by the national governing body of the Slovak Forest Certification System is required.

8 Certification procedure

Certification body is an accredited independent third party under which jurisdiction is to assess and certify quality system (QS) of forest management and system of accounting of material flows all the way through particular phases of the chain - of - custody of wood within the unit subject to certification procedure according to the certification criteria specified.

Certification body shall have established internal procedures for both forest and chain - of - custody of wood certification against the national certification system.

Certification procedure applied shall be compatible with the requirements defined in the Chapter 4.1.

Tasks of the certification bodies include:

- a) conduct of the independent assessment of the compliance of the applicant management with the SFCS standards,
- b) decision on the forest management and C-o-C certificate issuance, surveillance of their use and decision on its withdrawal,
- c) inspection of the certificate's use (including claims)
- d) provision of the national governing body of the Slovak Forest Certification System with the information on the number of certificates of forest management and C-o-C of wood issued under PEFC and any changes related to their expiry date or the scope recorded,
- e) inspection of the PEFC logo usage if the certified entity is a user of PEFC logo.
- f) a summary of the certification report will be available to the public on the web page of:
 - certification body
 - applicant
 - Slovak Forest Certification Association

Surveillance audit shall be completed within 1 year; maximum period for the reassessment audit is 5 years for both forest management and chain - of - custody certifications.

Compliance of the certification body's procedures with the above-mentioned requirements shall be verified in the process of accreditation.

Accredited certification bodies shall have separate procedures for the dispute settlement issues. All complaints involving dispute between the applicant and the certification body related to audit, certificate issuance, its temporary or permanent withdrawal or its denial shall be dealt with in compliance with the procedures, which are applied for any certification procedure carried out by the respective certification body.

Accreditation body whose accreditation covers forest management and C-o-C certification shall also establish procedures for the settlement of complaints related to observation of the accreditation provisions.

9 Accreditation

Certification bodies conducting forest or chain - of - custody certification shall be accredited by a national accreditation body as to ensure the credibility of certification and to facilitate mutual recognition.

Information on accreditation including accreditation number and the name of respective accreditation body shall accompany every certificate issued.

National accreditation body is the member of the following organisations:

- Engineering Accreditation Commission (EAC)

- International Accreditation Forum (IAF)
- European co-operation for Accreditation (EA)

National accreditation body conducts its work in compliance with the provisions of the ISO/IEC Guide 61:1996 ⁽⁶⁾ (EN 45010:1998 - General Requirements for the Assessment and Accreditation of Bodies Dealing with Certification/Registration) and the documents approved by the above-mentioned organisations of which it is a member.

Certification body shall set about the certification of forest management and the chain - of - custody as the "accredited certifications."

Approach to the accreditation:

- a) Certification bodies conducting the certification of forest management or the chain - of - custody certification are accredited by the national accreditation body whose jurisdiction covers the accreditation for the purposes of forest management and chain - of - custody certification.
- b) Certification bodies conducting forest certification or the chain - of - custody certification as a part of the QMS (Quality Management Systems as defined in the standard 9001:2000 ⁽³⁾), EMS (Environmental Management Systems as defined in ISO standard 14001 ⁽⁴⁾) or as a part of EMAS (Eco-Management and Audit Scheme as defined in the EC Regulation 761/2001 ⁽²⁾) shall have certification accredited by the national accreditation body that deals with the accreditation of the QMS, EMS or EMAS systems in that respective sector.

10 PEFC notification of certification bodies

Certification bodies operating forest management and / or chain of custody certification against the requirements of Slovak Forest Certification System shall be notified by the national governing body. In order to ensure the independence of certification bodies the PEFC notification conditions decided by the national governing body shall only cover:

- (a) administrative conditions (e.g. communication of the certification body with the national governing body, 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 9.

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

(1) **ISO/IEC 17021:2006** Conformity assessment. Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems

(2) **EC Regulation No. 761/2001** of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 March 2001. (http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/emas/documents/legislative_en.htm)

(3) **ISO 9001:2000** Requirements on the Quality Management Systems

(4) **ISO 14001:1996** Environmental Management Systems – specification with the instructions for use

(5) **ISO 19011:2002**: Guidelines for Auditing of Quality Management System and/or Environmental Management System

(6) **ISO/IEC Guide 61:1996 (EN 45 010:1998)** General Requirements for the Assessment and Accreditation of the Bodies Conducting Certification/Registration