
Standard setting - Requirements



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Foreword

The PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes) Council is a worldwide organization promoting sustainable forest management through forest certification and labelling of forest-based products. A product with a PEFC certificate and/or label offers assurance that raw materials used in the manufacture of that product have originated from a sustainably managed forest.

The PEFC Council endorses national forest certification systems that comply with PEFC Council requirements. These systems are regularly evaluated. Estonian Forest Certification Scheme has been approved by International PEFC. International PEFC approval acknowledges that the national forest certification scheme complies with international PEFC standards and PEFC forest management requirements.

This standard is a part of the series of Estonian PEFC forest certification standards (scheme) which belongs to Estonian Forest Certification Council.

NGO Estonian Forest Certification Council (EFCC) is a non-profit organization acting in the public interest.

The overall objective of the EFCC is to support the implementation of the principles of responsible and sustainable forestry in Estonia and raise the interest of forest owners, forest and timber industry, stakeholder groups related to forestry and the awareness of the consumers of responsible forestry, production and consumption.

The responsibilities of the EFCC are the following:

- 1) developing and revising Estonian PEFC Forest Certification Scheme;
- 2) developing, revising and amending the national standard and guides and introducing these to the public and interested parties;
- 3) developing and revising forest management standard;
- 4) development and dissemination of information and study materials, publications etc. on PEFC and sustainable forestry;
- 5) concluding PEFC logo agreements;
- 6) concentration and representation of interest groups.

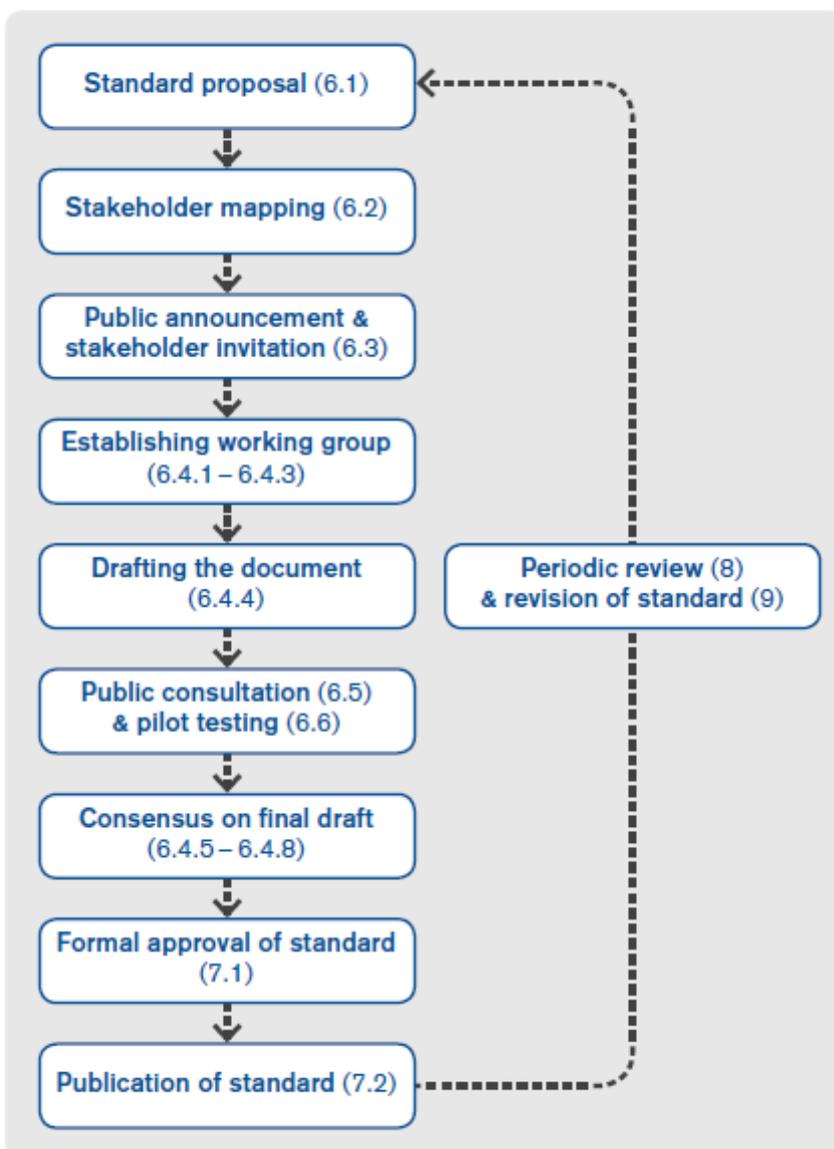
This document cancels and replaces Appendix 11 „Standard setting procedure” of 10.08.2015 of the Estonian Forest Certification Scheme.

Introduction

Sustainable forest management is a holistic approach that takes into account ecological, social and economic criteria. Participation of national and local stakeholders affected by forest management is essential during the development of the forest certification scheme and the specifying of the definition of sustainable forest management.

The standards development process (refer to Fig. 1) carried out by PEFC and its national governing bodies is open, transparent and based on the consensus among a broad range of stakeholders.

Figure 1: OVERVIEW of the standard setting process and related clauses in this standard.



1. Scope

This standard defines the requirements for the EFCC and the working group of the standard during the development, review and revision of the sustainable forest management standard.

2. Normative references

The standards of the Estonian Forest Certification Scheme are the following:

Introduction to PEFC Estonian Forest Certification Scheme

PEFC Estonian Forest Certification Scheme, 10.08.2015

Notification of Certification Bodies for Chain of Custody and Forest Management Certification in Estonia against the requirements of the Estonian Forest Certification Scheme, 10.08.2015

PEFC EST 2 The procedure requirements for the certification of forest management and chain of custody, 10.08.2015

PEFC EST 3 The qualification criteria for external auditors and certification bodies and certification procedures 10.08.2015

PEFC EST 4 Guidelines for Certification Bodies and Auditors to conduct FM and CoC Certification

Procedure for the Issuance of PEFC Logo Licenses by EFCC, 10.08.2015

PEFC EST 1001:2020, Standard setting – Requirements, 21.01.2020

3. Terms and Definitions

3.1 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 (ISO/IEC Guide 2).

3.2 Editorial changes

Changes that do not alter the technical content.

Note: The changes can include clarifications, guidance and grammatical changes.

3.3 Enquiry draft standard

A draft document that is available for public consultation.

3.4 Final draft standard

A final draft document that is available for formal approval.

3.5 Normative document

A document that provides rules, guidelines or characteristics for activities or their results.

Note 1: The term “*normative document*” is a generic term that covers such documents as standards, technical specifications, codes of practice and regulations.

Note 2: “*A document*” is to be understood as any medium with information recorded on or in it.

3.6 Publicly available

Generally accessible to the interested public in any form and without the need for a request.

Note 1: When information is available by request only, this is indicated explicitly in the document as available on request.

Note 2: Special consideration might be needed for disadvantaged stakeholders to ensure their access to a document, eg providing hard copies to stakeholders identified as having no access to electronic media.

3.7 Revision

Introduction of all necessary changes to the substance and presentation of a normative document.

Note: The results of the revision are presented by issuing a new edition of the normative document.

3.8 Review

Activity of checking a normative document to determine whether it is to be reaffirmed, changed or withdrawn (ISO/IEC Guide 2).

3.9 Stakeholder

A person, group, community or organization with an interest in the subject of the standard.

3.10 Affected stakeholder

A stakeholder who might experience a direct change in living and/or working conditions caused by the implementation of the standard, or a stakeholder who might be a user of the standard and therefore is subject to the requirements of the standard.

Note 1: A stakeholder having an interest in the subject matter of the standard (eg NGOs, scientific community, civil society) is not equal to being affected.

Note 2: A stakeholder who might be a user of the standard is likely to become a certified entity, eg a forest owner in the case of a forest management standard or a wood processing enterprise in the case of a chain of custody standard.

3.11 Disadvantaged stakeholder

A stakeholder who might be financially or otherwise disadvantaged by participating in the standard setting process.

3.12 Key stakeholder

A stakeholder whose participation is critical to the outcome of the standard setting process.

3.13 Standard

A document, established by consensus and approved by a recognized body that provides, for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for activities or their results.

Note: Standards should be based on the consolidated results of science, technology and experience.

3.14 Standardizing body

A recognized body involved in the development of standards (ISO Guide 2).

Note: A standardizing body for a forest management system / forest management standard is a body which is responsible for the development and review of standards for the forest certification scheme. The standardizing body can be a PEFC national governing body, eg NGO Estonian Forest Certification Council (EFCC); also, the standardizing body can be separate from the governance of the forest certification scheme.

3.15 Working draft standard

A draft document that is generally available for feedback or voting within a working group.

4. Standard setting principles

The standard setting process is governed by the key principles of

- Stakeholder engagement – an opportunity for meaningful participation in the process that is open to all stakeholders through participation in working groups and public consultations
- Balanced representation – no single stakeholder group should dominate or be dominated in the process. While each party is free to decide on its participation, EFCC makes an effort to ensure that all relevant stakeholder groups are represented and consider an appropriate gender balance
- Consensus – standards are approved by consensus. Any sustained opposition to specific issues is resolved by means of negotiations whenever possible
- Improvement – periodic review of a standard seeks continual improvement to ensure the standard continues to meet the expectations of the stakeholders
- Transparency – relevant documents are publicly available so interested parties can follow developments during and after the process

5. Standardizing body

5.1 Standard setting procedures

5.1.1 EFCC shall have written procedures for standard setting activities describing:

- a) the legal status and organizational structure of the EFCC, including a body responsible for consensus building (working group, refer to 6.4), and procedures for formal adoption of the standard (refer to 7.1);
- b) procedures for keeping documented information;
- c) procedures for balanced representation of stakeholders;
- d) the standard setting process;
- e) the mechanism for reaching consensus, and
- f) review and revision of standard(s)/normative document(s).

5.1.2 EFCC shall make its standard setting procedures publicly available and shall review its standard setting procedures regularly. The review shall consider feedback from stakeholders.

5.2 Documented information

5.2.1 EFCC shall keep documented information relevant to the standard setting and review process. EFCC shall be responsible for the implementation, revision and keeping records on timely assessment of the standards. Giving evidence of the compliance with the requirements of this standard and EFCC's own procedures include:

- a) standard setting procedures;
- b) stakeholder identification mapping;
- c) contacted and/or invited stakeholders;
- d) stakeholders involved in standard setting activities including stakeholders participating in each working group meeting;
- e) feedback received and a synopsis of how feedback was addressed;
- f) all drafts and final drafts of the standard;
- g) outcomes from working group considerations;
- h) evidence of consensus on the final draft of the standard;
- i) evidence relating to the review process and
- j) final approval of the final draft standard by EFCC.

5.2.2 Documented information shall be kept until the completion of the next review or revision of the standard to which they refer. Otherwise the documented information must be kept for a minimum of five years after the publication of the standard.

5.2.3 Documented information shall be available to interested parties upon request in the EFCC office or at the e-mail address info@pefc.ee.

5.3 Handling of complaints and appeals

- 5.3.1** Disagreements concerning the substance of the standard and appeals relating to the working group and standard setting activities shall be discussed by the Commission that has a chairman and the parties of the dispute or appeal as members. The chairman has the right to appoint relevant specialists in the dispute.
- 5.3.2** EFCC shall appoint an independent and impartial chairman to the Commission. The parties of the dispute or appeal shall appoint one member of the Commission case by case.
- 5.3.3** A written application for the resolution of the complaint or appeal shall be submitted to the CEO of the EFCC who shall acknowledge the receipt of the complaint or appeal and deliver the relevant material immediately to the chairman of the Commission. The latter shall initiate the procedure without delay. The contact details of the CEO of the EFCC are available on web page pefc.ee.
- 5.3.4** Upon receipt of a complaint or appeal EFCC shall:
- a) acknowledge the receipt of the complaint or appeal to the complainant;
 - b) gather and verify all necessary information to validate the complaint or appeal, evaluate the subject matter of the complaint or appeal impartially and objectively, and make a decision regarding the complaint or appeal and
 - c) formally communicate the decision on the complaint or appeal to the complainant and describe the process of the appeal.
- 5.3.5** Any questions related to making the inquiries and submitting complaints and appeals on the activities of standard setting can be delivered to the CEO of the EFCC whose contact details are available on the web page pefc.ee

6. Standard setting process

6.1 Standard proposal

6.1.1 For the development of a new standard, the standardizing body shall specify a proposal including:

- a) the scope of the standard;
- b) the justification of the need for the standard;
- c) a clear description of the intended outcomes;
- d) a risk assessment of potential negative impacts arising from implementing the standard, such as
 - factors that could affect the achievement of the outcomes negatively
 - unintended consequences of implementation
 - actions to address the identified risks and
- e) a description of the stages of the standard development and their expected timetable.

6.1.2 For the revision of the standard the proposal shall cover at least (a) and (e) of clause 6.1.1.

6.2 Stakeholder identification

6.2.1 EFCC shall identify stakeholders relevant to the objectives and scope of the standard setting activities by means of a stakeholder mapping exercise. It shall define which stakeholder groups are relevant to the subject matter and why. For each stakeholder group the EFCC shall identify the key stakeholders, their likely key issues and which means of communication would be best to reach them.

6.2.2 EFCC shall identify stakeholder groups according to nine stakeholder groups as defined by Agenda 21 of the *United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED)* in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. At least the following groups shall be included in the standard stakeholder mapping:

- forest owners
- business and industry
- indigenous people
- non-government organizations
- scientific and technological community
- workers and trade unions

Other groups shall be added if relevant to the scope of the standard setting activities.

Note: The full list of nine major stakeholder groups defined by Agenda 21 of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development consists of: (i) business and industry, (ii) children and youth, (iii) forest owners, (iv) indigenous peoples, (v) local authorities, (vi) non-government organizations, (vii) scientific and technological community, (viii) women, and (ix) workers and trade unions.

6.2.3 EFCC shall identify disadvantaged stakeholders and key stakeholders and address any constraints to their participation in standard setting activities.

Note: A stakeholder can be both a disadvantaged and a key stakeholder at the same time.

6.3 Public announcement of the start of standard setting process

6.3.1 EFCC shall make a public announcement of the start of the standard setting process and shall invite stakeholders to participate in the process. EFCC shall make the announcement and send an invitation to all stakeholders identified by the mapping exercise at least four weeks before the first meeting of the working group.

The public announcement and invitation shall include:

- a) an overview of the standard setting process;
- b) access to the proposal for the standard (refer to 6.1);
- c) information about the opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the process;
- d) a request to stakeholders to nominate their representative(s) to the working group (refer to 6.4). The request to disadvantaged stakeholders and key stakeholders shall be made in a manner that ensures that the information reaches intended recipients in a format that is easy to understand;
- e) explicit invitation and clear instruction on how to submit feedback on the scope and process of standard setting and
- f) access to the standard setting requirements (PEFC EST 1001:2020).

Note 1: In a timely manner means (at the latest) four weeks before the first standard setting activity is scheduled to occur.

Note 2: Through suitable media means at least through the EFCC's website and by email and/or letter to identified stakeholders. Other media includes press releases, news articles, features in trade-press, information sent to branch organizations, social media, digital media, etc.

6.3.2 EFCC shall review the standard setting requirements based on the feedback received in response to the public announcement.

6.4 Working group requirements

6.4.1 EFCC shall establish a temporary working group based on nominations submitted to the standard setting working group. The objective of the EFCC is to provide all stakeholders interested in sustainable forest management with equal opportunities to participate in the standard setting working group.

- a) All stakeholders identified by mapping and having notified of the participation can participate in the working group;
- b) EFCC shall involve all stakeholders identified as the key stakeholder groups by stakeholder group mapping (refer to p 6.2.2) to achieve balanced representation. Involvement of various stakeholder groups shall ensure that no single stakeholder group can dominate.
- c) The working group shall work out the details of its working methods at the first meeting (incl. the procedure specified in 6.4.5). The working group shall form the steering group and may form sub working groups and invite experts or organize the work of the working group in another way if it considers it necessary. The working group has the right to add members to the working group during its term of action.
- d) EFCC shall provide the working group with technical support and technical resources for carrying out the working group meetings.
- e) Each stakeholder group shall decide on the participation in the working group and shall

appoint its representative and his/her substitute in the working group. The stakeholder group having nominated its representative in the working group shall cover the costs of its representative. If necessary, EFCC shall make efforts to provide the disadvantaged stakeholders with opportunities to participate in the work of the working group (refer to 6.2.3).

- f) The members of the working group shall form a steering group consisting of two members of each key stakeholder group identified as the result of stakeholder group mapping (max 12 members). The representatives of the stakeholder groups shall appoint two members from the working group to represent them in the steering group.
- g) The responsibilities of the steering group are:
 - 1) to elect a chairman and a vice-chairman from among the members of the steering group;
 - 2) to agree on the principles and formulation of the text of the standard and formulate the text of the standard;
 - 3) to reach a consensus on the standard setting procedure and the substance of the standard. The decisions of the steering group shall be made by achieving a consensus;
 - 4) if consensus is not achieved in the steering group, the decision making procedure shall be carried out according to clauses 6.4.6 to 6.4.8.;
 - 5) to submit the final draft standard to EFCC for approval.
- h) The quorum shall exist in the steering group when at least one half of its members are present, including the chairman or vice-chairman;
- i) The obligation of the member of the steering group is to represent his/her stakeholder group and be responsible for the substance of the working draft of the standard;
- j) If a member of the steering group cannot participate in the meeting, he/she shall nominate his/her substitute member.

6.4.2 The working principles of the working group:

- a) the activities of the working group shall be based on the objectives set by the stakeholder groups and the discussion of these objectives with other members of the working group. The objectives of the working groups may vary within the standard, eg by areas of activities;
- b) every stakeholder group has equal opportunities to influence the decision-making process and possible voting situations. No stakeholder group can make up a majority and no key stakeholder group can be excluded from decision-making;
- c) stakeholder groups shall participate in the discussions with expertise relevant to the subject matter of the standard and/or for example, by submitting written presentations or other material to other working groups;
- d) the affected stakeholders should be represented in an appropriate proportion among the members of the working group of the standard.

6.4.3 EFCC shall aim at involving the highest possible number of all identified stakeholder groups (refer to 6.2) and all key stakeholder groups in the working groups of the standard; as well as ensuring the broadest representation. EFCC shall proactively seek to engage stakeholders by using outreach such as (but not limited to) personal emails, phone calls, meeting invitations etc.

When a stakeholder group is not represented or key stakeholder groups cannot be encouraged to participate in the standard setting working group, EFCC shall strive to increase the knowledge

of the working group of the standard in the main issues of the relevant stakeholder group, eg by involving experts to consult the working group of the standard.

- 6.4.4** Activities of the working group shall be organized in an open and transparent manner where
- a) working drafts of the standard shall be available to all members of the working group,
 - b) all members of the working group shall be given opportunities to practically contribute to the development or revision of the standard and provide feedback on the working drafts of the standard and
 - c) feedback and views given by any member of the working group shall be considered in an open and transparent way and the outcome of these considerations shall be recorded.

6.4.5 Achieving a consensus in the steering group is the prerequisite for the decision of the Board of EFCC to approve the final draft of the standard. In case there is no difference in opinion and no sustained opposition, the chairman of the meeting shall record the consensus as the decision of the meeting in the minutes of the meeting. In order to determine whether there is a consensus or any sustained opposition regarding the main issues, the steering group can use the following methods:

- a) convene face-to face meeting(s) where there is a verbal yes/no vote, a show of hands for a yes/no vote; a statement on consensus from the Chair when there are no dissenting voices or hands (votes) etc.;
- b) organise a meeting using information technology solutions enabling real-time two-way communication or other similar electronic methods where the members can give a verbal yes/no vote;
- c) send an e-mail request to the members of the steering group for agreement or objection where the members provide a formal (written) response (vote) or
- d) use combinations of these methods to be confirmed by the working group at the beginning of the standard setting process.

6.4.6 In case the decision shall be made by voting the decision shall be taken when 2/3 majority of the members of the steering group participating in the meeting have given a yes vote. Each key stakeholder group (p 6.2.2.) has a maximum of 2 votes. Voting should be carried out at a meeting convened with a prior notice.

When the stakeholder group has more than 2 representatives, the stakeholder group shall jointly decide who will participate in the voting.

A majority vote cannot override sustained opposition in order to achieve consensus. Differences in opinion in the working group shall not go unnoticed. The decision can be made by consensus provided all differences in opinion are solved according to the methods specified in clauses 6.4.5 and 6.4.7 and 6.4.8 if necessary.

6.4.7 Reaching a consensus shall be encouraged by the exchange of opinions between the members of the steering group and for example, combining different opinions by mutual consultations. When there is sustained opposition to a substantial issue, the issue shall be resolved using the following methods:

- a) finding a compromise through discussions and negotiations on the disputed issue;
- b) finding a compromise through direct negotiations with the stakeholders making the objection and other stakeholders with different views on the disputed issue;
- c) additional round(s) of public consultation (if necessary) where further stakeholder input can help to achieve consensus on unresolved issues. EFCC determines the scope and duration of any additional public consultation if necessary.

6.4.8 When a substantial issue cannot be resolved and sustained opposition persists, EFCC shall initiate dispute resolution in accordance with its procedures for impartial and objective action (p 5.3.).

6.5 Public consultation

6.5.1 EFCC shall organize public consultation on the draft standard and shall ensure that:

- a) the start and the end dates of the public consultation are announced on the homepage pefc.ee a day before carrying out the public consultation at the latest;
- b) a direct invitation to comment on the draft standard is sent to each stakeholder having been identified by stakeholder identification mapping (refer to 6.2) aiming for a balanced participation of stakeholder groups;
- c) invitations are sent to disadvantaged and key stakeholders by methods that ensure the invitations reach the recipients and are easy to understand;
- d) the draft standard is made publicly available;
- e) public consultation lasts for at least 60 days;
- f) all feedback is considered by the working group in an objective manner and
- g) a synopsis of feedback is compiled by the developer of the draft standard specifying the opinions and proposals that have been considered and those that have not been considered. The synopsis is made publicly available on the website pefc.ee and is sent to each stakeholder/party that has given feedback.

6.5.2 For new standards EFCC shall organize a second round of public consultation specified in 6.5.1 lasting for at least 30 days.

6.6 Pilot testing

EFCC shall organize pilot testing of new standard(s) to assess the clarity, auditability and feasibility of the requirements. The working group shall consider the outcome of pilot testing.

Pilot testing is not required for the revision of an existing standard when experience from its usage can substitute pilot testing. When the working group of the standard considers it necessary to have pilot testing for the revision of the existing standard, it is organized by EFCC. The standard setting working group shall discuss the results of the testing of the standard.

7. Approval and publication

7.1 Formal approval of the standard

The Board of EFCC shall formally approve the standard or normative document as soon as there is evidence of consensus among the steering group.

7.2 Publication and availability of the standard

7.2.1 EFCC shall publish the formally approved standard/normative document and make these publicly available at no cost within 14 days of approval.

7.2.2 The standard shall include:

- a) identification and contact information for EFCC;
- b) an indication to the official language of the standard;
- c) a note that when there is inconsistency between versions, the English version of the standard as endorsed by the PEFC Council is the reference;
- d) the approval date and the date of next periodic review of the standard.

Note: The date of next periodic review may be within a shorter period than five years based on (for example) stakeholder expectations or unforeseen developments.

7.2.3 Printed copies of the standard shall be made available upon request at a price that covers no more than administrative costs (if any).

7.2.4 EFCC shall make the development report of the standard setting (refer to PEFC GD 1007) publicly available.

8. Periodic review of standards

8.1 General

The standard/normative document shall be reviewed at intervals that do not exceed a five-year period. The review shall be based on the consideration of the feedback received during the implementation of the standard and a gap analysis. If necessary, a repeated request for stakeholder feedback shall be made to obtain further feedback and input.

8.2 Feedback mechanism

8.2.1 EFCC shall establish and maintain a permanent mechanism for collecting and recording feedback on the standard. Information on collecting and processing feedback shall be accessible on EFCC website pefc.ee

8.2.2 All feedback received through various channels, including meetings, training courses, etc. shall be collected, recorded and analysed in standard setting process.

8.3 Gap analysis

8.3.1 At the start of a review, EFCC shall evaluate the standard against appropriate PEFC international standards, national laws and regulations, and other relevant standards to identify potential gaps in the standard.

8.3.2 EFCC shall consider the latest scientific knowledge, research and relevant emerging issues.

8.4 Stakeholder consultation

8.4.1 Where the feedback and the gap analysis do not identify a need to revise the standard, EFCC shall organize stakeholder consultation to determine whether stakeholders see a need for revising the standard. EFCC shall include the results of the gap analysis in the stakeholder consultation.

8.4.2 At the start of a review, EFCC shall update the stakeholder identification mapping (refer to clause 6.2).

8.4.3 EFCC shall organize:

- a) a public consultation period of at least 30 days (following the requirements of clause 6.5.1) and/or
- b) stakeholder meetings.

8.4.4 EFCC shall make an announcement at least 14 days before the start of the review (vt 6.3).

8.5 Decision-making

- 8.5.1** Based on the feedback received during the period of the implementation of the standard, the outcome of the gap analysis and the consultations, EFCC shall decide whether to reaffirm the standard or whether a revision of the standard is necessary.
- 8.5.2** The decision shall be made by the general meeting of the EFCC.
- 8.5.3** When EFCC has decided to reaffirm a standard, EFCC shall provide a justification for the decision and make the justification publicly available.
- 8.5.4** When EFCC has decided to revise the standard, EFCC shall specify the type of revision (normal or editorial revision).

9. Revision of standards

9.1 Normal revision

Procedures for the revision of the standard/normative document shall conform to those stated in section 6.

A normal revision can occur at the periodic review, or between periodic reviews, but does not include editorial revisions and time-critical revisions.

9.2 Editorial revision

Editorial revisions can be made without triggering the normal revision process. EFCC shall approve the editorial changes formally and publish an amendment or a new edition of the standard.

9.3 Time-critical revision

9.3.1 A time-critical revision is a revision between two periodic reviews using a fast-track process.

9.3.2 A time-critical revision can be conducted only in the following situations:

- a) Change in national laws and regulations affecting compliance with PEFC International requirements;
- b) Instruction by PEFC International to comply with specific or new PEFC requirements within a timescale that is too short for a normal revision.

9.3.3 The time-critical revision shall follow these steps:

- a) EFCC shall draft the revised standard;
- b) EFCC may consult stakeholders, but it is not mandatory;
- c) The revised standard shall be approved formally by EFCC,
- d) EFCC shall explain the justification for the urgent changes and make the justification publicly available.

9.4 Application and transition of the revised standard

9.4.1 A revision shall define the application date and transition period of the revised standard/normative document.

9.4.2 The application date of the standard shall not be more than one year after the publication of the standard. This allows time for endorsement of the revised standard/normative document, introduction of change(s), information dissemination and training.

9.4.3 The transition period shall not exceed one year. EFCC may determine a longer period when justified by exceptional circumstances.