

Description of PEFC Balkan Forest Certification System

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Approved by:

The Council for SFM in Macedonia on 10.06.2021

Institute for forest certification in Slovenia on 10.02.2023

Association of private forest owners “Naša Šuma” on 01.06.2021

Introduction to Balkan Forest Certification System

This document is describing the content of the PEFC Balkan Forest Certification System.

Guiding principles of forest management in Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and North Macedonia are Forest Europe criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management as the PEFC global benchmarks of sustainability are based on.

The approach of PEFC to allow incorporation of country specifics in the national forest certification systems in compliance with global benchmarks for SFM of PEFC was accepted by the broad range of stakeholders in all three countries.

The Balkan Forest Certification System (BFCS) complies with the legislation governing forest management and nature protection, the ownership structure, the forest management planning system, the methodology of forestry data collection and processing and with other documents applicable in the countries.

The system currently applies to three countries from the Balkan Region: Slovenia, North Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

It may serve also to PEFC members from the countries that belongs or are neighbouring to the Balkan Region willing to join the Balkan Forest Certification System, if they decide to accept the principles of the PEFC Balkan Forest Certification System, and to adopt the scheme documentation outside of the FM standard.

The PEFC Balkan Forest Certification System is facilitating the efforts of new countries willing to join the Balkan FC System and to support the PEFC global efforts for sustainable forest management.

Contents

The Balkan Forest Certification System includes the following documents:

- **PEFC BS 01:2021**, Description of PEFC Balkan Forest Certification System
- **PEFC BS 02:2020**, Standard setting and revision procedures
- **PEFC MK 03:2020**, PEFC National Standard for Sustainable Forest Management in North Macedonia
- **PEFC SL 03:2021**, PEFC National Standard for Sustainable Forest Management in Slovenia
- **PEFC B&H 03:2021**, PEFC National Standard for Sustainable Forest Management in Bosnia and Herzegovina
- **PEFC BS 04:2021**, Certification and accreditation procedures
- **PEFC BS 05:2021**, Notification of Certification Bodies for Chain of Custody and Forest Management Certification
- **PEFC BS 06:2021**, Group Forest Management Certification Rules and Procedures
- **PEFC BS 07:2021**, Issuance of PEFC trademarks license procedures
- **PEFC BS 08:2020**, Complaints and appeals procedures
- **PEFC ST 2001:2020**, PEFC Trademark Rules - Requirements
- **PEFC ST 2002:2020**, Chain of Custody of Forest and Tree Based Products - Requirements
- **PEFC ST 2003:2020**, Requirements for Certification Bodies operating Certification against the PEFC International Chain of Custody Standard

Objective of the Balkan Forest Certification System (BFCS)

The BFCS objective is to contribute to overall development and contribution of the forestry sector in the countries that belongs to this system and at the same time to comply with the global efforts for mitigation of climate changes, nature conservation, maintenance of forest ecosystem services and community development.

Process of creation of the Balkan Forest Certification System

The initiative for creation of the BFCS was launched on the meeting of PEFC stakeholders from the region in Croatia in February, 2018. The present PEFC stakeholders from Bulgaria, North Macedonia, Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina exchanged their views on the PEFC developments in their countries and idea for creation of the BFCS was launched as facilitation tool to secure sustainability of the PEFC processes in these countries.

Three of these countries decided to participate in this process: Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and North Macedonia.

Methods for certification of sustainable forest management according to the Balkan Forest Certification System

The guiding principle in forest certification are: non-discrimination, cost efficiency and voluntary participation.

The Balkan Forest Certification System allows for two certification methods:

1. Individual and
2. Group

In view of the above methods, the following may apply for a certificate:

1. Authorised group representative and
2. Forest owner or authorised forest manager.

Participants in Forest Management Certification and/or Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products Certification

Pursuant to the requirements of the BFCS the following bodies or individuals participate in the scheme:

- The NGB's that participate in the BFCS;
- Accreditation body;
- Certification body;
- Applicant for certificate.

The NGB's from the BFCS

There are three NGB's that are PEFC authorized bodies and are contributing in the management of the BFCS:

1. The Council for Sustainable Forest Management in Republic of Macedonia
2. Institute for forest certification in Slovenia
3. Association of private forest owners "Naša Šuma", Bosnia and Herzegovina

Accreditation body, certification body and auditors

The accreditation and certification procedures are described in detail in PEFC BS 04:2021.

Certification body is an independent body accredited by the National Accreditation for auditing on the Implementation of PEFC Standard for Sustainable Forest Management (PEFC MK 03:2020; PEFC

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SL 03:2021; PEFC B&H 03:2021) and/or Chain of Custody of Forest and Tree Based Products - Requirements (PEFC ST 2002:2020).

The requirements for auditors of Sustainable Forest Management and/or Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products are given in PEFC BS 04:2021 and PEFC ST 2003:2020.

Applicant for a certificate

In view of the method of certification of sustainable forest management, the applicants may be an authorised group representative or forest owner or an authorised forest manager.

The requirements to be met by the applicant for Sustainable Forest Management are given in PEFC MK 03:2020; PEFC SL 03:2021; PEFC B&H 03:2021.