



**PEFC DK 003-3**  
English version

# PEFC Denmark's **Guidelines for Certification of Umbrella Organisations**

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## 1. Introduction

These guidelines are a part of the Danish PEFC certification system for sustainable forest management (in the following mentioned as "the Danish scheme"). The guidelines are normative for umbrella organisations, which administer group certification of forest owners properties in Denmark under the Danish scheme.

The rationale for group certification is to spread the costs of certification across a number of owners, for whom the costs of being certified individually as small or medium-sized owners might otherwise have been disproportionate to the benefits. The premise for this potential cost reduction is that only a sample of the forest areas within the group needs to be audited each year by the certification body.

Administration, policies and forest management planning that are relevant for the whole group may be implemented by the umbrella organization.

This document has been approved by PEFC Denmark on 29 April 2002 and by PEFC Council on 15 October 2002. The document has been reviewed as a part of the first 5 years review of the Danish scheme and has been approved by PEFC Denmark's Board of directors on 14<sup>th</sup> of March 2007 with amendments approved 18<sup>th</sup> October 2007 and the 16<sup>th</sup> November 2007.

## 2. Scope

These guidelines specify requirements for umbrella organisations, which administer group certification of forest owners in Denmark under the Danish scheme.

The guideline shall be used in accordance with the Danish scheme covering:

- Certification of umbrella organisations to administer group certification.

The guidelines shall be used in connection with "PEFC Denmark's Forestry standard PEFC DK 001-2" for the forest properties included in the group.

## 3. References

PEFC Denmark's forestry standard – PEFC DK 001-3

ISO 9001:2000 Quality management systems - Requirements

ISO 14001:2004 Environmental Management Systems – Specification with guidance for use

## 4. Definitions

For the purposes of the Danish scheme, the relevant definitions given in "List of words and definitions for the Danish PEFC certification scheme for sustainable forest management PEFC DK 007-1" apply.

## 5. Requirements for the umbrella organisation

### 5.1 FORMAL REQUIREMENTS FOR UMBRELLA ORGANISATIONS

In order to be designated as an umbrella organisation the organisation shall comply with the following:

- The organisation shall be registered as a legal unit.
- The organisation shall have a daily administration.

### 5.2 MINIMUM MANAGEMENT SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

PEFC certification of umbrella organisations requires application of a management system. As a minimum requirement the system shall be able to handle and control the demands on routines and documentation made on the umbrella organisations in this document. The management system can be based upon the ISO 9001, ISO 14001 or a similar system developed for that purpose.

It shall be demonstrated that the organisation has established a management system in accordance with this standard and that all the forest under the umbrella meets the requirements in "PEFC Denmark's forestry standard – PEFC DK 001-2".

The organisation shall be able to demonstrate its ability to collect and analyse data from all the forest sites including the organisations authority and ability to initiate change at the individual forest sites under the umbrella if required.

### **5.3 THE ACTIVITIES OF THE UMBRELLA ORGANISATION**

Umbrella organisations administer and organise group certification of forest properties. In doing so the umbrella organisation shall performs the following functions:

- Treating and approving applications from forest owners wishing to participate in a PEFC group certification.
- Provide all applicants with information and guidance needed for effective fulfilment of the requirements in PEFC Denmark's forestry standard.
- Provide organisational or contractual connection with all forest properties covered by the umbrella including commitments by the forest properties to implement and maintain the requirements in PEFC Denmark's forestry standard and by control secure that all group certified forest owners meet the requirements of PEFC Denmark's forestry standard.
- Inform and advice forest owners that do not meet the requirements of PEFC Denmark's forestry standard but wants to join the group.
- Operate an internal audit programme, and audit all the relevant forest sites (including its own central administration function) in accordance with the programme, prior to the independent certification body starting its assessment.
- Operate a review of the conformity of forest properties based on results of internal and external audits, establish corrective and preventive measures if required and evaluate the effectiveness of corrective actions taken.
- To collect remarks and observations received form external parties, which shall be passed on to the certification body at external audits.
- Issuing of forest management proofs with reference to a valid group certificate issued to the umbrella organisation.
- To immediately inform the certification body about issued and cancelled forest management proofs in written.
- Collect statistic information to PEFC Denmark from the register of certification, to report the results from the external third party auditing and finally to immediately report any suspended or cancelled forest management proof to PEFC Denmark.
- To handle a register of the certified forest properties containing the following information regarding each property:
  - Name and position of the forest
  - Name and address of the forest owner
  - Name of contact person
  - Phone number (contact person)
  - Mail address (contact person)
  - The date of the agreement coming into force
  - The date of expiry of the agreement
  - Number of the forest management proof
  - The certified area

The umbrella organisation is responsible for the information of group certified forest owners on the current guidelines for certification in accordance with the Danish scheme. The umbrella organisation is responsible to inform the group members about changes in PEFC Denmark's forestry standard.

The umbrella organisation is entitled to lay down a forest policy and management objectives, to prepare forest maps, stand lists and further registrations mentioned in section 8 in PEFC Denmark's forestry standard applying generally for forest properties under the umbrella organisation.

#### **5.4 AGREEMENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN GROUP CERTIFICATION**

For each forest property a written agreement for participation in the group certification shall exist between the forest owner and the umbrella organisation, which ensure an organisational or contractual connection to commit the forest owner to meet the requirement in PEFC Denmark's forestry standard. Following issues shall be observed:

1. The agreement shall be signed by the owner of the forest or, in the case of a co-operative by an authorised representative.
2. The owner of the forest shall be in possession of information material regarding the implications of PEFC certification.
3. It is the duty of the forest owner to follow Danish legislation concerning forestry, PEFC Denmark's forestry standard and other directions put forward by the umbrella organisation in order to maintain membership of the group.
4. The agreement validity. The agreement shall be valid for at least 1 year and can maximally be signed for a period of 5 years. After that the agreement shall be renewed.
5. The agreement shall include the right of the organisation to exclude any forest site from participation in the group in case of serious non-conformities from PEFC Denmark's forestry standard.
6. The umbrella organisation can issue a forest management proof when a specified property manages the forest in compliance with the requirements in PEFC Denmark's forestry standard.
7. The umbrella organisation shall collect information regarding forest management from the individual forest owners at appropriate intervals. Information shall as a minimum be collected when the agreement is resigned.
8. The agreement is made in 2 copies, one for the forest owner and one for the umbrella organisation.

#### **5.5 ORGANISATION - RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITIES**

The umbrella organisations shall describe the structure of the organisation in relation to the activity as a group administrator, for example in an organisation chart. Procedures, roles, rights and duties for the work as an umbrella organisation shall be defined and distributed by the umbrella organisation. The management shall provide the necessary resources in order to carry out the work.

#### **5.6 DOCUMENTS CONTROL**

The umbrella organisation shall implement and maintain procedures for controlling all document and registration required by the present document to ensure that:

- a) they can be located
- b) they are periodically reviewed, revised as necessary and approved by authorised personnel
- c) the current version of relevant documents are available at all locations where operations essential to the effective functioning of the system are performed
- d) obsolete documents are promptly removed from all points of issue and points of use, or otherwise assured against unintended use.

Documents shall be legible, dated (with dates of revision) and readily identifiable. Procedures and responsibilities shall be established and maintained concerning the creation and modification of the various types of document.

**As a minimum the following routines shall be described:**

- The entering of the agreement regarding participation in the group certification of forest properties.
- Issuance of forest managements proofs
- Guidelines for the documentation of the properties required in PEFC Denmark's forestry standard
- Procedures in connection with conveyance of property or parts of property.
- Cancellation of forest management proofs
- Collection of remarks and observations received from external parts
- Planning and implementation of internal audits
- Handling of deviations and corrective actions (see example in annex 1)
- Document handling and filing procedures, including a register with issued forest management proofs containing information as required in section 5.3, continuous reporting of certification agreement to PEFC Denmark and filing of important documents or documents that may be important in relation to the completion of the certification. (An example is provided in annex 2).
- Other routines of interest for the administration of the group certification.

## **5.7 INTERNAL AUDIT**

The umbrella organisation shall conduct internal audits of the management system at least annually, which cover all requirements in this guideline and conduct corrective and preventive actions if necessary.

The management of the umbrella organisation shall at least annually go through the reports from the internal audits.

## **5.8 CANCELLATION OF THE AGREEMENT AND FOREST MANAGEMENT PROOFS**

The umbrella organisation may suspend and cancel the agreement if it has reason to believe that the forest management proof is being misused or if a major deviation from PEFC Denmark's forestry standard is registered. The umbrella organisation shall lay down procedures for handling of suspension and cancellation of agreements. Guidance in handling of deviations from PEFC Denmark's forestry standard is shown in appendix 1.

The forest owner is informed about the suspension or cancellation in writing along with a demand of returning the issued forest management proof. Following cancellation, a new forest management proof can be issued after 3 years at the earliest.

The umbrella organisation shall immediately inform the certification body and PEFC Denmark about suspended or cancelled forest management proofs.

The umbrella organisation shall handle a register of cancelled forest management proofs.

## **5.9 CONTROL CARRIED OUT BY MANAGEMENT**

The management of the umbrella organisation shall at least once a year ensure that the current standards of PEFC Denmark are fulfilled.

# **6. Responsibilities for forest owners in a group**

Beside the forest owner's responsibilities in connection with certification described in "PEFC Denmark's forestry standard – PEFC DK 001-2", the forest owners participating in a group are responsible for:

- Responding effectively to all requests from the umbrella organisation or certification body for relevant data, documentation or other information whether in connection with formal audits or reviews or otherwise,
- Providing full co-operation and assistance in respect of the satisfactory completion of internal audits, reviews, relevant routine enquiries or corrective actions,
- Implementation of relevant corrective and preventive actions established by the umbrella organisation.

## **6.1 CANCELLATION OF AGREEMENT**

The forest owner can cancel the agreement in written at any time during the validity period. The cancellation has effect from the time the umbrella organisations receives the cancellation letter.

Forest owners, which agreement has been suspended or cancelled, can complain to the certification body and apply to have the suspension or cancellation tried.

## Annex 1: Guidance for handling of observations and deviations from “PEFC Denmark’s forestry standard”

The intention of this instruction is to clarify which corrective actions could be taken towards group certified forest owners when deviations from PEFC Denmark’s forestry standard are observed.

### Assumptions:

Observation of deviations from the current PEFC Denmark forestry standard for certified forest owners participating in a group can be noted by internal audit.

No adjusting actions can be demanded for deviations caused by circumstances not controlled by the forest owner e.g. actions from the umbrella organisation or from companies buying or processing the wood.

### Guidance

It is generally necessary for certification bodies and umbrella organisations to keep in mind that forests are biological systems evolving only slowly and that forests are production sites being substituted only every 50-150 years. Furthermore, the site-specific soil conditions and climate conditions along with specific stand conditions are crucial to what actions may seem reasonable in silvicultural management.

The forest management shall be evaluated in the light of the following:

- The general declaration of intent as formulated in PEFC Denmark’s forestry standard chapter 6
- The specific criteria as formulated in PEFC Denmark’s forestry standard chapter 7
- The individual objectives defined for the individual forest property

In the cases where the property develops in a “wrong” direction in relation to one or several indicators, the consultant shall evaluate whether this development can be explained from the current circumstances on the property and whether the development is acceptable.

Observations and deviations should be handled as follows:

#### 1. Observations

Observations are registered conditions at the property, which does not comply with the forestry standard but does not deviate considerably. It should be evaluated whether the observed conditions is reasonably substantiated as special conditions on the property such as specific stand structures; soil conditions or climatic conditions.

If the observation cannot be substantiated as stated it is pointed out for the forest owner in written.

Observations can turn into deviations

#### 2. Minor deviation

A minor deviation is a deviation, which imply that an indicator is evolving in a decidedly negative direction or that certain conditions in the management are in conflict with the forestry standard in general.

It should be evaluated whether the deviation is satisfactory substantiated by specific conditions on the property such as specific stand structures, soil conditions or climatic conditions.

If the deviation cannot be substantiated at states, this is pointed out for the forest owner in writing and the owner in question receives a written command about correcting the deviation.

#### 3. Major deviation

A major deviation is a deviation where the umbrella organisation can point out a management of the forest that is in violence with the foundation and contents of PEFC Denmark’s forestry standard or when earlier commands have not been followed up.

The umbrella organisation cannot issue forest management proof if a major deviation is pointed out and the condition is not reasonably substantiated.

If the deviation is pointed out after the forest management proof have been issued the umbrella organisation can suspend the certificate until the corrective action has been executed or give the owner a written command about correcting the deviation before the next internal audit.

If the corrective action hasn't been executed or the deviation is directly inconsistent with PEFC Denmark's forestry standard conditions for cancellation of the certification agreement exist. The forest owner receives written communication about the presence of the conditions for cancellation of the forest certification agreement. The owner of the forest is requested to explain the criticised circumstances within two months. If the explanation is considered unsatisfactory, the agreement of certification is cancelled in a written communication to the forest owner.

## Annex 2 - An illustration of rules of filing

Rules of filing exist for all documents of importance for carrying out the certification, internal control, handling of deviations and denunciation of certificates.

The filing procedure shall fulfil reasonable security demands.

<b>Document type:</b>	<b>Time of filing:</b>
Regulations.	1 year after alteration
Register of certified forest owners.	Current updating
Copies of agreements about PEFC certification.	2 years after denunciation
Documents guiding monitoring and control.	2 years
Routines for assessment of nature values etc.	
Reports of deviations and adjusting actions.	2 years
Denunciation of certifications of forestry.	5 years
Plans of revision, internal and external revisions.	2 years