



PEFC certification of the supply chain (COC)

So, you're interested in PEFC supply chain certification (COC) and wish to find out more about the background and processes? Here you will find a quick overview! If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us.

By the way: Many companies opt for a combined FSC® and PEFC certification in order to respond flexibly to their customer requirements. Benefit: Both systems can be relatively easily implemented and tested together. We also offer this form of certification.

WHY PEFC CERTIFICATION?



The PEFC COC certification for wood and paper products is of interest to many companies within the supply chain from originating forest to the certified end product. The PEFC COC certification represents an alternative or a complement to FSC® certification. The increased environmental awareness of the consumer has resulted in increasing demand for PEFC certified products. Not only private end users but also large companies and public institutions have set their procurement policies on certified wood and paper products. With the certification of your company, you too are able to meet these requirements. Certified companies are able to sell PEFC certified products and label

these with the PEFC logo. Additionally, the PEFC logos may also be used in the company's own website advertising and on company stationery. The most commonly cited reasons for a company to have PEFC certification are

- The fulfilment of the customer demand for PEFC certified products
- The development of new markets through PEFC certified products
- Good image by marketing the PEFC logo
- Fulfilment of the company's high demands in relation to responsible production

BACKGROUND PEFC COC CERTIFICATION



The PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest certification Schemes) represents a certification scheme for responsible forest management, which is used worldwide. The connected supply chain is also certified to protect the supply chain from the certified forest to the certified product. Consumers can thus deliberately opt for a labelled product.

The Geneva based PEFC Council has developed international standards for the responsible management of forests which include ecological, social and economic requirements for forest management. National or regional initiatives create their own standards for forest management, which may take into account specific local conditions of forest habitats. Once these standards meet the international requirements of the PEFC Council, they can then be endorsed by the PEFC.

Companies that are certified according to these standards are able to sell PEFC certified products. Annual inspections by independent certification bodies, like GFA, ensure compliance with forest management and the proper use of certified materials in certified products. PEFC COC certification is required if you wish to sell PEFC certified products to your customers. This requirement applies to all companies which are legal owners of the certified goods. For the annual inspections carried out by a certification body, the certified companies present the status of purchased materials for the certified products and provide a plausibility of quantities produced (e.g. via sector standardised conversion factors or job-related documentation of the amounts of). The primary task of COC certification is to prevent the uncontrolled mixing, exchange or multiplication of certified material from forestry companies within the supply chain. Certified companies may also continue to produce and sell non-certified products.

THE WAY TO PEFC COC CERTIFICATION



Different certification setups are offered according to your company's organisation. Fill-in our questionnaire under "Request Proposal" on www.gfa-cert.com and receive a free non-binding offer of a certification tailored to your needs.

In principle, the following points are important in your decision-making process and preparations going forward:

Scope of certification (sites)

For a single site certification please choose a single certification with a unique certificate number. If you wish to have multiple sites certified, a multi-site certification of all sites with a single certificate number may be of interest.

The choice of systems

If you only use certified materials for your certified products, you can be certified according to the "method of physical separation" and transfer the declaration of certification of the materials used to your original product (typical for commercial or printing companies). If you intend to mix certified and non-certified materials under controlled conditions, you can be certified according to the "percentage based method" (common in the paper industry, wood-based industry or sawmills).

Outsourcing

Should parts of your work processes be allocated to external service providers, then these activities can be included in the scope of your certification. Here, a distinction is made between low and high risk material mixing activities. In case of high risk situations, the external service provider needs to be included in the audit activities.

When you have chosen the correct form of certification, you can begin to prepare your company. The relevant PEFC standards form the basis for the requirements to be met. We are more than happy to send you these free of charge upon request. A brief overview of the most important points:

- Designation of responsible staff
- Preparation of documented procedures (e.g. PEFC manual)
- Staff training
- Determination of the audit date for the initial audit

Immediately after your acceptance of our certification proposal we will provide you an auditor for your company, with whom you can directly arrange an audit date for the initial audit. The audits are often concluded in one day. After completion of the audit, the auditor creates an audit report which is then evaluated at our Hamburg offices. After successful certification, you can sell PEFC certified products, provided that these have been manufactured according to the PEFC requirements. In future, annual surveillance audits monitor the correct implementation of your PEFC procedures.

Through our regionally distributed network of Auditors we are able to keep travel costs to a minimum and can also ensure flexible scheduling of audits. The duration of a certification process in accordance with PEFC depends on the size and complexity of the operation and the products to be certified. With the appropriate operational arrangements, the GFA usually carries out the certification process within 4 to 8 weeks.

Should you have questions, please contact us by phone or via the contact form on our homepage.

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