

Important steps to FSC® and/or PEFC forest certification

An independent assessment of the forestry company is carried out by GFA Certification based on the FSC and/or PEFC standards as part of the certification framework of forest management. The conformity of the management system(s) is verified and confirmed by GFA Certification in a certification audit and by subsequent annual surveillance audits. Upon successful certification of forest, products originating from this forest may be labelled with the FSC or PEFC label and be sold as FSC or PEFC certified (depending on the kind of certification).

1 PRELIMINARY INFORMATION

- Company collects information about the requirements certification
- Company fills out the GFA Questionnaire under “Request Proposal” on www.gfa-cert.com
- If necessary, GFA requests further information
- GFA evaluates the information

2 OFFER & PROPOSAL

- Elaboration of a non-binding certification proposal by GFA
- If necessary clarification of open questions
- Acceptance of the certification proposal by the company

3 PRE-AUDIT

- Preliminary audit for identification of weaknesses

4 STAKEHOLDER SURVEY

- Assessment of relevant stakeholders to identify potential problems
(authorities, trade unions, environmental associations, etc.)

5 MAIN AUDIT

Assessment of FSC and/or PEFC systems by a GFA auditor

- Verification of documented procedures
- Inspection of the on-site operations
- Meeting with company management
- Staff meetings with responsible staff
- Creation of the audit report by the auditor
- Correction of identified non-conformities by the company
- Certification decision by the GFA

6 EXPERT REVIEW

- Verification of the report, audit and quality assurance by an independent expert

7 CERTIFICATE

- Issuing of the certificate
- Registration of the certificate

8 ANNUAL SURVEILLANCE AUDIT

- Annual assessment by a GFA auditor
- Company provides evidence for compliance
- Decision of the certifier on the maintenance, suspension or withdrawal of the certificate

9 RE-CERTIFICATION AUDIT

- A re-certification audit will take place before expiry of the certificate period (depending on the system, 5 and 3 years respectively) and after the conclusion of a new certification contract

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