

PEFC National Standard for Sustainable Forest Management in Republic of Croatia

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The owner of this standard is:

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The official version of this standard is on English.

If there is any inconsistency between versions, the English version of the standard as endorsed by the PEFC Council is the reference.

List of used shortcuts:

RC	Republic of Croatia
SFM	Sustainable forest management
TOF	Trees Outside of Forest
CFC	Council for certification CUPFOA
PEFC	Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
WG	Working Group
CUPFOA	Croatian Union of Private Forest Owners Association
CF d.o.o.	Croatian Forests d.o.o.
FMP	Forest Management Plans
OP	Operative plans
LPCI	Law on Prevention of Conflict of Interest
FL	Forestry Law of Republic of Croatia
LNP	Law on Nature Protection
LMW	Law on Management of Waiste
LSW	Law on Safety at Work
WHO	World Health Organisation
NWFP	Non-Wood Forest Products
FMU	Forest Management Units
RFO	Reporting and forecasting operations
CBD	Convention on Biodiversity

1. Introduction

The basis for the development of this standard is the pan-European criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management (SFM) adopted at the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe held in Lisbon in 1998.

The requirements contained in this standard are in line with the international standard for sustainable forest management, PEFC ST 1003:2018. The content of this document was prepared in an open/participatory manner with the involvement of numerous stakeholders in forestry and was adopted by consensus of the participants of the project.

The compliance with the existing legal framework in the Republic of Croatia related to sustainable Compliance with the existing legal framework in the Republic of Croatia, which relates to the sustainable management of forests (forests, seed and fruit material, wildlife protection, protection of water, agricultural land, nature and environment protection, plant protection, safety and health regulations), then the Spatial Plan of the Republic of Croatia, international conventions ratified in the Republic of Croatia, as well as compliance with other requirements for sustainable forest management that are not legally binding, but which are part of PEFC Croatia, these standards are mandatory.

The description of requirements related to sustainable forest management is part of the criteria of this standard. The information on the connection with the legislation helps to connect the requirement of the criterion with the relevant legal framework in force in the Republic of Croatia and refers to the content of the criterion if it exists. The indicators are used to conduct an objective and measurable assessment of whether the requirements of the criteria have been met by the noise owner/manager. Sources of verification refer to documents and other sources of information that confirm the fulfilment of criteria and indicator requirements.

According to Article 5 of the Act on Forests, "(1) Forest is considered as land that is continuously covered with forest trees and/or their shrubby forms, shrubs, and ground cover on an area of 0.1 ha or more, where forest products are permanently produced, and general beneficial functions are realized, and where there is a balanced relationship between the biocoenosis and habitat. (2) Forests also include: forests in protected areas according to special regulations; forest seed objects of the seed source type (if they are an integral part of the forest complex) and seed stands; monuments of park architecture originating from natural forests; protective belts of trees with an area of 0.1 ha or more and a width of 20 m or more; forest clearings up to 5 m wide; forest roads and bright lines along the road up to 5 m wide; power line routes up to 5 m wide within forest complexes."

Meeting the requirements of the criteria and indicators described in this Standard is on a voluntary basis.

The content of this standard is applicable in the territory of the Republic of Croatia and refers only to forests and forest land in accordance with the Act on Forests or in accordance with Forest Management Plans (FMP) and related documents.

Trees located outside the area covered by Forest Management Plans (FMP) are not part of this standard, as there are currently no legal procedures and practices in favor of this type of certification.

2. General requirements

This document is a complementary part of the PEFC forest certification scheme in Republic of Croatia, and as such is part of the regional PEFC Balkan system.

Requirements that are part of this Standard are compulsory for:

- Forest certification on individual level
- Group forest certification

This standard is applicable at the level of the forest management unit (parcel, owner), or at another level (Cadaster units, Municipalities, Republic of Croatia). Forest managers, forest owners and forest users are responsible for ensuring full compliance of forest management with the PEFC standard, including activities performed by engaged workers in certified forest areas. Forest managers, forest owners and forest users must ensure record-keeping procedures that demonstrate the compliance of forest management with the requirements of the PEFC standard.

Forest managers and forest owners shall secure record-keeping procedures that provides evidence of compliance with the requirements of this Standard. Minimum period for keeping records and documents that are relevant as evidence is 5 (five) years.

The "100% PEFC certified" certificate can only be used for products coming from forests that are certified in accordance with this Standard. This certificate can be used by forest owners and forest managers who have a valid PEFC certificate issued by an accredited certification body. When forest owners or forest managers sell products from forests with the PEFC declaration "100% PEFC certified", in order to provide appropriate information for the input material, customers will be provided with the following information:

a) supplier identification, b) product identification, c) product quantity, d) delivery identification based on delivery date, delivery period or billing period, e) the organisation's name as the PEFC customer of the delivery, f) declaration "100% PEFC certified" separately for each product claimed to be covered by the documentation, g) the certificate number of the supplier's PEFC recognized certificate.

During the development of this Standard, the CUPFOA has identified, described, and communicated with all relevant stakeholders, including those that are key and affected by the requirements of the Standard, as well as with marginalized stakeholders who are in such a situation primarily due to their lack of organization.

This standard contains 7 chapters, 17 thematic areas, 36 criteria and 113 indicators.

The process of preparing this version lasted from 14.04.2023. to 18.03.2024.

Number	Chapter	Thematic area	Number of Criteria	Number of indicators
1.	Maintenance and appropriate enhancement of forest resources and their contribution to the	Forest management and forest planning	2	6
		Maintenance of forest resources in quantity, quality and structure	2	10
2.	Maintenance of forest ecosystem's health and vitality	Monitoring of forest resources	1	2
		Measures for maintenance of health and vitality of forest ecosystems	1	2
		Restrictions	5	10
3.	Maintenance and support of forest productive functions (wood and non-wood forest products)	Forest products	1	2
		Forestry activities and forest Infrastructure	2	5
4.	Maintenance, conservation and enhancement of biological diversity of forest ecosystems	Forests of high ecological significance	2	5
		Forest practice in balance with nature	5	10
		Traditional management systems	1	2
5.	Maintenance and enhancement of forest protective functions (notably soil and water)	Forest protective functions	2	8
6.	Maintenance of socio-economic functions and conditions	Socio-economic functions of the forests	2	3
		Ownership and traditional rights	1	1
		Trainings, knowledge development	1	3
		Occupational health and safety	1	5
		Compliance with legislation	2	2
7.	Organizational aspects	Internal procedures	5	14
	TOTAL		36	90

Chapter 1:	Maintenance and appropriate enhancement of forest resources and their contribution to the global carbon cycle
Thematic area:	Forest management and forest planning
Criteria number	1.1.
Criteria description	Forest management is based on continuous cycles of management, planning, implementation, monitoring and management analysis, taking into account the economic, ecological and social impact of forest management, with the aim of avoiding unnecessary negative impacts. Monitoring results and management analysis are carried out over a period of 10 years and are used in the planning process to define future management goals. Management (inventory) and forest mapping are carried out in an appropriate manner that reflects the structural elements of the stand, economic measures and is in accordance with legal regulations. The borders of the sustainably managed forest area are clearly defined and cartographically marked.
Connection with legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Law on Forests - Law on Nature Protection - Forest management plans (FMP) - Other laws and by-laws relating to forestry, nature protection, and environmental protection - International legislation such as UNFCCC, Kyoto Protocol, Paris Agreement, etc.
Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The goals of forest management are in accordance with the requirements of the criterion and are included in the FMP 2. Quantity and quality of data obtained through regular forest measurements for forest management planning 3. Data shown on forest maps. 4. Results of monitoring and management analysis over a period of 10 years
Source of verification	- FMP
Minimal requirements	Respecting the above-mentioned requirements.

Chapter 1:	Maintenance and appropriate enhancement of forest resources and their contribution to the global carbon cycle
Thematic area:	Forest management and forest planning
Criteria number	1.2.
Criteria description	FMP they are drawn up based on existing legal regulations, considering existing spatial plans, existing land use and other relevant documentation for the particular area and dealing with the forest resource in accordance with its volume and value, ownership structure and the intensity of the intention of use. The results of recent scientific research that are relevant and applicable in forest management must be considered. The summary of the FMP containing information on forest management measures and the location where they are applied will be made publicly available based on a stakeholder's request.
Connection with legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Law on Forests - Regulation on Forest Management

	- Law on Nature Protection
Indicators	1. The content of the FMP includes all aspects that are subject to the requirements of the criterion. 2. The summary of the FMP are drawn up and available to stakeholders at their request.
Source of verification	- Forest management plan (FMP) - Field verification carried out by an independent body and compilation of appropriate reports; - Notes (interviews or surveys), interviews with forest users, private forest owners and stakeholders.
Minimal requirements	Respecting the above-mentioned requirements.

Chapter 1:	Maintenance and appropriate enhancement of forest resources and their contribution to the global carbon cycle
Thematic area	Maintenance of forest resources in quantity, quality, and structure
Criteria number	1.3.
Criteria description	FMP are focused on the maintenance of forests and forest land with the aim of improving the economic, ecological, cultural, and social values of forests, including the protection of soil and water. The goals should be achieved using appropriate means and should be aimed at nature protection. Increasing forest areas by afforestation of abandoned agricultural areas and unvegetated forest land will always be considered when it enriches economic, ecological, and social and/or cultural values. In areas where there are ecologically significant areas that do not belong to the forest, afforestation will be carried out based on the prescribed procedure according to the Law on Nature Protection (LNP). Changing the way of using the forest resource must be in accordance with the Act on Forests and other relevant regulations.
Connection with legislation	- Spatial Plan of the RC - Law on Environmental Protection - Law on Forests - Law on Nature Protection
Indicators	1. The goals of management and the planned measures for their realization are in the function of ensuring the fulfilment of the criteria 2. The ratio of planned and implemented silvicultural and regeneration measures (%) contributes to the criterion requirement 3. Stability of areas under forest and forest land and their changes in relation to the previous management period (ha, %, cartographic description) 4. Stability of areas under natural and artificially planted forest stands (ha, %, cartographic description) 5. The conversion of forest land is based on appropriate decisions in accordance with the applicable legislation 6. Realization of afforestation on ecologically significant non-forest land is in accordance with the requirements of the criteria
Source of verification	- Information contained in Forest Management Plans (FMP); - Reports on the execution of forest management plans
Minimal requirements	There is no decrease in the areas under forest (except in cases in correlation with national regulation)

Chapter 1:	Maintenance and appropriate enhancement of forest resources and their contribution to the global carbon cycle
Thematic area	Maintenance of forest resources in quantity, quality and structure
Criteria number	1.4.
Criteria description	Techniques and practices of long- and medium-term forest management should preserve the quantity and quality of the forest resource at a desirable economic, ecological and social level. Maintaining the balance of forest resources is ensured through the implementation of appropriate silvicultural operations and the implementation of forest work techniques that reduce direct and indirect damage to the forest, soil and water resources. When carrying out activities in the forest, care should be taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the economic acceptability of the works.
Connection with legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Law on Forests - Law on Nature Protection - Regulation on forest management - Regulation on the type of forestry works, minimum conditions for their execution and works that forest owners can carry out independently
Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Forest classification according to: mixture ratio, purpose and method of management and applied method of forest cultivation (ha, map description). 2. The selection of silvicultural operations and performance techniques contributes to the reduction of damage to forests, soil and water resources 3. Establish relationship between growth and permitted felling, as well as sustainability in quality and quantity 4. Availability of qualified personnel with defined responsibilities
Source of verification	Data as an integral part of FMP
Minimal requirements	The allowed cut is defined in the FMP.

Chapter 2:	Maintenance of forest ecosystem's health and vitality
Thematic area	Monitoring of the forest resources
Criteria number	2.1.
Criteria description	The health status and vitality of forests are continuously monitored with tracking key biotic and abiotic factors and their impact on forests. Monitoring is carried out annually by an authorized institution in accordance with national regulations. Monitoring is carried out in accordance with Law on Forests (LF). When analysing the results of monitoring and defining measures to preserve the health and vitality of the forest, the following must be considered: the occurrence of forest fires, deforestation, and diseases, as well as other factors that disturb the stability of the forest ecosystem. The recommendations of professional institutions are an integral part of the monitoring results and are considered when creating the FMP.
Connection with legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Law on Forests - Law on Nature Protection
Indicators	1. The number and amount of biotic and abiotic factors are monitored and documented

	2. There is a system for monitoring the health condition and vitality of the forests
Source of verification	Data on monitoring in annual reports for bioindicator points according to ICP monitoring Annual Reporting and forecasting operations (IPP)
Minimal requirements	Regular monitoring of the vitality and health conditions of forests in accordance with national regulations

Chapter 2:	Maintenance of forest ecosystem's health and vitality
Thematic area	Measures for maintenance of health and vitality of forest ecosystems
Criteria number	2.2.
Criteria description	Maintaining the vitality and health conditions of forests is of primary importance for forestry. The FMP define measures to maintain the health and vitality of forests, reducing the risks of forest degradation or damage, as well as measures for the eventual revitalization of degraded forests. Forest management is based on natural processes and the determination of measures to maintain the health of forests, prioritizing the preventive biological measures, where possible and economically justified. One of the main goals of forest management is to maintain biodiversity: genetic, structural and species diversity, thereby contributing to the health and vitality of forests.
Connection with legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Law on forests - Regulation on forest management - Regulation on tree marking, labelling of forest products, bill of lading (forest cargo documents) and forest hygiene order
Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Selection of protective measures is under the function of supporting the health and vitality of forests, with the priority of applying biological measures 2. Adequate felling and production practices are applied in natural forests, which are aimed at forest regeneration, selective felling, and a longer regeneration period.
Source of verification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FMP - Reports on the execution of the FMP - Field verification by an independent body
Minimal requirements	Respecting the above-mentioned requirements.

Chapter 2:	Maintenance of forest ecosystem's health and vitality
Thematic area	Restrictions
Criteria number	2.3.
Criteria description	During felling, extraction and transport, the risk of spilling oil, fuel and other harmful liquids is strictly avoided and waste disposal in the forest and forest land is not allowed. Waste is collected, temporarily deposited in designated locations for this purpose and later taken to the landfill.
Connection with legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Law on Forests - Nature Protection Law - Environmental protection Law - Waste management Law

Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contractors in the forest are familiar with the prescribed rules and measures for reducing the risk of spilling oil, fuel and other harmful liquids, and waste disposal, and implement them 2. There are specific locations for temporary waste disposal 3. There are materials and absorbents of oil, fuel, and harmful liquids in the logging area and in the machines used for work in the forest
Source of verification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal acts of forest owners or users on the obligation of preventive measures and behaviour during the implementation of works in the forest (for employees and service providers) - Field verification by an independent body
Minimal requirements	Respecting the above-mentioned requirements.

Chapter 2:	Maintenance of forest ecosystem's health and vitality
Thematic area	Restrictions
Criteria number	2.4.
Criteria description	<p>If this is not provided for in the FMP, it is prohibited:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – cutting off branches, parts of branches or cutting off leaves, – grazing, brushing and acorn feeding - collection and removal of sedges, moss, removal of humus, peat and litter <p>The use of non-timber forest products is defined by the Law on Forests. Exceptionally, the forest owner can allow the use of non-timber forest products or provide a plan for the areas where it will be allowed.</p>
Connection with legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Law on Forests - Nature Protection Law
Indicators	1. Existence of regular application, monitoring and supervision by the forest manager / forest owner on violations of legal regulations
Source of verification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reports on violations of legal regulations - Reports on the conducted inspections - Field verification by an independent body - FMP
Minimal requirements	Respecting the above-mentioned requirements.

Chapter 2:	Maintenance of forest ecosystem's health and vitality
Thematic area	Restrictions
Criteria number	2.5.
Criteria description	The use of pesticides in forests is minimal and is applied only in cases where silvicultural and biological measures are not justified. The use of pesticides must be approved by the competent institution.
Connection with legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nature Protection Act - Plant Health Act - Sustainable Use of Pesticides Act
Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Documentation on the use of pesticides by type, quantity and surface treated, remaining quantities and storage 2. Records on the conducted training of personnel for pesticide handling

Source of verification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Records of treatments carried out - Permits on the use of pesticides issued by the competent institution
Minimal requirements	Respecting the above-mentioned requirements.

Chapter 2:	Maintenance of forest ecosystem's health and vitality
Thematic area	Restrictions
Criteria number	2.6.
Criteria description	The use of fertilizers in the forest is avoided. Fertilizers can only be applied with the recommendation of an expert institution in a controlled and prescribed manner, considering their impact on the environment.
Connection with legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fertilizers and Soil improvers Act - Nature Protection Law
Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Records on the type and amount of fertilizers used 2. Recommendation for the use of fertilizers issued by professional institutions.
Source of verification	Recommendations for the use of fertilizers issued by a professional institution
Minimal requirements	Respecting the above-mentioned requirements.

Chapter 2:	Maintenance of forest ecosystem's health and vitality
Thematic area	Restrictions
Criteria number	2.7.
Criteria description	It is not allowed to start a fire in the forest or near it, disposal of waste, as well as other activities that may weaken the productive function and general useful functions of the forest.
Connection with legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Law on Forests - Waste management Act
Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are regulations and supervision over the implementation of regulations 2. There is monitoring and control of violations of regulations
Source of verification	<p>Reports of violations of legal regulations</p> <p>Records of performed inspections</p> <p>Field verification by an independent body</p>
Minimal requirements	Respecting the above-mentioned requirements.

Chapter 3:	Maintenance and support of forest productive functions (wood and non-wood forest products)
Thematic area	Forest products
Criteria number	3.1.
Criteria description	Maintaining the capacity of forests for the production of wood and non-wood forest products and services is one of the basic goals of forest management. Forest management should ensure the fulfilment of economic goals with annual monitoring. Forest structure and its production capacities are the basis for determining economic goals or their equivalents,

	<p>considering the needs for different forest products and services and market flows. Forest management should also recognize all important functions and services of the forest area and ensure the preservation of all these functions while carrying out the planned economic activities. Forest management supports forest production capacities for the provision of various wood and non-wood products and services. Also, the intensity of the use of wood and non-wood products must not jeopardize long-term sustainability, considering the uptake of nutrients from the soil at a level that optimizes the use of products. The commercial use of non-timber forest products is regulated and is carried out with monitoring and control and is in accordance with the regulations.</p>
Connection with legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Law on Forests - Law on hunting - Nature protection Law - Regulation on forest management - Regulation on remittance of trees, labelling of forest products, bill of lading (forest cargo documents) and forest hygiene order - Regulation on mushroom protection
Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. List of issued permits for collection of non-timber forest products (where it is regulated) 2. Reports on the remittance of trees
Source of verification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data of forest management plans - Permits for collection of non-timber forest products
Minimal requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is no reduction of the quality of the forest structure and the forest area - The wood residue remains in the stand after felling in accordance with the forest order - Permitted logging is defined in the FMP

Chapter 3:	Maintenance and support of forest productive functions (wood and non-wood forest products)
Thematic area	Forestry activities and forest infrastructure
Criteria number	3.2.
Criteria description	<p>Silviculture and forest regeneration measures are carried out using appropriate techniques and technologies, at a time and in a way that helps preserve the productive capacity of the forest habitat, avoiding unnecessary damage to the remaining trees in the forest stand as well as to the forest soil. The use of tools, mechanization and forestry techniques during felling, export and transport is carried out with care and in such a way as to avoid unnecessary damage to the remaining trees, stands, soil and water courses. Activities are carried out in accordance with legal provisions, that is, forestry works are performed by registered and licensed contractors for these jobs.</p>
Connection with legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Law on Forests - Regulation on Forest Management - Regulation on the type of forestry works, the minimum conditions for their performance and the works that forest owners can perform independently - - Regulation on tree marking, labelling of forest products, bill of lading (forest cargo documents) and forest hygiene order
Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Selection of silvicultural and regeneration measures to prevent damage to the remaining trees and habitat

	<p>2. Implementation of appropriate techniques during felling reduces damage to remaining trees and stands</p> <p>3. Implementation of attraction techniques to reduce damage to the ground</p> <p>4. The attraction is carried out along the network of secondary transport forest infrastructure</p>
Source of verification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data in FMP - Elaboration of the workshop for works in forestry - Existence of internal protocols for logging and forestry operations
Minimal requirements	Respecting the above-mentioned requirements.

Chapter 3:	Maintenance and support of forest productive functions (wood and non-wood forest products)
Thematic area	Forestry activities and forest infrastructure
Criteria number	3.3.
Criteria description	Construction of forest infrastructure is carried out in accordance with FMP. Infrastructure in forest ecosystems should be planned and designed in a way that is least harmful to the forest habitat, taking care of special geological, vegetation, hydrological and other values, and especially of ecologically valuable parts of the ecosystem established by special regulations (protected areas, ecological network, endangered and rare habitat types, migratory corridors of rare, sensitive, or endangered species).
Connection with legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Law on Forests - Law on Nature Protection - Construction Law - Regulation on Forest Management
Indicators	1. List of forest roads planned for construction and maintenance in the FMP or consent of the competent ministries
Source of verification	Lists from the FMP or approvals from the competent ministries
Minimal requirements	Respecting the above-mentioned requirements.

Chapter 4:	Maintenance, conservation, and enhancement of biological diversity of forest ecosystems
Thematic area	Forests of high ecological significance
Criteria number	4.1.
Criteria description	The goals of forest management are aimed at maintaining, preserving, and improving biological, genetic and landscape diversity. Such areas are recognized and designated by the Ecological Network Natura 2000 and the National Classification of Habitats.
Connection with legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Law on Forests - Law on Nature Protection - Regulation on Ecological Network - Regulation on Forest Management - Regulation on the list of habitat types and habitat map
Indicators	1. Categorization of forests according to purpose.

	2. Selection of silvicultural and regeneration measures is in function of maintaining biological, genetic and landscape diversity. 3. Corresponding maps defined by FMP
Source of verification	FMP Consent of the competent ministries
Minimal requirements	Respecting the above-mentioned requirements.

Chapter 4:	Maintenance, conservation, and enhancement of biological diversity of forest ecosystems
Thematic area	Forests of high ecological significance
Criteria number	4.2.
Criteria description	Protected and endangered species of forest plants, mushrooms, and animals may not be exploited for commercial purposes. Where necessary, measures will be taken to protect, nurture and increase their populations
Connection with legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Law on Forests - Law on Nature Protection; - Law on hunting; - National and international reference lists - Red list (Red Book) of strictly protected wild species - Regulation on collection of native wild species - Regulation on strictly protected species
Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compliance with laws and regulations 2. The selection of protective measures according to the description of the criteria is included in the forest management plans
Source of verification	Field control of the competent authority Records of performed inspections
Minimal requirements	Respecting the above-mentioned requirements.

Chapter 4:	Maintenance, conservation, and enhancement of biological diversity of forest ecosystems
Thematic area	Forest practice in balance with nature
Criteria number	4.3.
Criteria description	<p>In natural forest stands and in forest stands with recognized values of landscape diversity of native (autochthonous) species, measures of close to nature forest management are applied with the aim of supporting their survival.</p> <p>In forest stands where species diversity and age/thickness structure have not been established, silvicultural measures are established to ensure their promotion.</p>
Connection with legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Law on Nature Protection; - Law on Forests
Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stability of forest areas under sustainable forest management 2. Field activities do not damage landscape diversity 3. Implementation of silvicultural measures to improve the diversity of forest structure

Source of verification	Data from FMP compared with the previous period Forest maps showing the composition of forests according to type and age, and management method Field checks carried out by the competent authority
Minimal requirements	There is no reduction in areas under sustainable forest management

Chapter 4:	Maintenance, conservation, and enhancement of biological diversity of forest ecosystems
Thematic area	Forest practice in balance with nature
Criteria number	4.4.
Criteria description	Forestry measures aim to ensure successful natural regeneration of forests. If this is not possible, regeneration measures should be undertaken while ensuring adequate area and quality of the forest in accordance with habitat conditions. In the selection of forest species for regeneration, priority is given to native tree species of local provenance that are well adapted to the conditions of the habitat. Introduced species may only be used if their impact on the ecosystem and genetic integrity of native species has been adequately assessed and is not negative. Aspects of ecological connectivity should be analysed in the planning of filling and regeneration measures. Measures that contribute to the improvement and restoration of ecological connectivity will be promoted. The use of reproductive material from genetically modified tree species is not permitted.
Connection with legislation	-Law on Forests -Law on Nature Protection - Law on Forest Reproduction Material
Indicators	1. The selection of silvicultural and regeneration measures is in accordance with the requirements of the criteria 2. The selection of measures and species for regeneration is in accordance with the requirements of the criteria 3. Successful natural or assisted forest regeneration
Source of verification	- ŠGP - Expert assessment of the impact of introduced species - Field supervision by an independent body
Minimal requirements	Respecting the above-mentioned requirements.

Chapter 4:	Maintenance, conservation, and enhancement of biological diversity of forest ecosystems
Thematic area	Forest practice in balance with nature
Criteria number	4.5.
Criteria description	Forest silvicultural and exploitation activities must be carried out in such a way that they do not cause permanent damage to ecosystems. Wherever possible, climate positive practical measures are taken to improve or maintain biological diversity and greenhouse gas emission reductions. Works in forests are carried out according to legal regulations, and they are carried out by registered and licensed contractors for these jobs.

Connection with legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Law on Forests - Law on Nature Protection - Regulation on the type of forestry works, the minimum conditions for their performance and the works that forest owners can perform independently - Regulation on tree marking, labelling of forest products, bill of lading (forest cargo documents) and forest hygiene order
Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Elaboration of the worksite for works in forestry 2. Elaborate with management guidelines that is issued based on the completed remittance, i.e. the previously submitted request for remittance of trees
Source of verification	<p>Contractor's license Approval by an authorized forestry engineer FMP</p>
Minimal requirements	Respecting the above-mentioned requirements.

Chapter 4:	Maintenance, conservation, and enhancement of biological diversity of forest ecosystems
Thematic area	Forest practice in balance with nature
Criteria number	4.6.
Criteria description	Forest management measures should be aimed at establishing a balance between the pressures of animal populations on forest regeneration, development, and protection of biological diversity.
Connection with legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Law on Forests - Law on Nature Protection
Indicators	1. The existence of records of the presence of animal populations and their impact on the forest ecosystem, and an explanation of preventive and other measures that deal with the risk that exists for the forest ecosystem.
Source of verification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Field checks by the competent authority - Report damage from the wild animals - Forest management plans
Minimal requirements	Respecting the above-mentioned requirements.

Chapter 4:	Maintenance, conservation, and enhancement of biological diversity of forest ecosystems
Thematic area	Forest practice in balance with nature
Criteria number	4.7.
Criteria description	Standing and fallen dead trees, trees with holes, old trees and trees of particularly rare species are left in the quantity and composition necessary for the preservation of biological diversity, taking care not to endanger the health and stability of the forest and neighbouring ecosystems.
Connection with legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Law on Forests - Law on Nature Protection - Regulation on remittance of trees, labelling of forest products, bill of lading (accompanying documents) and forest regulations

Indicators	1. The existence of written guidelines and their implementation for leaving old, dead, and lying trees in the forest
Source of verification	- The number and quantity of old, dead, and lying trees in the forest - Field check by the competent authority
Minimal requirements	- A minimum of 5 standing trees per ha remain after the final felling - The wood residue after felling remains on the cuttings while respecting the establishment of the forest order

Chapter 4:	Maintenance, conservation and enhancement of biological diversity of forest ecosystems
Thematic area	Traditional management systems
Criteria number	4.8.
Criteria description	Traditional management of coppice forests can be carried out in the appropriate habitat in cases where it is ecologically, socially, and economically justified. Deforestation and permanent change in the use of forest land is allowed only in cases prescribed by the Law on Forests.
Connection with legislation	- Law on Forests - Regulation on Forest Management
Indicators	1. There is no increase in the area under coppice forests. 2. On areas where clear felling is carried out, sowing and planting of forest reproduction material is carried out in accordance with the Regulation on Forest Management
Source of verification	- Data from FMP compared with the previous period - Field verification by an independent body
Minimal requirements	- At least 5 standing trees per ha remain after the final felling

Chapter 5:	Maintenance and enhancement of forest protective functions (notably soil and water)
Thematic area	Forest protective functions
Criteria number	5.1.
Criteria description	Forest management aims to maintain and improve the protective function of the forest, such as protection from erosion, wind, protection of water resources, protection from adverse effects of water (floods, avalanches); and infrastructure protection. Protective forests are listed and mapped in forest management plans. Silvicultural and protective measures are adjusted to maintain their protective function.
Connection with legislation	- Law on Forests
Indicators	1. The selection of silvicultural and regeneration measures is a function of fulfilling the requirements of criteria 2. Existence of forest maps according to purpose 3. Categorization of forests according to purpose
Source of verification	- FMP - Field verification by an independent body

Minimal requirements	Respecting the above-mentioned requirements.
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Chapter 5:	Maintenance and enhancement of forest protective functions (notably soil and water)
Thematic area	Forest protective functions
Criteria number	5.2.
Criteria description	In protective forests, measures are applied in accordance with their purpose. In principle, forest management must at least maintain and, where possible, improve recognized forest functions and services important for that area.
Connection with legislation	- Law on Forests - Law on Water - Law on Nature Protection
Indicators	1. The selection of silvicultural and regeneration measures is in accordance with the protective function of the forest and meets the requirements of the criteria 2. Technologies are used in accordance with the requirements of the criteria 3. On areas where clear felling is carried out, sowing and planting of forest reproduction material is carried out in accordance with the Regulation on Forest Management 4. In protective forests, the use of machines that damage the soil in the forest and increase the risk of erosion in protective forests is prohibited. 5. Ecosystem services important to the area are recognized and maintained
Source of verification	- Data from the FMP - Field verification by an independent body
Minimal requirements	Respecting the above-mentioned requirements.

Chapter 6:	Maintenance of socio-economic functions and conditions
Thematic area	Socio-economic functions of the forests
Criteria number	6.1.
Criteria description	Forest management maintains the socio-economic functions of forests, their contribution to rural development and employment opportunities, community well-being, recreational and aesthetic values as well as their positive impact on human health. When creating forest management plans, the principles of participatory participation of all interested stakeholders are respected, through public inspection and public discussion. Forest areas with recognized historical, cultural, or spiritual values and forest areas necessary to meet the basic needs of local communities are managed with attention, caution, and respect for the importance of that area.
Connection with legislation	-Law on Forests -Regulation on Forest Management
Indicators	1. Forest management maintains forest services in recreation and sports and supports the aesthetic values of the forest 2. Implementation of public inspection and public discussion in the process of creating the FMP

Source of verification	Data on the conducted public discussion
Minimal requirements	Respecting the above-mentioned requirements.

Chapter 6:	Maintenance of socio-economic functions and conditions
Thematic area	Socio-economic functions of the forests
Criteria number	6.2.
Criteria description	Forests are a natural asset of general interest and all citizens have the right to free access to the forest for enjoyment and recreation, at their own risk in terms of safety and with the obligation to comply with regulations. Free access may be limited or prohibited in protected parts of the forest, in parts where safety is threatened in periods when there are threats of fire, and when works are being carried out in the forest. All available means should be used to inform about restrictions on free access to the forest (local media, websites, information boards, etc.)
Connection with legislation	- Law on Forests
Indicators	1. The possibility of restricting free access to forests
Source of verification	- Documentation on the declaration of access ban by location and duration - Interviews with residents about free access to the forest - Field verification by an independent body
Minimal requirements	Respecting the above-mentioned requirements.

Chapter 6:	Maintenance of socio-economic functions and conditions
Thematic area	Ownership and traditional rights
Criteria number	6.3.
Criteria description	Ownership rights and land use agreements are clearly defined, documented, and established for a specific area. Rights related to forests and forest land are recognized and respected in accordance with national regulations.
Connection with legislation	-Law on Forests - Law on property and other real rights
Indicators	The existence of a property list with the number of cadastral parcels
Source of verification	- Overview of cadastral parcels - Interviews with representatives of the rural population
Minimal requirements	Respecting the above-mentioned requirements.

Chapter 6:	Maintenance of socio-economic functions and conditions
Thematic area	Trainings, knowledge development
Criteria number	6.4.
Criteria description	Forest management is based, among other things, on the results of scientific research. At the request of relevant institutions and organizations, the user and owner of the forest, according to their abilities, contributes to research

	and the collection of data necessary for research. Where necessary, local forest knowledge and experience are applied to promote sustainable forest management. If a particular knowledge, practice, new approach or innovation originates from another stakeholder and contributes to the forest user/owner, they should propose a benefit-sharing mechanism with that stakeholder.
Connection with legislation	- Law on Forests
Indicators	1. Involvement of forest owners or users in appropriate professional or scientific research in accordance with their capacities 2. Request for cooperation in scientific research. 3. Existence of benefit-sharing mechanisms proposed by forest owners or users and accepted by other stakeholders.
Source of verification	- Content of professional and scientific research related to forest management - Request for cooperation in scientific research - Evidence of a mechanism for sharing benefits between stakeholders
Minimal requirements	Respecting the above-mentioned requirements.

Chapter 6:	Maintenance of socio-economic functions and conditions
Thematic area	Occupational health and safety
Criteria number	6.5.
Criteria description	Economic activities are planned, organized, and carried out in such a way as to identify possible risks to health and accidents and to apply all reasonable measures to protect workers. By-laws define the works that the forest owner can perform independently, and for everything else he is obliged to hire a licensed contractor. The forest owner himself or the engaged licensed contractor must comply with all regulations on the safety of performing high-risk work, protecting himself, other people, and property.
Connection with legislation	-Law on Forests; -Law on Safety at Work; - Collective agreements in forestry (if any); Elaboration of the workshop for works in forestry - Regulations on the use of personal protective equipment - Regulations on protection at work in forestry - Regulation on the type of forestry works, minimum conditions for their execution and works that forest owners can carry out independently
Indicators	1. Identification of risks in the performance of works 2. Certificates for machine operators 3. Engagement of only licensed contractors 4. Obligation to wear protective equipment, first aid and work safety protocols 5. Provided means of communication in case of emergency
Source of verification	- Assessment of possible risks in accordance with the legal obligation - Certificates of completed training - Contracts with a licensed contractor - Field and other checks

Minimal requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Respecting the above-mentioned requirements. - Employment of workers under the age of 18 is not allowed

Chapter 6:	Maintenance of socio-economic functions and conditions
Thematic area	Compliance with legislation
Criteria number	6.6.
Criteria description	<p>The owner or user of the forest is obliged to recognize the appropriate regulations related to forest management and to ensure that every employee has access to these documents, as well as to harmonize their activities with these regulations.</p> <p>This includes national regulations, but also internationally recognized regulations accepted by the state. The owner or user of the forest and the service provider must ensure a fair compensation for all employees that will be in accordance with national regulations.</p>
Connection with legislation	- All national laws of the area concerned
Indicators	1. Violation of regulations by forest users or owners by types of regulations and violations
Source of verification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stored reports on the number of violations by users or owners of the forest by the competent institution - Interviews with injured persons, employees, or representatives of institutions
Minimal requirements	Respecting the above-mentioned requirements.

Chapter 6:	Maintenance of socio-economic functions and conditions
Thematic area	Compliance with legislation
Criteria number	6.7.
Criteria description	<p>The owner or user of the forest will apply all legal options to protect the forest from illegal activities and ensure the implementation of the forest protection system. Systematic protection is in accordance with national regulations and ensures the regular functioning of institutions and bodies responsible for carrying out these activities. The owner informs the competent institution about cases of illegal activities in his forest.</p>
Connection with legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All laws relating to various illegal activities -Law on Forests
Indicators	1. Illegal activities in the forest are recorded and processed according to national regulations
Source of verification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reports of illegal activities - Stored reports on the number of violations by users or owners of the forest by the competent institution - Interviews with injured persons, employees, and representatives of institutions. - Applications by foresters, forestry inspection and other institutions
Minimal requirements	Respecting the above-mentioned requirements

Chapter 7:	Organizational aspects
Thematic area	Internal procedures
Criteria number	7.1.
Criteria description	<p>The organization should demonstrate readiness to apply the requirements of sustainable forest management (SFM) through the establishment of economic procedures, necessary human resources, protocols for work in the forest, regular monitoring, and necessary improvements.</p> <p>The management of the organization fully understands the requirements of SFM and expresses its commitment to fulfil them. For this purpose, the organization must prepare a statement as part of the internal policy in which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the organization confirms its commitment to meeting the requirements of SFM; - the organization declares its commitment to regular monitoring of the implementation of all SFM requirements and improvements where necessary; - the organization is committed to supporting equal opportunities, preventing discrimination and harassment at work; - supports gender equality where possible; <p>The statement should be publicly available, and employees should be familiar with its content and should understand their role in implementing the organization's commitment.</p> <p>(Note: the content of this criterion is not mandatory for the individual forest owner who manages the forest)</p>
Connection with legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Law on Prevention of Conflict of Interest - Labor Law
Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The established SFM is efficient, well explained to employees, regularly monitored with improvements when necessary 2. The organizational statement is publicly available 3. Activities to support organizational commitment are carried out on an annual basis (except for individual forest ownership)
Source of verification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Results of internal protocols - Organizational statement - Records from organizational events promoting commitment - Interviews with employees
Minimal requirements	Respecting the above-mentioned requirements

Chapter 7:	Organizational aspects
Thematic area	Internal procedures
Criteria number	7.2.
Criteria description	<p>Professional and technical staff employed in the organization, service providers and forest owners should have adequate information related to the implementation of SFM and the opportunity for training as a prerequisite for compliance with the requirements of the standard.</p> <p>The manager of the organization should define and provide everything necessary for employees and service providers and should clearly define the</p>

	<p>responsibilities for the implementation of SFM. Role updates for all employees are done on an annual basis through written instructions and provision of training. This includes all resources and documents with information about the location, implementation, and improvement of system efficiency. The organization should designate a main responsible person who will prepare and maintain data and update information related to the requirements of the standard. Forest manager who manages a forest area of more than 4,000 ha should conduct an analysis of threats and possibilities of compliance with the requirements of the standard and measures to reduce risks. For an area smaller than 4,000 ha, a list of existing threats to SFM should at least be prepared.</p> <p>(Note: the content of this criterion refers to professional and technical staff employed in the organization, service providers and forest owners, it is not mandatory for an individual forest owner who manages the forest)</p>
Connection with legislation	The legislative framework for this area does not exist
Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The organization has written internal procedures for the responsibilities of all involved persons (employees and service providers) 2. Instructions are distributed and available to all employees and service providers 3. Internal training on SFM requirements was conducted within 30 days after giving written instructions. For new employees and service providers, the organization will conduct training within a period of 60 days after employment. The training is carried out before they go to work/into the forest. 4. Internal rules related to keeping records and mandatory documentation for system maintenance have been prepared, including designation of the responsible person 5-a. The chapter on the definition of threats to the implementation of SFM and mitigation measures is prepared by organizations <p>(Note: only for forest areas over than 4,000 ha)</p> <p>5-b. List of threats SFM</p> <p>(Note: only for forest areas less than 4,000 ha)</p>
Source of verification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal regulations of the organization - Records of conducted trainings with employees and service providers. - Systematization of jobs in the organization (if any) - Interviews with employees and service providers
Minimal requirements	Respecting the above-mentioned requirements

Chapter 7:	Organizational aspects
Thematic area	Internal procedures
Criteria number	7.3.
Criteria description	<p>The organization should organize and implement programs of annual internal controls with the aim of confirming that the forest is being managed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) in accordance with the requirements of standards and internal regulations; b) which are effectively implemented and maintained;

	<p>The internal control program contains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) plan for implementation, dynamics, methods, responsible persons, and reporting; b) scope and criteria that are controlled; c) qualifications of persons involved in internal control and implementation of procedures; d) reporting on the implemented internal control with record keeping procedure; <p>(Note: the content of this criterion is not mandatory for individual forest owners who manage their property)</p>
Connection with legislation	The legislative framework for this area does not exist
Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The existence of organizational procedures for the of internal control according to the requirements of the criteria 2. Existence of annual reports on internal control
Source of verification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal control procedures - Reports on the conducted internal control - Interviews with employees
Minimal requirements	Respecting the above-mentioned requirements

Chapter 7:	Organizational aspects
Thematic area	Internal procedures
Criteria number	7.4.
Criteria description	<p>As part of internal regulations, the organization should prepare procedures for appeals and applications to forest management in a written format. The document should contain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) description of corrective actions if non-conformities with the SFM standard were found and ways of dealing with the consequences; b) instructions for investigating the cause of non-compliance and a proposal for taking measures to remove the cause and potential recurrence of non-compliance; c) instructions for taking corrective measures that are in accordance with the level of established non-compliance and revision the effectiveness of the measures; d) instructions for changes in the management system if they prove necessary. <p>All information related to the occurrence of non-conformities and corrective measures should be documented and archived.</p> <p>(Note: the content of this criterion is not mandatory for individual forest owners who manage their property)</p>
Connection with legislation	The legislative framework for this area does not exist
Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The existence of a written and stored procedure for resolving non-compliance with the requirements of the standard. 2. A record of non-conformities and the implementation of corrective measures is stored and available upon request

Source of verification	1. Documentation on the finding of non-compliance with the standard 2. Documentation on the measures taken 3. Interviews with employees
Minimal requirements	Respecting the above-mentioned requirements

Chapter 7:	Organizational aspects
Thematic area	Internal procedures
Criteria number	7.5.
Criteria description	<p>To ensure successful compliance with the requirements of the SFM standard, the organization conducts an annual audit to identify weaknesses in the management system and provide the basis for management improvement. The audit should include:</p> <p>a) the status of the activities carried out since the last audit. b) changes in external and internal factors important for the management system; c) information on the quality of management, which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nonconformities recognized and corrective measures taken; • Monitoring results and evaluations; • Results of internal and external control; • Possibilities of continuous improvement; <p>The management of the organization should consider the results of the audit. If weaknesses or opportunities for improvement are recognized, a written decision from the management should be made. All management audit reports should be saved and available on request.</p> <p>(Note: the content of this criterion is not mandatory for individual forest owners who manage their property)</p>
Connection with legislation	The legislative framework for this area does not exist
Indicators	1. The organization regularly conducts management audits, including all points of criteria requirements 2. The annual audit and management decision report is available upon request
Source of verification	- Annual audit report and management decisions - Interviews with employees
Minimal requirements	Respecting the above-mentioned requirement