



IAF and PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes) Scheme Endorsement Agreement

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The **Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes (PEFC)** is the scheme owner of the PEFC Chain of Custody of Forest and Tree Based Products – Requirements (PEFC ST 2002:2020), which is operated worldwide. PEFC has sought and received endorsement of PEFC ST 2002:2020 (hereinafter referred to as “the Scheme”) as a sub-scope of the IAF Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA) in accordance with IAF PL 3 and this Agreement.
- 1.2 The Scheme requires Certification Bodies (CBs) operating in PEFC ST 2002:2020 or later to be accredited by an Accreditation Body (AB) that is a signatory to the IAF MLA with a main scope of product certification (IAF MLA signatories).
- 1.3 The Scheme sets voluntary standards for the certification of the field of product certification. The Scheme outlines the requirements for the chain of custody associated forest and tree-based products. The Scheme is owned and managed by the PEFC Council, Route de Pré-Bois 20, Case Postale 1862, 1215 Geneva 15, Switzerland. Currently, there are around 12,000 certificates registered worldwide accessible on its website <http://www.pefc.org>.
- 1.4 The PEFC contracts at the time of this Agreement with over 164 CBs worldwide under the Scheme, the supervision of which is carried out by 47 ABs that are IAF MLA signatories.
- 1.5 The PEFC requirements for the professional competence of personnel auditors are defined in the relevant scheme documents.
- 1.6 The PEFC delegates the responsibility of supervision of the CBs it contracts with to the corresponding IAF ABs, noting that harmonization of criteria applied by the different ABs is increasingly important to ensure consistency of that supervision.
- 1.7 The Scheme provides the standard and framework for independent, recognized third-party product certification to ISO/IEC 17065.
- 1.8 The **International Accreditation Forum (IAF)** is the world association of conformity assessment accreditation bodies in the fields of management systems, products, services, process, persons, validation and verification and other similar programs of conformity assessment.

- 1.9 IAF is responsible for the harmonization and continuous improvement of the accreditation practices of its members with the ultimate goal to ensure sound technical competence of accredited CBs and V&VBs (Verification and Validation Bodies) and to support its IAF MLA.
- 1.10 The IAF MLA is established and maintained on the basis of the requirements of ISO/IEC 17011 through regular peer evaluations and is the tool by which IAF contributes to the elimination of technical barriers to trade and to promoting the free circulation of certificates issued by accredited CBs.

2. Administration and Cooperation

- 2.1 Both IAF and the PEFC by means of this formal Agreement, have decided to develop and maintain a close cooperation between the two organizations to ensure harmonization in the accreditation practices performed by IAF members for the Scheme and to cooperate in the continuous improvement of the Scheme with the final goal of assuring the highest level of competence in the Scheme's accredited CBs.
- 2.2 IAF and the PEFC shall comply with the respective requirements of IAF PL3 *Policies and Procedures on the IAF MLA Structure and for Expansion of the Scope of the IAF MLA*, operating and administrating in an open, non-discriminatory and transparent manner, avoiding conflicts of interest or limitation on the acceptance of CBs or ABs other than for relevant technical considerations.
- 2.3 PEFC ST 2002:2020 or later will be open to all CBs that are accredited by IAF MLA signatories. The ABs will be signatory members of the IAF MLA for product certification to ISO/IEC 17065.
- 2.4 The PEFC will only work with IAF MLA signatories. The PEFC will stop working with an AB that is no longer a signatory to the IAF MLA.
- 2.5 Both IAF and the PEFC shall appoint a liaison person of each organization to act as contact persons.

3. Information Exchange

In order to achieve such goals, both organizations have agreed upon the following:

- 3.1 The PEFC shall inform the IAF of the following:
 - a. Changes to the Scheme that may impact compliance with IAF PL3.
 - b. Any revision/extension of the Scheme standards/documents.
 - c. Outcomes from any AB workshop held by the PEFC on the Scheme.
 - d. Feedback the PEFC may have regarding the IAF MLA signatory ABs.
- 3.2 IAF shall inform the PEFC of the following:
 - a. When an IAF MLA signatory with a sub-scope of the Scheme has been suspended or had their IAF MLA signatory status withdrawn.
 - b. Any general or technical questions regarding the interpretation of the Scheme standards/documents.

- c. Changes in policy, procedure or documentation that may impact the IAF MLA and Scheme sub-scope.

4. Mandatory Interpretation of the Scheme Documents

- 4.1 The Scheme's documents shall be prepared using the PEFC procedure for the setting and revision of the Scheme's documentation. This shall include a stakeholder consultation phase comprising of comment submissions by interested parties each lasting a specified timeframe with feedback being provided to organizations that made the comment.
- 4.2 The IAF will be included as a stakeholder and invited during any stakeholder consultation period of the Scheme revision process.
- 4.3 The review period for the Scheme normative documents shall be 5 years. The Scheme normative documents shall be available free of charge (at least to IAF MLA signatory ABs) onwards on the PEFC website.
- 4.4 The PEFC will provide new draft Scheme version document(s) with a gap analysis and proposed transition plan for implementation of the new version documents to IAF as soon as a technically sound new version is available, in order to make sure that the new scheme version continues to comply with the requirements of IAF PL 3. The PEFC accepts the process to be followed according to IAF PL 3 for IAF MLA sub-scope inclusion of new versions of the Scheme.
- 4.5 The need for the development of specific IAF application documents for inclusion of publicly owned standards/normative documents in the IAF MLA shall be proposed by the IAF Technical Committee and the need for additional preparation of peer evaluation by the IAF MLA Committee as specified in IAF PL 3.
- 4.6 The Scheme shall be included in the relevant IAF MLA status lists. After the end of the transition period to a new scheme version the old version will not be published as an IAF MLA sub-scope anymore.

5. Implementation

- 5.1 IAF and the PEFC shall each bear their own costs.
- 5.2 The Scheme will be included as a sub-scope under product certification in accordance with ISO/IEC 17065. Those accreditation bodies currently providing accreditations to the Scheme will automatically have their MLA scope extended to include the Scheme once this agreement is signed, thus allowing for accredited PEFC certification to be issued in line with the Level 5 standards listed in Schedule 1.
- 5.3 The revision of the implementation of this Agreement is in the scope of the MLA peer evaluation to the IAF product certification MLA signatories working in the Scheme.

6. Confidentiality

- 6.1 IAF shall hold all Confidential Information in strictest confidence and shall only use it for the purpose for which it was provided and shall not disclose or make available any Confidential Information to any third party without the prior written consent of the PEFC.

7. Term

- 7.1 This Agreement shall commence from the original Date of Signing (*17 September 2025*) and, unless terminated earlier according to clause 8, continue for a period of 5 years.

8. Cancellation

- 8.1 This Agreement between the PEFC and IAF can be cancelled by either party in writing with a period of notice of three months.

SCHEDULE 1

PEFC scheme endorsed for inclusion as a sub-scope to the IAF MLA:



1. PEFC Chain of Custody of Forest and Tree Based Products

Level 4 –

- PEFC ST 2001:2020 PEFC Trademarks Rules – Requirements
- PEFC ST 2003:2020 Requirements for Certification Bodies operating Certification against the PEFC International Chain of Custody Standard

Level 5 –

- PEFC ST 2001:2020 PEFC Trademarks Rules – Requirements
- PEFC ST 2002:2020 - Chain of Custody of Forest and Tree Based Products – Requirements
- PEFC ST 2002-1:2024 Requirements for the Implementation of PEFC EUDR Due Diligence System (PEFC EUDR DDS)

International Accreditation Forum, Inc.	The Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes (PEFC)
 Emanuele Riva IAF Chair	 Rob Shaw Head of Standards and Integrity

Date of Agreement: 17 September 2025