

Dutch Timber Procurement Policy

- Annex I -

User Manual

*for the assessment of certification systems by
the Timber Procurement Assessment Committee
(TPAC)*

NOTE ON VERSION 4.1

This version 4.1 of the TPAC User Manual includes three changes in the Dutch Procurement Criteria (annex III) compared to version 4.0. The changes were necessary to ensure that the Dutch Procurement Criteria are in line with the EU Timber Regulation (EUTR) which prohibits the placement of illegally harvested timber and timber products on the EU market. The changes are:

- Criterion 1.4 (illegal activities) has been renamed Criterion 6.2;*
- A new criterion 1.4 has been included reflecting the definition of 'legally harvested' of the EUTR;*
- Criterion 1.3 has been altered to avoid duplication with the new criterion 1.4.*

Index

<u>1 INTRODUCTION</u>	<u>5</u>
1.1 HISTORY AND CONTEXT.....	5
1.2 ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT	5
1.2.1 PURPOSE AND TARGET GROUP	5
1.2.2 STRUCTURE.....	6
1.2.3 STATUS.....	6
1.2.4 CATEGORY A AND B	6
<u>2 ABOUT THE TIMBER PROCUREMENT ASSESSMENT SYSTEM (TPAS).....</u>	<u>7</u>
2.1 THE DUTCH PROCUREMENT CRITERIA FOR TIMBER	7
2.2 THE STRUCTURE OF STANDARDS	8
2.3 THE TIMBER PROCUREMENT ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE (TPAC)	8
2.3.1 TASKS	8
2.3.2 COMPOSITION	9
2.3.3 MODE OF OPERATION	9
2.3.4 BUDGET	9
2.4 PERIODICAL REVISION	9
<u>3 ABOUT THE ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE</u>	<u>10</u>
3.1 SUMMARY OF THE PROCEDURE	10
3.2 APPLICATION AND DECISION ON APPLICATION.....	11
3.2.1 APPLICATION BY THE SYSTEM MANAGER.....	11
3.2.2 REQUEST BY THE DUTCH MINISTRY	11
3.3 SELF-ASSESSMENT	12
3.4 ONLINE STAKEHOLDER FORUM	12
3.5 TPAC ASSESSMENT.....	13
3.6 FIRST AND SECOND REVIEW	13
3.7 PRELIMINARY AND FINAL JUDGEMENT	13
3.8 DECISION STATE SECRETARY	14
3.9 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION GATHERING	14
3.10 ASSESSMENT OF META-SYSTEMS	14
3.11 THE ASSESSMENT METHOD.....	15
3.11.1 THE LEVEL OF CRITERIA.....	15
3.11.2 THE LEVEL OF PRINCIPLES	15
3.11.3 FINAL JUDGEMENT DECISION RULES	16
3.12 STIPULATIONS	16
3.13 VALIDITY OF THE FINAL JUDGEMENT	17
3.14 STATUS OF THE ASSESSMENT	17
3.15 PUBLIC INFORMATION.....	18

<u>4 ABOUT THE PROCEDURES FOR COMPLAINTS, OBJECTION AND APPEALS... 19</u>	
4.1 OVERVIEW OF THE PROCEDURES.....	19
4.2 COMPLAINT.....	19
4.3 OBJECTION.....	19
4.4 APPEAL.....	20
4.5 COSTS OF THE PROCEDURE.....	20
<u>5 ABOUT THE IMPLICATIONS OF TPAC ASSESSMENTS..... 21</u>	
5.1 IMPLICATIONS FOR CERTIFICATION SYSTEMS.....	21
5.2 IMPLICATIONS FOR PROCUREMENT OFFICERS.....	21
5.3 IMPLICATIONS FOR TIMBER COMPANIES.....	21
<u>ANNEX I - ABBREVIATIONS..... 22</u>	
<u>ANNEX II - DEFINITIONS..... 23</u>	
<u>ANNEX III – THE DUTCH PROCUREMENT CRITERIA..... 27</u>	
<u>ANNEX IV – PROCESS CRITERIA FOR CERTIFICATION SYSTEMS..... 35</u>	
<u>ANNEX V - APPLICATION FORM..... 41</u>	
<u>ANNEX VI - CONTACT DETAILS..... 42</u>	

1 Introduction

1.1 History and context

As from 2010 the Dutch Government is committed to 100% sustainable procurement.¹ This document deals with the Dutch Procurement Policy for timber.

The political commitment of the Dutch government to develop a green procurement policy for timber dates back to 2001. Soon after, the government started a dialogue with its stakeholders with the objective of formulating criteria for sustainable timber. The *Dutch Procurement Criteria for timber* were officially established by the former Minister of Housing, Special Planning and Environment (VROM) in 2008.

Furthermore, the Minister commissioned the independent organisation SMK (Stichting Milieukeur) to set up a *Timber Procurement Assessment Committee* (TPAC) with the task of assessing certification systems against the Dutch Procurement Criteria.

The TPAC 'programme' is managed by SMK; the regulations governing the TPAC are included in the SMK Manual.

1.2 About this document

1.2.1 Purpose and target group

The Timber Procurement Assessment Committee operates the *so-called Timber Procurement Assessment System* (TPAS), consisting of the Dutch Procurement Criteria and procedures to verify whether timber certification systems meet these Procurement Criteria. The purpose of this TPAC User Manual is to provide interested parties with information concerning the TPAS (the assessment system) and the TPAC (the assessment committee).

The primary target group of this document consists of representatives of timber certification systems - referred to as System Managers. Other target groups are: timber traders, non-governmental organisations, government organisations, concerned individuals etc.

¹ This commitment holds for national government bodies, municipal authorities are aiming for 75%, and the provincial authorities and waterboards for 50% in 2010. All parties committed themselves to 100% sustainable purchases in 2015.

1.2.2 Structure

The TPAC User Manual consists of the following chapters:

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Chapter 2 - Timber Procurement Assessment System (TPAS)

Chapter 3 - Assessment procedure

Chapter 4 - Procedures for complaints, objection and appeal.

Chapter 5 - Implementation of TPAS

The annexes of the TPAC User Manual include a list of abbreviations, a list of definitions, the complete Procurement Criteria, the application form and contact details.

1.2.3 Status

The TPAC User Manual is based on the SMK Manual, in particular the regulations for the Timber Procurement Assessment Committee; the regulations on complaint, objection and appeal; and the SMK by-laws. These regulations and by-laws are the legal documents for the Committee and are available upon request.

The TPAC User Manual version 4.0 was approved by TPAC and the SMK director on 1 December 2010. Version 4.0 is a revision of the User Manual of April 2009.

1.2.4 Category A and B

The Dutch Procurement Policy demands that all timber procured by government officials meets the Dutch Procurement Criteria. Evidence that a batch of timber complies with the Procurement Criteria can be demonstrated through a certificate (Category A evidence) or through 'other information' (Category B evidence). This TPAC User Manual deals with Category A evidence and the assessment of certification systems by TPAC. Information on Category B evidence can be found in the Category B Manual which can be downloaded from the TPAC website.

2 About the Timber Procurement Assessment System (TPAS)

2.1 The Dutch Procurement Criteria for timber

The Dutch Procurement Criteria for timber which have been approved by the former Dutch Minister of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment in 2008, consist of two standards:

1. Sustainable Forest Management (SFM);
2. Chain-of-Custody and Logo Use (CoC).

The SFM standard requires that forests are managed according to the three pillars of sustainability: people, planet and profit. The CoC standard requires that certified timber can be traced through the supply chain, and that rules for administration and on-product claims are clear and verifiable.

In addition, TPAC has developed standards concerning **process criteria** for **certification systems** and **meta-systems**:²

3. Development, Application and Management of certification systems (DAM);
4. Procedure on Endorsement of certification systems by a Meta-system (PEM).

These standards require that systems operate in a way that is transparent, verifiable and accountable.

Note 1: *For the purpose of this document, if reference is made to the Dutch Procurement Criteria, this also includes the DAM standard and, if relevant, the PEM standard.*

Note 2: *In October 2010, the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment merged into the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment. The State Secretary of this department is responsible for the Dutch Public Procurement Policy.*

² Organisations such as PEFC-International, that do not operate a certification system themselves, but instead endorse national or regional certification systems based on a generic standard.

2.2 The structure of standards

The standards consist of principles and criteria:

1. SFM standard: 9 principles and 40 criteria;
2. COC standard: 3 principles and 13 criteria;
3. DAM standard: 5 principles and 24 criteria;
4. PEM standard: 1 principle and 17 criteria.

The complete set of principles and criteria are included in annex III and IV.

2.3 The Timber Procurement Assessment Committee (TPAC)

2.3.1 Tasks

TPAC's tasks are:

1. To **assess certification systems** based on the Dutch Procurement Criteria for timber and to advise the State Secretary of Infrastructure and Environment on the outcome of the assessments.

In order to perform this task, the Committee:

- follows the assessment procedure as described in chapter 3;
- provides System Managers with the opportunity to review assessments during the procedure;
- invites stakeholders to share their knowledge on certification systems at an online forum;
- has the opportunity to gather additional information;
- undertakes all other actions that are necessary to assess certification systems, including the handling of objections.

2. To **develop and maintain** the Timber Procurement Assessment System (TPAS).

In order to perform this task, the Committee:

- refines assessment procedures and procedure documents;
- develops and refines guidances for the Procurement Criteria;
- advises the State Secretary of Infrastructure and Environment on related matters;
- undertakes all other actions that are necessary for maintaining and developing TPAS.

3. To **assist government procurement officers** in assessing Category B evidence for sustainably produced timber and for legal timber.

TPAC's activities related to Category B are described in the 'Category B evidence' Manual which can be downloaded from the TPAC website.

2.3.2 Composition

TPAC is composed of at least four independent persons, including the chair. The composition of the Committee is such that relevant knowledge and understanding of the three pillars of sustainability, people (social aspects), planet (ecological aspects) and profit (economic aspects), is ensured.

The members of TPAC are appointed by the SMK director after consultation with the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment. For the current composition of the Committee, see the TPAC website.

2.3.3 Mode of operation

TPAC meets at least three times a year depending on the (number of) assessments and the budget provided by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment.

The Committee can take valid decisions in meetings or through other forms of communication (e.g. e-mail, telephone). Decisions are preferably taken by consensus. If, for any reason, consensus is not possible, decisions are taken by majority voting.

TPAC and SMK are bound to confidentiality concerning the assessment of certification systems.

2.3.4 Budget

The Committee operates within a budget that is approved by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment.

2.4 Periodical revision

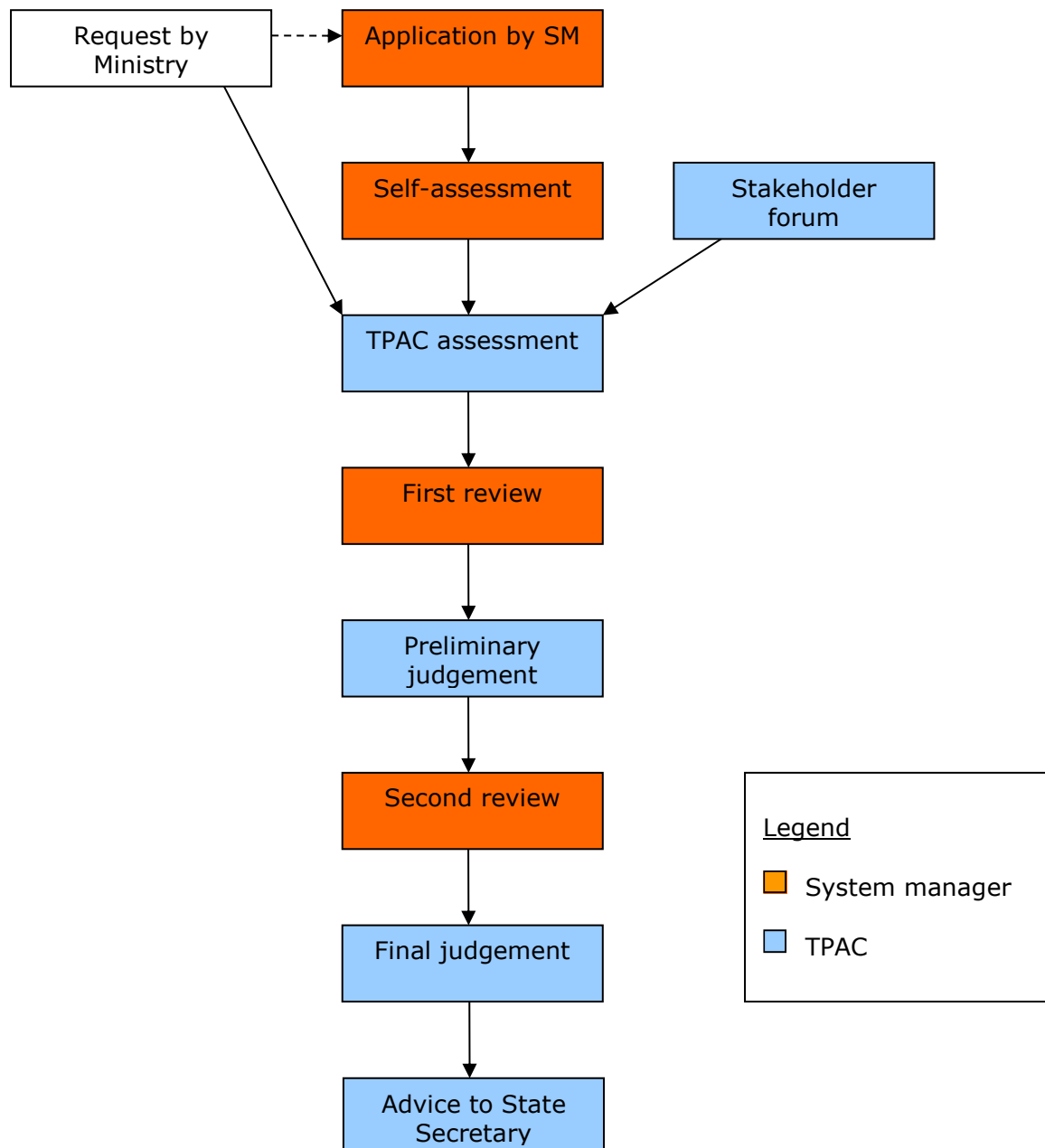
The TPAC User Manual is revised by the Committee when necessary. The SMK director approves the User Manual before it takes effect.

The Dutch Procurement Criteria³ have been approved by the Dutch Minister of Environment in 2008. Periodically and after consultation with the State Secretary of Infrastructure and Environment, the Committee makes proposals for revision of the criteria. The Committee provides stakeholders with the opportunity to be heard.

³ Excluding the process criteria for certification systems and meta systems.

3 About the Assessment Procedure

3.1 Summary of the procedure



3.2 Application and decision on application

There are two possibilities to start a TPAC assessment procedure for certification systems:

1. an application by the System Manager;
2. a request for assessment by the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment.

3.2.1 Application by the System Manager

Every national or international certification system for sustainable timber can apply for assessment, provided that it meets the following requirements:

1. It is a legally registered organisation with statutes, contact address, telephone, email and website;
2. All relevant system documents are publicly available;
3. The system has appointed a person who has authority to decide and act as a representative for the system (referred to as the System Manager);
4. The System Manager agrees to all procedures, time schedules and consequences of TPAS as described in the TPAC User Manual.

The application for assessment is free of charge. To start the procedure, the application form has to be completed and sent to SMK. The Committee confirms receipt of the application form. The decision on application, taken by TPAC, is published on the TPAC website. Following the acceptance of the application, SMK and the System Manager agree on a timeline concerning the steps of the procedure. This timeline can be altered with consent of both parties. The entire assessment procedure takes approximately nine months.

3.2.2 Request by the Dutch Ministry

The Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment can also commission TPAC to assess a certain certification system. In this case, the System Manager will be notified and invited to submit a formal application. The advantage of a formal application is described in section 3.7 "Preliminary and final judgement".

Applications by System Managers have priority over requests from the Ministry.

3.3 Self-assessment

By applying for the TPAC assessment procedure, the System Manager agrees to conduct a self-assessment. This means that he verifies to what extent his certification system meets the Dutch Procurement Criteria for timber by filling in the following assessment documents:

1. Sustainable Forest Management (SFM);
2. Chain-of-Custody and Logo Use (CoC);
3. Development, Application and Management (DAM) of certification systems.

In case of a meta-system, the System Manager is also requested to fill in a fourth document:

4. Procedure on Endorsement of certification systems by a Meta-system (PEM).

The self-assessment has to be based on official system documents, i.e. standards, by-laws, technical documents, or where relevant other documents. These documents have to be sent along with the self-assessment or be readily available on the web.

3.4 Online stakeholder forum

For each assessment procedure the Committee schedules an online stakeholder forum. On this forum stakeholders are invited to comment online on the certification system concerned. If desired, stakeholders can provide information without their names being disclosed.

The objective of the forum is to collect facts and experiences of stakeholders on the functioning of the certification system. The Committee expects that stakeholders have pursued the certification systems' official complaints procedures where appropriate.

After the wrap-up of the forum discussion, the system manager can comment on the discussion and provide additional information. Following the final judgement, the Committee reports back on how all comments have been taken into account. This forum report is made available on the TPAC website.

The forum is scheduled for a period of four weeks after the start of the assessment procedure. This period can be extended in consultation with the system manager.

Stakeholders are notified about the forum through the TPAC website and a press release.

3.5 TPAC assessment

After receiving the self-assessment, TPAC studies all documents in order to arrive at the TPAC assessment: a first view on whether a certification system meets the Dutch Procurement Criteria for timber. If relevant, the results of the stakeholder forum and how the system functions in practice are taken into account. In those cases where no self-assessment has been made, the research for the TPAC assessment is performed by SMK or a consultant.

If appropriate and relevant, the Committee takes into account the legal and social context within which the certification system operates. For example: if a country has rigorous legislation on the use of chemicals, TPAS criterion 5.7 is considered to be addressed, whether chemicals are mentioned in the system's standard or not.

For some criteria, the Committee may conclude that it needs further information in order to make an accurate assessment; these *information requests* are sent along with the TPAC assessment to the System Manager.

3.6 First and second review

The review by the System Manager takes place at least two times during the procedure: the first review after the TPAC assessment and the second review after the preliminary judgement.

During the first review, the System Manager can comment on all elements of the assessment. In addition, he shall address all *information requests* of the Committee. The review should where possible be based on official system documents such as standards and by-laws. The first review generally also includes a review of the stakeholder forum.

The second review is considered a 'final check' by the System Manager before the Committee makes its final judgement.

3.7 Preliminary and final judgement

Following the first review, TPAC arrives at the preliminary judgement, this can be 'system conforming' or 'system not-conforming'. The preliminary judgement can be conditional in anticipation of further information.

Following the second review, TPAC arrives at the final judgement of the certification system using the assessment method described in section 3.11. The final judgement can be:

'system conforming' or **'system not-conforming'**.

In case the final judgement is 'system not conforming', the System Manager can decide to withdraw the system from the procedure. This option is open to System Managers who have applied for assessment or who have taken over the application from the Ministry (see section 3.2). If a system is withdrawn from the procedure, TPAC will communicate 'system withdrawn' to the general public. Yet, the State Secretary will be informed about all assessment results.

3.8 Decision State Secretary

TPAC performs the assessment of the certification system, but the Dutch State Secretary of Infrastructure and Environment decides whether to accept the certification system for the Dutch Procurement Policy and to accept its certificates as valid proof of sustainability.

To this end, TPAC advises the State Secretary on its final judgement. Important findings from the assessment process - if based on written documentation - can be included in this advice. In consultation with the Ministry (parts of) this advice can be shared with the public.

3.9 Additional information gathering

If the acquisition of information during the consecutive steps of the procedure is regarded not to be sufficient, the Committee can gather additional information on (the functioning of) the certification system. This may include, but is not restricted to, inviting experts to a TPAC meeting.

The Committee can also send experts to the country involved to obtain the required information.

More in general, experts can, on behalf of TPAC, accept an invitation by certification systems for a field visit, provided that the programme includes sufficient opportunity to meet with relevant stakeholders.

3.10 Assessment of meta-systems

In case of the assessment of a meta-system, information about its functioning in practice is gathered by investigation of endorsed national (or regional) systems. The focus of the assessment is to establish the extent to which the requirements of the meta-system and of TPAS are complied with by endorsed systems.

3.11 The assessment method

The Committee uses an *assessment method* to judge whether a certification system meets the Dutch Procurement Criteria for timber. This method has three levels:

1. level of criteria;
2. level of principles;
3. level of final judgement.

3.11.1 The level of criteria

The criteria are awarded one of the following scores:

=	Fully addressed	the criterion is (nearly) fully addressed by the certification system.
≈	Partially addressed	a relevant part of the criterion is addressed.
≠	Inadequately addressed	the criterion is not or insufficiently addressed.
n.r.	Not relevant	the criterion is not relevant for the certification system. ⁴
c.o.	Covered otherwise in legal and social context	the criterion is (nearly) fully addressed by legislation and the enforcement of legislation and/or by the functioning of civil society institutions within the country.

3.11.2 The level of principles

Based on the scores on criterion level, the principles are awarded one of the following scores:

2	Fully addressed	the principle is (nearly) fully addressed by the certification system.
1	Partially addressed	a relevant part of the principle is addressed.
0	Inadequately addressed	the principle is not or insufficiently addressed.
n.r.	Not relevant	the principle is not relevant for the certification system. ⁵
c.o.	Covered otherwise in legal and social context	the principle is (nearly) fully addressed by legislation and the enforcement of legislation and/or by the functioning of civil society institutions within the country.

⁴ For example C2.3 on free and informed consent in a country without indigenous peoples.

⁵ For example Principle 9 on group certification.

3.11.3 Final judgement decision rules

A certification system meets the Dutch Procurement Criteria if the following four requirements are met:

1. at least 50% of the principles score '2', the other principles score '1', 'not relevant' or 'covered otherwise';
2. within the social, ecological and economic aspect of SFM, at least one of the two principles scores '2';
3. the fraction of the criteria that is 'inadequately addressed' shall be not more than 10% of the total of the 76 SFM, CoC and DAM criteria;
4. for meta-systems, the PEM principle scores '2'.

Ad 1. If one or more of the 17 principles score 'inadequately addressed', the certification system does not meet the Dutch Procurement Criteria.

Ad 3. The SFM standard includes two principles for each of the following aspects: people, planet and profit. If both principles of one aspect score 1 (or less), the certification system does not meet the Dutch Procurement Criteria.

Ad 4. If the number of criteria which are inadequately addressed exceeds 7, the certification system does not meet the Dutch Procurement Criteria.

3.12 Stipulations

TPAC does not operate a strict mechanical assessment method as each certification system has its own organisational structure and operates within its own national legal context. The following procedural stipulations ensure that a final judgement is accountable, transparent and verifiable:

1. The members of the Committee have no (financial) interest in the outcome of the assessment.
2. Each member has knowledge and expertise on at least one of the three aspects (social, ecological and economic) of forest management.
3. Stakeholders are given the opportunity to provide comments on certification systems through a stakeholder forum.
4. The Committee reports transparently on assessment results and the results of the stakeholder forum.
5. Stakeholders are given the opportunity to file a complaint on the functioning of the Committee or to file an objection or appeal against a decision of the Committee.

3.13 Validity of the final judgement

A positive final judgement is valid for a maximum of five years, after which the certification system will be re-assessed. There are two situations in which a certification system can be re-assessed before the end of this five year term:

1. If **alterations** are made to the certification system, the Committee will investigate whether the system still meets the Dutch Procurement Criteria. If not, the Committee will request the System Manager to make the necessary adjustments to the certification system. This request is bound to an agreed period of time after which the System Manager shall give written proof of the adjustments made. If the System Manager fails to make the adjustments before the deadline and without a written request for delay, the judgement 'system conforming' is withdrawn.
2. If the Committee is notified about **irregularities** within a certification system, it can investigate the background of the reported irregularities. Based on this investigation, the Committee decides whether the irregularities need to be investigated in more detail. Should this be the case, the Committee will inform the System Manager on the procedure to be followed which may include a field visit. Depending on the outcome of the detailed research and the response of the System Manager, the Committee will decide to:
 - a. withdraw the judgement 'system conforming'; or to:
 - b. request the System Manager to make a Corrective Action Plan.

The Committee holds the right to temporarily suspend the certification system pending the investigation.

3.14 Status of the assessment

On its website, TPAC will communicate the assessment status of certification systems. The categories are explained below.

Assessment status
Assessment in progress
Assessment postponed
System withdrawn
Final judgement

"Assessment in progress" applies from the moment the Committee has accepted the application until one of the other categories applies.

“Assessment postponed” indicates that the assessment procedure of a certification system is put on hold under specific conditions for a specific period of time. The conditions and time period are determined in consultation with the System Manager. If, after expiration of the time period, a clear indication exists that the conditions are met, the assessment procedure is resumed. There is no need for a new application. Both the conditions and the time period are communicated to the public.

“System withdrawn” implies that the System Manager has withdrawn the system from the TPAC assessment procedure. This option is open to System Managers who have *formally applied* for the assessment procedure. If a system is withdrawn, the final judgement is not published; only the decision on withdrawal is communicated.

The last step in the procedure is the final judgement. The Committee awards one of the following judgements: ‘system conforming’ or ‘system not-conforming’.

3.15 Public information

Concerning the activities and decisions of the Committee, the TPAC website will provide following information:

Assessment status	Information made public
Assessment in progress	If relevant, information on the progress of the assessment procedure (for example when deviating from the standard procedure)
Assessment postponed	Conditions and time period for postponement
System withdrawn	The fact that a system has been withdrawn
Final judgement	A summary report of the final judgement, and a stakeholder forum report

4 About the procedures for complaint, objection and appeal

4.1 Overview of the procedures

		Subject of the procedure	
		Activities and functioning of SMK and/or the Committee	Decisions of the Committee concerning applications and acceptance of certification systems
Procedure	Complaint	to: Director of SMK	
	Objection		to: the Committee
	Appeal	to: Supervisory Board of SMK	to: Board of Appeal

4.2 Complaint

A stakeholder can lodge a complaint with the SMK director on the functioning of the Timber Procurement Assessment Committee or members of the SMK staff. The director gives both the complainant and the person(s) whose actions and/or functioning are subject of the complaint, the opportunity to be heard. Within six weeks, the complaint will be settled. The complainant will be informed in writing. All correspondence concerning the complaint will be included in the SMK complaints register.

The director is under no obligation to deal with a complaint if the complainant's interests are clearly not strong enough or the action or conduct is clearly not serious enough.

4.3 Objection

If a stakeholder does not agree with the Final Judgement on a certain certification system, he has the opportunity to lodge a notice of objection with the Committee.

The notice of objection shall be composed in the English language and lodged within six weeks after the Final Judgement was communicated to the public. Where appropriate, the Committee expects that stakeholders have pursued the certification systems' official complaints/objection procedures before pursuing the TPAC objection procedure.

The Committee decides whether or not to deal with the notice of objection. Upon the decision to do so, the Committee will investigate the objection and will seek input from the stakeholder and System Manager. The Committee can schedule a hearing, during which the stakeholder, the System Manager and, if necessary other experts will be heard. Within six months after the notice of objection was lodged, the Committee will give a verdict. If necessary, this term can be prolonged with a maximum of six months.

4.4 Appeal

The appeal procedure is to a large extent similar to the procedure for objection. If the notice of appeal concerns a decision by the Committee on an objection, the notice of appeal has to be lodged with the SMK Board of Appeal. If the notice of appeal concerns the decision of the director of SMK on a complaint, the notice of appeal should be lodged with the SMK Supervisory Board. In both cases, the notice appeal should be composed in the English language and lodged within six weeks after the decision has been communicated.

Within six months after the notice of appeal was lodged, the respective organ will come to a decision which will be communicated as soon as possible. If necessary, the term of six months can be extended with a maximum of six months.

4.5 Costs of the procedure

In case of a complaint; an objection; or an appeal directed at the Supervisory Board, there are no costs for the submitter.

In case of an appeal directed at the Board of Appeal, the submitter can be charged with paying the costs of the appeal. For this, a sum of €1,000 is to be paid in advance.

5 About the implications of TPAC assessments

5.1 Implications for certification systems

The System Manager can apply for assessment through the application form included in Annex V. By applying, the System Manager agrees to the requirements of assessment described in this TPAC User Manual. These requirements include, but are not restricted to:

- conducting a self-assessment;
- conducting a first and second review;
- addressing information requests of the Committee, including responses on the forum;
- notifying TPAC of any changes made to the certification system after the system has been awarded the judgement 'system conforming'.

5.2 Implications for procurement officers

Based on TPAC's assessment, the Dutch State Secretary decides whether to accept certification systems for the Dutch Procurement Policy. This results in a list of 'accepted' certification systems published on the TPAC website.⁶ Timber carrying a certificate of one of these systems is subsequently eligible to be procured by public procurement officers.

5.3 Implications for timber companies

Timber companies supplying (indirectly) to government organisations, will have to evaluate to what extent their timber supply is certified through one of the accepted certification systems. In case (a part of) the timber supply is certified by a system which is not (yet) assessed by TPAC, the company is advised to notify the System Manager of the respective certification system and ask him to apply for assessment. A company can at any time turn to SMK for assistance.

⁶ <http://www.tpac.smk.nl/nl/s518/TPAC-home/c490-TPAC-Assessments>

Annex I - Abbreviations

CoC	Chain-of-Custody
DAM	Development, Application and Management of certification systems
PEM	Procedure on Endorsement of certification systems by a Meta-system
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SMK	Stichting Milieukeur
TPAC	Timber Procurement Assessment Committee
TPAS	Timber Procurement Assessment System

Annex II - Definitions

Within the context of the assessment of certification systems against the Dutch Procurement Criteria for timber, TPAC uses the following definitions.

Accreditation (of certification bodies)

The formal recognition by a specialised body – an accreditation body – that a certification body is competent to carry out certification in specified business sectors.⁷

Annual allowable cut (AAC)

The volume of timber harvest permitted per year from a specified area of land, usually expressed as cubic meters of wood per year. The AAC must be calculated considering landscape, forest types, ecological protection areas and infrastructure and shall not exceed the net annual increment on the long run.

Assessment standard

A reproduction of the Procurement Criteria in the form of a standard. The System Managers of certification systems are invited to complete the assessment standards in the course of the assessment procedure. There are four assessment standards:

- Sustainable Forest Management (SFM);
- Chain-of-Custody and Logo Use (CoC);
- Development, Application and Management (DAM) of certification systems and
- Procedure on Endorsement of certification systems by a Meta-system (PEM).

Biodiversity

The variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems.⁸

Chemicals

All types of fertilisers, biocides and hormones.

Certification

The issuing of written assurance (the certificate) by an independent external body that it has audited a forest management unit or chain of custody firm and verified that it conforms to the requirements specified in the standard.⁹

⁷ Based on ISO, see ISO website (www.iso.org)

⁸ CBD, see CBD website (www.cbd.int)

⁹ Based on ISO, see ISO website (www.iso.org)

Certification system (for timber)

A legally registered system which has the objective to promote sustainable forest management through certification of forest management and of the associated chain-of-custody.

Chain-of-Custody (CoC)

All the succeeding custodianships of forest based products during harvesting, processing and the distribution chain from the forest to the end-user.

Chain-of-Custody system

A set of regulations, processes and documents at company level, that ensures the traceability of certified material.

Conversion (of a natural forest)

A human activity through which a natural forest is transformed into another type of land use.

Ecological cycles

Natural processes in which elements are continuously cycled in various forms between different compartments of the ecosystem, including nutrient, carbon and water cycles.

Ecological functions

Ecological processes which are in a material way beneficial for society.

Endangered species

Plant and animal species at least classified as threatened in the IUCN Global Red List and the IUCN Guidelines for Application of IUCN Red List Criteria at Regional Levels.

Forest management

The processes of planning and implementing practices for the management and use of forests and other wooded land, aimed at achieving specific economic, environmental, social and /or cultural objectives.¹⁰

Forest management unit

A unit of forest, which may be natural forest, plantation forest or other forest type, which is managed on the basis of a management system of explicit objectives, in accordance with a long-term forest management plan.

Forest manager

The owner, concessionaire or person who in some other capacity is responsible for the management and exploitation of a forest management unit.

Free and informed consent

The right of indigenous peoples and local communities to give or withhold consent to activities planned on their lands and territories or which will affect their cultures and traditional knowledge. Information on which they should base

¹⁰ FAO (2005), Global Forest Resources Assessment.

their decisions should be complete, presented in an understandable manner and be made available timely.

Genetically modified organism

An organism that has been transformed by the insertion of one or more transgenes.¹¹

Group (or regional association)

Legal entity uniting forestry enterprises in a certain area; or companies active in a specific part of the chain of custody.

Habitat

The place or type of site where an organism or population naturally occurs.¹²

Indigenous peoples

Indigenous peoples, or communities, are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing in those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal systems.¹³

Legal use right (of the forest manager)

The right to undertake forest operations in a certain area, granted by the authorised government body.

Local population

The people living in or near the area where the forestry operations take place and which can be affected by those operations.

Meta-system

Organisation that does not operate a certification system itself, but instead assesses whether national or regional certification systems meet its general standard.

Non-timber forest product

Any product from the forest other than timber, including materials obtained from trees, such as resins and leaves, and any other plant, animal or plant/animal product.

Plantation forest

Forest stands established by planting or/and seeding in the process of afforestation or reforestation. They are either of introduced species (all planted stands), or intensively managed stands of indigenous species, which meet all the

¹¹ FAO website on biotechnology (<http://www.fao.org/biotech/find-formalpha-n.asp>)

¹² CBD, see CBD website (www.cbd.int)

¹³ Cobo, R. Martinez (1983), The Study on the Problem of Discrimination Against Indigenous Populations.

following criteria: one or two species at plantation, even age class, regular spacing.¹⁴

Stakeholders

Organisations and persons, in addition to forest managers, who are affected by or are interested in the management of the forest and the related Chain-of-Custody. These organisations or persons include, but are not restricted to, the following: local communities, indigenous peoples or organisations which represent their interests, local or national environmental organisations, trade unions, governmental organisations, timber traders and other industry organisations and concerned individuals.

Sustainable forest management

The management and use of forests and forest lands in a way and at a rate, that maintains their productivity, biodiversity, regeneration capacity, vitality and their potential to fulfil, now and in the future, relevant economic, ecological and social functions, at local, national, and global levels, and that does not cause damage to other ecosystems.¹⁵

System Manager

Person who acts as a (legal) representative of the certification system.

Tenure and use rights

Tenure and use rights refer to the rights to own, use, develop and control the lands, territories, and resources in areas traditionally occupied by indigenous peoples and local populations.¹⁶

Verifiable system (for uncertified material)

A set of regulations, processes and documents designed to ascertain that uncertified material in a product or product line does originate from non-disputed, at least legal sources.

¹⁴ FAO (2001), Global Forest Resources Assessment, FRA 2000.

¹⁵ United Nations Forum on Forests website (<http://www.un.org/esa/forests/faq.html>)

¹⁶ UN (draft 2007) Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Annex III – The Dutch Procurement Criteria

SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT (SFM)

Legislation and Regulation		
Legislation and regulation	P 1. Relevant international, national, and regional/local legislation and regulations shall be respected. To that end the system requires that:	
Requirements for forest manager	C 1.1. The forest manager holds legal use rights to the forest.	
	C 1.2. The forest manager complies with all obligations to pay taxes and royalties.	
	C 1.3. International agreements that apply to the forest management unit are fulfilled.	Guidance: International Agreements pertain in particular to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), ILO agreements and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Irrespective of the fact whether a given country has ratified these agreements, the standard of the Certification system should, where relevant, reflect the intention of these agreements.
Legality	C1.4 The timber is harvested in accordance with the applicable legislation in the country of harvest, that is legislation covering the following matters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. rights to harvest timber within legally gazetted boundaries, b. payments for harvest rights and timber including duties related to timber harvesting, c. timber harvesting, including environmental and forest legislation including forest management and biodiversity conservation, where directly related to timber harvesting, d. third parties ' legal rights concerning use and tenure that are affected by timber harvesting, and e. trade and customs, in so far as the forest sector is concerned. 	
Social Aspects		
Interests of stakeholders	P 2. The interests of directly and indirectly involved stakeholders shall be taken into account. To that end the system requires that:	
Tenure and use rights	C 2.1. The legal status of the management of the forest management unit and claims of the local population, including indigenous peoples, in the property/tenure or use rights regarding the forest management unit or a portion thereof have been inventoried and are respected.	

Consultation and permission	C 2.2. Effective communication with and consultation and participation of stakeholders take place regarding the management of the forests.	Guidance: A plan and reports on how and when communication with stakeholders takes place are considered to be indicators of effective communication.
	C 2.3. The local population and indigenous peoples have a say in forest management on the basis of free and informed consent, and hold the right to grant or withhold permission and, if relevant, receive compensation where their property/use rights are at stake	<p>Guidance: Free and informed consent is interpreted in the sense that the activity will not be undertaken before the relevant consent is given.</p> <p>Guidance: The local population and indigenous peoples can only prevent activities through withholding their consent where their property/use rights are at stake.</p>
Public availability	C 2.4. The forest management plan and accompanying maps, relevant monitoring results and information about the forest management measures to be applied are publicly available, except for strictly confidential business information.	<p>Guidance: Public availability implies that if stakeholders should have limited access to certain media, the management plan is dispersed through other channels. Depending on the level of detail in the management plan, the full plan or a summary should be available.</p> <p>Guidance: Wherever practical and necessary, information on the forest management can also be communicated to the people in the forest through <i>in situ</i> markings or information displays.</p>
Dispute resolution	C 2.5. Adequate mechanisms are in place for resolving disputes regarding forest management, property/usage rights, work conditions, or social services.	Guidance: In case of a conflict of significant dimension, the FMU will not be certified.
Objects of cultural and economic value	C 2.6. Objects of cultural and traditional economic value are identified and inventoried in consultation with the stakeholders and are respected.	
Health and labour conditions	P 3. Safety, health, and labour conditions shall be sufficiently safeguarded and where relevant enhanced. To that end the system requires that:	
Health and safety	C 3.1. The forest manager must take adequate health and safety measures, at least in compliance with relevant legislation and in accordance with ILO conventions, in order to protect the personnel, including contractors and their employees and, where appropriate, the local and indigenous population.	<p>Guidance: The core conventions of ILO in relation to this criterion are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convention 155 - Occupational Safety and Health and its accompanying Recommendation No. 164; • Convention 161 - Occupational Health Services and its accompanying Recommendation No. 171.

Employment conditions	C 3.2. Employees have the right to organise and negotiate wages and employment conditions, in accordance with national laws and the core conventions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO).	Guidance: The following ILO conventions are relevant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining' (Conventions 87 and 98); • 'Elimination of Forced and Compulsory Labour' (Conventions 29 and 105); • 'Elimination of Discrimination in respect of employment and occupation' (Conventions 100 and 111).
Ecological Aspects		
Biodiversity	P 4. Biodiversity shall be maintained and where possible enhanced. To that end the system requires that:	Guidance: The objective that biodiversity shall be maintained should be reviewed taking into account time and scale.
Species and Ecosystems	C 4.1. Objects of high ecological value and representative areas of forest types that occur within the forest management unit are identified, inventoried and protected.	Guidance: 5% is considered to be a relevant proportion
	C 4.2. Protected and endangered plant and animal species are not exploited for commercial purposes. (C 13.2) Where necessary, measures have been taken for their protection and, where relevant, increase of their population.	Guidance: Plant species include tree species.
Conversion	C 4.3. Conversion of forests in the FMU to other types of land use, including timber plantations, shall not occur unless in justified exceptional circumstances.	Guidance: Exceptional circumstances are for example natural disasters. In addition conversion can take place if the area to be converted is insignificant, if it enables clear long term conservation benefits, or if it is based on undisputed governmental decisions. Guidance: The forest manager of a plantation should aspire to make clear how the plantation helps in relieving pressure from natural forests; for instance when the plantation is established on degraded land instead of by conversion of natural forest.
Plantations	C 4.4. In case of plantations native species are preferred and a relevant proportion of the plantation shall be allowed to regenerate to natural forest.	Guidance: 5% is considered to be a relevant proportion
	C 4.5. Plantations shall not be established through the conversion of natural forests after 1997.	Guidance: Degraded land and degraded forest may be converted into plantations if this is ecologically and economically beneficial and if the owner or user has no relation to the actors behind the degradation.

Non-timber forest products, hunting and fishing	C 4.6. The exploitation of non-timber forest products, including hunting and fishing, are regulated, monitored and controlled. Insofar as relevant, knowledge of the local population, indigenous peoples, and locally active environmental organisations is utilised in monitoring commercial exploitation.	
Genetically modified organisms	C 4.7. Genetically modified organisms are not used.	
Regulation functions	P 5. The regulation function and quality, health, and vitality of the forest shall be maintained and where possible enhanced. To that end the system requires that:	
Soil	C 5.1. The soil quality of the forest management unit is maintained and, where necessary, improved, whereby special attention is given to shores, riverbanks, erosion-prone parts and slopes.	Guidance: Thresholds for allowable maximum altitude and maximum gradient are relevant indicators for the prevention of soil erosion.
Water	C 5.2. The water balance and quality of both groundwater and surface water in the forest management unit, as well as downstream (outside of the forest management unit), are maintained and, where necessary, improved.	
Ecological cycles	C 5.3. Important ecological cycles, including carbon and nutrient cycles, which occur in the forest management unit, are at least maintained.	Guidance: e.g., no lowering of groundwater table on peat soils, avoidance of turbidity of streams, measures which avoid large leakage of nutrients after logging.
Reduced impact logging	C 5.4. Avoidable damage to the ecosystem is prevented by application of the most suitable and available methods and techniques for logging and road construction under the prevailing conditions.	
forest fires	C 5.5. Initiating of forest fires is only permitted if that is necessary for the achievement of the management goals of the forest management unit and adequate safety measures are taken.	Guidance: Small scale, traditional sustainable "slash and burn" practices within a FMU are not restricted by this criterion.
Diseases and pests	C 5.6. Forest management is geared towards preventing and controlling diseases and pests, inasmuch as they threaten the timber production.	
Chemicals	C 5.7. The use of chemicals is only permitted if maximum use of ecological processes and sustainable alternatives proves insufficient. The use of class 1A and 1B pesticides, as drafted by the World Health Organisation, and of chlorinated hydrocarbons is not permitted.	
Waste and litter	C 5.8. Non-organic waste and litter are avoided, collected, stored in the designated places and removed in an environmentally responsible manner.	

Economic Aspects		
Production function	P 6. The production capacity of timber and relevant non-timber forest products shall be maintained. To that end the system requires that:	
Production capacity	C 6.1. The production capacity of each forest type of the forest management unit as a whole is maintained.	Guidance: Over-exploitation of individual commercial tree-species shall be avoided.
Illegal activities	C 6.2. The forest management unit is sufficiently protected against all forms of illegal exploitation, illegal establishment of settlements, illegal land use, illegally initiated fires, and other illegal activities.	
Contribution to local economy	P 7. Forest management shall contribute to the local economy and employment. To that end the system requires that:	
Employment	C 7.1. Forest management stimulates employment of the local population, including indigenous peoples, as well as the local processing of timber and non-timber forest products.	Guidance: The employment of local people, including indigenous peoples, shall be stimulated, for example through training.
Infrastructure	C 7.2. Insofar as not provided for otherwise, a contribution is made to the development of local physical infrastructure and of social services and programmes for the local population, including indigenous peoples. This contribution is made in agreement with the local population.	
Management Aspects		
Management system	P 8. Sustainable forest management shall be realised through a management system. To that end the system requires that:	
Management cycle	C 8.1. Forest management aims to achieve the goals formulated in the forest management plan and comprises the cycle of inventory and analysis, planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and improvement.	
Forest management plan	C 8.2. There is a forest management plan, consisting of, or dealing with at least: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. a description of the current condition of the forest management unit b. long-term objectives c. the average annual allowable cut per forest type, and, if relevant, the annually allowable exploitation of non-timber forest products, based on reliable and current data d. budget for the implementation of the forest management plan. 	Guidance: A realistic budget should allow the implementation of the management plan. Guidance: In the management plan attention should be given to economic, social as well as ecological (ecosystems, species, functions) elements.
Maps	C 8.3. Essential elements for forest management are indicated on maps.	
Monitoring	C 8.4. The implementation of the forest management plan and the ecological, social, and economic effects of forest management on the FMU and its surroundings are monitored periodically on the basis of adequate data.	
Knowledge and expertise	C 8.5. Forest management is based on scientific research and, if needed, information on comparable forests types.	
	C 8.6. Forests are managed by professional staff and forest workers. Adequate periodic training secures the level of skills, including knowledge of relevant laws and treaties.	

Management group or regional association	P 9. Forest management in a group or regional association shall offer sufficient safeguards for sustainable forest management. To that end the system requires that:	
Group or regional association	C 9.1. A group or regional association is under the leadership and supervision of an independent legal entity.	
	C 9.2. The management system of a group or regional association offers sufficient guarantee to fulfil criterion 9.3.	
Sustainable forest management requirements	C 9.3. A group or regional association complies with the requirements set by the SFM standard of the certification system. In addition, each member of a group or regional association complies with these requirements, inasmuch as they apply to its operations.	

CHAIN OF CUSTODY AND LOGO USE (CoC)

Chain of Custody system	P 1. A Chain of Custody (CoC) must be in place from the forest unit of origin to the final point of sale, which provides a link between the certified material in the product or product line and certified forest units. To that end the system requires that:	
Organisation	C 1.1 Each individual organisation in the CoC possesses an operational CoC system.	
	C 1.2 The management system of each organisation in the CoC provides sufficient guarantees that the requirements of the CoC standard are being met.	
	C 1.3 Each individual organisation in the CoC registers quantities and the names and certificate numbers of the organisations from which it purchases timber and to which it sells timber.	
Legal sources	C 1.4 If the system allows for mixing of SFM-certified and non-SFM-certified material, the non-SFM certified material is covered by a verifiable system to ensure that it is from non-disputed, at least legal sources. This applies to new-, including pre-consumer recycled material, and post-consumer recycled material.	Guidance: For post-consumer recycled material it is sufficient if its status as post-consumer material is ascertained by the verifiable system; the legality of the origin of the timber is not taken into account. In contrast, for pre-consumer recycled material the legality of the origin must be ascertained by the verifiable system.
	C1.5 SFM-certified timber, including timber products, timber from other verified legal sources and timber from non-verified (legal) sources are administratively separated. Timber from non-verified (legal) sources is also physically separated from the other two sources.	
Mixed wood and assembled products	C1.6 If the system allows for mixing of SFM-certified and non-SFM-certified material, (one of) the following approaches shall be used: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mass balance claim: the proportion of the product sold as SFM certified is equal to the proportion of SFM certified material entering a process; • percentage based claim: the percentage of SFM certified material in a product or product line is reported. 	
Chain of Custody group certification	P 2. If Group certification of the CoC is allowed, the standard must require that the group as whole must comply with the same requirements which are posed on individual companies. To that end the system requires that:	
Juridical entity	C 2.1 A group has a juridical entity, which is responsible for the group as a whole.	
Management	C 2.2 The group has a management system that provides sufficient guarantees that C 2.3 will be met.	
	C 2.3 The group operates according to principle 1; in addition, each member of the group complies with these requirements inasmuch as they apply to its operations.	

Registration	C 2.4 The group leader has a registration system in place including: a. names and addresses of the group members b. declarations of each member to comply with the certification requirements of the CoC.	
Logos and labels	P 3. Logos and labels that belong to the certification system and occur on products and documents shall have an unambiguous meaning and shall be applied in accordance with the rules established by the certification system. To that end the system requires that:	
Design and use of logos and labels	C 3.1. The system manager employs rules for the use of logos and labels and for supervision of compliance. The rules comprise at least: a. specification of the logos and labels b. unambiguous description of the claim that the logos and labels represent, including the requirement to communicate the actual or minimum percentages of SFM certified- and post-consumer recycled material included in the product or product line c. rights to use logos and labels d. instructions regarding the use of logos and labels and the informative text they show.	
Copyright	C 3.2. The logo is copyrighted and is a registered trademark.	
Clear and accurate claims	C 3.3 There is a clearly defined mechanism for controlling all claims made about the certified nature of products, which ensures that claims are clear and accurate and that action is taken to prevent any false or misleading claims.	

Annex IV – Process criteria for certification systems

DEVELOPMENT, APPLICATION AND MANAGEMENT OF CERTIFICATION SYSTEMS (DAM)

Standard Development		
Standard development	P 1. The process of standard development and the standard itself shall fulfil the requirements as established by international umbrella organisations (such as ISO and ISEAL). To that end the system requires that:	
ISEAL and ISO Guide 59	C 1.1. The development process of the standard fulfils the requirements established in the <i>ISEAL 'Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards'</i> , the <i>ISO Guide 59 'Code of Good Practice for Standardisation'</i> or equivalent requirements. The development process and application of the standard at least fulfil the following criteria: 1.2. through 1.10.; 2.1. and 2.2.; 3.3. through 3.6. of this assessment table.	
Stakeholder input	C 1.2. The standard development body comprises the relevant interested groups that serve the economic, social and environmental interests without undue dominance of one interest.	
	C1.3 Decisions of the standard development body are made, if possible, by consensus. If consensus is not reached, qualified majority voting applies.	Guidance: The most common requirement for a qualified majority is a two-third majority; other requirements can apply as long as the different interests are taken into account.
	C 1.4. The development of the standard takes place with input of the relevant stakeholders. Potential limitations for certain groups such as indigenous peoples and small forest owners to contribute directly are taken into account.	
Public consultation	C 1.5. The standard development procedure provides for public input during a reasonable period of time.	
Justification for handling comments	C 1.6. With the development of the standard, the standard setting organisation takes into account any comments submitted in writing and communicated verbally. The organisation maintains reports of the development process of the standard including the received input and how it is dealt with. A summary of it is published and is freely available.	
Publication	C 1.7. The standard setting organisation publishes the standard as soon as it has been established.	
Reference to international standards	C 1.8. A national standard which is part of an international certification system with a generic standard or which is based on a generic standard of an umbrella organisation, must refer to the relevant generic standard and be accepted by the relevant international system or organisation.	

General applicability	C 1.9. The standard and the procedures for establishing compliance are sufficiently flexible to be applied under changing local conditions and to forest management units of any size, either as a part of a group or regional association or otherwise.	
Process criteria and performance criteria	C 1.10. The standard contains both process and performance criteria and consists, where appropriate, of measurable, unambiguous parameters with guidelines for interpretation.	
Certification system management		
System manager	P 2. The certification system shall be managed by a legal entity (system manager). The tasks and responsibilities shall be clearly distributed among the organisations, which form an organisational and/or functional part of the system. To that end the system demonstrates that:	
Legal entity, statutes	C 2.1. The system manager is a legally registered organisation with statutes, contact address, telephone, e-mail, and website.	
Entities, distribution of responsibilities	C 2.2. The distribution of the responsibilities, authorities, and tasks among the entities, comprising an organisational and/or functional part of the certification system, and the procedures to be followed are clear and publicly available. The certification system comprises at least rules for the following functions: a. standard development b. certification c. accreditation d. supervision of proper performance of tasks and compliance with the rules e. objection and appeal handling f. design and use of logos and labels	
Decision-making bodies and objection and appeal procedures	P 3. Decision-making bodies shall reflect the interests of stakeholders and shall provide for adequate procedures for objection and appeal regarding the decisions made and the functioning of the decision-making bodies. To that end the system requires that:	
Composition	C 3.1. The decision-making and advisory bodies comprise the relevant interested groups without undue dominance of one interest.	Guidance: In case certain interest groups are not represented, TPAC will examine the reason why this is the case. In addition, it will be examined whether the interest is represented through other means. If TPAC holds the opinion that given interests are unjustifiably absent, this will be taken into account in the assessment of the criterion.
Decision-making	C 3.2. Decisions of decision-making and advisory bodies are made, if possible, by consensus. If consensus is not reached, majority voting applies.	

Provision for objection or appeal	C 3.3. Objection and appeal procedures are publicly available and clearly indicate the entity a stakeholder must turn to in the event of an objection or appeal against the operation of a particular entity or against a decision made by a particular entity.	
Justification	C 3.4. The objection and appeal procedures require that the submitter or a representative substantiates the objection or appeal with arguments and relevant documentation.	
Reasonable period	C 3.5. Objection and appeal procedures contain clear and reasonable deadlines for handling of the objection or appeal.	
Independent forum	C 3.6. A forum of independent persons, which adequately represent legal and domain knowledge, handles appeal cases. Decisions are taken by majority voting.	
Certification Bodies and Certification Procedures		
Certification bodies and procedures	P 4. Certification bodies shall be independent and shall be competent to assess sustainable forest management and the chain of custody system. To that end the system requires that:	
Certification bodies	C 4.1. The certification bodies are accredited on the basis of the requirements and guidelines in ISO 17021 ¹⁷ ' <i>Conformity Assessment - Requirements for Bodies Providing Audit and Certification of Management Systems</i> ' and/or ISO Guide 65 (EN 45011) ' <i>General Requirements for Bodies Operating Product Certification Systems</i> ' and preferably on the basis of specific supplemental requirements for performance of conformity assessments according to the standards for sustainable forest management and the chain of custody.	
Procedure for assessment	C 4.2. The certification contains an assessment of system documents, site visits, and sufficient consultation of external stakeholders.	
	C 4.3. In case of group or regional certification an adequate sample of group members must be audited.	
Public availability	C 4.4. The certification agency makes the following items public in addition to the requirements in ISO 17021 and ISO Guide 65: a. summaries of assessment reports b. a list of the granted certificates	

¹⁷ ISO 17021 has replaced ISO Guide 62 (EN 45012) and ISO Guide 66. A transition period applies. ISO Guide 62 (EN 45012) and ISO Guide 66 may be used until September 2008.

Accreditation		
Accreditation	P 5. The accreditation agencies that grant the accreditations for certification of sustainable forest management and/or the chain of custody shall be competent and independent, national or international organisations that are preferably member of the IAF. To that end the system requires that:	
Accreditation body	C 5.1. Accreditation must be granted by a national or international organisation that fulfils requirements as included in ISO 17011 ' <i>General Requirements for Assessment and Accreditation of Certification Bodies</i> '.	
Peer review	C 5.2. The accreditation body takes part in a peer review process with sister organisations, preferably within the framework of the IAF.	Guidance: A peer review preferably takes place within the framework of the IAF and its regional bodies. Comparable frameworks include: the multilateral arrangements for ISO/IEC 17021(SFM certification) and ISO/IEC Guide 65 (CoC).

PROCEDURE ON ENDORSEMENT OF CERTIFICATIONS SYSTEMS BY A META-SYSTEM (PEM)

Processes of assessment and endorsement	P1 Processes of assessment and endorsement of Certification Systems are reliable and transparent.	
Procedure	C 1.1. The assessment procedure is transparent and follows a clear time table.	
Assessment: Independence and expertise	C 1.2. The assessment is performed by an independent body. The auditors have relevant experience and expertise.	
	C 1.3. The system manager of the meta-system shall submit the assessment report for peer review.	
Consultation	C 1.4. A provision is in place for consultation of the system manager on the assessment report.	
	C 1.5. The assessment procedure provides for public input on the scheme during a reasonable period of time.	
	C 1.6. The assessing body takes into account any written comments. Records of the received input and how it is dealt with shall be maintained. At least a summary of the received comments is published and freely available.	
Modes of Assessment	C 1.7. The assessment procedure includes a desk study based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. a standardized checklist for assessment; b. a documented interpretation of terms and criteria. 	
	C 1.8. The assessment procedure includes a visit to the country of the applicant and consultation of amongst others: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the system manager; b. forest managers; c. forest authority; d. certification bodies; e. local communities; f. Non-Governmental Organisations. 	
	C 1.9. The assessment procedure provides for a transparent scoring system.	
Assessment time	C 1.10. The assessment procedure provides for a reasonable period of time from the start of the actual assessment to the submission of the report.	
Decision on acceptance	C 1.11. The decision on acceptance is taken by an accountable body through transparent and reliable procedures.	
Publication of decision	C 1.12. The decision on the acceptance is published as soon as possible.	

Validity	C 1.13. All changes in the system have to be reported to the manager of the meta-system.	
	C 1.14. The acceptance terminates after five years, or sooner if substantive changes are made to the certification system. In both cases a re-assessment procedure is required for the system to be re-accepted.	
	C 1.15. Criteria and mechanisms shall be in place for suspension and withdrawal of the acceptance of the certification system.	
Resolution of complaints and appeals	C 1.16. Objection and appeal procedures are publicly available and clearly indicate the entity a stakeholder must turn to. The procedure also indicates clear time schedules.	
	C 1.17. Appeal cases are handled by an independent body with adequate legal and domain knowledge. The decision on the appeal is taken by an accountable body through transparent and reliable procedures.	

Annex V - Application form



1. Name Organisation	
2. Postal Address	3. Postal Code
4. City	4. Country
5. Name System Manager	6. Position System Manager
7. Phone no.	8. Fax no.
9. Email Address	10. Website

The system manager declares to agree to all procedures, time schedules and consequences of TPAS which are described in the TPAC User Manual.

Date:

Signature system manager:

Annex VI - Contact details

Ms. Kim Geene (Programme manager TPAC)

T: +31 (0)70 358 6300

E: kgeene@gmail.com

W: www.tpac.smk.nl

Dr. Gijs Droge (Director SMK)

T: +31 (0)70 358 6300

E: gdroge@smk.nl

W: www.smk.nl

Mail for the SMK Director, the TPAC, the SMK Supervisory Board or the Board of Appeal can be directed (c/o) to:

SMK

Bezuidenhoutseweg 105

2594 AC The Hague

The Netherlands