

Normative document

**Requirements for Preparing National Standards
for Sustainable Forest Management, Nepal, 2016**

Green Foundation Nepal



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Introduction

Sustainable forest management (SFM) is a holistic approach that use of forests and forest land in a way and at a rate that maintains their biodiversity, productivity, regeneration capacity, vitality and potential to fulfill, now and in the future, relevant ecological, economic and social functions, at local, national and global levels and does not cause damage to other ecosystems (PEFC, 2010). Forest covers 44.74 percent of the total area of the country in Nepal (DFRS, 2015), which covers 6.61 million hectares. Out of these forests area, 18,13,478 hectares is managed by community forest user groups. In addition to community forests user groups, other diverse stakeholders are involved in forest management like Department of Forests, Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation in government level. Similarly, in Terai large part of forest are managed by collaborative forest user group. In hills, leasehold forests managed by poorer households are increasing.

But still, there is no specific standard developed for sustainable forest management in Nepal from independent or third party so-far. To initiate and continue sustainable forest management, forest certification is one better option in Nepalese context because certification always advocates sustainable forest management by improving the quality of forest, conserving local ecosystem and socio-cultural practices. Forest Certification is a volunteer mechanism to confer the best practices of sustainable forest management by forest owner and manager.

In this Context, Green Foundation Nepal (GFN), a non-profit organization working in the field of natural resource management specially focuses on forest based issues, is actively involving in awareness raising programs, issue based dialogues, and media dissemination on establishing national forest certification standards through Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) mechanism in Nepal since 2013. Recently, GFN has been playing a lead role to develop national standard of forest certification by involving different stakeholders (i.e. business and Industry, non-governmental organizations, scientific and technological communities, farmers and small forest land owner, workers and trade union, local organization, indigenous peoples, women, Children and youth) of Nepal, which will be recognized nationally

and internationally. Depending upon interest and international practices, these interest groups are put into three categories namely social, economic and environmental.

To develop national standards for sustainable forest management in inclusive way accepted by national and international stakeholders, a procedure to follow standard development is needed. This document is the regulation and procedure for developing national standards for sustainable forest management and its approval.

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Scope

This document describes the procedures and requirements for development, consultations and approval of National Standard of Forest Certification for Nepal under PEFC system.

Normative and References Documents

Normative Documents

The documents referenced below are indispensable for the preparation of this document.

- PEFC ST 1001:2010 Standard setting - Requirements
- PEFC ST 1003:2010 Sustainable Forest Management - Requirements
- ISO/IEC Guide 2:1996, Standardization and related activities – General vocabulary
- Association Regulation Act 1977 with all amendments.

Reference documents

The documents which are useful and should be consulted for preparing Standard Setting Process.

- DFRS, 2015. State of Nepal's Forests. Forest Resource Assessment (FRA) Nepal, Department of Forest Research and Survey (DFRS) Kathmandu, Nepal.
- Community Forestry Guideline 2005
- Forest Act and Rules

Terms and definitions

- **Consensus**

General agreement characterized by the absence of sustained opposition to substantial issues by any important part of the concerned interest group and by a process that involves seeking to take into account the views of all parties concerned and to reconcile any conflicting arguments. Note: Consensus need not imply unanimity (ISO/IEC Guide 2). If a vote is necessary, consensus is defined as at least 66% of votes in favor of each of the three chambers.

Stakeholder

A person, group or organization with an interest in preparing national standards for sustainable forest management.

Standards

A document, established by consensus and approved by a recognized body that provides, for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines, or characteristics for activities or their results, aimed at the achievement of the optimum degree or order in a given context.

- **Standardizing Body**

Body that has recognized activities in standardization (ISO Guide 2) in national level.

- **Revision**

Introduction of all necessary changes to the substance and presentation of a normative document.

- **Normative document**

Documents that should be mandatorily followed by Standard Setting Process which provides rules, guidelines, or characteristics for activities or their results.

- **Inquiry draft**

Proposed documents that is available for public consultation.

- **Working draft**

Proposed document that is available generally for comments or voting within a technical committee.

- **Final draft**

A proposed document that is available for formal approval by PEFC.

- **Complaint**

Expression of displeasure, written by a member or another stakeholder, related to the activity or to its operation.

Responsibilities for standard setting and approval

4.1 Standardizing body

A committee set by Green Foundation Nepal to study, analyse and approve the national standards is the standardizing body which is also responsible for managing and the implementing process for standard development. The most important task is to establish standard setting thematic working group/ committee through balanced and inclusive representation of stakeholders coming for

different interests in the process of sustainable forest management. In particular, the Standardizing body is responsible for:

- Identify relevant stakeholder through appropriate mapping.
- Announce publicly for initiation of standard development process and invite stakeholder.
- Make standard setting procedure publicly available.
- Keep records of all stakeholders, TWG members, advisory committee to the TWG and process adapted by them.
- Communicate decisions accepted by members of the national working group and the list of person publicly available.
- Call for public consultations and its administrative work.
- Conduct consultations and incorporate comments.
- Initiate pilot testing.
- Approve final draft on national standards on behalf of national stakeholders.
- Communicate with PEFC and other relevant stakeholders
- Publication of the approved document.

4.2 Advisory committee

The advisory committee will be selected by National standardizing body. The advisory committee is responsible within the standard setting process:

- Suggest names for thematic national working group in inclusive way keeping view that the main objective is to prepare national standards for sustainable forest management.
- Provide advice to national working group.
- Review documents prepared in relation to drafting standards for sustainable forest management.

4.3 National working group (NWG)

NWG or collection of names of thematic working groups (TWG) shall be established on the basis of nominations received during public call through website, newspaper and personal email invitation to the stakeholders and organizations. Total fifteen members or five from each chamber will be represented in the NWG from three chambers (i.e. Environment, Economic and Social). In each chamber five members will be nominated or selected and the nomination procedure will ensure the representation of all stakeholders which has been described in the introduction part of this document. Three chamber must comprise the all major groups based on stakeholders map and the experts. The NWG shall include stakeholders with expertise relevant to the subject matter of the specific standards, those who are materially affected by the standards and those that can influence the implementation of the standards. The members of NWG will vote for an overall leader who leads the discussion, correctness and ensure completeness of implementation of adopted decisions. Besides, that each chamber will have a leader for the coordination, setting time for discussion and informing standardizing body about the progress on national standards. The NWG will be established on the temporary basis for the period of standard development to the approval of final standard. Thematic working group members are five persons in each group. The main responsibilities of NTWG are:

- Review literature, standards, consultation in local to national level to collect the information and feedback for national standard of FC, stakeholder visit, prepare inquiry and working draft leading to final document.
- Facilitate in public consultations and for consensus building
- Prepare final draft by incorporating comments and feedback taken from consultations.

4.4 Consultative forum (CF)

A consultative forum (CF) is the forum where consultation take place in national level. This will include national working group and other stakeholders as per the interest in preparing standards for sustainable forest management. The interested stakeholder can nominate themselves for the CF. The members of consultative forum will also be represented from three chambers (Environment, Economic and Social). The participants of the national workshop will evaluate themselves to choose the chamber based on their expertise and interest. In each chamber, approximately equal number of members will be allocated for balanced representation. The main responsibility of CF is to provide technical support to NWG and make sure the work done by NWG is in line with interests of all stakeholders. The members of CF will participate during consultation process.

Standard setting process

The overall process, procedure and steps for preparing standards for sustainable forest management is described in table below.

Steps	Process	Procedures	Output
1	Stakeholder Mapping and interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Review previous documents related to SFM, FC and other related documents.- Documentation of participants and stakeholders in different reviewed documents.- Prepare a tentative map or list of stakeholders	Tentative list of stakeholders
2	Interactions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Send invitation to the stakeholder for interaction/ meetings- Share the objective and procedure of FC national standard setting meeting	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create group email among stakeholders for regular meeting, sharing and updating the information. 	
3	Public announcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Call publicly for expression of interest person/ stakeholder through national news paper - Use also inter personal and informal information. - Purpose 15 days deadline proposed for announcement or application. 	Complete list of stakeholders
4	national working group formation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Select/elect the appropriate person by addressing three chambers i.e. environment, economic and social from the application. 	National and thematic working gr.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduce nominated members of NWG in interaction meeting at national level. In the same meeting Consultative forum will be formed to support the standard setting group 	
5	NWG develops draft standard or preliminary documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review literature to develop the standard - Conduct consultation from local to national level to collect the information and feedback for FC standard, stakeholder visit, and prepared draft standard - Create group email among working committee for communicating about the regular meeting, sharing the meeting agendas and updates 	Working draft

6	Sharing the draft and comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide working draft to the members of consultative forum to contribute to the development or revision of the standard and submit comments to working draft. - Submit all views and comments using the form in Annex 1 - Consider comments and views submitted in an open and transparent way. - Record all proposed resolutions and changes to the working draft. 	
7	Public consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make proposal publicly available for Inquiry draft of standard through the website of standardizing body. - Organize national level seminar for getting comments, suggestions and feedbacks - Standardizing body and NWG will be responsible in public consultation - 60 days deadline for receiving comments and 30 days for re-public consultation - Record all proposed resolutions and changes to the working draft and made public available through website. 	Inquiry draft
8	Consensus building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish or build consensus in NWG - Use methods such as face to face meeting, telephone and an email meeting at national level workshop 	
9	Approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Final document will be approved by NSB 	Final draft
10	Sending draft to PEFC for approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NSB send the draft to PEFC 	Approved draft

11	Pilot testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Final draft of standard will be tested in different five community based forest management units from Terai, Hill and Mountain region of Nepal by Standardizing body. - Pilot testing report will be prepared 	
12	Publication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The final standard will be published as printed document. For public availability, website will be used to disseminate the document. The document will be sent to PEFC for endorsement 	
13	Final project report submission to PEFC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Technical and financial reports will be prepared 	

5.2 Public announcement

The public announcement will be done through our official website and national newspaper. The announcement will include:

- Information about the objectives, scope and the steps of the standard setting process and its' time table.
- Information about opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the process.
- An invitation to stakeholders to nominate their representatives to the national working group.
- An invitation to comment on the scope and the standard setting process.

5.6 Consensus building

The decision of the NWG to recommend working draft for public consultation will be taken on the basis of consensus. In any case of disagreement from stakeholder to substantive issue, will be resolved using the following mechanism:

- Discuss and negotiation on the disputed issue within the NWG in order to find a solution.
- Direct negotiation between the stakeholders submitting the objection in order to find a solution.

6. Further Revision of standard

The standard approved and implemented will be revised at the interval of five year. The standardizing body must publicize the start of the revision procedure for the standard in due time so as to ensure effective participation from different stakeholders.

7. Records on standard setting

The following records will be kept from the standard setting:

- Stakeholder determination and list of invited stakeholders
- Narrative report of interactions, workshops and seminar
- Written documentation of the establishment of NWG
- Records of public announcement and their application
- Minutes of NWG's meetings, public consultation, consensus building
- Report of pilot testing
- Project progress report
- Draft versions of the standard
- Documentation of the original version of the standards after amendments
- Comments on the draft through the public consultation with detail of the stakeholder
- Email communication to the stakeholders, emails including the meeting agendas within the chambers

8. Conflict Management

In case of conflicts, the issues will be resolved or managed according to rules set by GFN for National Working Group to prepare standards for sustainable forest management.

