



Virtual PEFC Week 2020 Newsletter





Welcome to PEFC Week!

It is my pleasure to present you with the PEFC Week Newsletter, giving you a glance into the work and the achievements of the PEFC alliance over the last year.

Covid-19 has made 2020 a very challenging year for all of us, changing the way we work, interact, meet, travel – in short, our very lives. At PEFC, like at so many other companies and organizations around the world, we had to adapt and to find new ways of doing our everyday work to maintain our impact.

But new challenges bring with them new opportunities. It is inspiring to see how the PEFC alliance is managing and thriving in this new situation, including the new ways of working together, presenting the impact of this alliance and also how many projects and initiatives have been continued and been launched this year, despite the pandemic. Our members for Vietnam and Thailand have achieved endorsement of their national standards, we have received three applications for membership, and several PEFC members have taken their projects, events and discussions online, ensuring that PEFC keeps moving forward.

Despite the challenges, we remain committed to unlocking and building on the full contribution of forests for a sustainable world. We keep **driving innovation**, by using novel technological approaches, such as remote auditing. Highlights of the year include the approval and implementation of the revised 2020 standards, the development of a new Label Generator and new ways of working together, for example through newly established working groups. It is also great to see an increased collaboration between members in the Congo Basin and the Balkan region.



Ben Gunneberg,
CEO/Secretary General
of PEFC International



2020 has seen **focused engagement** in emerging sectors such as construction, packaging, fashion and rubber, and we have established collaborations with new partners, as well as strengthened the way we work together. We have been striving to further increase our **communications effectiveness**, raising awareness of the importance of forests and certification through online campaigns, publications and videos, in addition to other tools.

Although we cannot see each other in person this year, let's make the most of our first virtual PEFC Week, building on the virtual members meeting in April, and let's make sure to stay physically distant from each other, but socially close.

I hope you enjoy this special PEFC Week newsletter, and that it gives you an insight on some of the work undertaken by the PEFC alliance and our partners and stakeholders around the world.



The growth and development of the PEFC alliance

PEFC is a global organization with local reach. We are a worldwide alliance that strives, through the commitment of national forest certification systems, NGOs, associations, companies and individuals, for a world that values the contribution of sustainable forests to our planet and our lives.

At the heart of our work is the endorsement of national forest certification systems. This year, **Vietnam** achieved PEFC endorsement of its national system, and **Thailand** of its Chain of Custody standard. Thanks to the hard work of stakeholders in these countries, many more forest owners and companies have access to PEFC certification and its associated benefits.

While forest certification is at the heart of our work, we do so much more: this year saw three revised standards entering into force, collaborations with various sectors, new campaigns and improved procedures to make what we do even better. We do all this work as a team, a family, for a world that values the contribution of sustainable forests to our planet and our lives.

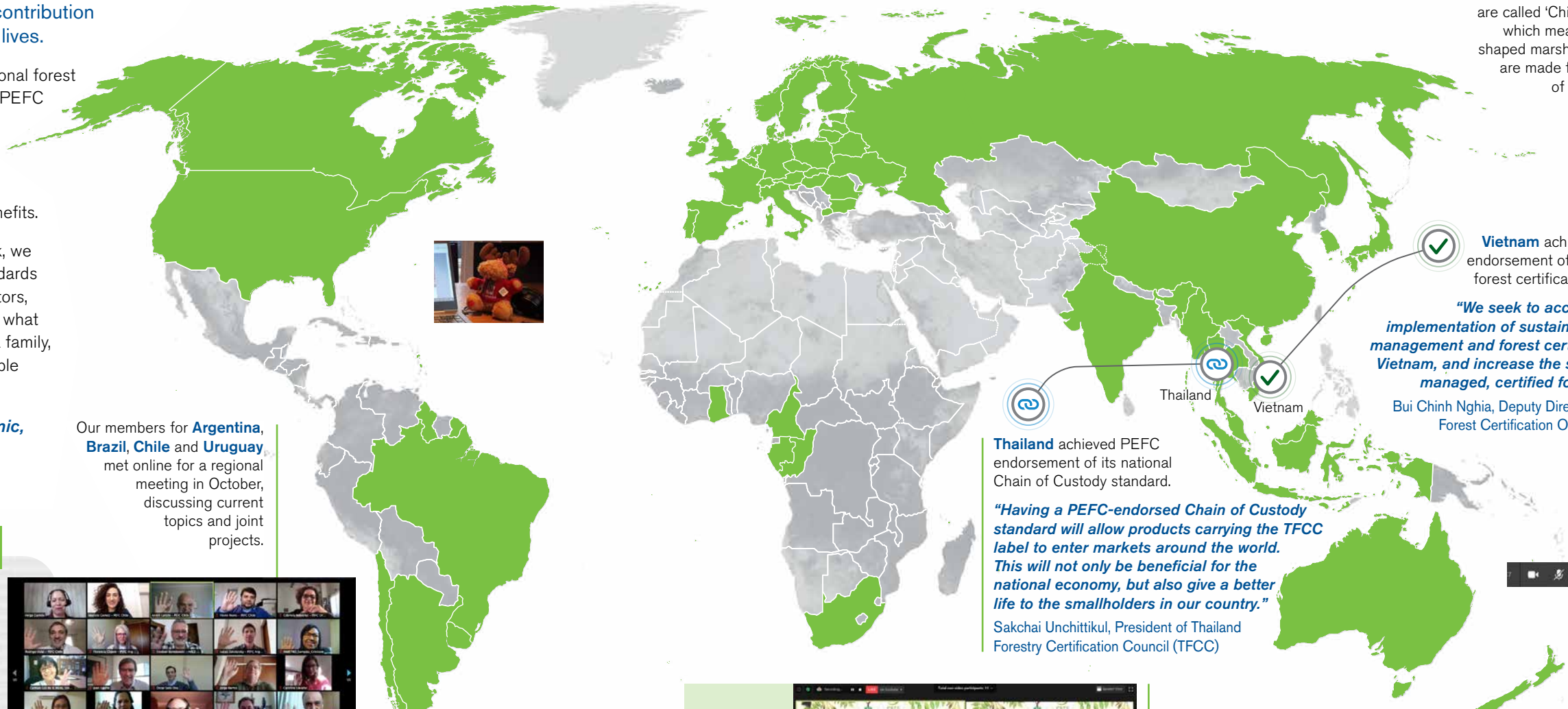
And as you can see, despite the global pandemic, the work of the PEFC alliance did not stop.

Have applied for PEFC Membership:

- **UPM Kymmene Corporation:**
The General Assembly will vote on the acceptance of **UPM Kymmene Corporation** as an international stakeholder member.
- **Bosnia and Herzegovina:**
The General Assembly will vote on the acceptance of **Naša Šuma** as the national member for Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- **Turkey:**
The General Assembly will vote on the acceptance of the **Association for Sustainable Forest Management, Forest Products and Services Certification** as the national member for Turkey.



Our members for **Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay** met online for a regional meeting in October, discussing current topics and joint projects.



Thailand achieved PEFC endorsement of its national Chain of Custody standard.

"Having a PEFC-endorsed Chain of Custody standard will allow products carrying the TFCC label to enter markets around the world. This will not only be beneficial for the national economy, but also give a better life to the smallholders in our country."

Sakchai Unchittikul, President of Thailand Forestry Certification Council (TFCC)

Vietnam achieved PEFC endorsement of its national forest certification system.

"We seek to accelerate the implementation of sustainable forest management and forest certification in Vietnam, and increase the sustainably managed, certified forest area."

Bui Chinh Nghia, Deputy Director Vietnam Forest Certification Office (VFCO)



In collaboration with the organizer of the Sustainable Fashion Week Madrid, The Circular Project, **PEFC Spain** developed a reforestation project to offset the 3.8 tonnes of carbon released in the organization of the event. A chestnut plantation established in the northwest of Spain will offset more than 35 tonnes of carbon – giving PEFC Spain carbon credits for future events.



PEFC Austria concluded the Wish Forest campaign, run in collaboration with DIY store BAUHAUS and the laminate flooring brand LOGOCLIC. For every 5 m² flooring sold, LOGOCLIC donated one tree, resulting in an incredible 60,000 trees that were planted with the help of pupils from local primary schools.

PEFC Germany launched an online campaign asking 'What if our forest and its wonderful stories no longer existed?'. The campaign uses a playful approach and forest-related fairy tale characters, such as Pinocchio or Little Red Riding Hood, whose stories would be very different without forests and forest products.



SGEC/PEFC Japan presented the world's first forest-born sweets that achieved SGEC/PEFC certification. The sweets are called 'Chichibu Mayu', which means 'cocoon-shaped marshmallow', and are made from the sap of maple trees.



The Indonesian Forestry Certification Cooperation (IFCC) took their public consultation online, asking for feedback on their revised Sustainable Forest Management standard in a webinar. Held on Zoom and live on YouTube, the webinar reached almost 500 interested participants.

Responsible Wood (Australia) launched its new Small Grants Program, supporting community groups in developing projects in their local area. Grants are awarded for collaborative community-based projects that connect communities to Responsible Wood/PEFC-certified forests.



Virtually Unmissable

The beginning of 2020 saw our world change. The way we interact and work with others transformed almost overnight. Like everyone else, we had to adapt. As a global organization with members around the world, staying connected has always been vital. At the same time, we need to reach out to forest owners, companies, associations and the public, to spread the importance of sustainable forest management and the need for certification. The answer? This year we went virtual.

Virtual Members Meeting

Our annual Members Meeting, which is normally the time the PEFC alliance meets in person for a few days for discussion, updates and training, arrived in the middle of lockdown. This meant we had to move it online – the first time we had ever run such a large meeting virtually.

After a few very busy days to get everything place, we held a successful online meeting. We were delighted to see that without the need to travel, many more employees of our members were able to attend the sessions. Our year online had begun!

#WebinarWednesdays

In the weeks following the Virtual Members Meeting, we held #PEFCtrainingFridays, a series of webinars to provide online training for PEFC members. These proved so popular, it was clear we needed to continue, and to widen the scope. Rebranding it #WebinarWednesdays, we took the campaign a step further, broadening the target audience and the range of topics covered.

#WebinarWednesdays gives us, and all our members, the opportunity to hold webinars to build capacity amongst the PEFC alliance, update each other, and increase our visibility for external stakeholders. From training on how to do social media, create videos and present virtually, to information sessions on fashion, construction and technical issues, we've had a full schedule.

Taking the dialogue online

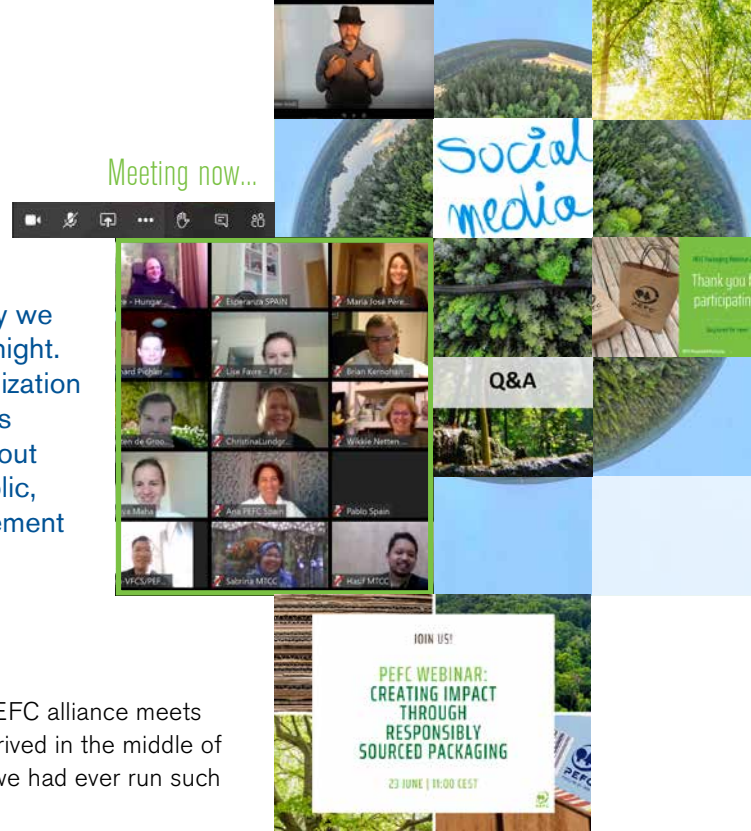
With physical events increasingly getting cancelled, we took the dialogue online, organizing virtual discussions and exchanges and taking part in several external events.

'In conversation with...'

The summer marked the launch of our 'In conversation with...' video series, part of #WebinarWednesdays. Streamed on Facebook Live, we invite internal and external experts to exchange their opinions on current issues in the forestry world.

In the **first video**, [🔗](#) our CEO Ben Gunneberg discussed with our Head of Communications, Thorsten Arndt, about labour rights and hidden heroes in forestry. In the **second instalment**, [🔗](#) Ben was joined by Coen van der Veer from Building and Wood Worker's International (BWI) to discuss how forest certification improves the lives of the people living and working in the forest.

Stay tuned for the next conversations with more experts from the forestry world!





PEFC Webinar puts the spotlight on responsibly sourced packaging

Increasing the use of certified forest-based packaging helps companies meet sustainability targets, and has a positive impact on the world's forests and forest communities.

In June, we hosted the webinar "Creating impact through responsibly sourced packaging", offering insights into the processes behind certification and highlighting the advantages of PEFC certification for business and beyond.

The webinar reached more than 500 people, including retailers, brand owners, and paper and packaging companies, from 39 countries on four continents.



Discussing forest management and climate action at the Consumer Goods Forum

The 2020 Consumer Goods Forum Sustainable Retail Summit took place virtually in October. Alongside our member, the Sustainable Forest Initiative (SFI), we hosted a session discussing the science behind sustainably managed forests, their contribution to climate change mitigation through sequestration, storage and substitution, and the role global manufacturers and retailers can play.



Virtual PEFC Week 2020

PEFC Forest Certification Week is always our biggest event of the year, and like everything else, it has gone virtual. While this has thrown us some challenges, including how to run the voting for our 25th PEFC General Assembly online, we're excited to see all our members, even if it's through a computer screen.

With more time to prepare came more opportunities, and, as so many other companies and organizations, we started exploring new horizons for online presentations and meetings. PEFC Week 2020 invites participants and the public for the first time to a [live announcement](#) of the photo contest winners, more trainings, discussions and even virtual coffee break chats, allowing the PEFC alliance to feel close, even though physically far apart.



Designing the future with sustainable timber



WAF AWARDS 2020
Best Use of Certified Timber Prize
 Sponsored by PEFC



Did you know that using timber for construction instead of steel and concrete could reduce global CO₂ emissions by 31%?*

Wood is a unique renewable, reusable and recyclable material, that is increasingly used by architects and constructors around the world. New developments in engineered timber have opened the door to building even taller and faster with wood.

Through our 'Designing the future with sustainable timber' campaign, we bring together a range of stakeholders to help promote the use of certified wood in construction.

We are continuing our collaboration with the **World Architecture Festival (WAF)**, awarding the **Best Use of Certified Timber Prize** for the third time. The prize rewards architects and project teams for using certified timber as the main construction material for buildings outstanding in sustainability, innovation, quality or aesthetics.

Due to the current global pandemic, the World Architecture Festival will go virtual in December, and be back as a live event in June in Lisbon.

The entry deadline for WAF has been extended to 8 January 2021. [Enter your project](#) or contact us for more information at fabienne.sinclair@pefc.org!

Several of our national members are also involved in this global campaign, enabling us to reach out to many more actors within the construction and architecture community and amplifying our impact.

- **PEFC Netherlands** launched **Tomorrow's Timber Talks**, a series of workshops to inspire architects, designers and developers in construction and to promote the use of sustainable materials. The book Tomorrow's Timber is covering the latest innovations in wood in architecture, focusing on innovations with large application potential, such as mass engineered wood like Cross Laminated Timber or Glulam, featured in inspiring projects around the world.
- **PEFC UK** invited architects and construction specifiers to learn more about responsible timber procurement and PEFC chain of custody certification through a series of CPD-accredited workshops. Topics covered in the sessions include forest certification and its global importance, and the requirements of the UK government's timber procurement policy.



What makes wood the ideal construction material?

While concrete, steel, cement and glass emit large amounts of carbon dioxide, wood stores it and helps reduce our ecological footprint. This makes it a powerful weapon in our fight against climate change and helps us support the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Timber buildings can be constructed quickly and are fire- and earthquake-resistant, making certified timber an ideal construction material for all kinds of buildings.

Discover more: treee.es/sustainableconstruction

Fashions change, Forests stay.

Fashion follows the seasonal cycle of nature. But the life cycle of clothes is becoming shorter.

The average consumer purchases 60% more clothing compared to the year 2000. Each garment is kept only half as long.

The environmental impact of today's fashion is significant, and is likely to increase even further. In the wake of climate change and other global environmental issues, the industry is looking to replace its conventional materials with sustainable alternatives. And forests can be part of the solution.

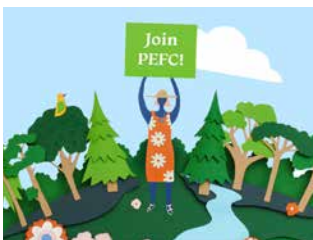
Thanks to new technologies, wood-based fibres can be used to produce recyclable, renewable and biodegradable textiles with a low environmental footprint.



In October, we launched our new textiles campaign **'Fashions change, Forests stay.'** The campaign aims to raise awareness for the importance of more sustainability in fashion, and opens the dialogue with the fashion industry. With a series of engaging social media posts, videos and texts, we seek to open people's eyes to the huge potential of wood-based fibres for fashion.

Throughout the year, we promoted sustainable forest fibres on a number of events, in discussions and presentations.

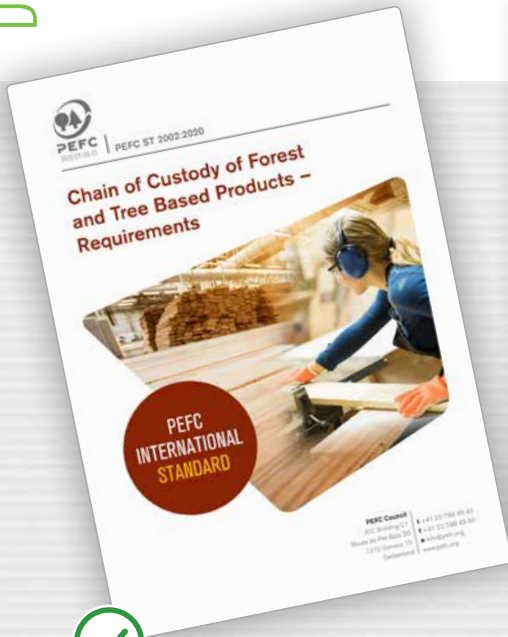
- **PEFC Spain** was a supporter of **Madrid Sustainable Fashion Week** this February, highlighting the potential of forest materials in a session and a special showroom. A few days before, María Lafuente had presented her latest collection 'Causalidad' as part of the **Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week** in Madrid. The designer chose fabrics produced by Textil Santanderina from PEFC-certified Tencel fibres, supplied by Lenzing.
- We were present at the **Innovation Forum Sustainable Apparel and Textiles Conference**, held virtually in April. In a panel discussion, we highlighted the importance of sourcing textile fibres from certified, sustainably managed forests to eliminate the risk of controversial forest materials entering textile supply chains.
- In November, we attended the virtual **2020 Textile Exchange Sustainability Conference**, which invited participants to explore emerging sustainability trends in the fashion industry. In a breakout session, we pointed out collaboration opportunities for the fashion industry and the benefits of sustainable forest management to the environment and society.



Revising our international standards

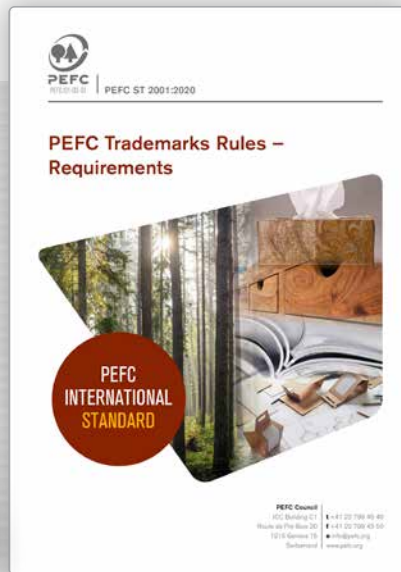
Our standards and technical documents are at the heart of our work at PEFC. That is why we revise them on a regular basis, so they continue to ensure best practice and meet evolving expectations.

Three revised standards that further strengthen PEFC's Sustainability Benchmarks were approved by the PEFC General Assembly in January and entered into force in February 2020.



Chain of Custody of Forest and Tree Based Products (ST 2002)

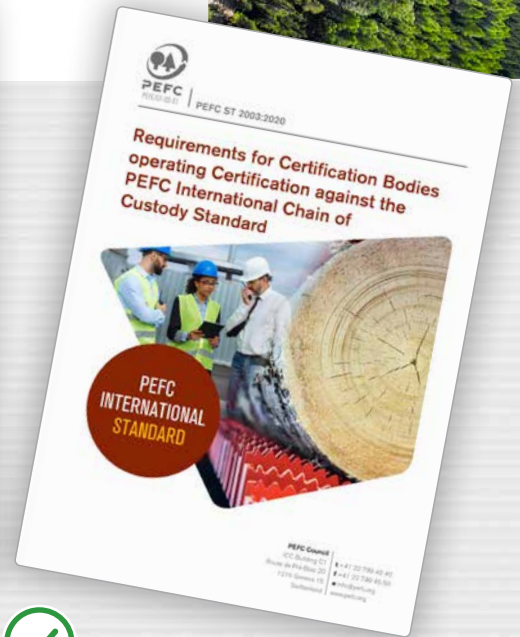
This standard lays out the requirements companies must meet in order to achieve PEFC chain of custody certification. The changes in the revised standard have made PEFC chain of custody certification more resource-efficient and environmentally friendly. Most notable is the expansion of the definition of controversial sources – material not to be used in certified products.



PEFC Trademarks Rules (ST 2001)

The new requirements in this revised standard strengthen the consistent use of our PEFC trademarks, while providing flexibility to PEFC trademarks users and making it easier for consumers to understand what the PEFC logo stands for.

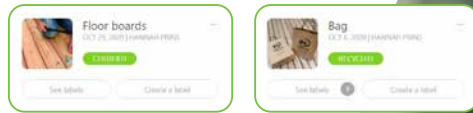
The TM or [®] symbols are no longer required alongside the PEFC logo or initials, and new label messages give non-certified companies, such as retailers, more options to communicate their commitment towards PEFC. The PEFC Label Generator also becomes mandatory for the creation of all PEFC labels.



Requirements for Certification Bodies operating Certification against the PEFC International Chain of Custody Standard (ST 2003)

Auditors conducting PEFC chain of custody certification are now subject to additional training requirements. This further safeguards the integrity of the conformity assessment process, and ensures that specifics concerning PEFC requirements are accurately verified. The standard also reflects our commitment towards gender responsive standards.

Find out more: Find out everything about the standards revision process and the revised standards on: tree.es/PEFCstandards2020



The PEFC Label Generator 2.0

With the entry into force of the 2020 PEFC Trademarks Rules standard comes an exciting new development: the PEFC Label Generator 2.0. The new Label Generator will create PEFC labels in line with the graphic requirements of the revised standard, as well as a range of new features making it even easier for trademarks users to benefit from the PEFC label.

Currently nearing the end of its development, the new Label Generator should be launched by the end of 2020. PEFC trademarks users will gain access once they have signed a new PEFC trademarks usage licence (or accepted an amendment to their current contract). Chain of custody certified entities must also be certified against the 2020 Chain of Custody standard. The old Label Generator will remain online until all trademarks users have moved to the new tool.


Stay tuned for further announcements!

Strengthening our training programmes

In order to offer certification for the 2020 PEFC Chain of Custody and PEFC Trademarks standards, auditors, certification decision makers and reviewers need to attend a chain of custody training recognized by PEFC International.

The existing training programmes have been revised, to ensure a harmonized, consistent and coordinated implementation of the 2020 standards worldwide.

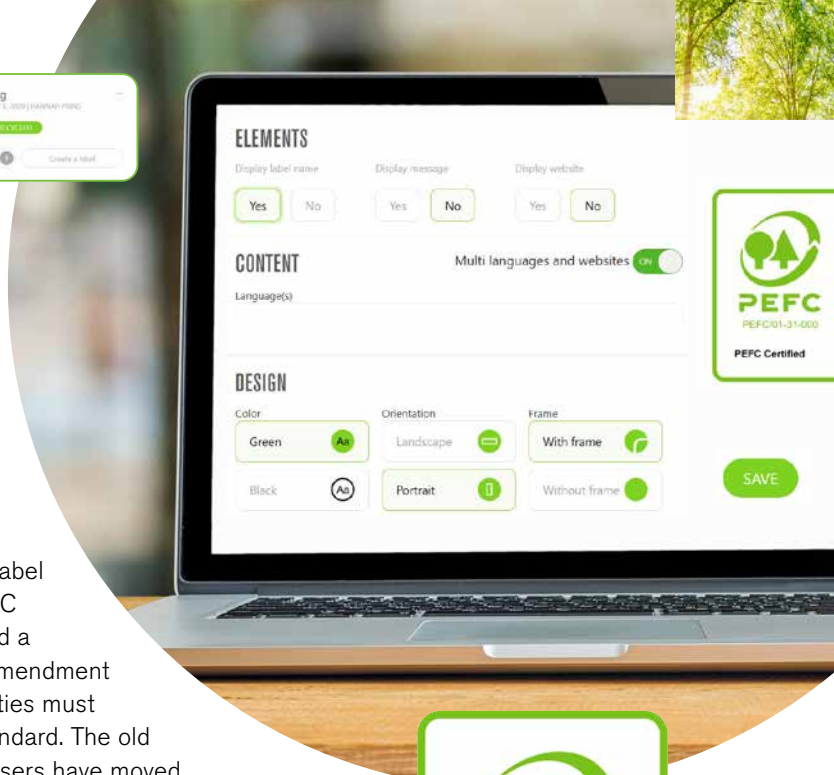
One of the revised and relaunched programmes is the Training Recognition Programme. Through this, certification bodies can get formal recognition of their internal PEFC chain of custody training programme and carry out internal trainings in compliance with PEFC's requirements. This has the advantage that the certification body does not need to plan how and when every auditor can attend a training organized by PEFC. Instead, they can decide themselves when to train them.

 All PEFC-recognized training is published on our website: treee.es/training

Becoming future-proof

We are in the process of designing a technological pathway for the future, including a new PEFC database. Development of the database started in August and has made good progress. The initial implementation has been reviewed with a small group of PEFC users and more will be invited to participate in the evaluation at a later stage.

In the wake of the Covid-19 situation, we had to change the way we work in some areas, adapting to the "new normal". In order to ease the consequences of travel restrictions, we implemented the possibility of remote audits. Where this is not sufficient, the time periods affecting the certificate can be extended. To support certified entities and certification bodies, we have extended the transition period for our revised 2020 standards by six months.



Promoting Sustainable Forest Management

www.pefc.org

Better together – PEFC members increase regional collaboration

Several PEFC members and potential members are teaming up in regional clusters to maximize their impact and reach. Currently, several national members are developing joint regional forest certification systems, allowing them to share resources and knowledge, while reducing the costs of developing and running their own national systems.



Great progress in the Congo Basin

Our national members for Cameroon, Congo and Gabon are developing a shared regional forest certification system under the name '**PAFC Congo Basin**'. The development of the system has moved forward considerably this year, despite the current Covid-19 challenges.

The final workshop of the working group was held virtually in October, and **PAFC Cameroon**, **PAFC Congo** and **PAFC Gabon** aim to submit the regional system to PEFC by the end of the year. The system includes a shared forest management standard for the three countries.

The system development is led by our international stakeholder member **ATIBT**, which is working in close collaboration with PAFC Cameroon, PAFC Congo, PAFC Gabon and **Olam**, another PEFC international stakeholder member. The project is funded by **KfW**, the German Development Bank, and co-funded by PEFC.



Joining forces in the Western Balkans

A similar approach is taken in the Balkans region. In August, **Naša Šuma**, the private forest owner association of Bosnia and Herzegovina, applied to become the PEFC National Governing Body for the country. The organization has been supported by the government of the Republic of Srpska, one of the two entities composing Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as by our international stakeholder member CNVP, which is based in North Macedonia.

Naša Šuma becoming a national member is one of the key steps within the development of a regional system for the Western Balkans. Two other PEFC national members are participating in the regional initiative: the **Institute for Forest Certification** in Slovenia and the **Council for Sustainable Forest Management in the Republic of Macedonia**. The three countries have harmonized their national forest management standards and aim to submit their regional system early next year.



Experience Forests, Experience PEFC



“I hope that my photo can help to open people’s eyes to the importance of forests.”

Keril Chairil, Indonesia

2020 PEFC Photographer of the Year



Fishermen in a forest lake, a curious squirrel coming down a tree and wonderful forest landscapes around the year – the fourth edition of our ‘Experience Forests, Experience PEFC’ Photo Contest showed us once again the many magical sides of forests around the world.

From Earth Day in April until World Environment Day in June, we invited photographers and forest lovers to enter their forest photos into the contest – and received an incredible 7800 photos!

With people around the globe stuck inside, the gorgeous photos helped everyone to dream away for a moment and escape to the forests in our imaginations.

National contests were run by our members in 12 countries. The winners of these contests entered the international contest to compete for the **‘2020 PEFC Photographer of the Year’** Award.

The Award went to Keril Chairil for his beautiful image **Morning Activities**, taken in the highlands of Sukabumi in Indonesia, a place surrounded by tropical rain forest.

The winners were announced virtually on Facebook Live, with forestry and photography experts discussing the photos and sharing their opinions on them. The top twelve images will also star in our 2021 photo calendar.



#ForestFactFriday opens eyes to the fantastic world of forests

We love our forests. Yet, there is so much more to them than meets the eye.

In our social media campaign **#ForestFactFriday**, we share interesting and unexpected forest-based facts every Friday. Besides expanding our knowledge about forests, the campaign highlights how important and fascinating they really are.

Did you know that forests cover over four billion hectares of our Earth? That's roughly a third of the total land area. Or that the world's forests are made up of over 60,000 tree species?

Indeed, forests are crucial for our survival. They are a source of food, medicine and fuel for more than a billion people. Tropical forests alone give us plants and substances to produce over a quarter of modern medicines. In addition, they are home to two-thirds of terrestrial species of plants and animals.

Forests give employment to around 50 million people, and they can even make it rain! Evapotranspiration from plants generates 40% of rainfall over land – which is vital for life on Earth.

Forests are the future, giving us sustainable construction materials and fibres to produce our clothes. They are also our strongest weapon against climate change, by absorbing CO₂ from the air and storing it.

Look for **#ForestFactFriday** on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram to learn more about our wonderful forests!

Sources: *FAO, UNECE, United Nations, World Bank, UNFCCC, UN-REDD*



Meeting our certified companies

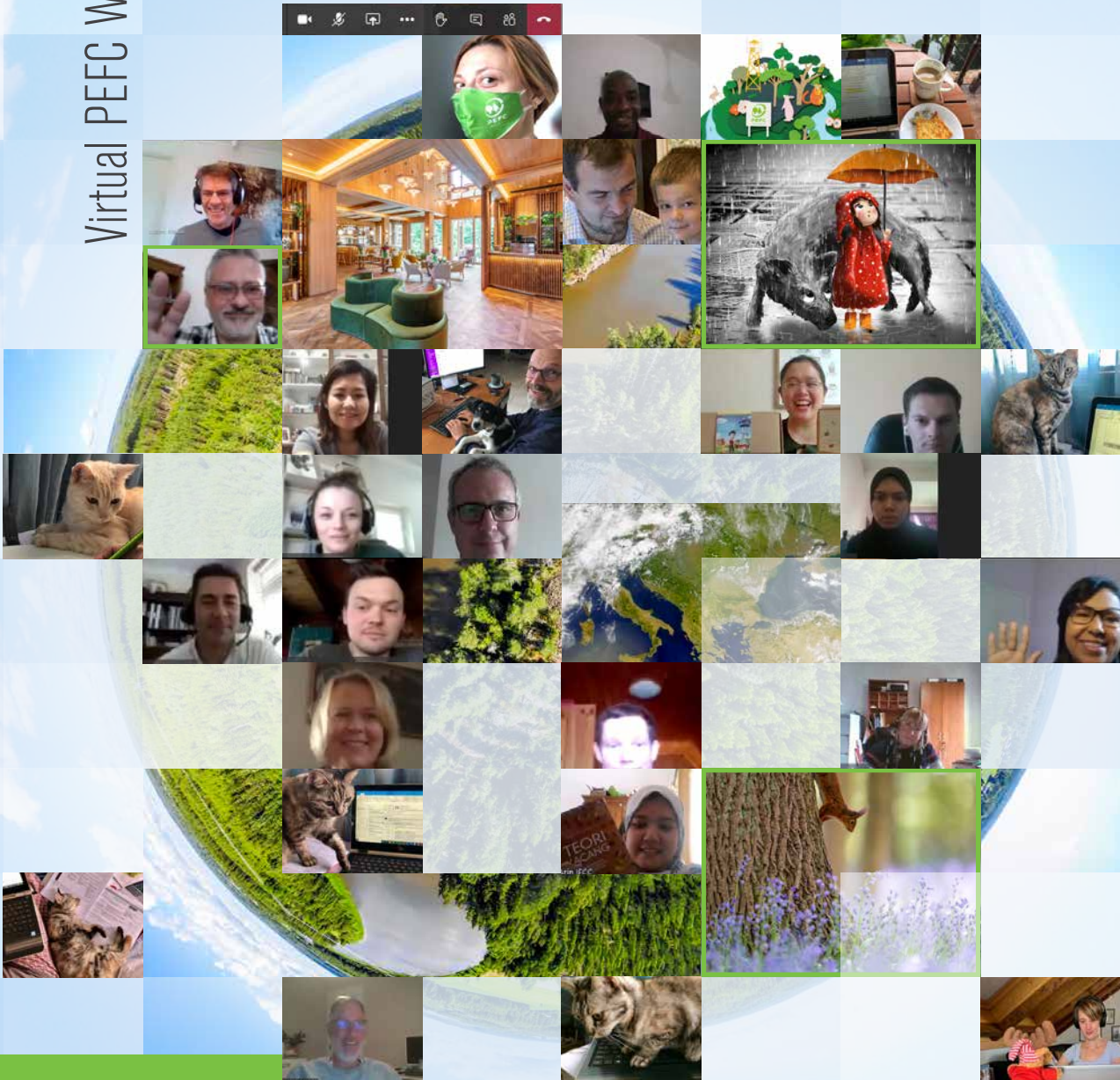
Case stories have always been important in helping us to communicate forest certification on the ground. With our new case story series, we hear directly from PEFC-certified companies around the world. **'Meeting our certified companies'**, gives an insight into the work, views and opinions of certified companies. Giving the word to the people on the ground, we will learn what PEFC certification means for the business world.

➦ In the **first interview of the series**, ➦ Per Friis Knudsen, A/S Global Timber Director for Asia, shared his thoughts about sustainable sourcing, business ethics and the current challenges in the forestry sector.



Find out more about PEFC:
www.pefc.org

Virtual PEFC Week 2020



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