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GUIDANCE ON AUDIT DURATION FOR CERTIFICATION BODIES OPERATING FOREST MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATION (NATURAL FOREST) UNDER THE MALAYSIAN TIMBER CERTIFICATION SCHEME



Malaysian Timber Certification Council
C-08-05, Block C, Megan Avenue II
No.12, Jalan Yap Kwan Seng 50450
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Tel: +(6) 03 2161 2298, Fax: +(6) 03 2161 2293
E-mail: info@mtcc.com.my, Web: www.mtcc.com.my

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Primary Contact Details: Email	fm@mtcc.com.my
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BACKGROUND

This document specifies guidance on audit duration for bodies operating forest management certification (natural forest) under The Malaysian Timber Certification Scheme (MTCS).

The ACB-FMC Documents were previously under the custodianship of the Department of Standards Malaysia (DSM). During the 2nd MTCC Coordination Committee (MCC) Meeting held on 12 December 2024, members agreed that ownership of the documents should be transferred to MTCC as the scheme owner to address overlaps and enable proper evaluation of their continued use. Following this decision, DSM formally transferred the ACB-FMC Documents to MTCC, thereby placing the documents under MTCC's governance for further review, alignment, and future management in line with MTCS requirements.

This document should form part of MTCS auditor training and is applicable to varying scopes and scales of audits, conducted by single auditors and large audit teams.

This document can be used as a criteria document for accreditation, peer assessment or other audit related processes.

In this document, the following verbal forms are used:

“auditor” includes “auditors”;

“shall” indicates a requirement;

“should” indicates a recommendation;

“may” indicates a permission;

“can” indicates a possibility or a capability.

“must” indicates an external constraint or obligations that is not stated as a provision in this document, e.g. legal requirements.

Section 1: Introduction

1.1 This document provides guidance on the audit duration required by the certification body for auditing Forest Management Units (FMUs) of various sizes in different geographical regions in Malaysia under the Malaysian Timber Certification Scheme (MTCS), by indicating the minimum on-site audit duration for stage 1 audit, stage 2 audit, surveillance and recertification audit.

Section 2: Purpose

2.1 The audit duration identified in this document is appropriate to the size of the FMU, accessibility and number of audit locations within the FMU, which is influenced by the different forest management activities and their complexity. Any deviation from the minimum audit duration shall be justified and documented.

Section 3: Audit Duration

3.1 Table 1 shows the minimum on-site audit duration (days), which includes the opening meeting, site audit, interviews, and closing meeting, and excludes the time needed for planning, preparation, travel and report writing.

3.2 Table 1 has been developed to provide sufficient time under normal circumstances to adequately carry out auditing of the FMU against the certification standard for natural forest management under the MTCS.

3.3 Additional auditor days may be required for conducting post audit follow-up activities, such as verification on major non-conformities raised or addressing of any contentious stakeholder issues.

Table 1: Minimum on-site audit duration (days) for stage 1 audit, stage 2 audit, surveillance and recertification audit

FMU	Stage 1 (1-member team)	Stage 2 (3-member team)	Surveillance (3-member team)	Recertification (3-member team)
Peninsular Malaysia				
Kelantan, Pahang, Perak	4	8	5	8
Johor, Kedah, Terengganu	4	6	4	6

Negeri Sembilan, Selangor	3	5	3	5
Melaka, Perlis, Pulau Pinang	2	3	3	3
Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur	2	2	2	2
FMU	Stage 1 (1-member team)	Stage 2 (3-member team)	Surveillance (3-member team)	Recertification (3-member team)
Sabah/Sarawak				
FMU <10,000 Ha	2	2	2	2
FMU >10,000 - <100,000	3	4	3	4
FMU >100,000 ha	4	8	5	8