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AUDIT DURATION FOR BODIES OPERATING FOREST MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATION (FOREST PLANTATIONS) UNDER THE MALAYSIAN TIMBER CERTIFICATION SCHEME



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BACKGROUND

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

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 requirement

1. This document provides guidance on the amount of time required by the certification body for auditing forest plantation management units (FPMUs) of various sizes in different regions of Malaysia under the Malaysian Timber Certification Scheme (MTCS), by indicating the on-site audit durations for initial audit (stage 1 and stage 2 audits), annual surveillance audit and recertification audit.
2. This document shall be used for the purpose of accreditation of a CB operating a forest plantation management certification programme under the MTCS. All CBs accredited by the Department of Standards Malaysia (Standards Malaysia) shall comply with the requirements of this document.
3. The audit durations identified in this document are appropriate to the size of the FPMU, accessibility and number of audit locations within the FPMU, which is influenced by the different forest plantation management activities and their complexity and frequency/occurrence within a stipulated time period.
4. However, the time allocated to the various locations of a complex audit must be documented to justify the allocated audit duration.
5. Table 1 below shows the minimum on-site duration for each of the different audits according to the FPMU size. The on-site audit duration includes the opening meeting, site audit, interviews and closing meeting, and excludes the time needed for planning, preparation, travel, closing out of non-conformities and report writing.
6. The audit duration does not allow for auditing forest plantation management activities/systems/sites outside the FPMU. Where there is such a need, the audit duration should be increased accordingly.
7. Table 1 has been developed to provide sufficient time under normal circumstances to adequately carry out the audit of forest plantations against the standard for forest plantation management certification under the MTCS.

Table 1: Minimum on-site audit durations (days) for initial audit (stage1 and stage 2 audits), annual surveillance audit and recertification audit according to FPMU size

FMU	Stage 1 (1-member team)	Stage 2 (3-member team)	Surveillance (3-member team)	Recertification (3-member team)
Sabah/Sarawak				
FPMU <5,000 Ha	2	2	2	2
FPMU 5,000 - 10,000	2	3	2	3
FPMU 10,001 - 50,000 Ha	2	4	3	4
FPMU >50,000 ha	3	5	4	5