

MTCS PR 1001:2026

Procedural Document



Standard-setting Procedures

(Including for Forest Management Certification Standards)



Malaysian Timber Certification Council

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The official version of this document is in English. While translations may be provided to ensure inclusivity within the Malaysian context, the English version shall remain the sole authoritative reference in the event of any inconsistency or doubt over language interpretation.

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Foreword

In October 1998, the Malaysian Ministry of Primary Industries incorporated, in accordance with the Companies Act 1965 (now the Companies Act 2016) the National Timber Certification Council, Malaysia, as a non-profit organization, entirely owned and empowered by the Ministry, to create and maintain a fund to be used for purposes of establishing and operating a timber certification scheme in Malaysia, as part of efforts to ensure sustainable forest management as well as to facilitate the timber trade of Malaysia.

In June 2001 the Council was renamed as Malaysian Timber Certification Council (MTCC). Currently MTCC is within the Ministry of Plantations and Commodities, and its standards are a pivotal part of the Malaysia Policy on Forestry, which states "Malaysia recognizes forest as a strategic national heritage and is committed to securing sufficient forest areas for their ecosystem services, biodiversity conservation, environmental protection and sustainable utilisation of resources towards the socio-economic development and well-being of present and future generations."

1. Introduction

- 1.1. MTCC is committed to its mandate by the Malaysian Government to bring together the necessary stakeholders to develop, maintain and oversee credible standards on sustainable forest management according to international best practices, approved through a process of consensus and voting, and published and made freely available to all parties.
- 1.2. The development of this document was largely guided by the standards development procedures and practices of the Malaysian Department of Standards, PEFC ST 1001:2024 and ISO/IEC Directives and Guides.
- 1.3. This document cancels and replaces MTCS ST 1001:2021 – Standard-setting Procedures for Forest Management Certification Standards in whole and expands the scope of standard-setting to non-forest management and non-certification standards. The operational structure of MTCC can be viewed in the MTCC website.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This procedure outlines the Malaysian Timber Certification Council's standard-setting activities, including development, production, review, reaffirmation, revision, approval, validation, ratification and publication.

3. References

- 3.1. References were made to the following documents when developing this procedure:
 - 3.1.1. PEFC ST 1001:2024 Standard-setting – Requirements;
 - 3.1.2. ISO/IEC Directives Part 1:2024 – Procedures for the technical work – Consolidated ISO supplement – Procedures specific to ISO;

- 3.1.3. ISO/IEC Directives Part 2:2021 – Principles and rules for the structure and drafting of ISO and IEC documents;
- 3.1.4. ISO/IEC Guide 59: 2019 – ISO and IEC recommended practices for standardization by national bodies;
- 3.1.5. ISO/IEC Guide 2: 2004 – Standardization and related activities - General vocabulary;
- 3.1.6. PEFC GD 1007 Endorsement and mutual recognition of certification systems and their revisions.

4. Terms and Definitions

4.1. Affected stakeholder

A stakeholder who might experience a direct change in living and/or working conditions caused by implementation of the standard, or a stakeholder who might be a user of the standard and therefore is subject to the requirements of the standard.

Note 1 to entry: Affected stakeholders include neighbouring communities, indigenous people, workers, etc. However, having an interest in the subject matter of the standard (e.g. NGOs, scientific community, and civil society) is not equal to being affected.

Note 2 to entry: A stakeholder who might be a user of the standard is likely to become a certified entity, e.g. a forest owner in the case of a forest management standard, or a wood processing enterprise in the case of a chain of custody standard.

4.2. Consensus

General agreement characterized by the absence of sustained opposition to substantial issues by any important part of the concerned interests and by a process that involves seeking to take into account the views of all parties concerned and to reconcile any conflicting arguments.

Note to entry: Consensus need not imply unanimity (Source: ISO/IEC Guide 2).

4.3. Disadvantaged stakeholder

A stakeholder who might be financially or otherwise disadvantaged in participating in the standard-setting process.

4.4. Editorial changes

Changes to a system that do not alter the technical content. They include grammar, punctuation and styles used in the document and its general appearance.

4.5. Enquiry draft

A proposed document that is available for public consultation.

4.6. Final draft

A proposed document that is available for formal approval.

4.7. Gender balance

Equal opportunities for men and women to participate in the development of MTCS standards. Representation is influenced by the proportion of women and men involved in the relevant stakeholder group or region.

4.8. Impacting stakeholder

A stakeholder whose actions have a direct impact on the affected stakeholder. Among others these would typically be regulatory bodies, policy makers in the government, standards governing bodies, accreditation and certification bodies.

4.9. Key stakeholder

A stakeholder whose participation is critical to the outcome of the standard-setting process.

4.10. Normative document

A document that provides rules, guidelines or characteristics for activities or their results.

Note 1 to entry: The term "normative document" is a generic term that covers such documents as standards, technical specifications, codes of practice and regulations.

Note 2 to entry: "A document" is to be understood as any medium with information recorded on or in it.

Note 3 to entry: The terms for different kinds of normative documents are defined considering the document and its content as a single entity (Source: ISO/IEC Guide 2).

4.11. Publicly available

Generally accessible to the interested public in any form and without the need for a request.

Note 1 to entry: When information is available by request only, this is indicated explicitly in the document as available on request.

Note 2 to entry: Special consideration might be needed for disadvantaged stakeholders to ensure their access, e.g. providing hard copies to stakeholders identified as having no access to electronic media.

4.12. Review

Activity of checking a normative document to determine whether it is to be reaffirmed, changed or withdrawn. (Source: ISO/IEC Guide 2)

4.13. Revision

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

Note to entry: The results of the revision are presented by issuing a new edition of the normative document (Source: ISO/IEC Guide 2).

4.14. Stakeholder

A person, group, community or organization with an interest in the subject of the standard.

4.15. Stakeholder classes

There are four classes of stakeholders:

- (1) Impacting stakeholders;
- (2) Affected stakeholders;
- (3) Key stakeholders;
- (4) Interested stakeholders.

4.16. Stakeholder groups

There are nine groups of stakeholders as identified in Agenda 21 of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro in 1992.

4.17. Standard

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.

Note to entry: Standards should be based on the consolidated results of science, technology and experience, and aimed at the promotion of optimum benefits (Source: ISO/IEC Guide 2).

4.18. Standard Review Committee

Committee established to develop and maintain standards through drafting and revision processes.

Note to entry: Such committees typically include representatives of relevant stakeholder groups and operate according to established procedures for transparency, impartiality, and consensus.

4.19. Standardizing body

Body that has recognized activities in standardization (Source: ISO Guide 2).

Note to entry: The Standardizing body for the Malaysian Timber Certification Scheme (MTCS) is the Malaysian Timber Certification Council (MTCC).

4.20. Sub-committee

A committee established under the Standards Review Committee to oversee and coordinate standards work within a defined subject area or domain.

Note to entry: Sub-Committees are established to manage standards development and review activities in a specific domain. They may form Working Groups to address detailed technical or thematic issues and report their findings to the Standards Review Committee.

4.21. Working draft

Proposed document that is available generally for feedback or voting within a working group.

4.22. Working Group

A subgroup established by the Standards Review Committee to address specific technical, procedural, or thematic issues related to the review of standards.
Note to entry: Working Groups are established to carry out detailed tasks or studies and report their findings to the Standards Review Committee for consideration and approval.

5. Standard-setting Principles

5.1. The MTCC standard-setting process is governed by the key principles of:

- 5.1.1. Openness and Inclusiveness – meaningful participation is open and made easy to all stakeholders.
- 5.1.2. Balanced and impartial representation – all relevant stakeholders are represented fairly, with appropriate gender balance, without any stakeholder(s) dominating the process.

- 5.1.3. Consensus – lawful, impartial and balanced or weighted decisions are made by consensus of key stakeholders.
- 5.1.4. Improvement and Enhancement – MTCC standards are continually improved to be more effective, efficient and relevant, and enhanced to achieve the growing needs of stakeholders. They are based on reliable science, technology, good practices, stakeholder feedback and periodic reviews. It is meant to be coherent with benchmark, national and international standards.
- 5.1.5. Transparency – transparency and visibility of the standard development process and the resulting versions of the standards are available to stakeholders.
- 5.1.6. Voluntary – encouragement of the voluntary implementation of MTCC standards is built into the standards.
- 5.1.7. Usability – ease of interpretation and use of MTCC standards are built into the standards.
- 5.1.8. Auditability – auditability of the effective implementation of MTCC standards are built into the standards.

6. MTCC's Role

MTCC performs the following roles to ensure the standards are relevant, transparent, and trusted:

6.1. Facilitate Consensus Among Stakeholders

- 6.1.1. Bring together diverse stakeholders.
- 6.1.2. Ensure balanced participation without domination by any single stakeholder or faction among them.
- 6.1.3. Manage processes to lead to consensus-based decisions.

6.2. Develop Standards

- 6.2.1. Establish principles, requirements and indicators, and verifiers as required, that reflect best practices.
- 6.2.2. Draft standards in a transparent, inclusive, and evidence-based manner.
- 6.2.3. Align with national and international norms.

6.3. Protect Credibility and Integrity

- 6.3.1. Ensure standards are relevant, coherent, technically substantiated and applicable.

- 6.3.2. Review and revise standards periodically to keep them up to date.
- 6.3.3. Maintain independence from political or commercial influence or pressure.
- 6.4. Enable Implementation
 - 6.4.1. Publish guidance on how standards should be applied.
 - 6.4.2. Support capacity-building for users.
 - 6.4.3. Ensure standards are practical, auditable, and adaptable without compromising comparability between users, audit consistency, and dilution of intent into become guidelines.
- 6.5. Oversight of Compliance and Recognition
 - 6.5.1. Organize, facilitate, develop, accredit (or endorse accreditation) of the certification systems and bodies that apply the standards.
 - 6.5.2. Monitor the conformity assessment processes of accreditation and certification for their integrity and credibility.
- 6.6. Promote Harmonization and Market Confidence
 - 6.6.1. Align the standards with industry, national and international frameworks to avoid duplication.
 - 6.6.2. Provide assurance to the public, consumers, industries and regulators that certified areas, processes or practices meet agreed sustainability, safety, and quality benchmarks.
- 6.7. Be a neutral platform for collaboration while developing the standards.

Standard Lifecycle Management

7. Standardization Needs and Review Mechanisms

- 7.1. Identify the Need for Standard-setting:
 - 7.1.1. The need to develop new standards or revise existing standards would be identified when:
 - 7.1.1.1. It is beneficial to the nation, industry or consumers to have standards, or to align with international benchmarks.
 - 7.1.1.2. Production, trade and consumption can be facilitated with standards across industries, users and borders.

- 7.1.1.3. There are regulatory or policy shifts by the Malaysian government, or national or international arrangements that require streamlined compliance mechanisms.
- 7.1.1.4. Stakeholders seek sustainability, consistency, safety or quality across regions or sectors.
- 7.1.1.5. There is a need to update, revise the scope or correct issues or clarify the standard.
- 7.1.1.6. Technological advancements or scientific discoveries make it possible or necessary for standardization.
- 7.1.1.7. Environmental concerns, risks or safety require responsible practices with standardization.
- 7.1.1.8. The standard is due for its periodic review.
- 7.1.1.9. There are other valid reasons to justify the cost-benefit of standardization.

7.2. Justification and Decision:

- 7.2.1. For new requirements, CEO Office shall estimate:
 - 7.2.1.1. How the standard is expected to bring benefits to society and stakeholders.
 - 7.2.1.2. The costs of developing and maintaining the standard.
 - 7.2.1.3. The number and types of stakeholders who would be interested and committed to developing and using the standard. And if this number of stakeholders justifies the development of the standard.
- 7.2.2. When the CEO Office decides that the benefits are worthwhile and there are sufficient stakeholder commitment and resources, the CEO Office shall determine:
 - 7.2.2.1. If new standards must be developed or the scope of an existing standard can be extended to include the new requirement.
 - 7.2.2.2. If a new standard review committee or technical committee needs to be formed, or an existing committee is sufficient. Note: The scope or members of the existing committee may be expanded.

- 7.2.3. For feedback, complaints from stakeholders, issues with the existing standards, new legal requirements, scientific discoveries and research, the CEO Office decides to include them either in the periodic review or immediate review (referred to as 'time critical review').
- 7.2.4. The CEO Office shall produce the proposal to develop or revise the standard for approval by the Board of Trustees. The proposal should consider:
 - 7.2.4.1. The type of standard review – there are three types of reviews:
 - 7.2.4.1.1. New requirement review.
 - 7.2.4.1.2. Periodic review.
 - 7.2.4.1.3. Time critical review.
 - 7.2.4.2. Type of standard development or revision – there are six types of standard development or revisions:
 - 7.2.4.2.1. New standard development.
 - 7.2.4.2.2. Technical revision.
 - 7.2.4.2.3. Structural revision.
 - 7.2.4.2.4. Amendments.
 - 7.2.4.2.5. Editorial revision.
 - 7.2.4.2.6. Time critical revision.
 - 7.2.4.3. Reaffirmation – the standard is due for its periodic review and there is no need to make changes to the standard.

7.3. Types of Standard Reviews

7.3.1. New Requirement

- 7.3.1.1. The review shall evaluate if:
 - 7.3.1.1.1. A new requirement can be included in the existing standards.
 - a. Including into an existing standard will typically involve revising existing clauses and/or adding new clauses.
 - 7.3.1.1.2. A new requirement can be included as an extension of existing standards.

- a. Extension of an existing standard will typically involve additional annexes or appendices.

7.3.1.1.3. New standards need to be developed.

7.3.2. Periodic Review

7.3.2.1. All existing standards shall be reviewed periodically to determine if and how the standard can be improved to reflect prevailing needs of its stakeholders.

7.3.2.2. The period or next date of review shall be stated in the standard and shall not exceed five years.

7.3.2.3. When there is a need to review the standard earlier than the five years, then the periodic review can be performed earlier.

7.3.2.3.1. But if the need to review is urgent, then a time critical review shall be done.

7.3.3. Time Critical Review

7.3.3.1. When there is an urgent need to review that does not permit a complete review cycle like the periodic review, then a time critical review shall be performed.

7.4. Types of Standard Development or Revisions

7.4.1. New Standard Development

7.4.1.1. New standards shall be developed according to this procedure with any other best practice.

7.4.1.2. New standards would involve the full development cycle of –

7.4.1.2.1. Proposal,

7.4.1.2.2. Working draft,

7.4.1.2.3. Committee draft,

7.4.1.2.4. Enquiry draft and public consultation,

7.4.1.2.5. Final draft and public consultation,

7.4.1.2.6. Standard approval and publication.

7.4.2. Technical Revision

7.4.2.1. Perform gap analysis of the standard against the identified needs.

- 7.4.2.2. Modify or add requirements, such as adding new clauses, changing performance thresholds, or revising definitions, which may affect implementation, compliance, audits, validation and certification.
- 7.4.2.3. Make necessary changes to the standard reflecting new practices, trends, technologies, risks, trade policies, evolving national interests and commitments.
- 7.4.2.4. Technical revision cycle would involve the full revision cycle of –
 - 7.4.2.4.1. Proposal,
 - 7.4.2.4.2. Working draft,
 - 7.4.2.4.3. Committee draft,
 - 7.4.2.4.4. Enquiry draft and public consultation,
 - 7.4.2.4.5. Final draft and public consultation,
 - 7.4.2.4.6. Standard approval and publication.
- 7.4.3. Structural Revision
 - 7.4.3.1. The clauses and sections of the standard are rearranged for a more harmonized structure or aligned with the structures of other standards or national policies.
 - 7.4.3.2. Content will remain the same and will be interpreted in the context of its new place in the standard.
 - 7.4.3.3. Structural revision cycle would involve
 - 7.4.3.3.1. Proposal,
 - 7.4.3.3.2. Working draft,
 - 7.4.3.3.3. Standard approval and publication.
- 7.4.4. Amendments
 - 7.4.4.1. While technical revisions are for the whole standard, and time critical revision is for urgent requirements, amendments are for specific and targeted requirements or clauses.
 - 7.4.4.1.1. Typically, amendments are for clarifying or changing performance thresholds or compliance criteria, adding a note, updating normative

references, replacing clauses, annexes or appendices.

- 7.4.4.2. Amendments are usually the result of reviews between the planned five years periodic reviews.
- 7.4.4.3. Amendments can be published as the entire standard or as an annex.
- 7.4.4.4. Amendments could require transition, revalidation and recertification.
- 7.4.4.5. Amendment revision cycle would involve:
 - 7.4.4.5.1. Proposal,
 - 7.4.4.5.2. Working draft,
 - 7.4.4.5.3. Public consultation,
 - 7.4.4.5.4. Standard approval and publication.

7.4.5. Editorial Revision

- 7.4.5.1. These are non-technical changes to improve clarity, consistency, or formatting without altering the requirements.
 - 7.4.5.1.1. Examples of editorial revisions are fixing typos, grammar, or punctuation, rephrasing for clarity without changing intent, updating formatting, headings, or layout or harmonizing terminology.
- 7.4.5.2. It improves usability of standards, enhances interpretation and has no effect on implementation, compliance or certification.
- 7.4.5.3. It does not require public consultation or change of revision status or year designation.
- 7.4.5.4. Editorial revision cycle would involve:
 - 7.4.5.4.1. Correction,
 - 7.4.5.4.2. Standard approval and publication

7.4.6. Time Critical Revision

The standard is revised and published within a period that is shorter than a full revision cycle. The necessity to do this can occur when there are:

- 7.4.6.1. Changes in laws and regulations that require urgent revision of the standard while complying with international or benchmark standards.
- 7.4.6.2. Requirements by a benchmark standard-setting body, such as PEFC, to comply with specific or new requirements within a period that is too short for a full revision cycle.
- 7.4.7. Time-critical revision shall be conducted as follows:
 - 7.4.7.1. The CEO Office shall publish a proposal for the time-critical revision and apply any appropriate feedback into the revision process.
 - 7.4.7.2. The CEO Office shall develop the working draft of the revised standard with or without consultation with stakeholders.
 - 7.4.7.3. Any consultation with stakeholders, including the benchmark standard-setting body, shall be necessitated by the extent and complexity of the revision that will be determined by the CEO Office.
 - 7.4.7.4. The MTCC Board of Trustees shall review and approve, when satisfactory, the time-critical revised standard that shall thereafter be published.
 - 7.4.7.5. Any additional technical revision processes to this time-critical revision process shall be at the discretion of the CEO Office depending on the time available.
 - 7.4.7.6. The CEO Office shall publish the justification for the Time Critical Revision on its website.

8. The Proposal

8.1. Proposal Development:

- 8.1.1. The CEO Office shall initiate a formal proposal to develop new standards, reaffirm or revise an existing standard. The proposal shall include details of the following as appropriate:
 - 8.1.1.1. Title of the standard.
 - 8.1.1.1.1. A new title shall be precise and unambiguous.
 - 8.1.1.2. Justification of the need to:
 - 8.1.1.2.1. Review the existing standard – type of review and reason.

- 8.1.1.2.2. Reaffirm the existing standard – reason why revision is not required.
- 8.1.1.2.3. Revise the existing standard – type of revision and reason.
- 8.1.1.2.4. Develop a new standard.
- 8.1.1.3. Type of standard review, development or revision that may be required.
- 8.1.1.4. Scope of the standard – with sufficient precision of what is included (and if necessary, of what is excluded) in the standard.
- 8.1.1.5. Whether the proposal:
 - 8.1.1.5.1. Will affect any of the other existing MTCC governed standards.
 - 8.1.1.5.2. Can be achieved by revising the scope of existing MTCC standards.
- 8.1.1.6. Examples of similar and/or related standards – international, national and industry standards.
- 8.1.1.7. Examples of organizations that are governing and/or using such standards.
- 8.1.1.8. A description of the intended outcomes, which could be:
 - 8.1.1.8.1. Reaffirmation that the standard shall continue as it is until the next periodic review.
 - 8.1.1.8.2. Types of documents produced.
 - 8.1.1.8.3. How the standard shall be used, verified and validated, including certification.
 - 8.1.1.8.4. The benefits and opportunities it will bring to stakeholders and society.
- 8.1.1.9. A description of the stages of standard development and their expected schedule.
 - 8.1.1.9.1. If there is more than one standard involved, suggest the prioritized schedule of work among them.

- 8.1.1.10. A risk assessment of potential negative impacts arising from developing, revising or implementing the standard, such as:
 - 8.1.1.10.1. Factors that could affect the achievement of the outcomes negatively.
 - 8.1.1.10.2. Unintended consequences of implementation
 - 8.1.1.10.3. Actions to address the identified risks.
 - 8.1.1.10.4. Expected consequence of the actions taken.

8.2. Proposal Approval:

- 8.2.1. The MTCC Board of Trustees (BOT) shall review and if agreeable approve the proposal for further actions.
- 8.2.2. Revisions to the proposal can be made if required by the Board of Trustees.
- 8.2.3. If the proposal is not approved, the CEO Office shall notify all parties concerned of the BOT decision and no further action shall be taken, unless required otherwise by the BOT.

8.3. The Standard Review Secretariat and Schedule

- 8.3.1. The CEO Office shall establish the Standards Review Secretariat (“the Secretariat”) responsible for organizing, facilitating and managing the review, reaffirmation, revision or development of the standard as per this procedure.

Note: The Secretariat should preferably be made up of MTCC staff.

- 8.3.2. The Secretariat may be made up of one or more people.
- 8.3.3. The Standards Review Secretariat shall prepare the schedule for the development, revision or reaffirmation of the standard made up of the following phases:
 - 8.3.3.1. First public announcement to inform that the standard is being reviewed; the proposal may be published partially or entirely during this announcement.
 - 8.3.3.2. Second public announcement and inviting Key Stakeholders for Standard Review Committee (SRC) / Technical Committee (TC) formation (refer clause 10.3).
 - 8.3.3.3. Selection of the SRC/TC (refer clause 10.5).
 - 8.3.3.4. Complete working draft (refer clause 10.1).

- 8.3.3.4.1. If the proposal recommends reaffirmation, there shall be no working draft.
 - 8.3.3.5. Training and preparing the SRC/TC (refer clause 10.7).
 - 8.3.3.6. Complete committee draft (refer clause 11.2.2).
 - 8.3.3.7. Complete enquiry draft (refer clause 11.2.3).
 - 8.3.3.8. Public consultation:
 - 8.3.3.8.1. For reaffirmation of the standard, OR
 - 8.3.3.8.2. Of enquiry draft (at least 60 days; refer clause 12).
 - 8.3.3.9. Complete final draft (refer clause 11.2.4).
 - 8.3.3.10. Public consultation of final draft (at least 30 days; refer clause 12).
 - 8.3.3.11. Pilot testing (refer clause 14).
 - 8.3.3.12. Approval and publication (refer clause 15).
- 8.3.4. The Secretariat shall maintain records of the development of the standard, the reasons for the revision or reaffirmation, and how the objectives of the standard-setting are achieved.

Note: The intention is to be able to know what was changed, and why and how it was changed.

- 8.3.5. The Secretariat shall:
- 8.3.5.1. Publish the approved proposal on the MTCC website and social media in an appropriate format and content.
 - 8.3.5.2. Announce on the MTCC website and its social media that the standard is to be developed or reviewed and invite any input from the public with a closing date.
 - 8.3.5.3. Seek public feedback if there is a need to revise the standard when the proposal recommends reaffirmation of the standard without revision, in which case the Secretariat shall include the analysis that justified the reaffirmation.

9. The Working Draft

9.1. Working Draft – Development:

- 9.1.1. Developing the working draft should commence immediately after the first public announcement, if not earlier, and should be ready for the training of the SRC or TC participants.
- 9.1.2. The working draft is the first draft developed, based on the available information including the proposal. The working draft also establishes the following characteristics that would be appropriate for its users:
 - 9.1.2.1. Voice – MTCC’s voice, distinct from other organizations, is recognizable.
 - 9.1.2.2. Tone – the relationship between the standard and user; formal, business-like, authoritative.
 - 9.1.2.3. Technicality – level of technicality; target groups.
 - 9.1.2.4. Style – pattern of expression, sentence structure, word choice; disciplined, coherent.
 - 9.1.2.5. Diction – precision, unambiguous, formality, clarity.
 - 9.1.2.6. Syntax – sentence structure, length, arrangement, readability, pacing.
 - 9.1.2.7. Structure – organization of ideas, headings, paragraphs, transitions, logical flow.
 - 9.1.2.8. Format – font, size, spacing, paragraph, numbering, bullets, indent levels, page numbers, layout, use of bold, italics, capitalization, underline.
- 9.1.3. The Secretariat shall:
 - 9.1.3.1. Initiate the development of the working draft:
 - 9.1.3.1.1. Set its characteristics (refer clause 9.1.2).
 - 9.1.3.1.2. Include the information, ideas, opportunities and risks identified.
 - 9.1.3.1.3. Include issues, complaints and feedback about the standard (for existing standards) or subject matter (for new standards)
 - 9.1.3.1.4. Include evaluations of the standard against national laws and regulations, appropriate

benchmark standards, other relevant standards to identify potential gaps in the standard.

9.1.3.1.5. Ready a working draft that can be worked on by the Standards Review Committee (SRC) or Technical Committee (TC).

9.1.3.1.6. Ensure that the working draft is mature for review by the Standards Review Committee (SRC) or Technical Committee (TC).

10. Standards Review Committee and Technical Committee

Standards Review Committee (SRC) – An SRC is established with a broad range of stakeholders, representing diverse interests, to oversee standards that have wide-reaching impacts. Typical examples include sustainable forest management standards, which affect multiple sectors and communities.

Technical Committee (TC) – A TC is formed with a more focused group of stakeholders, representing specific interests, to develop standards that have targeted impacts. Typical examples include standards governing the accreditation of certification bodies, which primarily concern specialized professional groups.

10.1. Stakeholders – Identification and Mapping:

10.1.1. The Standards Review Secretariat shall prepare a specific stakeholder register, made up of stakeholders relevant for the standard (and not all stakeholders).

Example: MTCS ST 1002 Stakeholder Register

Note: The MTCC Stakeholder Register lists all stakeholders – and for significant stakeholders there are Stakeholder Management Plans, among which is the Communication Plan that records the effective methods of communicating with the stakeholder (refer MTCC Stakeholder Management procedure).

Note: The groups recognized in Agenda 21 of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, relevant for developing Sustainable Forest Management standards, are identified in the MTCC Stakeholder Register.

10.1.2. In the specific stakeholder register, the Standards Review Secretariat shall map and classify the stakeholders relevant to the standard's objectives and scope, categorising them by their roles as follows:

- 10.1.2.1. Impacting stakeholders – those developing the standard or relevant policies, laws and regulations that affect others.
 - 10.1.2.1.1. Primary role is to understand the impact of their work and align the standard and legal requirements and policies.
- 10.1.2.2. Affected stakeholders – affected from using the standard or its implementation.
 - 10.1.2.2.1. Primary role is to inform how communities, businesses, workers, farmers and societies are being affected and align the standard to have positive outcomes.
- 10.1.2.3. Key stakeholders – whose participation is critical in developing the standard such as/including scientific community, subject experts, users, industries, communities.
 - 10.1.2.3.1. Primary role is to produce a standard that will achieve its objectives.
- 10.1.2.4. Interested stakeholders – none of the above but interested to contribute to the development of the standard.
 - 10.1.2.4.1. Primary role is to monitor the development or revision of the standard and propose improvements.
- 10.1.3. For standards related to sustainable forest management, the Secretariat shall make every effort, while listing the relevant stakeholders, for them to also represent the groups identified in Agenda 21, comprising:
 - 10.1.3.1. Women
 - 10.1.3.2. Children and Youth
 - 10.1.3.3. Indigenous Peoples and their Communities
 - 10.1.3.4. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)
 - 10.1.3.5. Local Authorities/ Related Government Agencies
 - 10.1.3.6. Workers and Trade Unions
 - 10.1.3.7. Business and Industry
 - 10.1.3.8. Scientific and Technological Community
 - 10.1.3.9. Farmers (e.g. forest owners, tree farmers)

- 10.1.4. In the stakeholder Expectations Management Plan (refer Stakeholder Management procedure), any likely key issues relevant to the standard shall be recorded.
- 10.1.5. The Secretariat shall update the stakeholder mapping and register when there is a need.
- 10.2. Key Stakeholders – Competency Criteria for Members of the Standard Review Committee (SRC) or Technical Committee (TC):
 - 10.2.1. The Standards Review Secretariat shall prepare the knowledge and skills requirements that will be useful for members of the SRC/TC to develop, review, reaffirm or revise the standard.
 - 10.2.2. The SRC or TC may already be formed or be newly formed.
 - 10.2.2.1. If they are already formed, they may continue in the current structure or be replaced with some or all participants or be expanded with additional participants.
 - 10.2.3. Exception: In cases where the standard is relevant solely to a specific stakeholder group with technical expertise, the TC established to develop that standard shall comprise appointed stakeholders from that group, with no requirement to involve a broader range of stakeholders. A balanced representation of technical expertise shall be ensured to achieve a comprehensive output.
- 10.3. Inviting Key Stakeholders - Second Public Announcement
 - 10.3.1. The Standards Review Secretariat shall:
 - 10.3.1.1. Announce on the MTCC website and its social media the start of the standard-setting process, and shall include or reference in the announcement:
 - 10.3.1.1.1. The published proposal.
 - 10.3.1.1.2. The published standard-setting procedure or process chart.
 - 10.3.1.1.3. The different ways in which the public can participate in the standard-setting process.
 - 10.3.1.2. Publish the Key Stakeholder Competency Criteria knowledge and skills requirements for the SRC or TC on the MTCC website and its social media.

10.3.1.2.1. Other forms of announcements such as press releases, news articles, features in trade-press, social media or digital media would not require publication of the proposal, procedures or process charts.

10.3.1.3. Invite stakeholders from the public who can contribute to the development, review or revision of the standard to express their interest, expertise and contribution and to provide any relevant output

10.3.1.3.1. Various options shall be made available for the stakeholders to express their interest via email, call in, social media, messaging, write in, walk in or other methods.

10.3.1.4. In the meantime, the Key Stakeholder Competency Criteria with information on the proposal and standard-setting process will be sent to all stakeholders in the specific stakeholder register for them to nominate competent people.

10.3.1.4.1. Sufficient time, more than four calendar weeks, shall be given for these stakeholders to respond to the invitation.

10.3.1.4.2. The Standards Review Secretariat shall resolve any constraints or disadvantages they may have to their participation, unless such constraints are related to their legal obligations and commitments to other matters.

10.3.2. Where a TC, limited to a specific stakeholder group, is formed by appointment (refer clause 10.2.3) a public announcement shall not be required

10.4. Aligning the Standard-setting Process with Stakeholders

10.4.1. Should feedback from the public or stakeholders require adapting the standard-setting process for this specific standard or its SRC/TC, then the Standards Review Secretariat shall make appropriate changes to the process, without compromising the requirements of the PEFC ST 1001.

10.5. Selection of the Standards Review Committee (SRC)

- 10.5.1. From the responses to the invitation, the Standards Review Secretariat shall shortlist, with any further clarifications with the respondents, the most appropriate members for the SRC.
 - 10.5.1.1. Members of the SRC, selected from qualified respondents, are called participants or P-members.
 - 10.5.1.1.1. P-members will be involved in the development, review and revision of the standards.
 - 10.5.1.2. Other stakeholders, who had responded to the invitation, but had not been selected to the SRC may be given the opportunity to be observers, called O-members.
 - 10.5.1.2.1. O-members will be invited to review and feedback on the drafts put out for public consultation.
 - 10.5.1.2.2. O-members could also be other stakeholders who had not responded to the invitation to join the SRC.
- 10.5.2. P-members shall be selected, from the four groups – impacting, affected, key and interested stakeholders, based on the competency criteria.
 - 10.5.2.1. For standards related to sustainable forest management, the participants shall also represent:
 - 10.5.2.1.1. Geographical regions – Sabah, Sarawak and Peninsular Malaysia.
 - 10.5.2.1.2. The Agenda 21 groups identified in the stakeholder registry.
 - 10.5.2.1.3. The different genders recognized by Malaysian law.
- 10.5.3. In terms of participant numbers, the selection shall ensure that no single group dominates or is dominated by others.
- 10.5.4. Each P-member may designate an Alternative Member to attend meetings in their absence. The Alternative Member shall possess the same level of expertise and shall be bound by the same confidentiality and Conflict of Interest commitments as the primary member.

- 10.5.5. Each SRC member shall be provided with the MTCC Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct and shall be required to execute the Non-Disclosure Agreement, Conflict of Interest Declaration Form, and Personal Data Notice and Consent Form.

10.6. Ensuring Balanced Stakeholder Participation

- 10.6.1. A balanced stakeholder participation, as appropriate for the standard, can be achieved by having stakeholders representing the different classes, groups, geography and gender among them:

- 10.6.1.1. P-members of the SRC, and/or

- 10.6.1.2. O-members of the SRC, and/or

- 10.6.1.3. Standard Stakeholder Group that will be continuously updated on the activities of the SRC and will participate by their feedback. Such feedback shall be addressed by the SRC.

- 10.6.2. A balanced stakeholder participation in the SRC shall be ensured by:

- 10.6.2.1. Confirming stakeholders have the required competencies.

- 10.6.2.2. Training them, as provided in this procedure, to narrow the competency gaps between them and enhance their competencies.

- 10.6.2.3. Directing them to the sources of information that will better equip them to contribute to the standard-setting process.

- 10.6.2.4. Giving them sufficient time to prepare for the meetings.

- 10.6.2.5. Inviting them to clarify matters of concern before the meeting.

- 10.6.2.6. Allowing the use of different Malaysian languages, as preferred by P-members during meetings or communications.

- 10.6.2.7. Rephrasing statements, when necessary, for clarity during meetings.

- 10.6.2.8. Assigning 'buddies,' when necessary, to assist them clarify and present matters.

- 10.6.2.8.1. Buddies can be volunteers from academic institutions (students and employees), social service clubs and societies and professional

organizations and need not be among the registered stakeholders.

10.6.2.8.2. Buddies will assist the stakeholders by clarifying documents, webinars and other matters the stakeholders may not understand.

10.6.2.9. MTCC shall facilitate in the matching of buddies when required.

10.7. Preparing the Standards Review Committee (SRC) or Technical Committee (TC)

10.7.1. Participants (P-members) of the SRC/TC shall receive the:

10.7.1.1. MTCC Code of Conduct, confidentiality and privacy commitments for SRC and TC.

10.7.1.2. Terms of Reference.

10.7.1.3. Rules and Directives for Standards Development.

10.7.1.4. Working Draft of the standard.

10.7.2. The P-members, shall be trained or briefed on:

10.7.2.1. MTCC Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct, as well as the Non-Disclosure Agreement, Conflict of Interest Declaration Form, and Personal Data Notice and Consent Form.

10.7.2.2. The current version of the standard and/or similar standards.

10.7.2.3. Issues and concerns raised by stakeholders and the public.

10.7.2.4. The objectives and expected outcomes of the standard review or development process.

10.7.2.5. The working draft of the standard.

10.7.2.6. What is expected of the participants.

10.7.2.7. The standard-setting process and schedule.

10.7.2.8. The administrative formats used in the standard-setting process, their use and purpose.

10.7.2.9. The use of digital tools for work involved.

10.7.2.10. Access to any shared platform, cloud drives, or communication channels.

10.7.2.11. Contact people within MTCC for the work being done.

10.7.2.12. Any other matters as necessary.

10.8. Mandate of the Standard Review Committee (SRC) or Technical Committee (TC)

10.8.1. The Secretariat, depending on the standard and the type of revision or development, shall define the mandate of the SRC/TC.

10.8.2. The mandate shall typically include:

10.8.2.1. The term of the SRC/TC, whether:

10.8.2.1.1. Limited for a specific one-time review or revision.

10.8.2.1.2. Limited for a specific standard or group of standards, irrespective of the number of reviews or revisions.

10.8.2.2. The leadership, Chairpersonship, secretariat and member designations.

10.8.2.3. The responsibilities and authorities of the different roles in the SRC/TC.

10.8.3. Where the mandate allows the SRC/TC to form Sub-committees (SC) or Working Groups (WG), such SCs or WGs shall also be mandated.

10.8.3.1. Such SCs or WGs shall not have mandates, responsibilities or authorities exceeding those of the SRC/TC.

10.9. Structure of the Standard Review Committee (SRC) or Technical Committee (TC)

10.9.1. The SRC/TC shall have:

10.9.1.1. A Chairperson

10.9.1.1.1. The Chairperson shall facilitate the interactions and roles of the SC/TC and have the casting vote in case of a voting tie.

10.9.1.1.2. The CEO of MTCC shall be the Chairperson of the SRC/TC.

10.9.1.1.3. However, the CEO of MTCC may appoint a participant of the SRC/TC as the Chairperson.

10.9.1.2. A Secretariat

10.9.1.2.1. The Secretariat shall be tasked to coordinate, record, communicate and update the SRC/TC activities, including records of meetings, minutes and attendance of the committees.

10.9.1.2.2. The resources for the Secretariat shall be provided by MTCC.

10.9.2. The SRC/TC may form:

10.9.2.1. Working group (WG) or Sub-committee (SC) to perform specific work such as research, developing sub-sections of the standard or collating and consolidating sections developed by different WGs or SCs.

10.9.2.2. Participants of the WG/SC need not be from among the stakeholders.

10.9.2.3. The WG/SC shall have:

10.9.2.3.1. A Chairperson who shall facilitate the interactions and roles of the WG/SC and have the casting vote in case of a voting tie.

10.9.2.3.2. The Chairperson shall be an officer of MTCC and organize and use the resources of MTCC to execute the work of the WG/SC.

11. Standard Review, Reaffirmation, Revision and Development

11.1. Operations of the Standard Review Committee (SRC) or Technical Committee (TC)

11.1.1. Standardization – the SRC/TC shall:

11.1.1.1. Plan the production of the standard.

11.1.1.2. Develop new standards.

11.1.1.3. Review prevailing standards.

11.1.1.4. Reaffirm or revise prevailing standards.

11.1.1.5. Approve drafts and standards that have been revised or developed.

11.1.1.5.1. All standards must be finally ratified by the MTCC Board of Trustees.

11.1.2. Focus Groups – the SRC/TC may form Working Group (WG) or Sub-Committee (SC) to work on specific areas of the standard.

11.1.2.1. The WG/SC shall:

11.1.2.1.1. Develop, review, reaffirm or revise the entire standard or the portions of the standard assigned to it to the satisfaction of the SRC/TC.

- 11.1.2.1.2. Submit its work and drafts to the SRC/TC for review and approval.
 - 11.1.2.2. The WG/SC shall be dissolved when its work is satisfactorily completed.
- 11.1.3. Resources – the SRC/TC shall ensure that all members of the WG and SC:
 - 11.1.3.1. Are competent and suitable to perform the tasks assigned to them.
 - 11.1.3.2. Have access to the drafts and related documents generated throughout the standard-setting process.
 - 11.1.3.3. Have the means to contribute to the work of the groups and standard development, review and revision.
 - 11.1.3.3.1. All individual or sub-group feedback shall be recorded and considered by the WG/SC and/or the SRC/TC.
- 11.1.4. Methods – the SRC/TC shall use the necessary methods of communicating, interacting, referencing, consulting and writing to produce drafts and standards.
 - 11.1.4.1. Review and consider feedback, gap analysis, due diligence information, latest scientific knowledge, research and relevant emerging issues.
 - 11.1.4.2. Production of drafts and standards at any stage of its development is an iterative process where multiple versions of the drafts or standard are produced.
 - 11.1.4.2.1. While such iterative versions are not subjected to the MTCC Document Control Procedure, the members shall ensure the use of correct versions.
 - 11.1.4.3. Copies of the different versions before finalization of the drafts should not be made available to people not involved in the production of that version.
- 11.1.5. Public Consultation and Feedback – the SRC/TC shall:
 - 11.1.5.1. Publish or transmit the drafts for public consultation, via the responsible MTCC function, as required in Clause 12.

11.1.5.2. Consider all feedback on the further development of the standard. Record, analyse and show how the feedback was considered and handled (synopsis).

11.1.5.2.1. Since different feedback could be on the same matter, it can be aggregated and a comprehensive single response to the stakeholders should be sufficient.

11.1.5.2.2. The response or individual feedback can be published on the MTCC website and directly transmitted to the associated stakeholder.

11.1.5.2.3. The response can elaborate on how the standard was revised OR why the standard was not revised but reaffirmed.

11.1.6. Consensus – the SRC/TC shall work towards consensus among the stakeholders on the reaffirmation or final draft of standards before deciding on its approval. Consensus could be reached by the following means or any other similar means:

11.1.6.1. Giving all participants the opportunity to express their views on the final draft of the standard and having their views recorded.

11.1.6.2. Discussing among the participants to derive a commonly acceptable draft of the standard. Typically, this will be an in-person or remote meeting, where there is:

11.1.6.2.1. a verbal yes/no vote, or

11.1.6.2.2. a show of hands for a yes/no vote or

11.1.6.2.3. a statement on consensus from the Chairperson when there are no dissenting voices or hands (votes) or

11.1.6.2.4. a formal ballot or

11.1.6.2.5. other similar methods.

11.1.6.3. The voting threshold for consensus shall be determined by the Standards Review Secretariat depending on the scope and impact of the standard. The threshold votes could be:

11.1.6.3.1. A simple majority of the participants.

- 11.1.6.3.2. A two-thirds majority to approve and a quarter minority to reject.
 - 11.1.6.3.3. A two-thirds majority to approve and a one-third minority to reject.
 - 11.1.6.3.4. Or any other combination as determined by the Standards Review Secretariat.
 - 11.1.6.4. Participants will be given the opportunity to write in their views.
- 11.1.7. Sustained Opposition – the SRC/TC shall resolve any sustained opposition to a substantial issue before approving the standard.
 - 11.1.7.1. Sustained opposition occurs when an entire group or bloc of participating stakeholders oppose the approval.
 - 11.1.7.2. Sustained opposition needs to be clearly explained and recorded in SRC/TC records – ambiguous oppositions shall be rejected.
 - 11.1.7.3. However, opposition to national policies, laws, regulations and cultural norms, or to international commitments that form part of the standard are not valid.
 - 11.1.7.4. Substantial issues involve:
 - 11.1.7.4.1. Matters affecting sustainability, safety, trade, quality, or usability of the standard.
 - 11.1.7.4.2. Matters raised by entire groups of affected and impacting stakeholders.
 - 11.1.7.4.3. Matters that are not trivial. Issues such as choice of phrases, words, formatting, styles, editorials, or rare cultural practices are trivial matters.
 - 11.1.7.5. Records shall show that sustained opposition to substantial issues has been considered prior to decisions.
- 11.1.8. Dispute Resolution – the SRC/TC shall refer sustained opposition to substantial issues that cannot be resolved to the Standards Review Secretariat. Standards Review Secretariat shall:
 - 11.1.8.1. Initiate the MTCC Dispute Resolution Mechanism to address the opposition.

11.1.8.2. Shall expedite the matter to resolve the opposition by the time the standard is ready for publication.

11.1.8.3. The final decision of the dispute resolution mechanism shall prevail.

11.1.9. Complete the Standard – the SRC/TC shall:

11.1.9.1. Continue to develop, review, reaffirm and revise the standard, despite any sustained opposition that has been referred to the Standards Review Secretariat.

11.1.9.2. Ensure the usability (Clause 13.1) and auditability (Clause 13.2) of the standard.

11.1.9.3. Ensure the outcome of any dispute resolution has been considered by the SRC/TC in the standard.

11.1.9.4. Finalize the standard and submit to the Standards Review Secretariat.

11.1.9.5. Monitor further processes of the standard by the Standards Review Secretariat such as pilot testing the standard, approval and publishing.

11.1.9.5.1. Should pilot testing require further changes to the standard, the SRC/TC shall review and make the necessary changes to the standard.

11.1.9.5.2. Unless these changes are significant (as determined by the Standards Review Secretariat), there shall be no further public consultation.

11.1.9.5.3. At this stage the standard is deemed completed and ready for publication.

11.2. Types of Drafts and Standards

The number of drafts shall be determined by the Standards Review Secretariat, depending on the type of review and revision.

11.2.1. Working draft

11.2.1.1. Shall be prepared by MTCC.

11.2.1.2. The Standards Review Secretariat shall confirm the working draft's maturity and approve it for further processing by the SRC/TC.

- 11.2.2. Committee draft
 - 11.2.2.1. From the working draft, the SRC/TC or the WG/SC shall prepare the committee draft.
 - 11.2.2.2. The SRC/TC shall thereafter review and approve the committee draft for further processing.
- 11.2.3. Enquiry draft
 - 11.2.3.1. The approved committee draft shall be put out for public consultation, particularly to the O-members.
 - 11.2.3.2. Feedback shall be considered by the SRC/TC and the draft shall be updated appropriately.
- 11.2.4. Final draft
 - 11.2.4.1. After feedback on the enquiry draft has been considered, the SRC/TC shall update and approve the final draft.
 - 11.2.4.2. The final draft shall be put out for public consultation, particularly to the O-members.
- 11.2.5. Standard
 - 11.2.5.1. After all feedback on the final draft standard has been considered, the SRC/TC shall update and approve the publication of the standard.

12. Public Consultation

12.1. Drafts for Public Consultation

- 12.1.1. Public consultation involves making the Enquiry Draft and Final Draft freely available for stakeholders or the public to review and give feedback.
 - 12.1.1.1. The drafts shall be made publicly available on the MTCC website.
 - 12.1.1.2. O-members shall be directly invited to review the online published drafts.
 - 12.1.1.2.1. Where there are known cases of O-members not having access to the online drafts, the Standards Review Secretariat shall make these drafts available to them by other means.

12.2. Public Consultation Period

- 12.2.1. The minimum period of public consultation shall be counted from at least 1 working day after the O-members have been notified.
- 12.2.2. For Enquiry Draft, the public consultation period is 60 calendar days
- 12.2.3. For Final Draft, the public consultation period is 30 calendar days.
 - 12.2.3.1. If offline methods of transmitting the drafts or notification are used, then additional days shall be included as necessary according to the method of transmitting or notification.

13. Applicability of Standard

13.1. Usability of the Standard

- 13.1.1. The Standards Review Secretariat, together with the SRC/TC, shall ensure that the readability level of the standards is as follows:
 - 13.1.1.1. MUET Band 4 readability level if a version translated to the National Language is made available. (Flesch Readability Ease approx. equivalent is 50 to 70)
 - 13.1.1.2. MUET Band 3 readability level if a version in the National Language is not available. (Flesch Readability Ease approx. equivalent is 70 to 80)

13.2. Auditability of the Standard

- 13.2.1. The Standards Review Secretariat, together with the SRC/TC, shall ensure that the standard is auditable.
- 13.2.2. Auditability could be confirmed by checking if the requirement is:
 - 13.2.2.1. Specific to one matter or group of matters.
 - 13.2.2.2. Clearly explained and understandable without needing to seek clarification.
 - 13.2.2.3. Unambiguous and cannot have different meanings.
 - 13.2.2.4. Verifiable from records, interviews, observations, experiments, tests.
 - 13.2.2.5. Reproducible and repeatable – it should be possible for the requirement to be reproduced for audit purposes.

14. Pilot Testing

14.1. Need for Pilot Test

- 14.1.1. Pilot testing is done to validate the draft standard for its clarity, consistency, feasibility, practicability and ability to meet requirements and achieve the desired outcomes.
- 14.1.2. The SRC/TC together with the Standards Review Secretariat shall determine if pilot testing of a new or revised standard is required based on the following criteria:
 - 14.1.2.1. Unfamiliarity: Does the standard introduce new concepts, methods, technology or other matters that have not been applied and tested before.
 - 14.1.2.2. Impact: The impact the standard will have on stakeholders and society.
 - 14.1.2.3. Complexity: The requirements are technically demanding and open to misinterpretation.
 - 14.1.2.4. Risk: There could be high risk of misapplication and safety.
 - 14.1.2.5. Any other relevant matters.
- 14.1.3. New standards for sustainable forest management system shall require pilot testing.

14.2. Risk Assessment

- 14.2.1. The Standards Review Secretariat shall decide whether risk assessment is required to determine the need for pilot testing and perform if needed.
 - 14.2.1.1. This risk assessment is about risks when there is no pilot testing and is different from the risk assessment performed to determine risks if the standard is implemented.

14.3. Executing the Pilot Test

- 14.3.1. The Standards Review Secretariat, together with the SRC/TC, SC and WG shall plan, organize, execute, evaluate and report on the pilot testing.
- 14.3.2. Participating organizations in pilot testing shall be representative of the industry.
- 14.3.3. When participation is only by a single organization, the test must consider situations in other organizations of the industry.

- 14.3.4. All persons involved in implementing the draft standard for pilot testing, monitoring, recording, verifying, auditing and reporting shall be trained.
- 14.3.5. Interpretation of the standard shall be tested by requiring participants from different organizations to express their understanding of the requirements.
- 14.3.6. Inconsistencies shall be evaluated for improvements in the wording of the standard for making improvements.
- 14.3.7. Scenario mapping and risk assessment shall be performed prior to any implementation testing on the operations.
- 14.3.8. If the risk level is low, it is not necessary to perform test on the operations. Instead, pilot testing can be concluded from scenario mapping.
- 14.3.9. High risk operations should be selected for trial implementation.
- 14.3.10. Parallel operations should be created, if necessary. to prevent disruptions to normal operations.
- 14.3.11. Where parallel operations cannot be created, and inline testing must be done, the process outputs should be isolated and only returned to the process when confirmed suitable.
- 14.3.12. The methods of converting the operations for pilot testing and reverting to normal operations shall be risk assessed and confirmed as safe to perform.
- 14.3.13. The quantity, period and frequency of pilot test, as applicable, shall be determined based on the risk assessment.
- 14.3.14. The persons to monitor the testing, collect information and type of information shall be identified.
- 14.3.15. Further to the objectives of the pilot testing, any unintended outcomes, both positive and negative, shall be recorded.

14.4. Deciding on the Pilot Test

- 14.4.1. Upon completion of the pilot testing, information shall be compiled and submitted to the SRC/TC who will:
 - 14.4.1.1. Carry out any further revisions to the standard.
 - 14.4.1.2. Finalize the standard according to their operational processes.
 - 14.4.1.3. Submit to the Standards Review Secretariat.

- 14.4.2. Standards Review Secretariat shall:
 - 14.4.2.1. Determine if public consultation is required and act accordingly.
 - 14.4.2.2. Finalize the drafting of the standard.

14.5. Deciding on the Effective Date and Transition Period

- 14.5.1. The SRC/TC shall determine when the standard will come into effect.
 - 14.5.1.1. It shall not be more than one year after the publication of the standard.
- 14.5.2. The SRC/TC shall determine the transition period, if any, from the earlier standard to the new standard for recertification. Transition periods:
 - 14.5.2.1. Are stated on the cover page of the standard. Unless justified by exceptional circumstances, it shall not exceed one year after publication of the revised standard.
 - 14.5.2.1.1. An example of such exceptional circumstances is when the recertification date is less than six months after the final transition date (eighteen months after publication of the standard).

15. Approval and Publication

15.1. Final Approval of the Standard

- 15.1.1. The Final Draft shall be:
 - 15.1.1.1. Validated by the Board of Trustees.
 - 15.1.1.2. Endorsed by PEFC if it is a PEFC benchmark standard.
 - 15.1.1.3. Ratified by the Board of Trustees.
- 15.1.2. The cover and front pages of the standard shall thereafter be finalized. It shall contain:
 - 15.1.2.1. Name, logo and contact information of MTCC
 - 15.1.2.2. A statement on the official language of the standard and any official translations and their status.
 - 15.1.2.3. A statement on which language version of the standard is the reference when there is inconsistency between the language versions.

- 15.1.2.4. Whether it is a new standard, a technical revision, structural revision, time-critical revision, amendment, editorial revision, or a reaffirmed standard.
- 15.1.2.5. The date of approval and date of coming into effect.
- 15.1.2.6. The transition period for organizations applying the standard to conform to the latest revision. The transition period shall not exceed one year unless justified by exceptional circumstances.
- 15.1.2.7. The International Classification of Standards number.
- 15.1.2.8. The latest date for the next periodic review.

15.2. Endorsement by PEFC for PEFC benchmark standards

The PEFC endorsement process for national certification systems is a rigorous, independent assessment designed to ensure that national standards align with the PEFC Sustainability Benchmark. Based on PEFC GD 1007, the typical process spans approximately 22 weeks and follows these chronological steps:

15.2.1. Application and Pre-Check

- 15.2.1.1. Submission: MTCC prepares and submits the system documentation, including standard-setting procedures, development reports, and a completed PEFC checklist in English.
- 15.2.1.2. Acceptance: The PEFC Council Secretariat checks the application for completeness and verifies MTCC's financial standing. If not accepted, MTCC updates the documentation and resubmits.

15.2.2. Public Consultation and Assessor Selection

- 15.2.2.1. International Consultation: A minimum 60-day public consultation is announced on the PEFC website to gather stakeholder feedback.
- 15.2.2.2. System Webinar: At the start of the consultation, MTCC hosts a webinar to present the system's structure and development process.
- 15.2.2.3. Assessor Appointment: An independent, PEFC-registered assessor is selected through a call for tenders to carry out the evaluation.

15.2.3. Technical Assessment

15.2.3.1. Stakeholder Survey: The assessor conducts a survey of stakeholders involved in the standard-setting process to verify the development report.

15.2.3.2. Draft Report: Within 5 weeks of starting, the assessor evaluates the system against the PEFC benchmark and issues a Draft Report identifying any conformities or nonconformities.

15.2.3.3. Commenting Period: MTCC has 3 weeks to provide additional information, comments, or amendments to the documentation.

15.2.3.4. Field Assessment: For initial assessments, the assessor visits the region to interview MTCC and stakeholders (usually during the comment period).

15.2.4. Finalization and Decision

15.2.4.1. Final Draft Report: The assessor incorporates feedback and field findings into a Final Draft Report within 3 weeks.

15.2.4.2. Internal Review: The PEFC Council Secretariat performs a 2-week quality assurance review of the report.

15.2.4.3. Final Report: The assessor responds to internal review comments and produces the Final Report within 2 weeks, providing a recommendation for endorsement.

15.2.5. Assessment Outcomes and Nonconformities

15.2.5.1. The assessor categorizes findings into three types:

15.2.5.1.1. Conformity: The system fully meets the requirement.

15.2.5.1.2. Minor Nonconformity: A low-impact issue that must typically be corrected within 6 months of endorsement.

15.2.5.1.3. Major Nonconformity: A high-impact issue that prevents endorsement until it is corrected.

15.2.6. The Decision:

15.2.6.1. PEFC Board of Directors: Reviews the Final Report and, if satisfied, makes a recommendation to the General Assembly.

15.2.6.2. PEFC General Assembly: The highest authority makes the final vote on whether to endorse the system.

15.2.7. Publication on PEFC website

15.2.7.1. Endorsement decision.

15.2.7.2. Final assessment report.

15.2.7.3. Endorsed system documents.

15.2.7.4. Next review date.

15.3. Publication and Availability of the Standard

15.3.1. The Standards Review Secretariat shall launch or reaffirm the standard. The launching of the standard may be by:

15.3.1.1. Publishing it on the MTCC website and any other associated websites.

15.3.1.1.1. This is done within 14 days of final ratification of the standard or as otherwise determined by the MTCC Board of Trustees;

15.3.1.1.2. A Digital Object Identifier (DOI) may be assigned to the document on the websites.

15.3.1.1.3. Downloads of the standard shall be made available to the public without any cost.

15.3.1.1.4. Security to prevent editing shall be included in the digital standard.

15.3.1.2. Providing printed copies to the P-members and O-members at no cost.

15.3.1.2.1. Done within 2 months of final ratification of the standard.

15.3.1.3. Publicity campaigns with the goal of promoting sustainable forest management among the public.

15.3.1.3.1. Done at a time deemed most effective, especially for promoting sustainable forest management.

15.3.1.3.2. If any copies of the standard are given out, it shall be at no cost.

- 15.3.2. The reaffirmation of the standard by:
 - 15.3.2.1. Publishing the reaffirmation on the MTCC website and any other associated websites.
 - 15.3.2.1.1. This is done within 14 days of final ratification of the reaffirmation.

16. Information Control and Knowledge Management

16.1. Control of Documents and Information

- 16.1.1. The standard shall be subjected to the Document Control procedures of MTCC.
- 16.1.2. Records and Information generated during the standard-setting process that may be required for later reference and reporting shall be subject to the Document Control procedures.
 - 16.1.2.1. The retention period of the records and information shall be determined according to the Document Control procedure.
 - 16.1.2.1.1. The guiding principles of retaining records and information of standard-setting processes is to understand how the standard developed, the objectives and decisions for future references when the standard undergoes reviews, reaffirmation, revisions, expansions, consolidation with other standards, withdrawal and other changes.
- 16.1.3. The availability of controlled documents and information for public viewing and references shall be subjected to prevailing laws, regulations and MTCC procedures, directives and instructions.

16.2. Reporting and Knowledge Management of the Standard-setting Process

- 16.2.1. The Standards Review Secretariat shall:
 - 16.2.1.1. Compile and consolidate all documents and information related to the development, review, reaffirmation and revision of the standard, including details and activities of the stakeholders in the standard-setting process.
 - 16.2.1.2. Produce any reports that may be required by national laws and policies, endorsement bodies, other national and international bodies.

16.2.1.2.1. PEFC, as the endorsement body, provides guidance on the preparation of standard development reports that should be referred to.

16.2.2. The Standards Review Secretariat shall:

16.2.2.1. Identify, classify and index, as and when necessary, for retaining and referencing the documents and information for training purposes.

16.2.2.2. Make the development report publicly available.

17. Post Publication

17.1. Status of the Committees and Working Groups after Publication

17.1.1. The Standards Review Secretariat shall determine:

17.1.1.1. If the committees and working groups shall be dissolved and act accordingly.

17.1.1.1.1. Any dissolution of the committees and working groups shall be made after 6 calendar months from the publication of the standard. This is to attend to any further feedback, complaints and appeals.

17.1.2. The CEO Office shall determine if the SRC/TC shall continue to function as the Standard Maintenance Committee, responsible to:

17.1.2.1. Keep track of stakeholder feedback, implementation challenges and new developments in the field.

17.1.2.2. Advise the CEO Office of any need to revise, amend or withdraw the standard before its scheduled review.

17.1.2.3. Respond to requests for interpretation from users, auditors, certification bodies, and regulators, and when necessary, generate official interpretation documents.

17.1.2.4. Review whether the standard's requirements remain auditable, measurable, and practical and propose changes as necessary.

17.1.2.5. Monitor regulatory, market, and technological trends that may affect the standard to ensure the standard remains relevant.

17.1.2.6. Keep a record of discussions, proposed changes, and technical justifications to ensure traceability of decisions for future revisions.

17.1.2.7. Initiate proposals to ensure the standard remains up-to-date, useful, and fit for purpose.

17.2. Feedback, Complaints and Appeals

17.2.1. Feedback, complaints and appeals regarding the standard received after publication but during the lifetime of the committees and working groups shall be vetted for relevance by the Standards Review Secretariat and reviewed by the SRC/TC.

17.2.1.1. If substantive, the standard shall be subjected to review and revision according to this procedure.

17.2.1.2. If not substantive, review shall be made at scheduled times.

17.2.2. Feedback, not amounting to complaints or appeals, regarding the standard received after the committees and working groups have been disbanded shall be reviewed by the CEOs Office and treated as a proposal if substantive and subjected to this procedure.

17.2.3. Complaints and appeals received regarding the standard after the committees and working groups have been disbanded shall be subjected to the prevailing Complaints Handling and Dispute Resolution Mechanism of MTCC.