



**RULES FOR THE CONCESSION AND MAINTENANCE
OF CHAIN OF CUSTODY CERTIFICATION OF FOREST
BASED PRODUCTS (PEFC - CHAIN OF CUSTODY)**

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Technical rules

RULES FOR THE CONCESSION AND MAINTENANCE OF CHAIN OF CUSTODY CERTIFICATION OF FOREST
BASED PRODUCTS (PEFC-CHAIN OF CUSTODY)

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CHAPTER 1 – AIM

1.1

These Rules describe the procedures applied by RINA for the issue of chain of custody certification of forest based products (PEFC-COC) and how the certificate can be applied for, obtained, maintained and used, as well as its possible suspension and withdrawal.

1.2

The terminology used in these Rules complies with the terminology of the Standards: ITA 1002 and ITA 1003¹.

CHAPTER 2 – DEFINITIONS

2.1

PEFC: Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes
GR: Organisation applying for group certification
CoC: Chain of Custody
GVI: Audit Team
NC: Non Conformity
AC: Corrective Action

CHAPTER 3 – GENERAL

3.1

The certification system contemplated in these Rules represents an implementation of the ITA 1002 and ITA 1003 Standards for chain of custody certification of an organisation which operates in the field of forest based products.

Thanks to this certification, it is possible for an organisation which produces, transforms or markets forest based products to guarantee the origin from sustainable forest management of the wood it uses through traceability of the raw wood material throughout the chain according to the requirements contained in the above documents.

The chain of custody requirements describe how to transfer the information concerning the origin of the raw materials acquired to the information on the origin of the organisation's products.

3.2

Access to the RINA services contained in these Rules is open to all organisations and does not depend on whether they belong to an association or group, provided they come under the field of application of the certification scheme for chain of

custody of forest based products, in the following called PEFC-CoC.

In relation to certification, RINA will apply its current fees, guaranteeing fairness and uniform application to every type of product.

3.3

In connection with the application of these Rules, RINA does not provide consultancy services to organisations for the establishment of a management system or for the implementation of procedures aimed at ensuring compliance with the requirements of the ITA 1002 and ITA 1003 Standards.

3.4

In order to be able to start the certification process, at the time of the audit, the organisation must be able to demonstrate availability of supplies for the product groups subject to certification.

CHAPTER 4 – CHAIN OF CUSTODY CERTIFICATION PROCESS

4.1

Organisations wishing to obtain chain of custody certification must provide RINA with the main data of their organisation/production and location of the site(s) where the product to be certified is made by sending the "Informative Questionnaire" (Available upon request), on the basis of which RINA will prepare an offer and which must contain at least the following information:

- company name and address of applicant;
- name of contact person;
- location and characteristics of the production site(s);
- number of employees;
- number of production sites subject to certification;
- number and type of the groups of products subject to certification;
- type of certification (individual, multi-site (includes also group));
- wood species and activities involved;
- certification level (user companies, primary wood processing companies, secondary wood processing companies, commerce, other)
-
- outsourced activities;
- number of production lines dedicated to the production of PEFC products;
- number of staff involved in PEFC;
- size, in square metres, of the part of the site involved in PEFC;
- complexity of the facility;
- information related to project certification.

RINA performs an initial analysis in which it checks:

¹ Document issued by PEFC Italia and available from www.pefc.it

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- that the certification scope is in line with RINA accreditation;
- any items in the informative questionnaire not filled in or to be clarified with the client;
- that the necessary resources are available to carry out the audits within the time frame;
- that there are qualified resources able to perform the audits, bearing in mind the organisation's sector and the language used by the certification applicant (identifying the need for an interpreter where necessary);
- whether it is necessary to carry out on-site audits of sub-contractors and draw up a sampling plan of the sub-contractors and of the sites (in the case of multi-site or group organisations).

4.2

Organisations formalise their request by sending RINA the form "Request for certification of chain of custody of forest based products" (Available upon request) in which the product subject to chain of custody certification of forest based products is to be defined.

In the case of multi-site organisations, the head office signs and sends the certification request on behalf of all the sites / members of the group together with the list of participating sites.

On receipt of the request form and related enclosures and following a preliminary review to ensure they're complete, RINA will send the organisation written confirmation of acceptance of the request.

The organisation's request and related acceptance by RINA contractually formalise the latter's activities carried out according to these Rules.

RINA communicates the names of the auditors who will perform the audit to the organisation; the latter may object to the appointment of the members of the audit team giving its reasons, within 3 days of the communication of the names.

Together with the request or in any case, prior to the on-site audit, the list of PEFC-CoC procedures implemented is to be sent to RINA.

The documentation indicated in 4.2 will be kept by RINA for its files.

RINA appoints the audit team and sends them the information necessary to perform the audit. On the basis of the information received, the audit plan is drawn up and sent to the organisation.

4.3

During the on-site audit of the production site, it will be checked that effective procedures are in place and implemented to ensure traceability of the origin of the raw material using the method defined for the calculation of the certified raw material, definition of product groups, organisational structure with the definition of the roles and responsibilities relating to

chain of custody, training of the personnel involved in maintaining the system, a system of internal audits, management of complaints and assessment of the level of risk of having controversial sources as origin of the raw materials used, compliance with social requirements and with occupational health and safety requirements as stated in the ITA 1002 Standards, as well as knowledge of the proper use of the logo.

4.4

In the case of associate applicants, the site audit is performed by sampling. Sampling will cover all the types of applicant organisations (user companies, primary wood processing companies, secondary wood processing companies, commerce, other).

In the case of complex organisations, which carry out activities involving several different types, assignment of the type will be made on the basis of the organisation's prevailing type of activity.

The head office of the applicant Group or Multi-site is always audited and is in addition to the sampled sites to be audited.

The parameters considered for sampling are the number of subjects in the group requesting certification and the number of companies to be audited.

The minimum sample is obtained by means of the formula below:

$$x = \sqrt{n}$$

where:

x indicates, rounded up to the next whole figure, the number of companies to be audited;

n indicates the number of subjects in the group requesting certification.

RINA reserves the right to check, at least once in the five year period of validity, all the production sites subject to certification.

If the organisation intends to add a further set of sites to those already certified, the new set will be considered independently of those previously certified and therefore for them, the formula $x = \sqrt{n}$ will apply. For subsequent surveillance audits, all the sites will be considered together.

4.5

RINA reserves the right to perform on-site audits at suppliers that label the product directly and/or undertake part of the production on behalf of the organisation requesting chain of custody certification.

In general, all suppliers are subject to on-site audit who:

- carry out a lot of activities connected with production;
- classify or sort the material during the process contracted to them;
- label the product during the process contracted to them;
- do not physically return the PEFC certified product after carrying out the process contracted to

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them.

Therefore, the organisation is required to inform its suppliers about this necessity and obtain their consent.

4.6

At the end of the audit, the organisation will be given a copy of the audit report containing any non conformities found and observations made.

The organisation may note down any reservations or observations it has regarding the non conformities or findings highlighted by the RINA auditors in the specific space in the audit report.

The contents of the report will subsequently be confirmed by RINA in writing.

If there is no written communication from RINA, the report is considered confirmed 5 days after it has been delivered to the organisation.

After analysing the causes of any non conformities contained in the above report, the organisation is to propose to RINA the necessary corrective actions and time required to implement them in the specific field in the audit report. RINA will inform the organisation whether it accepts these proposals.

No certificate will be issued until all the major NC have been resolved and the proposed corrective actions for the minor NC have been accepted, as established in Guide EA 6/01.

4.7

The following are considered major non conformities:

- the total lack of consideration of one or more requirements of the PEFC Standard; a situation which could result in:
 - non compliance with one or more requirements of these RINA Rules for chain of custody certification for the wood sector;
 - a serious deficiency, in the opinion of the audit team based on its experience, in the implementation of the procedures, to the detriment of the guarantee of traceability of the origin of the wood raw material used.

A minor non conformity is considered:

- partial or formal non compliance with a requirement of the PEFC Standard such as not to permit the proper functioning of the Chain of Custody System.

A recommendation is considered:

- an improvement suggestion which does not have direct bearing on the requirements of the reference standards.

Major or minor non conformities may also arise as a result of total or partial non compliance with this document.

Non conformities related to group or multi-site organisations are recorded in the audit report, divided according to:

- non-conformities found at central office level and potentially due to:

- o failure to fulfil a responsibility at the operational level (i.e. administration, internal audits, keeping records, use of the mark);
 - o failure to ensure that the sites covered by the certification scope comply with the requests for corrective action issued by the certification body or by central office;
 - o insufficiency in site responsibility, sufficient in number to demonstrate that organisational control is not operating properly.
- non conformities found at site level could be due to:
- o inability to manage responsibility at site level (for example: prompt communication of adequate information, effective responses to internal corrective actions, correct use of the mark, etc.);
 - o non compliance with the requirements of the applicable PEFC standard by the operational site.

4.8

The organisation must define the corrective actions, for both major and minor NC, within 10 days of issue of the corresponding NC and approved by RINA before the certificate is issued.

In the case of major non conformities in relation to the reference standards, the certification validation process is suspended.

In such cases, a supplementary audit will be carried out within 3 months to check that the proposed corrective actions have been properly implemented; following the successful outcome of this audit, the certification process of the chain of custody will be resumed.

If the 3 month period is exceeded without the possibility of verifying implementation of the corrective actions proposed, the certification process is suspended and will be subject to a complete review within 12 months from the date of the finding.

At the end of the 12 month period, if the assessment is not positive, RINA reserves the right to definitively close the certification file and charge for the time and expenses incurred until then. In such a case, if the organisation intends to pursue RINA certification, it will have to submit a new request and repeat the entire certification process.

Minor NC can be resolved within a year and checked during the annual surveillance audit.

If a minor NC is not resolved, it is reissued as a major NC and therefore will have to be resolved within the following 3 months, as described above.

The above time limits may, in special cases, be modified, at the discretion of RINA and following a justified reason by the organisation.

4.9

If the outcome of the on site audit is positive, the documentation produced by the audit team is submitted to independent technical review. The technical reviewer appointed to perform the final review of the documentation prepared by the audit team may request further clarification or modify the classification of one or more findings identified by the auditors.

Should the decision be taken not to issue the certificate, RINA will inform the organisation in writing, giving its reasons. The organisation will be required to pay for the audit activities contained in the accepted offer, even if the outcome of the certification process is negative.

Once the checks have been successfully completed, a certificate of compliance with the PEFC-CoC scheme will be issued, valid for five years. The outcome of the decision is communicated to the applicant through dispatch of the certificate and to the association PEFC-Italia (Regulatory Body) by transmitting the identification data of the certificate.

4.10

The certificate, both in Italian and in English, will contain the following information:

- company name;
- legal representative of the applicant organisation;
- any adherents to the group or multi-site;
- field of application (type of products, wood species and activities involved in the CoC);
- current edition of the reference standards;
- certification level;
- method (physical separation-percentage)/ CoC approach (simple percentage-rolling percentage);
- certificate number;
- date of issue;
- expiry date;
- national accreditation information (including accreditation number and name of the accreditation body and RINA accreditation number).

4.11

A preliminary on-site audit to check the general state of implementation of the PEFC-CoC scheme may be made, subject to agreement with the organisation.

CHAPTER 5 – MAINTENANCE OF CERTIFICATION

5.1

Following issue of the certificate and in order to verify that the Chain of Custody (CoC) system remains compliant with the requirements of the Standard, at least one annual surveillance audit will be carried out. The organisation is only required to send RINA the completed questionnaire if changes have been made compared to what was previously stated.

Moreover, during the surveillance audits, a check is made to verify that the NC found during the previous audit have been resolved, to verify the proposed and implemented AC and to verify the sites not previously sampled in the case of a multi-site/group.

The duration of the surveillance audits and the site sampling methods are undertaken according to the requirements established in the ITA 1003 Standard.

The audits are performed according to the UNI EN ISO 19011 Standard, as required by the ITA 1003 Standard.

Following the positive outcome of the on-site audit, the organisation is given an audit report containing any findings identified. The findings are to be resolved in accordance with the same methods described for first certification.

Following the positive outcome of the on-site audit, the documentation produced by the audit team is submitted to independent technical review. The technical reviewer appointed to perform the final review of the documentation prepared by the audit team may request further clarification or modify the classification of one or more findings identified by the auditors. Should the decision be taken not to maintain the certificate, RINA will inform the organisation in writing, giving its reasons. The organisation will be required to pay for the audit activities contained in the accepted offer, even if the outcome of the surveillance activities is negative.

The certificates cannot be kept if the organisation has not proposed corrective actions, accepted by RINA, related to the NC found.

The organisation has three months in which to solve the major NC; should they not be resolved in this time limit, the certificate will automatically be suspended.

In the case of a change to the field of application of the certificate, for example due to an increase/reduction in the groups of products, RINA will re-issue the certificate with the appropriate amendments, following the positive result of the on-site surveillance audit and the positive outcome of the independent technical review.

CHAPTER 6 – SUPPLEMENTARY AUDITS

The organisation must inform RINA of any changes or need to extend the scope of its certificate. Supplementary audits may be of a documental nature or on site.

On-site supplementary audits may be performed in the following cases:

- verification of the implementation of corrective action related to major NC, within 3 months of the date when the NC were issued;
- pre-audit request to assess whether the company is ready for the certification audit;
- any communications received by RINA relevant to non compliance by the certified organisation with one or more requirements of the PEFC Standard for Chain of Custody;
- requests to modify the certificate which do not change the number of man/days.

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If the surveillance audit is not far off, any requests for certificate extension or modification can be taken into account during this audit.

As concerns the request for scope extension of the certificate in the case of new sites for group or multi-site certification or new products subject to certification, it might not be possible to treat it as a supplementary audit but rather as new certification.

A change of scope can only be made provided it does not involve an extension to the expiry date of the certificate beyond the period for which it was originally issued.

RINA reserves the right to carry out an audit on site before making a decision regarding the request to modify the scope of the certificate.

In particular, for each change for which a supplementary audit is required by RINA, the organisation cannot issue any certificate concerning certified products derived from these changes until RINA has notified the organisation that it can do so.

If the audit outcome is positive, RINA will amend the scope of the previously issued certificate, ask the organisation to destroy any copies of the previous certificate it still has and will issue a new certificate.

CHAPTER 7 – CERTIFICATE RENEWAL

7.1

On expiry of the certificate, valid for 5 years, a certification renewal audit will be performed.

This audit will be carried out in compliance with the ISO 19011 Standard and using, for group or multi-site companies, the sampling methods established in the ITA 1003 Standard.

7.2

The renewal audit is carried out the same way as the first certification audit and aims to check the same audit elements audited during the first certification audit.

CHAPTER 8 – WITHDRAWAL, SUSPENSION OR SURRENDER OF CERTIFICATES

8.1

If, during a certification maintenance audit, one of the following situations occurs:

- improper or misleading use or advertising by the organisation of the certificate obtained;
- the organisation hinders the performance of the audit;
- the organisation does not fulfil the financial commitments made at the time it stipulated the contract with RINA;
- identification of particularly serious NC;
- the organisation has not implemented corrective action, following major NC found;

- use of the PEFC logo without having obtained the user licence from PEFC Italia or for non-payment of the annual fee for use of the logo;
- any other situation covered by the document "General contract conditions governing system, product and personnel certification"

the certificate will be suspended. The suspension measure is notified to the organisation and to PEFC-Italia. The organisation has 3 months in which to implement the necessary corrective action and a supplementary audit will be made; if this audit is successful, the suspension may be revoked.

If it is not possible to eliminate the causes leading to suspension of the certificate within 3 months, the certificate is revoked and its use prohibited.

In the period between suspension of the certificate and revocation of suspension, the products obtained cannot be declared as conforming.

On revocation of the certificate, the organisation must immediately cease using it and/or in the case of group or multi-site organisations, must cease using all sub-certificates.

From the time of suspension, withdrawal of the certificate, cancellation of the contract due to renouncement or expiry of the terms of validity, the client will be required to:

- immediately stop using any PEFC mark on products and/or promotional material;
- immediately stop selling the products previously labelled and marked using the PEFC mark;
- immediately stop using statements which may suggest the organisation complies with the certification requirements.

Moreover, if the certificate is withdrawn, the organisation is required to:

- return the certificate to RINA and undertake to destroy all electronic and paper copies in its possession;
- remove, at its own expense, the PEFC mark, PEFC statements and RINA logo from all products, documents, advertising material.

The decision to withdraw a certificate and the pertinent reason(s) are communicated to the organisation concerned as well as to PEFC-Italia.

In the case of a certificate which has been withdrawn or has expired, the certified products which left the organisation when the certificate was still valid continue to be certified even after the certificate has been withdrawn or has expired; vice versa, the products which have not yet left the organisation certified at the time of withdrawal or expiry of the validity of the certificate, can no longer be considered as certified products, with immediate effect.

8.2

The organisation may surrender its certificate at any time by informing RINA in writing.

RINA will inform PEFC-Italia of the decision to surrender the certificate.

CHAPTER 9 - EXTENSION

The organisation may ask RINA, in writing and for a justified reason (no orders, considerable organisational changes, other), for a delay not exceeding three months from the date of the surveillance audit. RINA will assess the request and decide whether to grant it or not.

CHAPTER 10 – RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE CERTIFIED ORGANISATION

10.1

The organisation has the right to:

- advertise the fact that it has obtained PEFC certification, always in compliance with the method of use of the logo, as established in the pertinent PEFC standard and in these Rules.

10.2

The organisation must:

- not use certification on products which are not subject to certification or induce a similar doubt;
- not transfer the certification acquired except in cases where the organisation could be transferred or transformed. In this case, the organisation undertakes to promptly inform RINA, which takes note after checking that no changes to the chain of custody control system have been made;
- maintain its chain of custody system active during the period of validity of the certificate;
- use the PEFC logo correctly, according to the requirements for use specified in these Rules and in the pertinent PEFC standards;
- inform RINA of any changes to the organisation (company management, human resources, production processes, etc.);
- always comply with the certification requirements, even in the case of changes communicated to RINA;
- provide adequate assistance to the audit team during the first certification audit and during subsequent maintenance audits, also allowing access to premises and offices, production sites, products and documents subject to audit, including those of sub-contractors;
- implement the AC proposed in relation to the NC found during the audits;
- allow access to the sites and to confidential information (also of subcontractors) and to the authorised representatives of the accreditation bodies;
- pay the contractually fixed fees even if the certificate is not issued or it is withdrawn or suspended;
- ensure the possibility of performing on-site audits at their suppliers;
- bring its chain of custody system into line with any amendments to the reference standards/RINA Rules in accordance with the time frame established in these Rules.

CHAPTER 11 – AMENDMENTS TO THE STANDARDS

11.1

RINA reserves the right to inform its client organisations of all important amendments/updates to the chain of custody reference standards, specifying the action to be taken and the time within which it is to be implemented.

Unless established otherwise, the organisation will have 12 months in which to comply with the new PEFC requirements and with the consequent amendments to these Rules.

The organisation may decide to comply with the new requirements or to relinquish its certificate, informing RINA accordingly.

CHAPTER 12 – USE OF THE LOGO AND CERTIFICATE

12.1

Use of the logo is granted by PEFC-Italia.

The PEFC logo can be used by the certificate holder:

- together with the RINA logo;
- together with other individual or group marks.

The logo may be combined with three claims:

- “This product (or part of it or product name) is from sustainably managed forests and controlled sources” (wording on PEFC certified products);
- “This product (or part of it or product name) is from sustainably managed forests, recycled and controlled sources” (wording on PEFC certified products);
- “Promoting sustainable forest management” (wording for off-product use of the logo).

In addition to the above wording, the claim:

“X% PEFC certified” is included on labels of PEFC certified products.

The PEFC logo can be used:

- directly on the product (products without packaging, on products with individual packaging, containers, wrapping, etc. or on large boxes, crates, etc. used for transporting the products);
- on the documentation associated with the product (i.e. invoices, transport documents, advertising, brochures, etc.) where use of the logo refers to specific products.

Any use which may be received or interpreted by the purchaser or by the public as referring to a specific product and/or to the origin of the raw material contained in the product is considered as use on the product.

If the certified organisation wants to use the logo in ways different from those described above, these will have to be approved by PEFC-Italia.

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The official claims are written in English but translations are permitted, if and in the way approved by the PEFC Council.

Uses other than those described above must be approved by PEFC-Italia and ultimately by the PEFC General Assembly.

RINA will monitor use of the logo granted to individual companies and to organisations which have group/multi-site certificates.

12.2

PEFC-Italia manages the rights to use the PEFC logo through a written contract.

A single certified company or an organisation which has obtained group or multi-site certification can apply to PEFC-Italia for a sub-licence to use the logo. An organisation which has obtained group or multi-site certification may grant use of the logo to its associates, if they ask for it and provided they are included on the certificate, through a written contract which also contains the rules for use of the logo.

The licensees of the sub-licences must check that the logo is being used correctly by the organisations to which they have granted the sub-licences, as per the rules attached to the sub-licence contract.

CHAPTER 13 – CONFIDENTIALITY

13.1

The information acquired during the activities carried out by RINA and related to chain of custody certification, is considered and treated as confidential.

CHAPTER 14 CHAIN OF CUSTODY FOR SPECIFIC PROJECTS

A project is a clearly defined tangible product or a correlated group of products which constitute a functional unit, manufactured and/or assembled in a particular site.

Thus, the project can involve several products (for example, several buildings) provided that all together they form only one functional unit.

The chain of custody for a product is based on the total contribution of certified raw material for the project overall which enables a single claim to be made for the proportion of certified raw material involved.

The duration of project certification is not limited and corresponds to the duration of the construction and monitoring of the project. In the case of chain of custody for specific projects, maintenance audits are thus not contemplated.

A documentary assessment is foreseen with evaluation of the project report and an on-site audit.

It is possible to obtain a Chain of Custody certificate before completion of the project, provided the expected content of certified raw material to be used is deduced from commitments made during the

planning stage through technical specifications and contracts with suppliers. In this case, RINA will carry out an on-site audit once the project has been completed aimed at verifying correspondence between the claims made during the design stage and the final calculation of certified raw material in the project.

CHAPTER 15 – APPEALS

15.1

An organisation may appeal against the decisions made by RINA, explaining their reasons for dissent, within 30 days of the date of notification of the decision.

RINA will examine the appeal within 2 months of its submission, possibly also consulting the organisation's representatives.

15.2

All expenses related to the appeal will be charged to the organisation except in cases of recognised good grounds to the contrary.

CHAPTER 16 - CONTRACTUAL CONDITIONS

16.1

For what concerns the contractual conditions, reference is to be made to the requirements contained in the RINA document "General contract conditions for the certification of systems, products and personnel", current edition, which can be downloaded from the site www.rina.org.

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