

FFCS 1001:2003, Alternative Implementation Levels of the Finnish Forest Certification System

This document is an unofficial translation (3 February 2004) of the original Finnish standard FFCS 1001:2003 text.

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1. Introduction

This standard belongs to series of standards in the Finnish Forest Certification System, preceded by SMS standards drafted in 1997 and 1998.

The other standards in the series address forest certification criteria, verification of chain of custody of timber and competence of auditors and vocabulary.

The Working Group on Forest Certification Standards has approved this standard in the meeting held on 29 September 2003.

The series of FFCS standards are administered and possessed by the Finnish Forest Certification Council (Suomen Metsäsertifiointi ry).

2. Scope and field of application

This standard defines

- Finnish Forestry as a Basis for Forest Certification Criteria,
- Framework of Forest Certification in Finland,
- Alternative implementation levels of the Finnish forest certification system:
 - group certification on the area of a forestry centre
 - group certification on the area of a forest management association and
 - certification of holdings of individual forest owners or of a group or forest owners
- preconditions set for the applicant of certification.

3. References

This standard is implemented in the forest certification according to the Finnish Forest Certification System together with the following FFCS standards:

FFCS 1000:2003 "Vocabulary";

FFCS 1002-1:2003 "Criteria for Group Certification for the Area of a Forestry Centre";

FFCS 1002-2:2003 "Criteria for Group Certification for the Area of a Forest Management Association";

FFCS 1002-3:2003 "Criteria for Certification of Holdings of Individual Forest Owners";

FFCS 1004:2003 "Qualification Criteria for Auditors and Certification Bodies; Certification Procedures";

SFS-EN ISO 14012 "Guidelines for environmental auditing. Qualification criteria for environmental auditors";

SFS-EN 45011 "General requirements for bodies operating product certification systems";

SFS-EN 45012 "General requirements for bodies operating assessment and certification/registration of quality systems";

SFS-EN ISO 19011:2002 Guidelines for quality and/or environmental management systems auditing (ISO 19011:2002).

4. Definitions

The definitions of the standard FFCS 1000:2003 are applied in this standard.

5. Finnish Forestry as a Basis for Forest Certification Criteria

Finland, for the most part, excluding the most south-western part and Åland Islands, belongs to the boreal coniferous zone. Legislation regulates forest management and silviculture in Finland. In addition, forest management guidelines and recommendations emphasise methods

that take into consideration the multiple values of forest use and characteristics of different habitats as well as the silvicultural methods respecting biological and environmental values. An objective in forest management – alongside economically viable timber production – is to maintain biological diversity and take into account other forest uses.

Finnish Forest Resources

In Finland, there are 26.3 million hectares of forestry land (86 % of Finland's total surface area of 30.5 million hectares). Classified according to the timber producing capacity¹ about 20.0 million ha is forestland (growth over 1.0 m³/ha/a), 2.9 million ha is poorly productive land (growth over 0.1 m³/ha/a). The area supporting forest² is therefore 23.0 million hectares. The proportion of forests completely protected and under restricted forestry was 12.1% of the land supporting forests in 2002 and the area under different protection schemes covered 7.6% of the land supporting forests.

The growing stock on forest and scrub land is 2 024 million m³ and the annual increment is 81.0 million m³ (2003). The growing stock has increased by 30% and the annual increment by 45% from the 1950s to the beginning of this century. Annual drain (harvesting and natural drain) has not exceeded the annual increment since the late 1960s. Forest management does not lead to the decrease of forest area in Finland, on the contrary, improved forest management has increased the timber resources in the Finnish forests.

In Finland forestry is based on growing naturally occurring tree species. According to the National Forest Inventory, the shares of the major tree species are: pine 45.7%, spruce 36.5% and broad-leaved trees (silver birch, *Betula pen-*

¹ Definition: Annual mean increment on forest land is at least 1 m³/ha, on poorly productive land the increment is below 1 m³/ha but over 0.1 m³/ha, on waste land the increment remains below 0.1 m³/ha

² FAO's "forest" category is equivalent to the Finnish definition of land supporting forest, which includes both forestland and poorly productive land.

dula; downy birch, *Betula pubescens*; European aspen, *Populus tremula*; and alder, *Alnus* sp.) 17.8% of the growing stock. The share of broad-leaved trees varies from 15.1% to 22% among regional forestry centres. A majority of Finnish forests are conifer-dominated mixed forests. In southern Finland, 26.2% of forests are over 80 years old. In Kainuu and Ostrobothnia, the share of over-100-year-old forests is 21.5% and in Lapland 31.9% of forests are over 120 years old. Suomen metsävarat

Forest Monitoring

The First National Forest Inventory was carried out in 1921-1924, thus there is data on the monitoring of forest resources already for a period of 80 years. The ninth National Forest Inventory is about to be concluded. Forest Research Institute is responsible for the regular inventory of Finnish forest resources. In Finland, the inventory and monitoring systems on forests cover the whole country. They produce data on forest resources, biological diversity as well as on the quality of harvesting, forest and nature management. Regional Forestry Centres, the Forestry Development Centre Tapio, Forest Research Institute, and Finnish Environment Institute (Syke) are responsible for the various monitoring systems.

Forest Management Planning

Regional Forestry Centres make regional and holding-level forest management plans to promote sustainable forest management. Regional summaries of forest resources are drawn based on the regional forest management plans. The information on forest resources are used, e.g. for regional target programmes on forestry and for monitoring of their implementation.

In private forestry, the scale of forest management planning is basically the forest holding and forest stand. The forests and its stands of an individual forest owner are always the basis for any recommendations for forest management operations. A forest holding-level plan is a decision-making tool in forestry guiding and moni-

toring of forest management, consulting forest owners and for maintaining biological diversity in forests. Data collection for the planning of private forestry is carried out every 10-15 years at village or community level. In addition to Regional Forestry Centres, also local Forest Management Associations prepare holding-level forest management plans.

Metsähallitus (the state forestry enterprise) has prepared, for all state forests under its administration, forest management plans, which take into consideration the natural and social characteristics of state forests. Forest industry companies and other organisations that own large forest areas have made forest management plans for their own forests. Metsähallitus and forest industry companies have developed landscape-level planning methods (so-called landscape ecological planning), which aim to bring together differing forest-related aspects and objectives.

Regional Forestry Centres have surveyed the location and quality of habitats of special importance in private forests and informed forest owners on the collected data. Metsähallitus, forest industry companies and other organisations owning large forest areas have made the survey in their forests during the forest management planning process.

Forest Ownership and Multiple Use of Forests

Finnish forestry is mostly based on family forestry, which ensures a greater variation in forest management. Private individuals or families own a majority of forests. Usually forests are passed on to the next generation through inheritance. The share of private forests in forestland is 62%, state forests 24%, forest industry and other companies 9% and other owner groups (communities, parishes, etc.) 5%. The number of forest holdings, larger than four hectares is about 320 000, and the total number of owners of these holdings is about 630 000. The average size of these private forest holdings is 37 hectares. Over 80% of domestic timber processed

in forest industry come from these private forests.

State forests are located mainly in northern and eastern Finland. Metsähallitus is responsible for the management, use and protection of state forests. In the Sámi people homestead areas in northern Finland, natural livelihoods are mainly practised in state forests. Sámi Parliament has challenged state ownership of state lands in the Sámi Region. Studies and investigations on the basis for any changes in the ownership are in the process. Sámi Region is mostly treeless tundra or timber line area.

Sustainable forest management markedly contributes to the opportunities for viable livelihoods in the vast countryside as well as maintaining variable population structure also in the rural areas. Forests have a great importance for the Finnish people providing environment for recreational and outdoor activities, scenic landscapes, pleasant surroundings and cultural experiences, opportunities to gather mushrooms and berries as well as for hunting and fishing.

Forest Industry

Forestry and forest industry produce wealth in Finland. Forest industry products cover 26% of the total value of the Finnish export of goods (2001). The share in net export income is even higher because forest industry uses mostly domestic timber and need quite little imported inputs. Finnish Forest Industries Federation, Finnish Sawmills Association and Sawing Entrepreneurs Association represent forest industry at the national level.

Forest industry is the biggest consumer of timber resources in Finland. In 2001, forest industry companies used 67.3 million m³ of which they bought 53.8 million m³ from domestic markets. The turnover of the Finnish forest industry companies processing in Finland was about EUR 19 billion in 2001. The companies implement ISO 9000 quality management systems and ISO 14001 environmental management systems in the forest management and

timber. These systems are tools to implement the company environmental and quality policies. European Union Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) has been implemented in a few forest industry companies.

Organisations in Private Forestry

Forest Management Associations are service organisations financed and administered by forest owners. Their purpose is defined in the Act on Forest Management Associations. The objective of the associations is to enhance the profitability of forest management, implementation of holding level forest management targets, as well as promote economically, ecologically and socially sustainable forest management. There are 196 (as of 1 January 2003) Forest Management Associations and their cumulative area of operation covers the whole country. About 322 000 forest owners are members in the associations and they own about 98% of private forests. Persons owning forest in the administrative area of a Forest Management Association and paying the statutory forest management fee are the members of the association.

Forest Owners' Union is the regional level representative of local Forest Management Associations. There are 14 Forest Owners' Unions in the country. They attend the general and common interests of forest owners and support private forestry and Forest Management Associations in their region. At the national level the Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners (MTK) acts among other tasks as their umbrella organisation.

Private forest owners make the decision on participation in the regional group certification in the council meeting of the local Forest Management Association. These local level decisions provide the basis for the final decision in the official meeting of regional Forest Owners' Union.

Forestry Centres

Thirteen regional Forestry Centres contribute to sustainable management and use of forests, maintenance of their biological diversity and general enhancement of forestry. Forestry Centres also enforce forest legislation in the forests of all forest owners, including state forests. En-

forcement of forest legislation and the decision making in official duties is segregated from other activities. Forestry Centres are independent in the enforcement of forest legislation. Forestry Centres are under the guidance and control of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

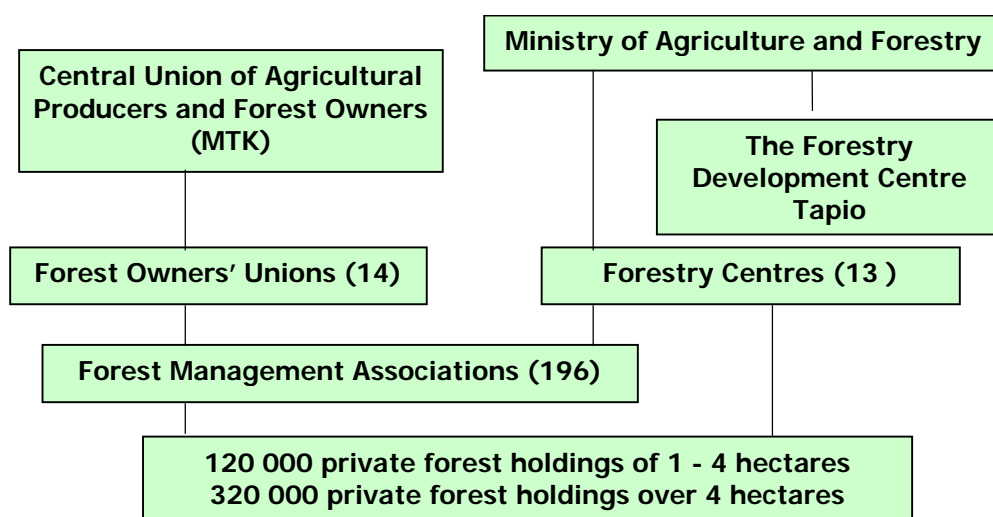


Figure 1. Organisation of Private Forestry in Finland, 1 January 2003.

Forestry Organisations and Forestry Professionals in Timber Procurement and Silviculture

Forest owners decide within the framework of legislation and normative decisions on all the operations carried out in their forests. Many forest owners or their families do themselves especially silvicultural works and some also does the timber harvesting.

Professional staffs of forestry organisations and private forestry companies provide a variety of services for forest owners including consulting on various forestry operations and options. The forest organisations carrying out silvicultural and harvesting operations play a significant role in the implementation of forest certification. Forest industry companies hire private companies to carry out harvesting and transportation. A majority of these companies are family enterprises. The worker,

employee and entrepreneur organisations are unionised at regional and national levels. National worker, employee and entrepreneur organisations include, among others, Wood and Allied Workers' Union, Forestry Experts' Association METO, Society of Finnish Professional Foresters, Trade Association of Finnish Forestry and Earth Moving Contractors (TAFSEC), and Timber Truck Transport Entrepreneurs Association.

Forestry and forest industry employed a total of 94 000 persons in 2002 or about 4% of all employed. About 71 000 of them worked for forest industry and 23 000 man-years were worked in forestry as professional staff, loggers, harvester operators, truck drivers, entrepreneurs and in work inputs carried out by forest owners.

6. Framework of Forest Certification in Finland

Finland's International Commitments

Finland is committed, among other, to the Convention on Biological Diversity, forest principles and action plan approved at the UN's Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED, Rio de Janeiro 1992), the resolutions taken at the European Ministerial Conference and the subsequent common European criteria for sustainable forest management approved together with the Pan European Operational Level Guidelines for sustainable forest management in the third European Ministerial Conference (Lisbon 1998). These criteria include:

1. Maintenance and Appropriate Enhancement of Forest Resources and their Contribution to Global Carbon Cycles
2. Maintenance of Forest Ecosystem Health and Vitality
3. Maintenance and Encouragement of Productive Functions of Forests (wood and non-wood)
4. Maintenance, Conservation and Appropriate Enhancement of Biological Diversity in Forest Ecosystems
5. Maintenance and Appropriate Enhancement of Protective Functions in Forest Management (notably soil and water)
6. Maintenance of other Socio-Economic Functions and Conditions

The criteria and the indicators developed for the monitoring are revised after the Ministerial Conference in Lisbon. The revised criteria and indicators were approved and adopted in the Fourth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe held in Vienna 2003. New indicators were added especially under the criterion six (social and cultural

aspects) and under the criterion four (biodiversity in forests).

Finland is also a member of The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in the conventions (Kyoto Protocol), Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD), the UN International Labor Organisation's (ILO) Conventions on workers' rights, work safety, health and working environment as well as of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). Finland has actively participated in the global forest processes (IPF, IFF, UNFF) initiated after the UN Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992.

National Forest Programme 2010 and Regional Forestry Target Programs

The National Forest Programme 2010 drafts the future development trends in forestry. It is a continuation to the traditions of previous forest programs but has a broader approach when taking into consideration the economic, ecological, social and cultural aspects of sustainable forest management. Broad and transparent cooperation was the basis in the elaboration of the National Forest Programme approved by the Finnish government in 1999. All stakeholders interested in forests were provided the possibility to participate in the process. Forest management and protection is developed according to the Programme, maintaining the balance among forest based employment and living, vitality and diversity of forests as well as the spiritual and physical opportunities for recreation in forests.

Regional Forestry Centres chaired the elaboration of statutory Regional Forestry Target Programmes. These Programmes guide and support the regional forestry development. They are also elaborated in a transparent participatory process among the regional stakeholders interested in forestry.

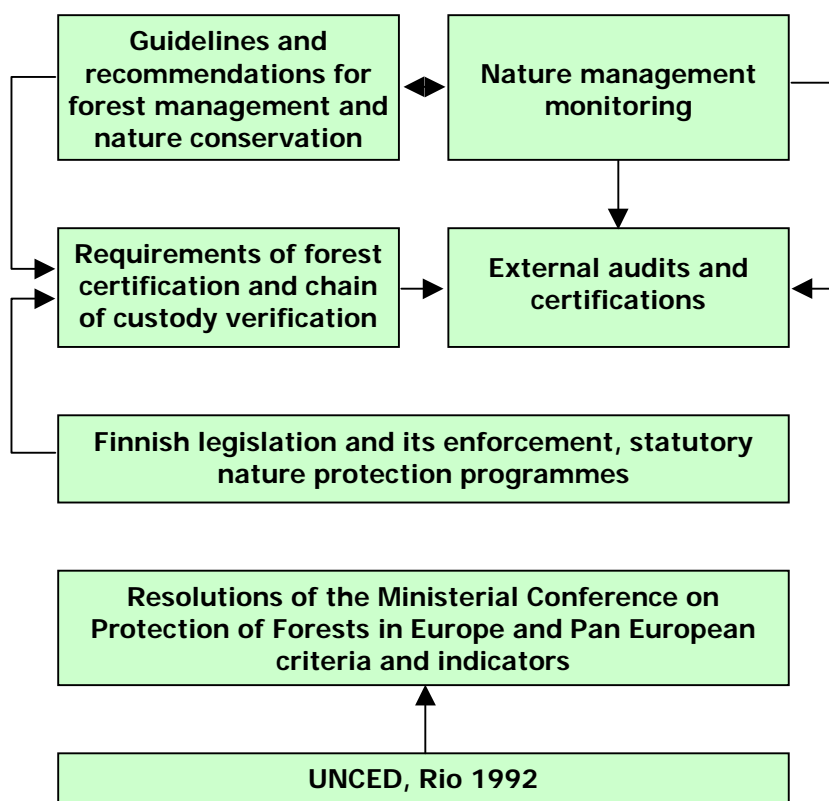


Figure 2. Finland's International Commitments and Forestry Legislation as a Framework for Forest Certification.

Central Finnish Legislation on Forest Management and Nature Protection

The Finnish legislation on forestry and forest nature provides the essential framework for forest management. Observation of legislation is an essential element in forest certification, which should be taken into consideration in the assessment of the certification system. The elements already addressed in the forest and nature legislation are not included for the major part in the criteria.

The objectives of the legislation on forestry and nature protection are among others:

- to promote economically, ecologically, socially and culturally sustainable forest management with the objective of maintaining the biological diversity while aiming at good and sustainable revenues.
- to safeguard the preservation of forest resources by defining felling /harvesting methods considering the needs of remaining stands or the establishment of new seedling stands
- to promote the maintenance of biological diversity in forest ecosystems also by allowing felling aiming at maintenance of elements safeguarding the diversity, landscape or multiple use values of forests.
- to oblige to establish a new economically viable seedling stand on the final felling site within a reasonable time either through natural regeneration or seeding or planting.
- to safeguard the preservation of habitats characteristic for the biological diversity of forest ecosystems.

- to require that native tree species, including Siberian larch, are used in forest regeneration
- to require that material for seeding and planting is appropriate to the local conditions and its origin is documented
- to oblige to elaborate regional plans for forest management and promote holding level forest management planning
- to promote the safeguarding of forest health and vitality
- to aim at the achievement and maintenance of favourable conservation status of habitats and species
- to prohibit the destruction or deterioration of the habitats important for the specially protected species
- to prevent the retreat of timberline by limiting felling in the protection forest areas in North-Finland

Regional Forestry Centres enforce the forest legislation.

Regional Environment Centres under the Ministry of Environment enforce the legislation on environment and nature conservation.

In addition, the Finnish legislation among others

- defines and documents the tenure and use rights of land properties
- safeguards the preservation of cultural historically valuable ancient monuments
- promotes work safety and safeguards the social rights of forest workers
- safeguards the right of both Finnish people and foreigners to move freely in forests and also their freedom to e.g., pick berries and mushrooms
- provides the opportunity to plan, construct and maintain hiking trails
- ensures the Sámi people the right to practise traditional forms of livelihood like reindeer farming, and to benefit from the natural resources of the Sámi lands in ways forming part of the traditional culture.

- defines the area as well as rights and duties for reindeer husbandry

Principles and Recommendations for Forest Management

All forestry organisations implement forest management recommendations and guidelines, which take into consideration in addition to the economic aspects, the biological diversity and prevention of environmental damages as well as respect to other forest uses. The recommendations and guidelines emphasise diverse forest management methods that take into account the habitat characteristics. These recommendations and guidelines and requirements specified in the forest certification criteria guide the sustainable forest management. These principles of forest management include among other,

- forests and forestlands are managed such that their biodiversity, productivity, capacity for regeneration, and vitality are preserved.
- in forest management, as far as possible the dynamics of the natural succession of the forests are imitated.
- silviculture is based on the growing of native Finnish tree species.
- in silviculture, the target is the production of a good quality and economically valuable stand, while paying attention to sustainability and biodiversity.
- environmental impact and the prevention of environmental harm are emphasised in forest management.
- in forest management planning a balanced age class distribution is the target taking into consideration the management objectives of forest owners and the size of the forest holding..
- in forest regeneration, natural regeneration is favoured when this will probably lead to a good result within a reasonable time. Even in cultivated areas an attempt is made to accomplish supplementary (repair) planting with natural seedlings.

- regeneration areas are marked out with an eye on landscape values: this applies especially to places with a high landscape significance.
- in soil scarification the methods shall be suitable for the target and site
- in silvicultural measures, the clearing of vegetation is avoided, if this is unnecessary from the timber production perspective and possibly also harmful from the biodiversity standpoint.
- in conifer stands, broadleaves suited to the growing site are left to form a mixed stand in order to promote forest health and biodiversity.
- the use of chemical control measures is being reduced by developing mechanical and biological control methods.
- in forestry practices, the health of the forests and the prevention of epidemics are safeguarded.
- attention is paid in forest management to the multiple use of the forests, game management and recreational values.
- when planning new forest roads, in addition to their use for forestry purposes, the development of traffic communications in sparsely populated areas of the countryside, and the improvement of the road network for the local populace, are taken into account. Part of the of the forest road network is reasonable to be constructed only for winter use.

7. Alternative Implementation Levels of the Finnish Forest Certification System

7.1 Standard Implementation and Preconditions for the Applicant of Forest Certification

Forest certification according to this standard can be carried out as group certification for the area of a Forestry Centre (alternative A) or Forest Management Association (alternative B) or for an individual forest owners holding (alternative C).

Certified Forest Area

Certified forest area consist of productive forests (forestland, low productive forestland, wasteland and other forestry land) belonging to the members of the certification group or individual forest owners in the certification of individual forest holdings.

Statutory protected areas and other areas set aside from forestry operations are not included in the area of certified forests, but certification audits may, if deemed necessary, also focus on protected areas.

7.1.A Group Certification for the Area of a Forestry Centre

Regulating standards for forest certification on the area of a forestry centre are FFCS 1001 and FFCS 1002-1.

Applicant

Applicant is the registered Forest Owners' Union established by the Forest Management Associations in the region.

Participation

In addition to the applicant the following parties may participate in the certification of the area of a forestry centre:

- an other forest owners' association joining the application
- the forest management associations that are members of forest owners' association(s)
- other forest management associations operating in the region
- forest owners as members of forest management associations
- individual forest owners and corporations that are not members of forest management associations (such corporations may be among others forest industry companies, municipalities, parishes and Metsähallitus)

- forestry centre as a forestry operator and development organisation
- timber procurement and forest industry companies in the region as forestry operators
- forest contractors as members of their trade association
- forest contractors on their own announcement
- forest workers trade associations
- forest service enterprises.

Applicant Organisation and Decision Making

1. The applicant is the registered forest owners' union established by forest management associations in the region. If two or several forest owners' unions operate in the area of a forestry centre, the applicant is the union having the greatest number of forest owners.

2. Decision on the application of forest certification shall be made in the forest owners' union's official meeting with a majority of 2/3 of the members present in the meeting.

3. The applicant shall have notices of the meetings and minutes of the forest owners' union(s) meetings where the decisions to apply for forest certification for the region has been made.

Participation and Commitment

1. Forest owners' unions, forest management associations and other organisations having given the notice of participation is documented in the decisions made in the respective organisations and documents of these decisions are informed to the applicant.

2. Participation of forest owners that have given individual notice of participation is documented in the signed notice given to the applicant.

3. The applicant forest owners' union of parties it has authorized keeps a register on all organisations participating in the group certification and on individual forest owners and –

other operators that are not members of any organisation.

4. Forest management associations keep a register on all members that belong to the group certification through the membership to the association.

5. Other organisations that have members belonging to the forest certification through the decision of the organisation (e.g. forest contractors) keep a register on the members of participating in certification.

6. Preconditions on the participation of forest owners in the regional group certification on the area of a forestry centre are fulfilled if participating forest owners own such a share of the total forest area that the results of regional data collection have an adequate credibility.

7. When operating in certified forests the organisations participating in regional group certification shall contract mainly contractors committed to forest certification.

8. Commitment to forest certification is adequate when the operations conform to the criteria as required in the issuance and validity of the certificate

9. It is required that organisations whose members participate in regional group certification through the decision of the organisation, inform members on the participation in forest certification and the related duties and also on the possibility to resign from the forest certification.

10. Forest owners' union in the region keeps a public register on timber procurement organisations and companies participating in group certification in the region.

11. In regional forest certification the applicant shall establish a regional forest certification council. The council:

- approves statutes compatible with the model regulations drafted by the Finnish Forest Certification Council. The statutes define responsibilities and procedures for possible actions contradicting with criteria and council statutes and

- approves a document on the responsibilities and content of regional data collection

7.1.B Group Certification for the Area of a Forest Management Association

Regulating standards for group certification on the area of a forest management association are FFCS 1001 and FFCS 1002-2.

Applicant

Applicant is a registered forest management association established by forest owners in the region.

Participation

In addition to the applicant the following parties may participate in the certification of the area of a forest management association:

- other forest management associations operating in the region
- forest owners as members of forest management associations
- individual forest owners and corporations that are not members of forest management associations (such corporations may be among others forest industry companies, municipalities, parishes and Metsähallitus)
- forestry centre as a forestry operator and development organisation
- timber procurement and forest industry companies in the region as forestry operators
- forest contractors as members of their trade association
- forest contractors on their own announcement
- forest workers trade associations
- forest service enterprises.

Applicant Organisation and Decision Making

1. The applicant is the registered forest management organisation established by forest

owners in the region. If two or several forest management associations operate in the region, the applicant is the association having the greatest number of forest owners.

2. Decision on the application of forest certification shall be made in the forest management association's official meeting with a two-thirds majority of the members present in the meeting.

3. The applicant shall have notices of the meetings and minutes of the forest management association's meetings where the decisions to apply for forest certification for the region has been made.

Participation and Commitment

1. Forest management associations' and other organisations having given the notice of participation is documented in the decisions made in the respective organisations and documents of these decisions are informed to the applicant.

2. Participation of forest owners that have given individual notice of participation is documented in the signed notice given to the applicant.

3. The applicant forest management association or parties it has authorized keep a register on all organisations participating in the group certification and on individual forest owners and other operators that are not members of any organisation.

4. Participating forest management associations keep a register on all members that belong to the group certification through the membership to the association.

5. Other organisations that have members belonging to the forest certification through the decision of the organisation (e.g. forest contractors) keep a register on the members of participating in certification.

6. Preconditions on the participation of forest owners in the regional group certification on the area of a forest management association are fulfilled if participating forest owners own

such a share of the total forest area that the results of regional data collection have an adequate credibility.

7. When operating in certified forests the organisations participating in regional group certification contract mainly contractors which are committed to forest certification.

8. Commitment to forest certification is adequate when the operations conform to the criteria as required in the issuance and validity of the certificate.

9. It is required that organisations whose members participate in regional group certification through the decision of the organisation, inform members on the participation in forest certification and the related duties and also on the possibility to resign from the forest certification.

10. Forest management association in the region keeps a public register on timber procurement organisations and companies participating in group certification in the region.

11. In regional forest certification the applicant shall establish a regional forest certification council. The council:

- Approves statutes compatible with the model regulations drafted by the Finnish Forest Certification Council. The statutes define responsibilities and procedures for possible actions contradicting with criteria and council statutes and
- Approves a document on the responsibilities and content of regional data collection.

7.1.C Certification of Holdings of Individual Forest Owners

Standards for certification of individual forest holdings are FFCS 1001 and FFCS 1002-3.

Certification of holdings of individual forest owners is applied when a forest owner or a group of forest owners applies for a certificate for the forests they own or administer.

Applicant

The applicant is a forest owner or a group of forest owners administering a forest holding or a group of forest holdings. If the application covers forest holdings of several forest owners, each forest owner shall make a written commitment to the person or corporation representing the group in certification.

Commitment

Commitment to certification of individual forest holdings is adequate when the audits indicate that operations conform to the criteria presented in the standards FFCS 1001 and FFCS 1002-3 as required in the issuance and validity of the certificate.

Information

The applicant forest owners or a group of forest owners shall inform the Finnish Forest Certification Council administering the Finnish Forest Certification System on issuance of a certificate, possible changes in its validity and its withdrawal.

7.2 Forest Certification Group and Regional Forest Certification Committee

In regional group certification (alternatives 7.1.A and 7.1.B) the certification group consist of all the parties mentioned in the chapters 7.1.A and 7.1.B "Participation".

The applicant for forest certification represents the group members in the issues related to application or validity of a certificate.

7.3 Authorizations to the Applicant

Forest owners, their associations and other organisations participating in regional group certification (alternatives 7.1.A and 7.1.B)

- authorize applicant organisation to make contracts with certification bodies on cer-

tification activities as defined in the statutes approved by the regional forest certification council.

- allow auditors and contracted certification bodies to carry out conformance audits in the participating forests and organisations.