

Approved by the UKWAS Steering Group (March 24th 2009)

UKWAS Revision 2009-2011: Process and timetable

1. Background

The UKWAS revision process will conform to the UKWAS Standard Setting Process (Version 1.1) document which is aligned with the FSC and PEFC requirements.

The 2nd edition of the UK Woodland Assurance Standard was effective from 1st November 2006 and in accordance with section D1 must be reviewed and revised by November 2011.

2. Participation of the certification schemes

The Steering Group met in November 2008 and in accordance with section D2 invited the certification schemes to participate in the review process by:

- a) Notifying them of its intention to begin a review process and providing a projected time line to be discussed and agreed with them.
- b) Requiring them to confirm that the UKWAS Standard Setting Procedures will meet their requirements.

3. Elements of the review

Section D3 of the UKWAS process document defines a minimum seven elements of the review process:

- a) An Interpretation Review – a consideration of any advice developed by the Interpretation Panel.
- b) A Technical Review – a consideration of any new scientific or technical knowledge.
- c) An International Benchmarking Review – a comparison with any equivalent accredited standards of a similar geographical or ecological scope of application, and an evaluation of whether there are any substantial differences in the overall cost/benefit balance of compliance for similar types of enterprise with similar forest conditions. (To be provided by the certification schemes.)
- d) A Standard Users' Feedback Review - a consideration of feedback from certificate holders and accredited certification authorities. (To be provided by the certification schemes.)
- e) A Review of the Initial Stakeholders' Consultation – a consideration of consultees' comments and responses.

- f) A Small and Low Intensity Managed Woodlands Review – a consideration of the impact and applicability of the standard for small and low intensity operations.
- g) A Certification Schemes' Requirements Review – a consideration of advice (to be provided by the certification schemes) on any new or revised policies, procedures or guidance that is relevant to the revision. National certification schemes should seek advice and guidance from their international body when compiling their advice.

Section D4 of the UKWAS process document requires that provision is made for consultation through notifying a wide range of stakeholders and publicising the availability of the following documents as a minimum:

- a) An 'Initial Stakeholder Consultation' - an invitation to comment on the current standard which should identify any areas already identified as requiring review (minimum consultation period of 60 days).
- b) A 'Revision Draft' which should include a summary of the stakeholders' initial comments and clearly identify and explain the proposed changes (minimum consultation period of 60 days).
- c) A 'Pre-approval Draft' which should include a summary of the further stakeholder comments and clearly identify and explain the proposed changes (minimum consultation period of 30 days).

Additional drafts may be issued at the discretion of the Steering Group.

4. Phases of the review

The UKWAS Board has considered how best to carry out the review and agreed that the revision and consultation process will be taken forward in three main phases:

- **Phase 1(2009):** an **evidence gathering** phase including initial stakeholder consultation (60 days) to take place May-June 2009
- **Phase 2 (2010):** a **main revision drafting** phase leading to a revision draft consultation (60 days) to take place Dec 2010 – Jan 2011
- **Phase 3 (2011):** a **conclusion phase** including a further revision and pre-approval draft consultation (30 days) to take place by end April 2011 prior to any further amendment and final submission to FSC UK and PEFC UK by the end of July 2011.

The key elements of each phase are:

4.1 Phase 1 - evidence gathering

This phase is essentially about the Steering Group identifying the key issues to be considered during the main revision drafting phase and involves the following elements:

- a) Interpretation Review – collate advice from Interpretation Panel.
- b) Technical Review – identify and collate any new scientific or technical knowledge e.g.UK Forestry Standard, Guidelines and supporting documents.

- c) International Benchmarking Review – request information from the certification schemes.
- d) Standard Users' Feedback Review – request information from the certification schemes.
- e) Initial Stakeholders' Consultation – undertake public consultation (May-June 2009).
- f) SLIM Woodlands Review – identify relevant issues from the recently concluded SLIM Woodland Review and any subsequent feedback.
- g) Certification Schemes' Requirements Review – request information from the certification schemes.

Output: An Issues Paper will be prepared which identifies the information to be taken into consideration during the main revision drafting phase.

Timetable for Steering Group:

- March 2009 – ask UK certification schemes to provide a final confirmation in writing of Certification Schemes' requirements by 30th June 2009.
- March 2009 – invite UK certification schemes to undertake International Benchmarking Review and Standard Users' Feedback Review and provide written reports to the Steering Group by 30th June.
- April 2009 – prepare a short Initial Stakeholders' Consultation paper and release by 1st May with return date of 30th June 2009.
- July-August 2009 – PW (with Board) to prepare Issues Paper for Steering Group including the requirement, if any, for undertaking further research.
- Early September 2009 – Steering Group meets to consider Issues Paper and to initiate further work as necessary.
- November 2009 – Steering Group (& AGM) to take stock of progress and confirm plans for phase 2 revision drafting phase in 2010.
- December 2009 – PW (with Board) to conclude Issues Paper.

4.2 Phase 2 – main revision drafting

The main revision drafting phase will be informed by the Issues Paper.

Key issues:

- Review of new UK Forestry Standard and Guidelines to identify changes
- Potentially review new FSC Principles & Criteria

Output: a 'Revision Draft' of the UKWAS standard to be issued for a 60 day consultation.

Timetable for Steering Group:

- Jan / Feb 2010 – Steering Group meets to begin revision of UKWAS standard.
- November 2010 – Steering Group to conclude revision draft
- December 2010 – issue Revision Draft for 60 days' consultation with responses required by January 31st 2011.

4.3 Phase 3 – conclusion phase

This phase will consider the responses to the consultation exercise and prepare a further draft to be issued for a 30 day consultation as a 'Pre-approval Draft'. Following this the draft will be revised as necessary and submitted to the certification schemes for approval via FSC UK and PEFC UK.

Output: a Final Draft for submission to the Certification Schemes.

Timetable for Steering Group:

- Feb 2011 – Steering Group meets to consider issues arising from consultation.
- March 2011 – Necessary revisions incorporated into draft.
- April 2011 – Steering Group issues 'Pre-approval Draft' for 30 day consultation by end of April 2011.
- June 2011 – Steering Group meets to consider responses and conclude the drafting of the revised standard.
- By end July 2011 – Steering Group submits Draft to FSC UK and PEFC UK for onward transmission to certification schemes.
- November 2011 – launch of UKWAS 3rd Edition at AGM.

5. Resources

The Board has considered the likely resource implications of taking forward the review.

It is anticipated that in Phase 1 (2009) and probably in Phase 3 (2011) the work can be carried out using existing resources and that the main workload will be in Phase 2 in 2010. The level of work needed will be clearer following the initial stakeholder consultation.

A major unknown is how much work will be needed to determine the impact of the revised UKFS and Guidelines. It will be necessary to determine what is new and what is no longer required or in need of updating. The same applies to any revised FSC Principles & Criteria that need to be taken into account.

**UKWAS Steering Group
March 2009**

United Kingdom Woodland Assurance Standard

UKWAS

UNITED KINGDOM WOODLAND ASSURANCE STANDARD

Version 1.1

STANDARD SETTING PROCESS

(updated 07.04.08)

Document History

Version 1 – approved by Steering Group (18.01.08)

Version 1.1 – Section B2 amended by Board to incorporate revised Steering Group constituency list approved by Members at AGM in November 2007 (07.04.08)

Introduction

The UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) is a certification standard which sets out the requirements which woodland owners and managers and certification authorities can use to certify woodland management in the United Kingdom. The standard is the product of an inclusive and transparent process which has involved a balanced representation from the UK forestry and environmental community. It has been designed to ensure that it reflects the requirements of the UK Government's UK Forestry Standard (and through this the guidelines adopted by European Forestry Ministers at Helsinki in 1993 and Lisbon in 1998) and the Forest Stewardship Council's Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship.

This is a consolidating document which defines the existing standard setting process and procedures.

Scope

The document defines the procedures and process requirements for the development, maintenance and revision of the United Kingdom Woodland Assurance Standard.

The procedures have been developed to ensure alignment with the requirements of the FSC and PEFC forest certification schemes. To ensure their continued alignment, these procedures should be subject to review, as a minimum, a year prior to the commencement of a formal revision of the UKWAS standard.

Purpose

This standard setting document defines the roles, responsibilities and authorities of the UKWAS Steering Group in relation to the delivery of the national forest certification standard for the UK.

Effective date

18 January 2007

References

- UKWAS - Memorandum of Association (Amended 25 November 2002)
- UKWAS - Articles of Association (Adopted 25 November 2002)
- UKWAS – Steering Group Rules (Version 1: adopted 15 December 2003)
- Forestry Commission: The UK Forestry Standard (2nd edition 2004)
- FSC – FSC International Standard - Principles & Criteria for Forest Stewardship (FSC-STD-01-001) (April 2004)
- FSC – Process Requirements for the Development of National or Sub-national Forest Stewardship Standards (FSC-STD-60-006) (Draft 4-1 2006)
- FSC Procedure to Develop a National Standard (FSC-PRO-60-001) (Draft 1-1 2006)
- FSC – Procedures for the Development of National or Sub-national Forest Stewardship Standards (FSC-STD-20-002) (Version 2-1 Approved November 2004, revised in May and October 2005)
- PEFC – PEFC Council Technical Document (27 October 2006)
- PEFC – PEFC Council Annex 2 Rules for Standard Setting (27 October 2006)
- PEFC - PEFC Council Annex 3 Basis for Certification Schemes and their Implementation (27 October 2006)
- ISO/IEC Guide 59:1999 Code of Good Practice for Standardisation
- ISEAL Code of Good Practice for setting Environmental and Social Standards (January 2006)

Terms & definitions

- Certification schemes – the forest certification schemes which have adopted the UK Woodland Assurance Standard as the certification standard in their UK schemes – currently the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes (PEFC).
- Company – the company known as 'United Kingdom Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS)' established to own and manage the standard.
- Members – Members of the Company.
- Standard – the UK Woodland Assurance Standard.
- Steering Group – the group established by the Company which is equivalent to an FSC Standards Development Group or a PEFC Forum for Standard Setting.
- Steering Group members – members of the Steering Group.
- United Kingdom – Great Britain & Northern Ireland.

A. General Provisions

A1 Independence

A not-for-profit company, 'United Kingdom Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS)', was established in 2002 to own and manage the standard. The Company is constituted as a 'Company Limited by Guarantee And Not Having A Share Capital' (registered in Scotland: Company Number SC199337). The Company is managed by the Members.

The Company's Objects are:

To own, interpret, develop and promote a certification standard for forest management in the United Kingdom on behalf of United Kingdom forestry and environmental communities, and bodies which represent the interests of people working in woods and forests or using them for the purpose of recreation, for the general benefit of people.

The Company's Memorandum and Articles of Association do not provide for the Company to undertake certification or accreditation thereby ensuring that the certification standard shall be developed independently from the certification or accreditation processes.

A2 Territory

The standard setting process covers the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

B. Participatory Process

B1 Introduction

The first edition of the standard was the product of an inclusive and transparent process which involved a balanced representation from the UK forestry and environmental community. The standard was designed to reflect the requirements of the UK Government's 'UK Forestry Standard' (and through this the guidelines adopted by European Forestry Ministers at Helsinki in 1993 and Lisbon in 1998) and the Forest Stewardship Council's Principles & Criteria for Forest Stewardship.

All stakeholders were invited to participate in the development of the standard and associations representing the UK's forest and woodland owners and managers were fully supportive of the process and were active participants. The standard was published in 1999 and a second revised edition was published in 2006.

The Company's Members appoint a broadly based Steering Group which has responsibility for interpreting the standard and ensuring its periodic revision to take account of experience from its application and new information that arises.

B2 Steering Group

The first edition of the standard was developed by an independent and broadly based Technical Working Group and launched in May 1999 prior to the establishment of the Company.

Articles 38 to 40 of the Company's Articles of Association provide for the establishment of a Steering Group and define its terms of reference and operating procedures:

- Article 39 requires that the Steering Group shall maintain, amend and interpret the standard. A Steering Group was appointed in November 2002.
- Article 38 requires that "Steering Group Rules" shall be adopted (and can be amended from time to time) by Members in a General Meeting. The Steering Group Rules shall regulate, *inter alia*, the number, appointment, retirement and removal of Steering Group members. The Steering Group Rules were adopted in December 2003.

The Steering Group comprises eleven defined constituencies with an agreed maximum representation for each:

Woodland owners (6), forest practitioners (5), state forest enterprises (4), environmental organisations (6), forest user organisations (2), wood processing industry (3), wood products trade (2), forest workforce (2), UK countryside, environment & heritage agencies (3), local government & national park authorities (2), forestry standard setting and labelling bodies (6) and education, research & training (3 non-voting).

In addition there is an independent Chair and a Company Secretary.

All decisions are made on the basis of consensus.

B3 Transparency

The publication of this document on the website ensures transparency of process.

The commencement of the standard setting process and information on the development process shall be communicated publicly and stakeholder representatives shall be notified

directly. Key documents including this process document and related documents, the consultation drafts and the formal responses to comments received shall be available to all interested parties by publication on the website and direct notification of stakeholder representatives. Steering Group members shall receive all relevant papers and minutes of meetings and shall be responsible for keeping their constituents informed.

No information on the development of the standard shall be withheld unreasonably.

B4 Consultation

The process for developing and revising standards shall include provision for consultation through notifying a wide range of stakeholders and publicising the availability of the following documents as a minimum:

- a) An 'Initial Stakeholder Consultation' - an invitation to comment on the current standard which should identify any areas already identified as requiring review (minimum consultation period of 60 days).
- b) A 'Revision Draft' which should include a summary of the stakeholders' initial comments and clearly identify and explain the proposed changes (minimum consultation period of 60 days).
- c) A 'Pre-approval Draft' which should include a summary of the further stakeholder comments and clearly identify and explain the proposed changes (minimum consultation period of 30 days).

Additional drafts may be issued at the discretion of the Steering Group.

NOTE: The Steering Group may at its discretion adopt a 'fast track' process for adapting the standard for use in limited applications such as small and/or low intensity managed forest areas. In considering what process to adopt, the Steering Group shall take account of the requirements of the certification schemes.

B5 Consensus

Decisions of the Steering Group shall require the unanimous vote of those attending and voting at a duly convened meeting of the Steering Group. Any member attending the meeting but abstaining from voting shall not be counted (Article 40.3).

B6 Drafting

The Steering Group shall be responsible for the drafting of the standard and subsequent revisions and shall make such arrangements as it considers necessary.

B7 Records

The Steering Group shall keep the following records of the standards development process:

- a) List of all consultants or other individuals who have been involved in drafting the standard, together with their affiliations.
- b) List of all forest stakeholders invited to participate in the standards setting process.
- c) List of all forest stakeholders sent specified drafts of the standard and invited to comment.
- d) List of forest stakeholders that have participated in the standards setting process through other means, together with a note of the nature of such participation.
- e) All correspondence in relation to development of the standard.

- f) Copies of each draft of the standard which was prepared during the development process.
- g) Copies of all comments submitted in writing with respect to the specified draft standards.
- h) Summaries of comments on each draft, together with a brief explanation of the way in which those comments were responded to in the draft.

The Steering Group shall provide the certification schemes with a copy of the complete set of records specified above in support of the accreditation processes and shall keep a copy of the records for at least seven years.

B8 Forest testing

The drafting of the first edition of the standard was informed by the results of testing the standard in the forest. In revising the standard, pilot testing and/or experience gained from the application of the standard shall be used to inform the revision process.

B9 Regional

In developing the first edition of the standard, account was taken of accredited standards in neighbouring territories and those with similar geographic or ecological scope and this shall continue to be done when undertaking a revision.

C. Governance

C1 General

The operation of the Company is governed by its Memorandum & Articles of Association together with the Steering Group Rules. These are available on the website.

C2 Duties and responsibilities of the Chair

Article 63 provides for the Members of the Company to appoint a Chair of the Company as recommended by the Steering Group. By convention the Chair shall also chair the Steering Group.

The Chair shall:

- a) Have overall responsibility for ensuring that the documented standards development procedures are implemented.
- b) Have overall responsibility for ensuring that the views of all stakeholder groups are properly and fairly represented in the standards development process and in subsequent decision making.
- c) Have overall responsibility for facilitation of meetings and the smooth running of the standards development process.
- d) Represent the overall interests of the standards development process rather than any particular stakeholder group.

All decisions are made on the basis of consensus and by convention the Chair shall not cast a vote.

C3 Decision making

The quorum for the transaction of the business of the Steering Group shall be two-fifths of all the persons who at the commencement of the meeting are Steering Group members (Article 40.2).

Decisions of the Steering Group shall require the unanimous vote of those attending and voting at a duly convened meeting of the Steering Group. Any member attending the meeting but abstaining from voting shall not be counted (Article 40.3).

C4 Decision to approve the standard

The Steering Group shall be responsible for approving the standard or any revision thereof.

Approval of the standard by the Steering Group shall require the unanimous vote of those attending and voting at a duly convened meeting of the Steering Group. Any member attending the meeting but abstaining from voting shall not be counted (Article 40.3).

C5 Dispute resolution

Any query relating to the interpretation of the meaning of the standard shall be remitted to an Interpretation Panel which shall be appointed by the Steering Group to provide it and users of the certification standard with advice on its interpretation. The Steering Group shall appoint an independent chair of the Interpretation Panel and shall publish its rules, procedures and advice on the website.

Any grievance relating to the standard setting process should be addressed to the Company Secretary and shall be considered and determined by the Steering Group in accordance with the provisions of Articles 40.2 and 40.3 (see C3 above).

In the event of a complainant wishing to appeal against the Steering Group's determination the matter shall be remitted to the chair of the Interpretation Panel whose decision shall be final.

D. Review of the Standard

D1 Revision

The standard shall be reviewed and revised as necessary on a five year cycle.

D2 Participation of certification schemes

The Steering Group shall invite the certification schemes to participate in the review process by:

- a) Notifying them of its intention to begin a review process and providing a projected time line to be discussed and agreed with them.
- b) Requiring them to confirm that these Standard Setting Procedures will meet their requirements.

D3 Elements of the review

The review process should include as a minimum the steps set out in section B4 and incorporate the following elements:

- a) An Interpretation Review – a consideration of any advice developed by the Interpretation Panel.
- b) A Technical Review – a consideration of any new scientific or technical knowledge.
- c) An International Benchmarking Review – a comparison with any equivalent accredited standards of a similar geographical or ecological scope of application, and an evaluation of whether there are any substantial differences in the overall cost/benefit balance of compliance for similar types of enterprise with similar forest conditions. (To be provided by the certification schemes.)

- d) A Standard Users' Feedback Review - a consideration of feedback from certificate holders and accredited certification authorities. (To be provided by the certification schemes.)
- e) A Review of the Initial Stakeholders' Consultation – a consideration of consultees' comments and responses.
- f) A Small and Low Intensity Managed Woodlands Review – a consideration of the impact and applicability of the standard for small and low intensity operations.
- g) A Certification Schemes' Requirements Review – a consideration of advice (to be provided by the certification schemes) on any new or revised policies, procedures or guidance that is relevant to the revision. National certification schemes should seek advice and guidance from their international body when compiling their advice.

D4 Amendments induced by certification schemes

In the event that a certification scheme requires a revision to be made to the standard or the standard setting process prior to the normal revision period, the Steering Group shall consider the requirement and make any such amendment as it considers appropriate.

UKWAS Support Unit
7 April 2009