

# **PEFC Certification – Benefits to Growers and Industry**

## **Forestry, Woodland and Bio Energy Show**

**Stradbally Hall, Co. Laois**

**10 – 11 May 2012**

William Merivale  
National Secretary, PEFC Ireland  
[www.pefc.ie](http://www.pefc.ie)  
[william@pefc.ie](mailto:william@pefc.ie)

- 1. What does forest certification involve, and how does it work?**
- 2. Why do forest owners need to become certified?**
- 3. The application process**

# 1. What is involved and how it works

- Rio Earth Summit 1992 – failure to agree internationally binding convention on SFM
- **But**, agreement was reached on series of criteria and indicators (C&I) for SFM
- FSC formed in 1993, with original focus on the tropics, and developed its principles and criteria from the Rio C&I
- Attention turned to temperate forests in developed world
- Difficulties encountered with growers organisations, particularly in Europe
- Led to establishment of alternative system – PEFC formed in 1999

- Post Rio, growth in international and inter-governmental processes to agree the basic tenets of SFM, all of which include economic, environmental and social criteria
- In Europe, Ireland is member of the MCPFE and is a signatory to the mandatory PEOL Guidelines for SFM
- Today about 50 forest certification systems worldwide, but two predominate: FSC and PEFC
- PEFC the largest system – more than 750,000 owners with 244 million hectares now certified

- Certification involves 2 different processes:
  - Forest Management
  - Forest Products
- Independent, credible means of verification
- Tracking of material from forest to end product – called Chain of Custody

## FM Certification:

- Involves preparation of a certification standard
- Audit protocol that encompasses national legislation and regulations; and internationally agreed conventions (eg MCPFE)
- Provides the means to enable an independent auditor to assess management against the standard
- PEFC Ireland standard has 8 sections, with sub-sections comprising:
  - Requirement
  - Means of verification
  - Guidance notes

## **Chain of Custody Certification:**

- Includes every link in manufacturing supply chain from forest gate to end product
- Independent audit against CoC Standard
- Follows the paper trail – end product can be linked to certified forest of origin
- End product can bear the logo – honest labelling system

## 2. Why do private forest owners need to be certified?

- International concerns regarding illegal logging, deforestation, climate change etc.
- Significant growth in demand for labelled goods
- Public timber procurement policies, green building initiatives, corporate social responsibility (CSR) policies, EUTR
- Rapid growth in demand for certified forest products
- Coillte's position as near-monopoly supplier of logs diminishing as volume of private sector supply set to expand rapidly



- Currently 3 Irish forest owners are certified: Coillte, IForUT, and An Grupa Dubh Dara
- Coillte/IForUT supply 70-80% of all timber
- Private sector supply at the stage of rapid growth, so Coillte proportion reducing
- Major sawmills can absorb max 30%, and the board mills max 20% uncertified material
- Stage where mills will have to turn away private sector supply approaching fast

- Ireland is dependent on timber exports
- UK is our largest customer
- Near exponential growth in UK demand for certified timber
- Comprehensive public timber procurement policy ([www.cpet.org](http://www.cpet.org))
- Green building initiatives, eg BREEAM, Sustainable Homes Initiative, etc → 80%+ of all timber imported into UK certified, **and rising**
- Uncertified Irish timber won't find a market in Europe, and increasingly at home

### 3. The application process

- No private owner large enough to certify in isolation
- Group schemes pioneered by PEFC, many examples with '000s of members
- Some are already calling for an Irish national group scheme
- Existing producer groups starting to seek training
- **All** forest owners within 2 years of thinning need to prepare now

- Each individual group member must implement a forest management plan compatible with the certification standard
- The group appoints a manager(s) responsible for ensuring compliance on the part of every member
- Group centrally / regionally administered
- Group manager conducts an internal annual audit of every member to ensure all are compliant
- When the group is ready for certification, application made to certification body (CB)

- CB audits a sample of the members in accordance with PEFC Ireland sampling procedures
- Likely to raise “corrective action requests” (CARs)
- CARs must be closed out prior to issue of certificate
- Certificate lasts 5 years, subject to annual surveillance audit
- 2 types of CAR:
  - Minor: timeframe given for corrective action
  - Major: certificate withdrawn until problem addressed

## **For further information, contact :**

PEFC Ireland  
1A Westlink Business Park  
Kilnap  
Old Mallow Road  
Cork

021 4399660 / 087 2450241

[william@pefc.ie](mailto:william@pefc.ie)  
[www.pefc.ie](http://www.pefc.ie)

## **Thank You**