

Meet your customers' expectations – with PEFC certification

From small and medium-sized enterprises to global brands, more and more companies along the timber supply chain are keen to demonstrate that the forest-based materials they are using come from legal and sustainable sources. Some are doing so in response to legislation and regulatory requirements, others realise the benefits of delivering sustainability assurances on products to address environmental, social and ethical concerns. Regardless of the motivation, the preferred tool for companies to demonstrate legal and sustainable sourcing of forest products is PEFC Chain of Custody certification.

Whether your business operations are simple or complex, PEFC offers several Chain of Custody options which can meet your needs. For smaller organisations, the preferred option is Group Certification.



What is PEFC Chain of Custody certification?

PEFC Chain of Custody certification adds value to all companies that manufacture, process, trade or sell timber or forest based products, including structural timber, joinery, paper, packaging, fresh fibre and furniture.

It provides independently verified assurance that the certified wood contained in a product originates from well-managed forests. In addition, the PEFC Due Diligence System (DDS) minimises the risk that timber comes from illegal harvesting and enables companies to demonstrate alignment with regulatory requirements such as the EU Timber Regulation. The PEFC DDS is an integral part of PEFC Chain of Custody certification.

To earn PEFC Chain of Custody certification, companies must develop and implement procedures to account for the purchasing, tracking, manufacturing, sale and recordkeeping of certified materials.

What are the benefits of PEFC Chain of Custody certification?

-  **Access to markets:** With both private and public sector procurement policies increasingly specifying certification, PEFC is your ticket to access markets for environmentally responsible products
-  **Ability to use the PEFC label:** With ecolabels being the most trusted source of information for consumers about whether a product is environmentally and socially responsible, PEFC certification demonstrates that both you and your customers are addressing consumer expectations
-  **Compliance with legislation:** PEFC's Due Diligence System (DDS) excludes wood from conversions, illegal and other controversial sources and is fully aligned with the requirements of the EU Timber Regulation (EUTR)
-  **Business leadership on sustainability:** By adopting PEFC certification and supplying PEFC-certified products, you can gain a competitive advantage over other suppliers
-  **Traceability:** You can be sure that the certified material in the final product was sourced from a certified forest with respect for environmental, economic and social standards.



How can a small company obtain Group Certification?

PEFC Group Certification is based on small, independent businesses forming a "group" for the purpose of certification to reduce costs. It is a simple, straightforward and cost-effective way to benefit from PEFC Chain of Custody certification.

PEFC Chain of Custody certification requires companies to set up a management system to account for purchasing, tracking, manufacturing, sales and record-keeping of certified material. However, we realise that many smaller companies may not have the in-house resources to implement and manage these requirements.

PEFC Group Certification delivers all these requirements in a single package. The Group Scheme Manager, operating on behalf of the individual group member companies, provides scheme management and all the documentation required for Chain of Custody certification. Consultancy, support and auditing are also provided, thereby keeping the human and financial investment required by individual members to a minimum.

Companies must first source from PEFC-certified suppliers. When the product (e.g. timber, paper, finished product) arrives at the workplace, or ownership is transferred, everybody involved must ensure that the correct paperwork is in place. If it is, the next step is to ensure it can be identified before going into storage, production or sale. When it is sold, the product must be clearly identified on all accompanying paperwork such as a delivery note or invoice.

PEFC Group Certification schemes are for companies which employ up to 50 staff and have a turnover of less than £6 million. If your company meets both these criteria, then the next steps are straightforward.



Implementing PEFC Group Certification

Companies come together to form a Chain of Custody certification group and appoint a Group Manager. The Group Manager develops and administers the certification procedures for the group and undertakes annual internal audits of the members. This enables each member to be certified together under this formally identifiable group.

The fundamental basis of Group Certification is that all members of the Group must formally commit to complying with all the requirements of PEFC Chain of Custody and demonstrate this during the internal audit. Once this is achieved, they are eligible to supply PEFC-certified material as a part of the unbroken supply chain and use the PEFC label.

The exact steps necessary to implement Chain of Custody, as well as the costs involved, depend on multiple factors (such as number of employees, complexity of production and turnover). Group Managers co-ordinate the information produced by Scheme Members and are the certificate holder. A Group Manager can be a specific Group Member, an experienced legal entity such as a consultant or a trade association.



PEFC promotes Sustainable Forest Management and helps protect the world's forests

PEFC (Programme for Endorsement of Forest Certification) is an international non-profit, non-governmental organisation dedicated to promoting Sustainable Forest Management through independent third-party certification.



As a federal organisation, PEFC works by endorsing national forest certification systems and has recognised systems in 43 countries. Together these account for over 300 million hectares of certified forests, making PEFC the world's largest forest and wood product certification system. This is equivalent to two-thirds of the global certified forest area.

The PEFC label provides assurances that the products on which it appears come from responsibly-managed forests. With more than 18,000 companies involved in PEFC Chain of Custody certification, PEFC's distinctive "two trees" label now appears on thousands of PEFC-certified products around the world.

Get involved with Group Certification

For companies with up to 50 employees and a turnover of less than £6 million, there are several existing Group Certification Schemes in the UK that you may be able to join:

- LIGNA
- British Woodworking Federation
- Oxford Timber Audits

However, new groups can also be formed so for the latest information visit <http://bit.ly/1C3R8w4>. You can also contact the PEFC UK team for further advice by e-mailing info@pefc.co.uk or calling 0114 307 2334.

Further information about Chain of Custody can be found on the PEFC UK website at <http://bit.ly/2bYfc0l>.



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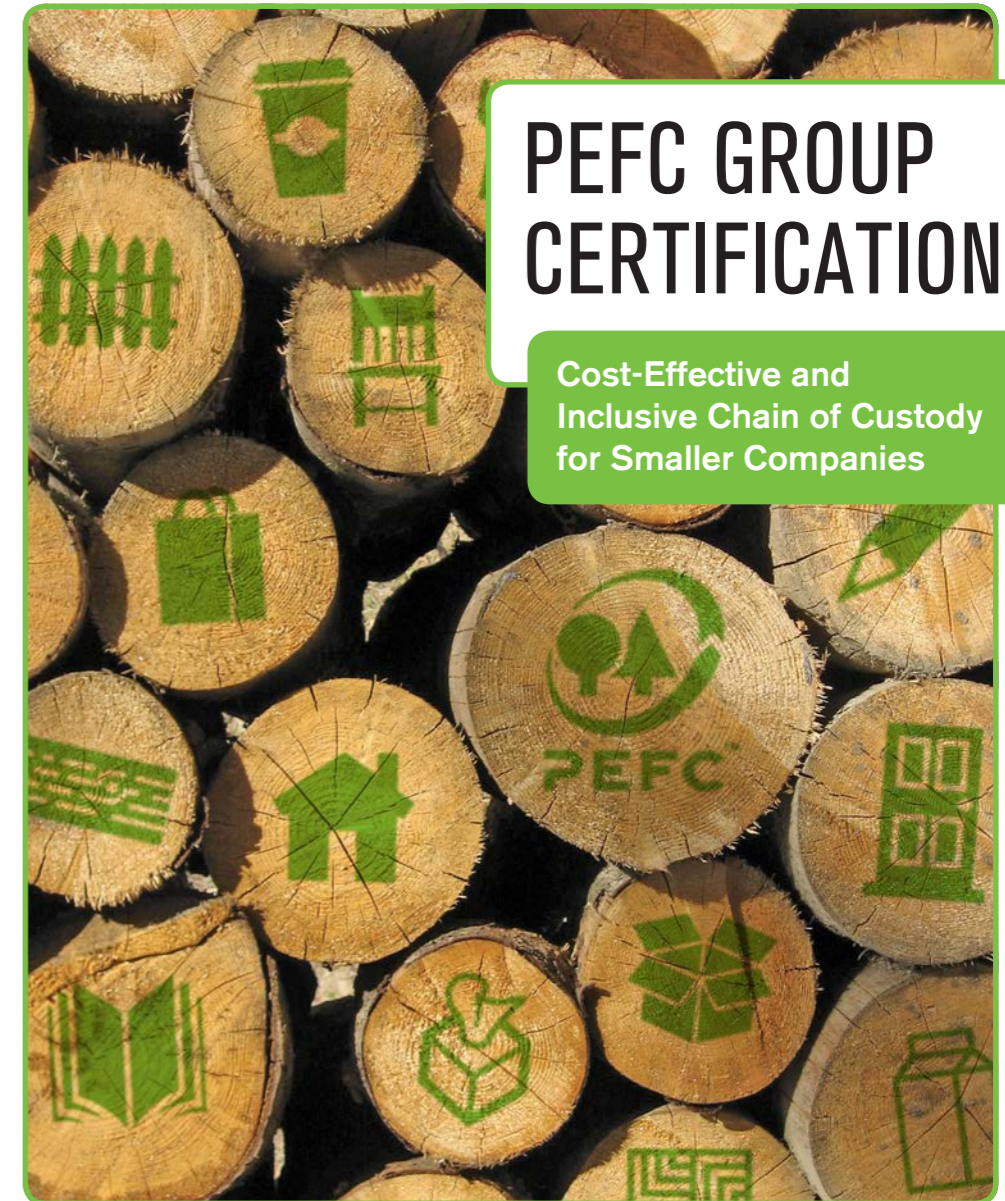
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PEFC GROUP CERTIFICATION

Cost-Effective and
Inclusive Chain of Custody
for Smaller Companies



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