

Summary points of CPET Reference Board Meeting 07/09/2006

Attendees:

Bob Andrew, Defra

Katharine Thoday, Defra

Neil Judd, ProForest (CPET)

Kate Bottrill, ProForest (CPET)

Beatrix Richards, WWF UK

Saskia Ozinga, FERN

Andy Roby, TTF

Martin Gale, Confor

Conflict of Interest

Prior to the official commencement of the meeting, the issue of potential conflict of interest was raised. Martin Gale had recently been appointed as the Chair of PEFC UK and therefore had close links with one of the certification schemes currently accepted by the UK Government.

Issue resolution: It was proposed that all RB members provide a list of organisations to which they have affiliations to increase transparency. Issues would be evaluated meeting by meeting, and where a conflict of interest was perceived, the RB member would be asked not to participate in that particular discussion. It was agreed that Martin Gale should continue to participate in RB meetings, given that he was unpaid for his role with PEFC UK and that he, like other non executive CPET Board members, did not represent any of the organisations he was affiliated to but was there to give his personal opinion and did not make decisions on CPET work or UK Government policy..

Agenda items

The following agenda items were agreed upon for the meeting

- Category A update on scheme submissions
- Category A comments by RB members
- Category B
- CPET Activities update

Annual Reviews

Methodology

Methodology for dealing with non-compliances was discussed. Varying 'corrective action request' time periods were discussed, including 6 months, 3 months and 1 month. It was noted that there was a distinction between asking for further clarification, and asking for corrective action. A request for clarification did not implicitly indicate the failure of a scheme. The goal of issuing corrective action requests in the event a scheme scored a zero was to promote continual improvement.

Issue resolution: It was proposed that schemes where scores of zero were outstanding after the completion of the Review would be given one month to make a commitment to adjust their systems accordingly. The commitment would include a schedule for implementation. During this month, no public announcements would be made and RB members would not be able to distribute any information regarding the status of schemes.

MTCC

The issue noted in the MTCC draft findings (presented at the previous RB meeting) was non-compliance with criterion 4.2. Further clarification was sought from MTCC on whether the removal pass system adequately addressed the lack of chain of custody between the FMU and the first processing stage. The response from MTCC was distributed (emails dated 28 July 2006 and 1 September 2006, including attachments). NB. The response was not distributed to RB members

It was also noted that with reference to criterion 1.1.1, Civil Court decisions provided an interpretation of existing land use laws, which were potentially not used by certifiers (as evidenced by MTCC certification in Sarawak, where there were outstanding land claims). With reference to criterion 1.1.2, it was noted that there was no requirement for general legal compliance. This had led to a selection of laws that risked excluding some relevant laws.

Issue resolution: The RB recommended that the score of zero be maintained for criteria 4.2 and a request for corrective actions be issued. No announcement would be made before the end of October 2006. Should the MTCC make a commitment to adjust the standard accordingly by the end of October 2006, it would be allowed two months from then to provide evidence that the changes had been implemented.

It was also recommended that further clarification be sought with respect to criteria 1.1.1 and 1.1.2, specifically as to how a certification body would verify legal compliance by a forest owner/manager. MTCC would be given one month to provide clarification. If at that time the information provided did not satisfy the criteria, a request for corrective actions would be issued and MTCC would not be accepted as proof of legality.

FSC

As noted in the FSC draft findings (presented at the previous RB meeting), documentation had not yet been provided to support criterion 3.1. Since the last RB meeting, the documentation had been examined by CPET and a score of 2 had been allocated.

Issue resolution: The RB was satisfied with the score. Copies of the checklist were available to RB members.

PEFC

At the previous RB meeting, issues were noted with the draft score of '1' for criterion 1.3.3.

Instances were noted where national schemes were using voting systems. Voting which ensures no decision can be made in the absence of agreement from the majority of an interest category was acceptable under CPET requirements, but PEFC's requirement for consensus left no room for alternative procedures. It was suggested that a score of zero should be awarded if PEFC did not satisfactorily address these anomalies.

Issue resolution: The RB recommended that a request for corrective actions should be issued. No announcement will be made until the end of October 2006.

With respect to AFS, it was suggested that if the review of the standard for the February 2007 deadline was undertaken according to the standard setting procedures which included the two NGO seats, then AFS would be compliant with PEFC's requirements (provided PEFC adjusted its standard to reflect both consensus and voting procedures). However, if the review is not completed by February 2007 with appropriate participation, then AFS would not be compliant with PEFC's requirements. If at that time AFS continued to be an endorsed PEFC scheme, PEFC would cease to be a CPET approved scheme for legal and sustainable sources.

SFI

A letter from WWF and FERN was submitted a short while before the meeting outlining concerns with SFI criteria 1.1.1, 1.1.3, 1.2.2 and 1.3.2. These issues had not been raised at the previous RB meeting and supporting documentation was not available at the current meeting. FERN, WWF had raised these points more than one year ago and their point had not been considered to date.

Issue resolution: It was agreed that, ProForest would respond in writing to the concerns outlined in the letter and to the other concerns with SFI raised as part of the consultation on the Category A criteria.

Category B

ProForest presented a copy of the current Framework for evaluating Category B evidence (it is also available on the CPET website). A workplan was outlined which included the evaluation of Category B programmes and initiatives, such as OLB and TFT.

CPET activity update

Recent activities were highlighted, including a monitoring pilot study, monthly workshops, regional workshops and workshops with specific departments. A presentation was given by CPET at the Nordic Council of Ministers summer meeting. Articles on CPET had been published in the TTJ, Timber in Construction and Timber Building.

Upcoming activities included seminars at The Timber Show, meetings on harmonisation of EU procurement policy, and the initiation of the formal monitoring programme which will involve the recruitment of a dedicated individual.

Next meeting

Scheduled for 20th October 2006

Defra – September 2006