

The procedure describes the order in which complaints and appeals are received and reviewed and replied to.

A complaint - Client`s or clients` expression of dissatisfaction in relation to the auditing work and/or certification process within the scope of the accreditation, or in relation to the technical assessment work or in relation to the inspection work within the scope of designated product areas. Complaints may be submitted by third parties.

The complaint may be submitted orally (in person or by telephone) or in writing (including electronically). The complaint must contain the submitter`s name, legal name, registered legal office, description, and date of submission. Anonymous complaints will not be accepted.

An appeal - A Client`s or third party`s request to reevaluate the auditor's conclusion (opinion) in the certification and assessment conclusions in technical assessment or inspection process. The main attention is paid to the Client's appeals.

The complaint or appeal shall be submitted in writing (including electronically). The complaint must contain the submitter`s name, legal name, registered legal office contact information, clear description, and date of submission. Complaint shall be accompanied with objective evidence to support each element or aspect of the complaint. Anonymous complaints will not be accepted. Anonymous complaints shall be treated as stakeholder comments and addressed during the next audit. Furthermore, anonymity of the Submitter in relation to Client shall be retain, if it is requested by Submitter.

An appeal is accepted in written form as a formal request. The appeal must contain the submitter`s name, legal name, registered legal office, description, and date of submission, as well as the appellants signature.

Certification body, signing the contract on certification service provision, shall inform the Client in writing about the order of appeal submission and conflict resolution.

According to standard PEFC LV 02_1 PEFC Latvian scheme "Guidelines for Certification Organisations and Auditors for the Certification of Forest Management "; PEFC LV MDS 02 "Conditions for certification bodies and auditors for the certification of PEFC forestry contractors" and "Requirements for Certification Bodies operating Certification against the PEFC International Chain of Custody Standard", if disputes relating to PEFC Forest Management and PEFC Chain of Custody of Forest-Based Products certification can not be resolved between the certification applicant/holder of certificate and the certification organisation, information about it along with other relevant information shall be submitted to the Association "PEFC Latvian Council". The Chairman of the Board of the Association "PEFC Latvian Council" shall assign a dispute settlement committee of three persons, who shall adopt a decision suitable for all parties involved.

BM Certification upon the receiving the complaint or appeal will gather and verify all necessary information to progress them to a decision.

The Office Administrator upon receipt of a complaint or appeal will undertake the following actions following Complaints and appeals procedure, respectively:

- shall register all complaints in Complaint Register and resent to Executive Director of BM Certification;
- acknowledge receipt of a complaint or appeal to the submitter within 10 working days of receiving the written complaint or appeal;
- provide a written response to the submitter within 14 business days of receipt of the complaint or appeal, informing about measure taken and planned measures;
- if the complaint is linked to a client of BM Certification, inform the client;
- keep the submitter informed of progress in evaluating the complaint or appeal;
- acknowledged in writing the submitter when the complaint is deemed closed.
- shall record all actions with the complaints and appeals in the order specified in the procedure, as well as received and created documents shall be stored.

The Executive Director of BM Certification will undertake the following tasks:

- shall decide whether the complaint or appeal relates to scope of BM Certification certification activities and, if so, shall address it and together with Head of Certification assigns the Responsible person;
- responsible person will investigate the issue, reviewed, fill the checklists if the preventive measures have been taken, and made a decision based on evaluation results about received complaint or appeal. In addition, person who have been involved in the consultation or auditing process shall not be involved in complaint or appeal approval or reviewing process for three years;
- after the Responsible person will provide a review, the Office Administrator will send a progress report to submitter;
- organizes the review of the appeal and reviews the appeal. If necessary, an independent committee may be organized for the review.

If as a result of processing appeals or complaints, errors and mistakes in the actions of BM Certification are identified, without undue delay the causes of the detected non-conformities shall be investigated and necessary corrections and corrective actions shall be taken, of which reports shall be made in the Non-Conformity Registry in accordance with the procedure specified in the Management System.

Technical assessment body at signing the contract on technical assessment service shall inform the Client in writing about the order of appeal submission and conflict resolution within three (3) month. If more time is needed to complete the investigation, the complainant shall be informed.

Board Members review Complaints and Appeals. In the case of dispute settlement, independent committee of three persons is organized with the aim to review the appeal.

The responses to submitter shall be provided in the same language that is used in the public summary, or the language used shall be agreed with the submitter.

BM Certification shall ensure that decisions on complaints and appeals do not result in any discriminatory actions against the submitter. Moreover, BM Certification will retain the anonymity of the submitter in relation to the client, if this is requested by the complainant.