NEPCon
Generic Chain of Custody Standard

Version 2.0

NEPCon Generic Chain of Custody Standard	
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A   Introduction

NEPCon has developed this generic Chain of Custody (CoC) Standard for Organisations that want to separate certain material categories with their manufacturing and/or trading facilities and would like to undergo an independent evaluation regarding the robustness of their chain of custody system. The Standard can be used by Organisations that would like to be certified or verified for the purchasing, handling, processing, and/or selling of products, which may carry claims regarding origin or certification/verification schemes.

Organisations successfully evaluated by NEPCon against this CoC Standard can receive a certificate, confirming that it has a documented system in place to ensure claims regarding products sold correspond with claims for purchased raw material or final products. This Standard has been produced in response to Organisations that needs to demonstrate forest products tracking in situations where FSC™ or PEFC CoC certification is not applicable.

This CoC Standard may be applied to a variety of certification and verification services for which traceability is fundamental to the end claim. NEPCon may determine through the auditing process that it is necessary for sampling audits to take place further down a supply chain in cases where suppliers do not have independent verification.

For the purposes of making the generic CoC Standard relevant to different types of product claims, this document uses the term "**claim category**" to refer to the scheme and/or the product characteristics that are being tracked within the CoC system. Slight modifications to terms may be made by NEPCon when the Standard is used in a report template checklist and to respond to new developments in the area of certification and verification services.

Organisations that are independently verified by NEPCon as meeting the requirements of this Standard can be issued with a NEPCon Generic Chain of Custody certificate, entitling them to trade the products covered by the certificate with the corresponding claim category.

Public Comments

NEPCon invites interested parties to submit comments on this Standard to the contact listed on page 2. Comments received outside of the public consultation period will be considered during the next revision of the Standard.

Note on the use of this Standard

All aspects of this Standard are considered to be normative, including the scope, Standard effective date, references, terms and definitions, requirements, notes, tables and annexes, unless otherwise stated.

B   Scope

This Standard covers certification of general Chain of Custody to track product carrying various claims (claim categories).

C   Standard effective date

This Standard is effective from the date of approval as stated on this document. The Standard will be updated periodically and updated versions will replace previous versions.

D   References

NEPCon LegalSource™ Standard – the Standard developed by NEPCon which facilitates an Organisation's establishing and implementing a Due Diligence System, enabling evaluation of the risks of producing or sourcing illegal timber and timber products.

FSC (Forest Stewardship Council™) Chain of Custody Certification Standard – FSC-STD-40-004.

PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification) International Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products, Requirements – PEFC ST 2002:2013

E   Glossary

Certification Scheme: Any scheme providing certified or verified assurance of conformance to a normative standard.

Certification Code: A unique code awarded to an organisation which has certified or verified part or all its products according to a certification scheme.

Chain of Custody (CoC): CoC in the forest and timber industry refers to the path taken by raw materials from the forest to the consumer including all successive stages of processing, transformation, and distribution. For the purposes of this generic CoC Standard, CoC refers to the tracking and handling systems in use from the point of purchase of raw materials, to the point of shipment and sale of final product, for the Organisation being audited.

Claim category: The type and claim of the certification/verification scheme (including percentage of certified material if applicable) and/or the material or product characteristics being tracked within the CoC control system.

Outsourcing: Subcontracted manufacturing or other handling services of materials/products by an off-site operation.

Organisation: Individual, company or legal entity responsible for meeting the requirements of this Standard.

Products: Any product or material that an Organisation handles. In the context of forest products, this includes roundwood, lumber, processed wood-based intermediate and final products, pulp, paper, non-timber forest products, etc.

Records: Written or stored information. Records may be copies of documents, or information stored digitally with information on systems and data collected, that can be used to show compliance with standard requirements.

Chain of Custody requirements

1   General CoC requirements

1.1   The Organisation shall define one person with overall responsibility for the CoC control system and individual persons responsible for each part of the CoC control system (purchasing, processing, storage, marking, record-keeping etc.).

1.2   The Organisation shall develop and maintain documented procedures to ensure compliance with all applicable CoC requirements.

1.3   The Organisation shall develop and implement procedures for addressing non-conformances identified by auditors.

1.4   The Organisation shall demonstrate awareness of, and competence in, implementing, the Organisation's procedures relevant to fulfilling the requirements of this Standard.

1.5   The Organisation shall maintain records applicable to demonstrate compliance with this Standard.

1.6   The Organisation shall define and document the different products and claim categories that will be tracked within the CoC control system.

1.7   The Organisation shall maintain data on the quantity of tracked product and ensure that it is available for auditors. The quantity information shall be maintained at minimum for each reporting period:

- purchased product,
- product used in manufacture,
- conversion factors,
- sold product,
- input and final products held in stock.

2   Segregation

2.1   The Organisation shall track and segregate products with separate claim categories throughout all processes, including purchasing and receiving, processing, storage and shipping, delivery and sale.

3   Purchasing and receiving

3.1   For each purchase/receipt of products tracked within the CoC control system, the Organisation shall identify and validate the claim category.

3.2   For each purchase/receipt of products tracked within the CoC control system, the Organisation shall identify and record at least the following information:

(a) supplier(s) identification,

(b) product(s) identification,

(c) quantity of delivery,

(d) date of delivery,

(e) claim category,

(f) the supplier's Certification Code, as applicable.

3.3   The Organisation shall verify that product purchased and received is consistent with the claim category.

4   Processing

4.1   The Organisation shall use a tracking system or production records to document the manufacture of product for each claim category.

4.2   The Organisation shall ensure that any off-site processing or handling that takes place at a contracted facility follows the same CoC procedures and is covered by a signed outsourcing agreement requiring compliance with the applicable requirements of this Standard.

4.3   All product that cannot be identified as belonging to one of the claim categories defined in 1.6 above, shall be kept separate from all other products until documented evidence of the claim category is obtained.

5   Shipping and sales

5.1   The Organisation shall ensure claim information is provided on sales invoices and shipping documents, including the following:

    5.1.1 Description of the product and the claim category,

    5.1.2 Quantity of each product/claim category,

    5.1.3 NEPCon Generic Chain of Custody Certification Code, if applicable.

6   Claims and public information

6.1   All claims made by the Organisation shall be in conformance with NEPCon requirements, as applicable.

6.2   Organisation shall submit all claims to NEPCon for review and approval prior to use.

About NEPCon

NEPCon (Nature Economy and People Connected) is an international non-profit organisation that works to build capacity and commitment for mainstreaming sustainability. For over 20 years, we have worked to foster sustainable land use and responsible trade in forest commodities. We do this through innovation projects and through sustainability services.

We are accredited certifiers for sustainability schemes such as FSC™, PEFC, and SBP. We offer Chain of Custody certification according to the SAN / Rainforest Alliance Standard. We also certify to our own LegalSource Standard and Carbon Footprint Management standards. A self-managing division of NEPCon promotes and delivers our certification services. Surplus from certification activities supports the development on NEPCon's non-profit activities.

NEPCon is recognised by the EU as a Monitoring Organisation under the EU Timber Regulation.

Contact

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