



TFCC/PEFC Development Report:

Thai Conformity Assessment Standard

(TCAS 14061-2566)

March 2026

Thailand Forest Certification Council (TFCC)

Document name: Thailand Forest Certification System (TFCS) - Introduction		
Document title: Development Report	Issue date: 17 April 2026	Application date: 17 April 2026
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The official language of the document is Thai. This development report When there is inconsistency between language versions, the English version of the document as endorsed by the PEFC Council shall be the reference document.

1. Summary of the Standard Setting Process

The standard setting process for the Thailand Forest Certification System (TFCS) is a collaborative, transparent, and consensus-based effort. In this process, the Thai Industrial Standards Institute (TISI) acts as the standardizing body responsible for establishing the requirements, while the Thailand Forest Certification Council (TFCC) operates as the National Governing Body (NGB) on behalf of the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC). The process is structured into multiple phases, heavily relying on Technical Subcommittee 4 (SC 4), which consists of a balanced representation of stakeholders from industry, government, academia, NGOs, and forest owners.

Timeline of the Standard Setting Process (TCAS 14061)

- **June – July 2021 (Preparatory Stage):** TISI and TFCC developed the standard proposal, conducted stakeholder mapping, made public announcements, and established Technical Subcommittee 4 (SC 4).
- **July 2021 – March 2022 (Draft Development Stage):** SC 4 held 15 meetings to prepare and review the first draft of the standard.
- **March 29 – May 31, 2022 (Public Consultation Stage):** The enquiry draft was published for a 64-day public consultation. This included a public seminar held on April 5, 2022, which gathered 92 participants from 75 organizations.
- **May 27 & June 6–7, 2022 (Standard Testing Stage):** The standard was pilot-tested at Klongpang Rubber Replanting Fund Cooperative Co., Ltd. to verify auditability, specifically testing the newly added "Trees Outside Forest" (ToF) requirements.
- **September 2022 – May 2023 (Consensus-Building Stage):** SC 4 reviewed feedback from the public consultation and reached a consensus to finalize the draft.
- **April 27 – July 10, 2023 (Approval Stage):** The Industrial Product Council approved the standard on April 27, 2023, and it was formally signed by the Secretary-General of TISI on July 10, 2023.
- **August 23, 2023 (Publication Stage):** The final standard (TIS 14061) was officially published in the Royal Thai Government Gazette.

Timeline of TFCC Re-endorsement by PEFC

- **August 31, 2023:** The Federation of Thai Industries (FTI) submitted the application for the re-endorsement of the TFCS to the PEFC Council.
- **July 2025:** The external assessment of the TFCS against PEFC requirements was completed, and the final assessment report was issued.
- **July 23, 2025:** The PEFC Council issued a formal letter confirming the maintenance of the TFCS endorsement, conditionally requiring FTI to address 33 minor non-conformities (NCs) identified across standard setting procedures, SFM, group certification, and the newly added Trees Outside Forests standard.
- **January 15, 2026:** TFCC formally wrote to the PEFC Council confirming that corrective actions (such as procedural enhancements to PD 006 and PD 002) were being implemented to resolve all 33 minor non-conformities.
- **January 23, 2026:** The deadline set by the PEFC Council for FTI to submit all final evidentiary documents regarding the implemented corrective actions.
- **April 23, 2026:** The revision of evidentiary documents regarding the corrective actions.

2. Executive Context and Standard Rationale

The transition to **TCAS 14061-2566 (มตช. 14061-2566)** represents a fundamental restructuring of Thailand’s forestry governance. This document signifies the shift from a product-based Industrial Standard (TIS) to a system-based **Thai Conformity Assessment Standard (TCAS)**. This is not merely a nomenclature change; it is an architectural alignment with the nation’s National Quality Infrastructure (NQI) and the 20-Year National Strategy, specifically Strategy 2 (Competitiveness) and Strategy 5 (Green Growth).

By moving from a "Product-Based" industrial focus to a "System-Based" assessment framework, Thailand provides a transparent and verifiable mechanism for global stakeholders to trust the sustainability of Thai timber. The objectives of the standard—ensuring sustainable yield, mitigating environmental degradation, and biodiversity restoration—collectively form the "triple bottom line" necessary for Thai forestry exports to penetrate high-value international markets. This report serves as a technical brief on the standard's readiness for international accreditation and its strategic role in Thailand’s economic future.

3. Evolution of the Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) Framework

The SFM framework in Thailand has undergone decades of refinement to meet increasing international rigor. Tracing this evolution demonstrates the commitment of the Thai government to continuous improvement:

- **TIS 14061-2547 (2004):** The first iteration, establishing a baseline for industrial forest management.
- **TIS 14061 Vol. 1-2555 (2012):** The first major update, refining management requirements.
- **TIS 14061 Vol. 1-2559 (2016):** An interim alignment with evolving global benchmarks.
- **TCAS 14061-2566 (2023):** The current National Conformity Assessment Standard, expanding the scope to meet modern ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) requirements.

The 2023 revision (B.E. 2566) was triggered by a 2020 review of stakeholder feedback and certification data, revealing a need for a more inclusive model.

Strategic Comparison of the SFM Evolution

Feature	Previous Context (TIS)	Current Expansion (TCAS 14061-2566 / 2023)
Legal Identity	Industrial Product Standard	National Conformity Assessment Standard (TCAS)
Primary Scope	Large-scale industrial plantations.	Economic Forests (ป่าเศรษฐกิจ), Plantations, and Trees Outside Forests (TOF).
Social Inclusion	General labor compliance.	Explicit inclusion of Community Forests and smallholder TOF models.
Global Strategy	Industrial compliance.	Alignment with the NQI and 20-Year National Strategy (Strategy 2 & 5).

This expansion is critical for Thailand's inclusive economic model. By incorporating **Trees Outside Forests (TOF)**—timber grown on agricultural lands or non-state zones—and **Community Forests**, the standard brings small-scale farmers into the formal, certified economy. This evolution is the result of a multi-agency collaboration between the **Thai Industrial Standards Institute (TISI)**, the **Royal Forest Department (RFD)**, and the **Thai Forest Certification Council (TFCC)**.

4. Methodological Alignment: International Grounding

To ensure global "mutual recognition," TCAS 14061-2566 was specifically **aligned with and guided by PEFC ST 1003:2018 (Sustainable Forest Management – Requirements)**. This alignment is the bridge that allows Thai timber to compete in markets requiring Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) credentials.

The legal validity of this standard is rooted in the **National Standardization Act B.E. 2551 (2008)**. It was formalized via **Notification No. 24 (B.E. 2566)**, issued by the Committee on Conformity Assessment and signed on July 10, 2023, by **Mr. Banjong Sukreeta**, the Secretary-General of TISI. Furthermore, the standard achieved final legal validation through its publication in the **Royal Thai Government Gazette** (Vol. 140, Special Section 202 Ng, dated August 23, 2023).

5. Comprehensive Stakeholder Mapping and Technical Subcommittee Analysis

The development of the standard was managed by the **Technical Subcommittee on Sustainable Forest Management (Subcommittee No. 4)**. The composition of this group was strategically designed to ensure "balanced representation," a core requirement for PEFC endorsement.

Stakeholder Mapping: Subcommittee No. 4

- **Government & Regulatory:**
 - Thai Industrial Standards Institute (TISI)
 - Royal Forest Department (RFD)
 - Ministry of Industry
 - National Bureau of Agricultural Commodity and Food Standards
 - Forest Industry Organization (FIO)
- **Academic & Technical Experts (Independent Mediators):**
 - **Faculty of Environment and Resource Studies, Mahidol University** (Chair: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Rathanawat Chaiyarat)
 - Faculty of Forestry, Kasetsart University
- **Private Sector & Industry Associations:**
 - Federation of Thai Industries (FTI)
 - Thai Pulp and Paper Association
 - Fast-Growing Tree Business Association
 - Thai Forest Certification Council (TFCC)

- **Civil Society & Community Representatives:**
 - RECOFTC (The Center for People and Forests)
 - National Farmers Council
 - Private Forest Plantation Cooperative Limited

Strategic Insight: The presence of high-level academic experts from Mahidol and Kasetsart Universities serves a critical function. In the eyes of international accreditors, these experts act as independent mediators, ensuring that the standard is not skewed toward government mandates or private profit, but is grounded in scientific rigor.

6. Technical Analysis of Requirements: The SFM Pillars

The architecture of TCAS 14061-2566 is built upon rigorous, verifiable requirements.

Context and Affected Stakeholders (Section 4)

The standard requires managers to identify **affected stakeholders**—those with a direct social or economic nexus to the forest unit. This distinction is vital; it prioritizes those impacted by local land use over general interest groups, ensuring localized social harmony.

Leadership and Transparency (Section 5)

Leadership is mandated to provide public transparency. Commitments to SFM must be disclosed through accessible local channels, such as village announcements or physical postings, ensuring the "social license to operate" is maintained.

Operational Mandates (Section 8)

Section 8 contains the most substantive technical requirements.

Top 5 High-Impact Operational Mandates:

1. **Carbon Sequestration (8.1.2):** Managers must prove a balance between harvest and growth rates to maintain long-term carbon storage capacity.
2. **Integrated Pest Management (8.2.5):** The use of chemical pesticides is strictly limited to a "last resort" basis, prioritizing biological and silvicultural controls.
3. **GMO Prohibition (8.4.7):** The standard prohibits Genetically Modified (GM) trees that have **impacts on humans, animals, and the environment**, a crucial safeguard for ecosystem integrity.
4. **Endangered Species Protection (8.4.3):** Mandatory identification and protection of species listed on Thai national endangered/threatened lists and IUCN references.
5. **Pollution Prevention (8.2.3):** Rigorous procedures for managing inorganic waste and preventing oil spills during machinery operation are required to protect soil and water health.

The "Conversion Rule" and Land History (Sections 8.1.4 and 8.1.5)

This is the most critical "non-negotiable" for PEFC endorsement. The standard prohibits conversion of forest to non-forest land or the replacement of ecologically important non-forest ecosystems with plantations.

- **The 5% Limit:** Conversion for infrastructure or societal benefit is capped at 5% of the total certified area.
- **The Cutoff Date:** Any conversion after **December 31, 2010 (B.E. 2553)** is ineligible for certification.
- **The Negative Clause:** Managers must perform a "land history trace" to prove that, as of the cutoff date, the land was not primary forest or an ecologically important non-forest ecosystem.

7. Socio-Economic Safeguards and Labor Rights

TCAS 14061-2566 self-imposes international best practices for social equity, which is a major differentiator in tropical forestry.

- **Fundamental ILO Conventions (Section 6.3.3):** The standard mandates compliance with the **8 core conventions (29, 87, 98, 100, 105, 111, 138, and 182)**, covering everything from the right to collective bargaining to the elimination of child and forced labor.
- **Fair Wages (Section 6.3.4):** Wages for all personnel, including contractors and subcontractors, must meet or exceed the **legal minimum wage**.
- **Indigenous Rights and FPIC (Section 6.3.2):** While Thailand has not fully ratified ILO 169, the TCAS standard **self-imposes** the principles of **Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC)**. No management activity can violate the traditional rights of local communities without their informed agreement.

8. Implementation Framework: Monitoring and Dispute Resolution

The administrative framework of the standard is designed to be robust yet accessible for all scales of operation.

- **Controlled Documentation (Section 7.5):** All compliance evidence—from training logs to harvest records—must be maintained. Crucially, the standard allows for **flexibility in media (digital or physical)**. This ensures that smallholders (TOF) and community forests can achieve compliance without the burden of sophisticated digital systems, provided the records are "controlled and maintained."
- **Grievance Mechanisms (Section 7.4):** Every certified unit must maintain a transparent complaint mechanism for land, labor, or management disputes. A functional grievance process is a strategic tool that prevents local conflicts from escalating, thereby protecting the plantation's long-term operational stability.

9. Conclusion: The Path Forward for Thai Forestry

TCAS 14061-2566 (มทษ. 14061–2566) is the strategic catalyst required to modernize Thailand's forestry sector. By transitioning to a National Conformity Assessment Standard, Thailand has created a bridge between its domestic smallholders and the global green economy.

The technical rigor of the conversion cutoff, the exhaustiveness of the labor rights protections, and the inclusion of Trees Outside Forests (TOF) position this standard as a benchmark for sustainable tropical forestry. As Thailand undergoes international PEFC assessment, this standard stands ready to serve as a verifiable tool for achieving the nation's 20-year economic and environmental goals.

10. Synopsis of the comments from the public consultation

- **Feedback Received:** During the public consultation period (March 29 to May 31, 2022), the Thai Industrial Standards Institute (TISI) received a total of 13 comments.
- **Synopsis Document:** A compiled summary document was created, officially listed in the documentation annex as "**Summary Feedback 'PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS FOR TCAS14061 2022 REVISED VERSION'**".
- **Procedural Requirement:** According to the standard setting procedure (TFCC PD 006), the standardizing body is required to compile a synopsis of feedback for each material issue—including how the issue was considered—and make this synopsis publicly available on the TISI/TFCC website, as well as send it directly to the stakeholders who provided the feedback.
- **Assessment Finding:** The independent PEFC Assessor verified that the feedback was successfully collated, considered, formatted, and sent directly to the recipients. However, the assessor noted that the synopsis did not appear to have been published publicly on the website at the time of the assessment

Stakeholder Responses and Approval Ratings The public consultation demonstrated strong support for the revised standard. Out of the feedback received, the results were overwhelmingly positive:

- **84.6%** of respondents absolutely agreed with the proposed standard.
- **15.4%** agreed with comments.
- **0%** abstained from providing an opinion.
- **0%** disagreed.

During the consultation period, a total of 92 participants representing 75 different organizations attended the public seminar, and the Thai Industrial Standards Institute (TISI) received 13 formal comments.

Public Consultation Procedures The standard-setting body employed several methods to ensure transparent and broad stakeholder engagement:

- **Timeline:** The public consultation period ran for 64 days, from March 29 to May 31, 2022, fulfilling the procedural requirement that consultations must remain open for at least 60 days.

- **Announcements:** The consultation was publicly announced on March 30, 2022, through the TISI and TFCC websites, as well as on Facebook, in collaboration with the Royal Forest Department (RFD) and the Federation of Thai Industries (FTI).
- **Direct Invitations:** Direct invitations containing a link to the enquiry draft were sent via email to all mapped stakeholders. The system ensured that disadvantaged and key stakeholders were reached using clear and easy-to-understand communication methods.
- **Public Seminar:** To facilitate effective discussion, an online public consultation seminar titled "TFCC Public Consultation: Draft National Standard on Sustainable Forest Plantation Management" was hosted on April 5, 2022.
- **Document Accessibility:** The enquiry draft of the standard was made publicly available for download on the TFCC website and was also accessible via a QR code provided on promotional posters.
- **Handling Feedback:** After the consultation period ended, the feedback was collated, summarized, and directly sent back to the stakeholders who had provided comments, ensuring their input was objectively considered by the working group

11. The Standard Testing Phase

Because the revised standard added a brand-new framework for "**Trees Outside Forests**" (TOF), TFCC needed to test the standard's auditability, clarity, and reliability in a real-world setting.

- **When and Where:** The pilot testing took place on May 27 and June 6–7, 2022, at the Klongpang Rubber Replanting Fund Cooperative Co., Ltd.
- **The Test Subject:** The cooperative was chosen because its members manage land holdings of no more than 50 rai per person and their main income is not derived from timber (focusing instead on products like rubber/latex), which perfectly qualifies for the new TOF framework.
- **Outcome:** The testing was successful, with no problems found regarding the clarity or auditability of the standard indicators. However, the participants did suggest that additional knowledge resources—such as a manual with examples—should be prepared to help entrepreneurs and related persons better understand and implement the new requirements.

12. The PEFC Assessment: 33 Minor Non-Conformities

During the external assessment of the Thai Forest Certification System (TFCS), the PEFC assessor found **0 major non-conformities**, but identified **33 Minor Non-Conformities (NCs)**. The Federation of Thai Industries (FTI) was given a firm deadline of **January 23, 2026**, to implement corrective actions for these issues. With the extension for updating detail of implemented corrective actions, revision of evidentiary documents until **April 23, 2026**.

The 33 minor NCs were distributed across four main areas:

1. Standard Setting Process and Procedures (6 NCs) The assessor found procedural gaps, such as the standardizing body missing a risk assessment in the initial standard proposal document and failing to organize a required second round of public consultation. The procedures also lacked stipulations for making printed copies and the standard development report publicly available.

2. Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) Standard (11 NCs) Several issues were identified within the core SFM standard (TCAS 14061), including:

- **Incomplete Indigenous Rights:** The framework lacked explicit mentions of compensation, interim requirements for engagement, and processes for just dispute resolution.
- **Missing Requirements:** Management plans lacked clear requirements to specify the annual allowable use of non-wood forest products (like latex), minimize ecosystem degradation, and incorporate the results of scientific research.
- **Translation Errors:** The English translation of the standard contained errors, such as confusing "reforestation" with "afforestation," and poorly translating the limitations on the use of fire.

3. Trees Outside Forests (TOF) Standard (12 NCs) Because TOF was a new addition, it garnered the most NCs. Key issues included:

- **Ambiguous Definitions:** The standard lacked a clear definition for "ecologically important non-forest ecosystems" and had ambiguous definitions for "settlement area" and "agricultural area".
- **Unclear Cut-off Dates:** The standard failed to clearly define the cut-off date (December 31, 2010) for eligibility regarding the conversion of forests to TOF.
- **Broad Exceptions:** The standard provided exceptions for TOF areas (such as exceptions to maintaining structural diversity and taking into account different forest functions) that were considered far too broad compared to PEFC benchmarks.

4. Group Certification Model (3 NCs) The group certification requirements (TFCC SD 002) lacked a defined general framework. Furthermore, there were multiple procedural gaps concerning how group participants are selected, how risk assessments are categorized, and inadequate procedures for determining sampling boundaries

TFCC Corrective Actions (Submitted January 2026)

Area of Improvement	Action Taken	Details
Procedural Enhancements	Updating core procedures	TFCC committed to updating the Standard Setting procedure (PD 006) and Group Certification procedure (PD 002) to explicitly include PEFC benchmarks like stakeholder balance and proper risk assessment protocols.
Process Verifications	Providing retrospective evidence	TFCC is documenting supplementary actions, such as retrospective risk assessments, to demonstrate that the integrity of the standard-setting process remains intact despite procedural gaps.
New Compliance Document	Issuing PD 010:2025	FTI issued "Additional Requirements for TCAS 14061" (PD 010:2025) in January 2026 to explicitly codify missing requirements and ensure complete alignment with the PEFC Standard for Sustainable Forest Management.
Unified SFM & TOF Framework	Harmonizing requirements	Through a "Similarity Note" strategy, TFCC aligned the core TIS 14061 standard with the TOF Appendix A

Area of Improvement	Action Taken	Details
		requirements to ensure a consistent application of management planning and environmental safeguards across all land types.
Specific Standard Fixes	Addressing individual indicator gaps	Through PD 010, the framework now mandates scientific evaluation for exotic species, applies an unconditional ban on genetically modified trees, requires explicit fire control measures when raising animals, and specifies annual allowable limits for non-wood products like Para rubber latex.

Specifics of the Trees Outside Forests (TOF) Framework

TOF Concept	Framework Details
Definition	TOF refers to trees planted or growing in agricultural areas or other use areas outside of state forest zones that are not legally classified as economic forests.
Management Categories	TOF is divided into Intensive Management (areas >250 rai, higher canopy cover, timber as main product) and Extensive Management (areas ≤250 rai, lower tree density, main income derived from non-timber products).
Management Planning	TOF management plans must detail quantitative and qualitative resources, objectives, boundaries, buffer areas, water sources, budgets, soil/nutrient analysis, and harvest rates.
Legal & Social Compliance	TOF entrepreneurs must comply with local, national, and international laws, respect indigenous land tenure, ensure labor safety, prevent corruption, and manage compensation for damage to agricultural crops.
Ecological Diversity	Operators must promote and preserve natural diversity (genetics, species, and structural diversity) to maintain the ecosystem's viability, though TOF plots smaller than 50 rai are exempt from this specific requirement.

Appendix 1

Thailand Forest Certification System (TFCS) Framework Summary

1. System Governance and Regulatory Context

The Thailand Forest Certification System (TFCS) is a comprehensive national framework developed through a strategic collaboration between the **Thai Industrial Standards Institute (TISI)** under the Ministry of Industry, the **Royal Forest Department (RFD)**, the **Thailand Forest Certification Council (TFCC)**, and the **Institute of Industrial Energy of the Federation of Thai Industries (FTI)**.

Evolution of the Standard

The transition from a domestic industrial standard to a globally aligned conformity assessment framework is marked by the following chronological milestones:

- **TIS 14061-2547:** Initial announcement as an Industrial Product Standard for sustainable forest management.
- **TIS 14061 Book 1-2555:** First revision, replacing the 2547 version.
- **TIS 14061 Book 1-2559:** Second revision, refining management specifications.
- **TCAS 14061-2566:** The current Thai Conformity Assessment Standard (TCAS), announced in the Royal Gazette on August 23, 2023. This iteration was specifically drafted to address international requirements, utilizing **PEFC ST 1003:2018** as its primary guiding document.

Strategic Alignment

The TCAS framework is a critical instrument in achieving the goals of Thailand's **20-year National Strategic Plan**:

- **Strategy 2 (Competitiveness):** Strengthening Thailand's position in the global timber trade by providing a certification pathway recognized by international markets.
- **Strategy 5 (Green Growth):** Advancing the **Bio-Circular-Green (BCG) Economy Model** to ensure economic development is environmentally friendly and socially sustainable.

2. Core Objectives and Scope of TCAS 14061-2566

As mandated by Clause 1.1, the standard is built upon three foundational objectives:

- **Sustainable Yield:** Ensuring the long-term, continuous production of forest products.
- **Environmental Impact Mitigation:** Minimizing or eliminating negative ecological footprints resulting from management activities.
- **Biodiversity Conservation:** Protecting and restoring biological diversity and ecosystem services within designated areas while upholding social responsibility.

Scope of Application

The standard is applicable to all legal entities or individuals managing:

- **Economic Plantations:** Areas designated for timber production or trade.
- **Forest Plantations:** General reforested lands.
- **Trees Outside Forests (TOF):** Trees on land not legally designated as economic forest.

Legal Standing: In accordance with Clause 1.2, compliance with local, national, and international laws is the non-negotiable minimum requirement for certification. TCAS 14061-2566 is designed to augment existing legal governance with advanced sustainability metrics.

3. Trees Outside Forests (TOF) Requirements

Clause 3.30 defines **Trees Outside Forests (TOF)** as trees growing on land outside of state-owned forest lands that have not been legally designated as economic forests. This specifically includes **Agricultural Areas** (e.g., agrisilviculture, fruit orchards, rubber, and oil palm per Clause 3.23) and **Settlement Areas** (Clause 3.29).

Management Intensity Comparison (Clauses 3.2 and 3.3)

Management Type	Definition	Compliance Requirement
Intensive TOF Management	High-density tree placement.	Full compliance with all TCAS 14061-2566 requirements.
Extensive TOF Management	Low-density tree placement.	Compliance with selected, specific requirements as determined by the certification body.

4. Strategic Management Framework (Clauses 4-7)

Leadership and Support

- **Management Commitment (Clause 5.1):** Senior management must provide documented evidence of their commitment to the sustainable management system and its continuous improvement. This commitment must be made public (Clause 5.2).
- **Resource Allocation (Clause 7.1):** Organizations must identify and provide adequate human, financial, and physical resources to maintain the standard's integrity.

Stakeholder Engagement

- **Stakeholder Identification (Clause 4.2):** Managers must identify "affected stakeholders" (those experiencing direct impacts on life or work) and distinguish them from general "interested stakeholders."
- **Public Grievance Mechanism (Clause 7.4):** A transparent mechanism for resolving disputes regarding forest management, land use rights, and working conditions must be established and publicly disclosed.

Management Planning Checklist (Clause 6.2.2)

The Forest Management Plan is the central document for audit. It must include:

- [] **Objectives:** Environmental, social, and economic goals.
- [] **Resource Assessment:** Quantitative/qualitative data of forest resources and biodiversity characteristics.
- [] **Comprehensive Mapping:** Boundaries, ecologically important areas, buffer zones, set-aside areas, and water sources.
- [] **Silvicultural Systems:** Species selection, planting, maintenance, and soil/nutrient analysis.
- [] **Harvesting Metrics:** Annual allowable cut (AAC) with technical justification and equipment specifications.
- [] **Biodiversity Protocols:** Procedures for protecting rare, threatened, and endangered species.
- [] **Social/Environmental Impact Mitigation:** Measures to manage identified impacts on the surrounding community.

5. Operational Requirements (Clause 8)

Carbon Sequestration and Residue Management

Managers are required to maintain or increase the forest's carbon sink capacity (Clause 8.1.2). Forest conversion is strictly limited (Clause 8.1.4). Limited conversion (max 5%) is only permissible if it:

1. Aligns with national/regional land-use policies.
2. Follows transparent stakeholder consultation.
3. Does not impact ecologically important or protected areas.
4. Does not destroy high-carbon stock areas.
5. Provides clear long-term conservation and socio-economic benefits.

Residue Control (Clause 8.1.3.3): The burning of forest residues is prohibited unless it is necessary for sanitary health (pest/disease control) or to mitigate wildfire risks.

Ecosystem Health and Biodiversity

- **Integrated Pest Management (IPM):** Preferential use of biological and silvicultural controls to minimize chemical dependency (Clause 8.2.5.1).
- **Chemical Bans (Clause 8.2.5.2):** Strict prohibition of WHO Class 1A and 1B chemicals, substances listed in the Hazardous Substances Act B.E. 2535, and persistent organic pollutants as defined by the **Stockholm Convention (2001)**.
- **Species Protection (Clause 8.4.3):** Prohibition of commercial collection or hunting of species listed by CITES, the IUCN Red List, or national protected lists.

Social and Labor Standards

- **Labor Rights (Clause 3.41):** Mandatory compliance with the eight Fundamental ILO Conventions (29, 87, 98, 100, 105, 111, 138, and 182).

- **Extended Accountability (Clause 6.3.4.3):** Protections, including minimum wage compliance and safety standards, must extend to **contractors and subcontractors** operating within the certified area.
- **Indigenous Rights (Clause 6.3.2.2):** Adherence to **ILO Convention 169** and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Activities impacting traditional or customary rights require **Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC)**.

Economic Sustainability

Managers must maintain documented evidence of long-term economic viability and market-responsive harvest planning (Clause 8.3.2). Harvesting levels for timber and non-timber products must not exceed the long-term sustainable yield (Clause 8.3.4).

6. 2025/2026 Updates and Corrective Actions

TCAS 14061-2566 functions as a "corrective" standard, specifically revised to resolve non-conformities identified during PEFC assessment.

Enhanced Technical Definitions

To ensure audit precision, the standard introduces quantitative metrics for complex ecosystems:

- **Degraded Forest (Clause 3.18):** Defined by specific density thresholds in National Reserved Forests where natural recovery is unlikely. Criteria include:
 - Seedlings >2m height: ≤ 20 trees/rai.
 - Trees 50–100cm girth (at 130cm height): ≤ 8 trees/rai.
 - Trees >100cm girth: ≤ 2 trees/rai.
 - *Total combined count across these categories must be at least 16 trees for the area to be evaluated under this clause.*
- **Non-forest Ecosystems (Clause 3.34):** Ecosystems not meeting the forest definition but possessing high ecological value are now formally protected from replacement.

The Historical Cut-off Rule

As per the "Note" for Clauses 8.1.4 and 8.1.5, a strict Historical Cut-off is established:

- **December 31, 2010 (B.E. 2553):** Any plantation established via the conversion of **Primary Forest** or **Ecologically Important Non-Forest Ecosystems** after this date is ineligible for certification. Managers must provide historical land-use evidence to verify compliance.

7. Key Glossary of Technical Terms

- **Sustainable Forest Plantation Management (Clause 3.1):** Management focused on the maintenance and enhancement of forest resources in the long term, providing economic, social, and environmental benefits for current and future generations.
- **Ecologically Important Forest Areas (Clause 3.28):** Areas containing protected, rare, or fragile ecosystems; significant concentrations of endemic or threatened species; or habitats contributing to global/regional landscape diversity.
- **Genetically Modified Trees (Clause 3.14/8.4.7):** Trees with genetic material altered through non-natural means. Propagation in the forest is prohibited to prevent adverse impacts on humans, animals, and the environment.

- **Set-aside Areas (Clause 3.24):** Portions of the plantation designated to remain free from production activities to maintain or enhance environmental, economic, or social functions.
- **Non-Wood Forest Products (Clause 3.8):** All biological products excluding timber (e.g., resins, medicinal plants, honey) harvested from the plantation area.