

IMS Index 7.05 Group Certification Scheme Membership Agreement, Rules and Procedures

Scottish Woodlands Group Certification Scheme Membership Agreement

About the Group Scheme

The objective of the Scottish Woodlands Group Certification Scheme is to allow its Members to demonstrate that their forests are being responsibly managed and their commitment to both the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC C020901) and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC/16-40-1000) scheme requirements and to access markets for certified timber. Both schemes endorse the United Kingdom Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) to demonstrate responsible forest management in the UK.

Membership is open to any Scottish Woodlands client and to other woodland owners who express a desire to join and are willing to comply with the terms of this Membership Agreement. Scottish Woodlands Ltd encourages its clients to enter the Group Scheme, but membership is voluntary. The advantage of the Group Scheme is that the overall costs of achieving certification can be split amongst a wider ownership base. Further, by relying on the Scottish Woodlands management system the costs of meeting the standard can be further minimised.

Accordingly, the Member named below, and Scottish Woodlands Ltd have agreed to enter into this Membership Agreement to set out the terms upon which the Member will be granted membership of the Scottish Woodlands Group Certification Scheme.

Membership Details

1. This Membership Agreement is between:

the "Member",

and

Scottish Woodlands Limited, a company registered in Scotland (Company Number SC101787) and having its registered office at Research Park, Riccarton, Edinburgh, EH14 4AP ("Scottish Woodlands").

2. This Membership Agreement relates to the area(s) of woodland identified below and shown on the plan attached as an addendum to this Membership Agreement (hereinafter known as "the Property")

Forest Name:		
Location:		
Certified Area* (ha):		
Type of Membership**	Full ☐	Associate ☐
*For Portfolio Memberships see Appendix 2 for list of Woodland Management Units. **For information on membership types see section 2 of the Scottish Woodlands Group Certification Scheme Membership Rules and Procedures.		

3. This Membership Agreement consists of this membership form together with the Scottish Woodlands Group Certification Scheme Membership Rules and Procedures and Appendices attached hereto. The Rules and Procedures may be varied from time to time in order to meet changing certification scheme requirements.
4. By signing this Membership Agreement, the Member commits to conform with the terms of this Membership Agreement, the Scottish Woodlands Group Certification Scheme Membership Rules and Procedures, the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (and any subsequent revised version) and commits to follow the requirements of both FSC® Principles and Criteria and the PEFC Principles and Objectives for responsible forest management for a minimum period of 5 years from the date of certification of the Member's Property being granted by Scottish Woodlands and declares an intention to protect and maintain the woodland management unit and its ecological integrity in the long term. Furthermore, the member confirms that the forest management unit is not included in any other Forest Management Certificate.
5. Scottish Woodlands will act as the "Resource Manager." In this role they will administer the Group Scheme and proactively develop markets for the certified timber originating from Members' forests. The administration of the Group Scheme by the Resource Manager is governed by this Membership Agreement and the Scottish Woodlands Group Certification Scheme Membership Rules and Procedures.
6. Potential Members must satisfy the Resource Manager that their Property meets all the requirements necessary to become a Member of the Group Scheme.
7. An integral part of the Scottish Woodlands Group Scheme management system is that internal and external audits are carried out to monitor performance against the required standards. A significant noncompliance by one Member could cause the Group Scheme Certification to be withdrawn and it is essential that all Members meet consistently, the highest standards of forest management. Auditing of Members will be carried out in line with sections 5 and 6 of the Group Certification Scheme Membership Rules and Procedures, which includes the authority to audit the members property.
8. This Membership Agreement gives the Scottish Woodlands the authority to immediately stop any work or activity on the Property that does not comply with the requirements of UKWAS or Certification Scheme requirements until such time as the non-compliance is resolved. Failure to comply with such a notice will result in membership of the Group Scheme being suspended or withdrawn. See section 11.2 in the Group Certification Scheme Membership Rules and Procedures.
9. The costs of certification are of two types – the initial assessment, followed by an ongoing administration, auditing and monitoring fee. Members will be charged a joining fee and an annual administration fee reflecting the individual input required by the "Resource Manager" to administer Members' participation. These fees will be reviewed annually and notified to Members. Cost will be much lower than the alternative of individual forest certification.
10. Any dispute or arbitration will be referred for resolution under section 12 of the Group Certification Scheme Membership Rules and Procedures.
11. Section 11 of the Scottish Woodlands Group Certification Scheme Membership Rules and Procedures details the circumstances under which this Membership Agreement may be terminated. Upon leaving the Group Scheme the former Member shall not make any certification claim or use the FSC® or PEFC trademark or logo using Scottish Woodlands Group Certification Scheme licences for any purpose.
12. The Member confirms they will protect and maintain the integrity of the Property in the long term.

13. The Member confirms and warrants that they are the legal owner of the Property, or have legal rights of forest management for the Property, and hereby agrees to comply with the attached Scottish Woodlands Group Certification Scheme Membership Rules and Procedures.
14. This Membership Agreement shall be interpreted, and the rights and obligations of the parties determined according to Scottish Law.

Signed..... Date:

Please print name:

Owner ☐

Agent ☐

(if an authorised agent please provide evidence of authority to sign on behalf of the Member)

Signed for and on behalf of Scottish Woodlands Ltd:

Signed..... Date:

Head of Certification Environment and Planning

Scottish Woodlands Group Certification Scheme

Membership Rules and Procedures

1 Scope

These Rules and Procedures have been developed to meet Scottish Woodlands' commitment to both the FSC® Principles and Criteria and the PEFC Principles and Objectives for responsible forest management. The UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) has been adopted as the Certification Standard by both of the above schemes in the UK and has been employed as the working standard to guide forest management and evaluate performance against responsible forest management targets.

The aim of these Rules and Procedures is to establish a set of rules and mechanisms to implement and control the Group Scheme. This shall ensure that Members of the Group Scheme are adequately supported and that their woodlands undergo regular monitoring for compliance with UKWAS and all relevant legislation and regulations.

1.1 Group Scheme Size

The aim of Scottish Woodlands Group Scheme is to supply certification services in line with demand, from our clients. Consequently, the number of group scheme members or total area within the scheme is only limited by demand. The company undertakes to allocate the necessary management resources from within its Certification Environment and Planning Team or pool of skilled forest managers. Where necessary the company can provide additional resources through the engagement of contract auditors. For the purposes of this document the current limit is 1,000 members or 500,000ha, whichever is reached first. All members are considered 'active.'

1.2 Management Resource

It is the responsibility of the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning to monitor the management capacity of the Group Scheme and to request from the Forestry Director the allocation of additional resources in line with membership levels at any given time. The management resource required is determined by demand, to competently administer the scheme, to successfully achieve the minimum auditing frequency set out in section 5.2 below and to ensure the robust assessment of new members.

Supporting auditors are selected from the company Certification Environment and Planning Team, pool of skilled forest managers, or contracted in if required.

1.2.1 Contingency

The Forestry Director will normally appoint the most suitable member of the Certification Environment and Planning Team to act as the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning's deputy if required.

1.2.2 Training

Training needs and competency of staff involved with auditing the Group Scheme will be assessed by the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning and at annual staff appraisals. The Head of Certification, Environment and Planning does most training through the mentoring of support staff.

The Head of Certification, Environment and Planning and/or their deputy will hold a Lead Auditor qualification and necessary training is provided by the company.

1.2.3 Appointment of a Certification Body

The Certification Body is the external auditor appointed by Scottish Woodlands to audit the management of the Group Scheme and to issue the relevant certificates. The Certification Body will have been accredited by FSC® and by PEFC for forestry certification worldwide.

The selection of the Certification Body will be renewed every five years on expiry of the Group Scheme certificate.

1.3 Variations

These Rules and Procedures may be changed at any time for them to remain compliant with certification scheme requirements.

1.4 Definitions of Terms Used in these Rules and Procedures.

1.4.1 “The Group Scheme”

Means the Scottish Woodlands Group Certification Scheme

1.4.2 “Scottish Woodlands”

Means Scottish Woodlands Limited, a company registered in Scotland (Company Number SC101787) and having its registered office at Research Park, Riccarton, Edinburgh, EH14 4AP.

1.4.3 “Resource Manager”

Scottish Woodlands will act as the Resource Manager. In this role they will administer the Group Scheme. This function is primarily delivered by the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning on behalf of the Board of Directors as defined in the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning’s job description. The Head of Certification, Environment and Planning reports directly to the Forestry Director. The Head of Certification, Environment and Planning is supported by and may delegate tasks to other suitably trained members of the Scottish Woodlands Certification Environment and Planning Team or qualified sub-contractors, such tasks as may be deemed appropriate to ensure the delivery of the Resource Manager role.

1.4.4 “The Forest Manager”

Means the individual named as being responsible for the management of the forest resource as per the Group Scheme Membership list maintained by the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning.

For a Full Member of the Group Scheme, this is the manager named in the Group Scheme Membership List and with direct line management responsibility for the Property.

For Associate Members, the Forest Manager may be the Associate Member themselves or such other person designated by the Associate Member to act on their behalf in matters relating to membership of the Group Scheme.

1.4.5 “The Property”

Means the area(s) of woodland identified in the Membership Agreement.

UKWAS defines a Forest Management Unit as “... the area to which the management planning documentation relates. A Forest Management Unit is a clearly defined woodland area, or areas, with mapped boundaries, managed to a set of explicit long-term objectives.” The term Property is synonymous with the UKWAS definition of the Forest Management Unit.

Group Scheme Membership and certification shall extend only to forest land use areas. All woodlands within an individual Property shall be covered by the certificate and the ownership cannot be artificially divided to avoid certification requirements. On estates, small areas of scattered open trees within an adjacent deer forest, in a garden or round field edges may be excluded from the certificate where these form part of larger areas managed for sporting, agriculture, amenity, recreation or other non-forest uses. Any new planting carried out on the Property or new forest land use areas purchased from neighbours shall be included in the Property at the commencement of establishment activity or on the date of purchase.

1.4.6 “Ownership”

Ownership of a Property must be held by a legal entity or entities. For example, a limited company, partnership, trust, individual or individuals. Where there is more than one owner then either all owners must sign the Membership Agreement, or one owner must have the authority to sign on behalf of all others.

Similarly, individuals signing the Membership Agreement on behalf of a company or trust must have and exhibit authority to do so.

It is a requirement of UKWAS that Members can demonstrate legal title to their property and for the legal identity of the ownership to be clearly identifiable. If applicable Members must demonstrate legal authority of forest management for the Property, for example in instances of ownership of timber rights but not land ownership, other instances of long term management leases, or investment vehicles.

1.4.7 “Membership”

An individual Membership relates to an individual Property. However, a membership may consist of a number of closely aligned ownerships (e.g., Family estates) or a portfolio of woodlands in the same ownership, where the woodlands are managed as a single management unit under a single forest plan in a defined geographic area.

1.4.8 “UKWAS”

The requirements for certification are not Scottish Woodlands requirements but are contained in the current edition of UKWAS. Members confirm that they will comply with the whole standards and requirements of UKWAS, and this is not negotiable. A summary of UKWAS requirements is included in Appendix 1. There may be additional requirements specific to the individual certification schemes which members are obliged to follow.

2 Membership

Membership of the Group Scheme is ultimately at the discretion of the Board of Directors of Scottish Woodlands. Membership of the Group Scheme is voluntary and open to any Scottish Woodlands’ client. There are two classes of Membership.

2.1 Full Membership

Full Membership of the Group Scheme is open to clients of Scottish Woodlands where Scottish Woodlands has full operational and management control.

This would be appropriate in the following circumstances:

1. If Scottish Woodlands have a signed management contract and/or carry out all the woodland management work on the property.
2. If Scottish Woodlands are the woodland managers in respect of the property, but other companies or contractors carry out some works, then as long as Scottish Woodlands have a full management and supervisory role of the work and the work is done to appropriate standards, the property can be a Full Member.
3. If there are estate staff, then they can carry out limited work in the woods so long as they meet all the relevant health and safety requirements (to a parallel standard to Scottish Woodlands Contractors) and the work is carried out to a programme agreed with Scottish Woodlands as Forest Managers, then Full Membership can be offered. This most often applies to stalking staff but could also include fencing or firewood work done by estate staff.

Agreed programmes can take several forms including, for example:

- Agreeing cull targets and receiving the actual cull figures,
- Estate staff repair a section of fence identified by Scottish Woodlands as in need of repair,
- A programme of work agreed at quarterly or monthly management meetings.

Other managers or contractors cannot be engaged by the owner or manager of the property without the prior knowledge and approval of the Scottish Woodlands Forest Manager or engaged out with Scottish Woodlands

management control. Estate staff may not carry out work within the certified area which could affect the certification status of the property unless the Scottish Woodlands Forest Manager has knowledge of the operations and has assessed any potential impacts and granted their approval.

The Membership Fee does not cover the costs of any supervisory role required by Scottish Woodlands to maintain certification. Where applicable, the Scottish Woodlands Forest Manager will charge an appropriate fee to cover any required supervisory costs.

2.2 Associate Membership

Associate Membership of the Group Scheme may be open to clients of Scottish Woodlands who wish to retain some or all control of their forest management activities in respect of the Property.

Associate Membership of the Group Scheme is not available as a stand-alone service but may be available in conjunction with other services provided by Scottish Woodlands where there is a long-term business relationship between Scottish Woodlands and the prospective Associate Member. Associate Membership is not available to facilitate a one-off job.

This would be appropriate in the following, example circumstances:

1. Where there is a resident forest manager and/or forestry employees, but Scottish Woodlands carry out all major operations such as felling and restocking.
2. Where the prospective Associate Member carries out the forest management function, but Scottish Woodlands are regularly engaged as the main Forestry Contractor; and
3. Where a third-party acts as Estate Factor or Manager for the prospective Associate Member but does not have expertise in forestry and engages Scottish Woodlands to fulfil that requirement.

Associate Membership will only be granted after consultation with the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning and if necessary, the Forestry Director and is entirely at the sole discretion of Scottish Woodlands.

3 Membership Fees

3.1 Full Members

For Full Membership, the joining fee and current annual membership fees are fixed by area and current rates are available from the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning. Membership Fees are reviewed annually. In the case of Full Members, the Scottish Woodlands Forest Manager is responsible for notifying the prospective Member of the costs of certification. Membership fees for Properties which join during the year shall be charged pro-rata to the nearest whole month.

Full Membership fees cover the period 1st April to 31st March.

3.2 Associate Membership Fees

Associate Membership joining, and annual fees are set by the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning and reflect the costs of establishing and maintaining certification for a given prospective Member. The level of membership fees payable by Associate Members will depend on several factors including the size and complexity of the property. The Head of Certification, Environment and Planning will send the applicant a note of the proposed Membership Fees based in individual circumstances.

Associate Membership fees are charged for the period 1st November to 31st October.

4 Joining the Group Scheme

4.1 Written Contract (Scottish Woodlands Group Scheme Membership Agreement)

All Members of the Group Scheme must enter into a Membership Agreement with Scottish Woodlands as the Resource Manager (IMS Index 7.05 - Scottish Woodlands Group Scheme Membership Agreement) and comply with the terms of the Membership Agreement which, for the avoidance of doubt, obliges the Member to comply with both FSC® and / or PEFC Principles of Management and these Rules and Procedures. The Membership Agreement will be valid for a minimum of 5 years. The extent of the Property set out in the Membership Agreement should correspond directly with the Forest Plan and associated maps viewed and assessed at the Pre-assessment.

4.2 Pre-assessment

The Property of all applicants for Membership of the Group Scheme will undergo a Pre-assessment to determine if current management practices meet the requirements of UKWAS prior to Membership being awarded. The Scottish Woodlands Head of Certification, Environment and Planning or a member of the Certification Environment and Planning Team shall assess whether the operational practices and documentation comply with the requirements of responsible forest management.

The Pre-assessment may raise non-conformities against the standard, which will be rated as either Major or Minor (see below). Observations where there is a weakness in management systems and Opportunities for Improved Compliance are raised as appropriate. Following the pre-assessment, the prospective Member or Forest Manager shall be notified of any corrective actions or observations raised at the pre-assessment. These may include:

- Major Corrective Actions which require closure prior to admission.
- Minor Corrective Actions requiring closure within the first 12 months of certification.
- Observations requiring closure within the first 12 months of certification.

Scottish Woodlands can, if instructed, provide necessary expert advice to Associate Membership applicants on meeting certification requirements and a fee will be charged for such work.

The scope of the assessment covers all applicable requirements of UKWAS but will be appropriate to the forest type(s) on the Property, the size of the woodlands and the effectiveness of management control.

4.2.1 Full Members Pre-assessment

Scottish Woodlands has its own procedures developed under ISO 9002, ISO 14001, and OHSAS 18001 so, applicants for Full Membership may only require a more limited pre-assessment

4.2.2 Associate Members Pre-assessment

Applicants for Associate Membership will be required to provide documented evidence of management plans, including long term objectives, a 5-year operational plan and yearly implementation records. They will also be required to demonstrate that all operations at the Property meet with UKWAS requirements and current industry best practice, particularly in terms of health and safety and environmental standards.

4.3 Consultation

Before a Property can be accepted as a member the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning must be satisfied that the consultation requirements laid out in UKWAS have been met. Applicant properties advertised on the appropriate section of Scottish Woodlands public website for a period of not less than 30 days in line with UKWAS requirements will normally meet this requirement. The appropriate 30-day consultation may be achieved at the scoping stage of developing the Forest Plan, providing all requirements of UKWAS are met at that time.

This does not negate the requirement for the Forest Manager to proactively consult with neighbours, community interests and other stakeholders during the planning process or forest operations.

Consultation is also required during subsequent forest plan renewals and at other times as appropriate.

4.4 Admission

Following the pre-assessment, consultation and the closure of any Major Corrective Actions raised at the preassessment, the Property may be admitted to the Group Scheme, subject to the owner of the property signing a Membership Agreement.

On admission, the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning will issue a Membership Confirmation and membership number for the Property, or group of Properties, being admitted to the Group Scheme. The Head of Certification, Environment and Planning shall inform, in writing, the Forest Manager that the Property has entered the Group Scheme, and of the assigned membership number. The note will inform the Forest Manager of the correct usage of the relevant certificate number and of any outstanding Corrective Actions or Observations (see [5.3 Corrective Actions](#)).

Outstanding Corrective Actions and Observations will be raised by the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning on the CAPACITY system with the Forest Manager responsible for ensuring closure within the allotted time.

4.5 Renewal of Membership

The Head of Certification, Environment and Planning shall monitor the expiry dates of Group Scheme Memberships to ensure they remain current. Existing Members will be invited to renew their Membership every five years.

5 Internal Audits

Formal internal audits are undertaken on a regular basis to ensure that forest management performance remains high and continues to comply with the requirements of UKWAS. Other informal inspections may take place from time to time. Scottish Woodlands has the authority to immediately stop any work or activity that does not comply with the requirements of the scheme until such time as the non-compliance is resolved. Failure to comply with such a notice to stop will result in membership of the Group Scheme being suspended or withdrawn. (See 11.2)

5.1 Authority to Audit

Scottish Woodlands has the authority to carry out regular internal audits of management practices of Members against UKWAS. This includes the right to access the member's property and associated documentation.

5.2 Internal Surveillance Audits

5.2.1 Full Members

For Properties managed by Scottish Woodlands and which are also Full Members of the Group Scheme, the aim of internal auditing is to audit all Properties at least once in every 5-year membership cycle. However, properties where Major Corrective Actions are identified through internal and / or external audits may be re-visited more often to ensure Corrective Actions are adequately addressed and performance improves.

5.2.2 Associate Members

For Associate Members, internal audits will be carried out at least three times in every 5-year cycle and will inspect office procedures followed by field operations. Associate Members will be subject to a re-certification audit every 5th year. The re-certification audit is required to ensure that the management arrangements remain sufficiently robust to be able to maintain the required standards and will cover all requirements in UKWAS. Properties where Major Corrective Actions are identified through internal and / or external audits may be re-visited more often to ensure Corrective Actions are adequately addressed and performance improves.

5.3 Corrective Actions

Non-compliance against UKWAS requirements is recorded as either a Minor Corrective Action or a Major Corrective Action.

5.3.1 Major Corrective Actions

A Major Corrective Action refers to infringements that have a serious risk and can impede achieving the goal of sustainable forest management. Normally a Major Corrective Action must be addressed (i.e., information supplied to and agreed with the Certification and Environment Manager on how closure is proposed) within 30 days of the audit or the Member may face suspension or expulsion from the Group Scheme. Closure is required within 90 days unless an extension is agreed with the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning. Failure to close a Major Corrective Action within the agreed time will lead to the suspension or expulsion of the Property from the Group Scheme. Exceptionally, a major corrective action may lead to the immediate suspension or withdrawal of a certificate if the non-conformance is of a serious nature. (See also section 11.2.1)

5.3.2 Minor Corrective Actions

A Minor Corrective Action refers to infringements that have a low risk and do not impede sustainable forest management. Minor Corrective Actions must be addressed within 6 months, or other such time as agreed with the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning. Minor Corrective Actions not closed within 12 months may be raised to Major Corrective Actions by Scottish Woodlands.

5.3.3 Observations

In addition, the audit report may raise Observations. Observations are not in themselves Corrective Actions but highlight weaknesses in management and provide suggestions for improved compliance. They may also commend especially good management practices. Normally Observations highlighting a weakness in management should be addressed within 12 months of the audit and may be escalated to a Minor Corrective Action after that period, if not adequately addressed.

5.4 Internal audit findings

Internal audit findings are reported to the Property owner/manager by the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning, (on the Internal Audit Form). This provides feedback from the audit process to enable the development and closure of Corrective Actions.

5.5 Recording and Closing Corrective Actions

Internal audit findings for Members are recorded and stored in Scottish Woodlands' Capacity System Database. These records enable performance trends to be identified and form the basis for defining the scope of future internal audits.

6 External Audits

6.1 Authority to Audit

Scottish Woodlands along with the Certification Body and representatives from FSC® and PEFC, or their appointees have the authority to carry out audits of management practices of Members against UKWAS and their own standards. These audits could occur at any time by reasonable notice and arrangement and include the right to access the member's property and associated documentation.

6.2 Surveillance Audits

The Certification Body will undertake surveillance visits to a sample of certified properties within the Group Scheme every 12 months to ensure that the Resource Manager and the performance of Members continues to meet the requirements of the UKWAS.

6.3 Renewal Audits

The Certification Body carries out a full assessment of the Group Scheme every 5 years before re-issuing the Group Scheme Master Certificate. This is a much more in-depth assessment which will draw from a larger sample of certified properties within the Group Scheme.

6.4 Disputes

Any dispute between the Member and the Certification Body will be treated according to the dispute procedures set out by the Certification Body and as required by FSC® and PEFC rules and ISO norms.

6.5 Audit Results

The Head of Certification, Environment and Planning analyses the results of external and internal audits on an annual basis. Highlighted areas where weakness has been identified may be supported by subsequent training in the form of training events, Toolbox Talks, webinars etc and by mentoring during internal audits.

7 Chain of Custody

Internal audits shall also verify the Chain of Custody to ensure that timber products delivered to processing sites can be traced back to the forest of origin. Details of Scottish Woodlands' Chain of Custody procedure to be followed by Scottish Woodlands Harvesting Managers are contained in IMS Index 7.08 "Chain of Custody."

7.1 Informing Others

The Head of Certification, Environment and Planning shall inform, in writing, the Forest Manager that the Property has entered the Group Scheme and shall assign an internal membership number. The note will inform the Forest Manager on the correct usage of the relevant certificate number.

The Forest Manager shall inform the Scottish Woodlands Harvesting Manager or the purchaser of the timber (if sold standing) of the certification status of the Property so that they may check this on the Certification Schemes databases.

7.2 Informing Sawmills, Timber Merchants, and Processors

The Scottish Woodlands Harvesting Manager or the Forest Manager responsible for an Associate Member, shall inform sawmills, timber merchants and processors, prior to each sale of the certification status of the Property concerned.

7.3 Identification on Timber Advice Notes

Timber products originating from Group Scheme Members shall be delivered using a Timber Advice Note (TAN). For Scottish Woodlands managed sales this advice note is part of Scottish Woodlands' existing mechanism for tracing timber loads from the forests to the factory gate, see IMS Index 7.08 "Chain of Custody." Associate Members should seek the advice of the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning on the design of Timber Advice Notes.

7.4 Invoices

Invoices for timber or other non-timber woodland products shall include the relevant claim(s) and certificate code(s). These are embedded in Scottish Woodlands invoicing software, see IMS Index 7.08 "Chain of Custody." Associate Members should seek the advice of the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning on the design of invoices.

7.5 Outsourcing

Where a Member engages a contractor to harvest timber on their behalf the Member must first put in place an Outsourcing Agreement with the contractor. Associate Members should seek the advice of the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning on outsourcing.

8 Monitoring

8.1 Annual Monitoring Forms

Annual monitoring summary forms shall be completed by the Forest Manager responsible for each Member's woodlands. These shall be collated and analysed by the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning. Failure to return the Annual Monitoring Form by the due date will result in a Corrective Action being raised.

8.2 Annual Returns

The Head of Certification, Environment and Planning shall prepare the following information on an annual basis for Full Members.

8.2.1 Pesticide and Herbicide Usage (including Urea for stump treatment)

For Full Members, Forest Managers are responsible for ensuring that all pesticide and herbicide usage is recorded correctly on Pesticide Application forms and that these are entered into the CAPACITY system. Associate Members are required to return this information on the annual monitoring form. Pesticide and Herbicide usage by quantity used shall be recorded by Member, active ingredient and product name and collated annually by the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning.

8.2.2 Fertiliser Use

For Full Members, Forest Managers are responsible for ensuring that all fertiliser usage is recorded correctly on Fertiliser Application forms and that these are entered into the CAPACITY system. Associate Members are required to return this information on the annual monitoring form. Fertiliser usage by quantity used shall be recorded by Member, active ingredient and product name and collated annually by the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning.

8.2.3 Timber Harvesting

The Head of Certification, Environment and Planning shall provide an annual summary of all timber sold by Full Members. This information will be drawn from Navision and from returns from standing sales. Associate Members are required to return this information on the annual monitoring form.

8.3 Membership List

The Head of Certification, Environment and Planning shall maintain a list of current Members and this shall be publicly available through the Scottish Woodlands website. The external auditor shall receive an up-to-date Membership list from the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning monthly unless there are no membership changes.

9 Publicly Available Information

The names and locations of member forest are published on both the FSC® and PEFC websites. The Scottish Woodlands website also contains a list of current member forests and the name and contact details of the forest manager. A copy of members commitment to the FSC® Principles and Criteria and the PEFC Principles and Objectives for responsible forest management in the form of the Group Scheme Membership Agreement and management planning documentation is publicly available through the named contact.

Public summaries of evaluation reports produced by the certification body are also published and included on the relevant certification scheme websites. Members may request copies of the full evaluation report if desired.

10 Amendments to Memberships

10.1 Changes to Certified Areas

The Member is required to inform the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning of any changes to the property as a result of the purchase or sale of parts of the Property or any neighbouring land or following the planting of new areas of woodland within the Property.

Where additional areas are purchased, it may be necessary, depending on the scale and complexity of the purchased area, for the new area and supporting management documentation to be subject to an additional audit. Such audits may be chargeable by Scottish Woodlands. Individual cases will be assessed on their own merits by the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning.

All changes to the nature or extent of any Property must be notified to Scottish Woodlands within 30 days of the change.

10.2 Excision

Occasionally, areas of a certified woodland may be excised to allow for infrastructure developments such as new powerlines, windfarms etc. The excision of areas from certification must be done in line with the requirements of the two certification schemes. Where an infrastructure development is to take place on a member property then the Forest Manager must inform the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning as soon as possible in the planning process and before any woodland removal takes place. Failure to follow excision procedures correctly could jeopardise the continued certification of the remaining wooded area.

10.3 Changes to Ownership

Membership of the Group Scheme shall cease automatically on any change in ownership of the property. New owners will have to apply for Membership of the Group Scheme and any audit or re-audit shall depend on the new circumstances.

Where the property is already certified as a Full Member of the Group Scheme and the incoming owner of the property is eligible for Full Membership of the Group Scheme in terms of paragraph 2.1 of these Rules and Procedures and wishes to adopt the current Forest Management Plan then the new owner need only sign a new copy of IMS Index 7.05 - Scottish Woodlands Group Scheme Membership Agreement in respect of the relevant property in order to attain Membership.

New membership documentation will be then issued by the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning in respect of the new prospective Member.

The new prospective Member (or their manager) wishing to adopt this route to membership must do so in consultation with the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning during the purchase or transfer of the property.

Where this does not apply the property will be subject to a full pre-assessment.

11 Leaving the Group Scheme

11.1 Early Termination

On signing the Membership Agreement, the Member commits to remaining a member in respect of the property for a full five years from the date that the property is certified. A member may only withdraw a property (or part of a property) from the Group Scheme prior to the end of the 5-year term on the sale or transfer of their interest in the property (or part thereof) to a third party.

The Certification Body has the authority to continue auditing performance to check continuing compliance for 5 years from the date of joining the Group Scheme even if a member has left the scheme.

11.2 Suspension or Expulsion of a Member/Property from the Group Scheme

11.2.1 Significant Major Non-Compliance with the Spirit of UKWAS, FSC® Principals and Criteria or PEFC Principals and Objectives

A single incident resulting in a significant major non-compliance with the spirit of the Certification Standard (UKWAS) or FSC® Principles and Criteria or PEFC Principles and Objectives *may* be sufficient to result in the suspension or withdrawal of a Member's membership of the Group Scheme in respect of all its Properties. Examples include (this list is non-exhaustive):

- Inadequate Health and Safety.
- Evidence of Wildlife Crime.
- Use of illegal pesticides, unapproved products, or wilful misuse of approved pesticides'
- Illegal Felling (especially of Ancient Semi Natural Woodlands).
- Significant pollution.
- Actions to cause significant loss of designated environment or habitat.
- Any other act of wilful law breaking.

Although activities carried out by an owner outside the certified woodland area are not covered by certification, for example, open hill stalking, agricultural activity, or work around the estate house etc., if there is any evidence that these activities are clearly contrary to the spirit of UKWAS or are having a significant impact on the certified woodland area, then Scottish Woodlands may withdraw certification in respect of the Property and the corresponding membership of the Group Scheme.

Individual incidents will be assessed on their own merits and a Member's continued membership of the Group Scheme is ultimately at the discretion of the **Board of Directors** of Scottish Woodlands.

11.2.2 Continual Non-Compliance or Failure to Close Corrective Actions

If internal audits reveal persistent non-compliance against UKWAS by any Member, or if Corrective Actions are not implemented in the required time frame, then the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning will review that Member's continued membership of the Group Scheme which may result in a Member's suspension or expulsion from the Group Scheme in respect of some or all of its Properties. Such information shall be communicated to the Member in writing along with appropriate evidence, referencing UKWAS requirements.

11.2.3 Non-payment of Membership Fees or Other Sums Due to Scottish Woodlands

Non-payment of membership fees within 30 days from the date of issue or the non-payment of other sums due to Scottish Woodlands within the required timescale may also lead to suspension or expulsion from the Group Scheme. Such information shall be communicated to the Member in writing with appropriate evidence, referencing UKWAS requirements.

11.2.4 Changes to Management

Full Members who no longer wish to use Scottish Woodlands Management Services or who significantly alter the terms of Scottish Woodlands' engagement under which they were admitted to the Group Scheme may have their membership of the Group Scheme withdrawn. Such Full Members may be offered Associate Membership of the Group Scheme subject to a re-certification audit and at the discretion of the Board of Directors of Scottish Woodlands. Such information shall be communicated to the Member in writing with appropriate evidence.

Associate Members who make significant changes to their management arrangements will also be subject to a recertification audit to assess whether their membership may continue.

The re-certification audit will be based on the pre-assessment format and will be charged at Scottish Woodlands' prevailing rate. The re-certification audit is required to ensure that the new management arrangements are sufficiently robust to be able to maintain the required standards.

11.3 Notice of Termination

Upon leaving the Group Scheme (either within or at the end of their 5-year minimum membership period), the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning will write to the former Member's manager to inform them of the termination of their membership and to inform them that they will cease to be able to use the Scottish Woodlands FSC® or PEFC certificate number or certification scheme logo for any purpose thereafter.

12 Dispute Resolution

12.1 Internal Disputes

In the event of a dispute between the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning and a Scottish Woodlands Forest Manager over the legitimacy of a Corrective Action, the suspension or revocation of a certificate then the matter shall be referred to the Forestry Director, and as necessary to the Board of Directors for final arbitration.

12.2 Disputes with Members

Any Full Member or Associate Member may, in similar circumstances, refer matters which cannot be resolved with the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning to the Forestry Director. The Forestry Director may seek guidance on certification matters from the Certification Body before providing arbitration. Membership of the Group Scheme remains ultimately at the discretion of the Board of Directors of Scottish Woodlands.

12.3 Complaints

Complaints from external stakeholders which cannot be resolved amicably by the Member or their Forest Manager should be passed to the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning. The Head of Certification, Environment and Planning will attempt to resolve the issue but if this is not possible the issue will be raised with the Certification Body.

13 Logo and Trademark Use

No logo or trademark use is permitted without the authorisation of the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning. Any Member wishing to use either the FSC® or the PEFC logo or trademarks for e.g., marketing purposes, signage /interpretation boards, etc. must contact the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning for advice on proper logo use.

The Head of Certification, Environment and Planning must submit any proposed trademark use to the Certification Body for prior approval.

14 Membership Support

14.1 Login Area

Scottish Woodlands maintains a Login Area on the Scottish Woodlands website (www.scottishwoodlands.co.uk). The login area contains information to assist members with compliance and members are encouraged to use this resource to assist with their management.

The Login Area also contains important information on

- Pesticide use.
- Employee competency and insurance
- Shooting competency and insurance
- International Labour Organisation requirements

Access to the area is password protected. The password can be obtained from the Head of Certification, Environment and Planning.

14.2 Toolbox Talks and Safety Bulletins

Scottish Woodlands publish toolbox talks and safety bulletins on the FISA website as part of an industry wide sharing of safety information and best practice. The FISA website also contains industry standard guidance on health and safety matters. Members are encouraged to visit the FISA website to help maintain a high standard of health and safety.

[This page is intentionally left blank for appending a Certification Boundary Map(s) clearly showing the Property and all certified areas covered by this Membership Agreement]

Appendix 1

Scottish Woodlands Group Certification Scheme Requirements Summary

To ensure Members understand the overarching obligations relating to Certification in the UK, the following summary of UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) requirements are included as a reference. Internal and third party auditing will be carried out on the Property against the full current and relevant UKWAS standard. The standard is reviewed periodically and newer versions may be available. Current versions of UKWAS can be found at <https://ukwas.org.uk/>

UKWAS focuses on specific areas relating to forest management

1. Legal Compliance and UKWAS Conformance
2. Management Planning
3. Woodland Operations
4. Natural, Historical and Cultural Environment
5. People, Communities and Workers

Each of these areas above includes requirements which must be understood and followed. The list of key points below is not exhaustive but outlines the most common circumstances within Members Properties where compliance is expected in order to meet UKWAS requirements.

- ❖ Understanding and **complying with the law** and following **best practice guidance**
- ❖ Having an up-to-date **long term forest management plan** or strategy
- ❖ Carrying out appropriate **consultation** with neighbours, communities, government agencies, or interest groups to ensure they are aware of forest management which may impact upon them and have opportunity for input or discussion.
- ❖ Managing the forest in line with the UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) including careful consideration and management of
 - Water
 - Soil
 - People
 - Landscape
 - Historic environment
 - Impacts from climate change
 - Biodiversity
- ❖ Harvesting and Restocking to ensure achievement of objectives and avoiding or minimising negative impacts
 - Careful planning to **avoid or reduce soil disturbance, diffuse pollution and maintain water quality**
 - Choosing appropriate restocking species and maintaining them through low impact options to **reduce need for pesticides or fertilisers.**

- Careful consideration of fencing needs and planning for removal once fences have become redundant
- ❖ **Monitoring**
 - Establishing a **monitoring programme** and ensuring surveys, site checks, or other records are made and reviewed periodically
 - Ensuring that objectives are being reached through reconciliation of monitoring findings
 - Adaptively changing management practices where monitoring suggests targets or indicators are not being met
- ❖ Identifying **areas of conservation value** and planning for their enhancement where appropriate, this could include
 - Ancient woodlands
 - Veteran trees
 - Protected species
 - Sensitive or protected sites or habitats
 - Significant cultural sites, archaeology
- ❖ Responsibly managing game, fisheries, and deer shooting within the certified area. No use of lead ammunition or snares. As well as considering how livestock grazes the certified area, and protecting vulnerable trees and woodland.
- ❖ Ensuring everyone working within the property, including volunteers, are safe and competent to do the work they are being instructed to do.
- ❖ **Maintaining suitable access** for recreation, training or environmental education and keeping the property safe for users.

Many members choose to be certified to gain access to timber markets which place a greater value on certified timber but It is important to ensure specific land management needs are not overlooked within budget planning such as:

Tree safety surveys and tree safety arboriculture works

Waste management and removal, including redundant materials such as fences

Monitoring costs of surveys and reports

Vetting of contractors/operators to ensure good standards are met during operations

Insurance covering: Woodland, property, employer liability, public liability, and events if they occur within the certified area

As administrators of the Group Scheme, Scottish Woodlands can provide many services and resources to Members to aid in maintaining compliance. Please reach out with any questions or needs to see what advice and support can be provided.

Appendix 2

Scottish Woodlands Group Certification Scheme

Portfolio Membership Agreements

The Member	
Portfolio Name	
Main Contact	

This Membership Agreement relates to each of the Woodland Management Units identified below and shown on the plans attached as an addendum to this Membership Agreement (hereinafter known as “the Properties”). Each of the Properties is included in and subject to the Rules and Procedures, and Requirements outlined in the preceding Scottish Woodlands Group Certification Scheme Membership Agreement.

Property Name:			
Location:			
Certified Area (ha):		Membership Number:	

Property Name:			
Location:			
Certified Area (ha):		Membership Number:	

Property Name:			
Location:			
Certified Area (ha):		Membership Number:	

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Property Name:			
Location:			
Certified Area (ha):		Membership Number:	

Continue on a new sheet as required.