**IMG Certification Standards 2021, V2.0**

**Group Manager Requirements Checklist**

Generally, the Group Organization administers the overall functions of the Group and coordinates certain activities, such as:

* ensuring conformance to the AFF Standards of Sustainability,
* administering entry and departure of members,
* maintaining records and reporting,
* conducting ongoing monitoring,
* managing the group certification process.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Standards Reference** | **Group Manager Responsibility** | **Conformance** |
| 4.1.1 | The Group Entity must be a legal entity competent to sign agreements with Group Members and to enter into binding contracts with certification bodies and other outside entities. |  |
| 4.1.2 | The Group Organization shall adhere to ATFS Eligibility Requirements and may further define membership parameters, if desired. |  |
| 4.2.1 | The Group Entity shall define and administer a procedure for admitting Group Members. Conformance with ATFS Eligibility Requirements and AFF Standards of Sustainability shall be determined prior to FMU enrollment in the group certificate. |  |
| 4.2.2 | The Group Entity shall define and administer a procedure for expelling Group Members if they do not meet the requirements of the AFF Standards of Sustainability and ATFS IMG Standards and are not willing or able to take appropriate corrective action. |  |
| 4.3.1.2 | Inspectors of the Group Organization conducting internal monitoring must have completed the current ATFS Tree Farm Inspector training course. |  |
| 4.3.2.1 | The Group Entity shall describe roles and responsibilities of the Group Entity, Group Manager and Group Members with respect to forest management decisions and associated activities (e.g. plan development, harvesting, monitoring, etc.) as well as with implementation of the AFF Standards of Sustainability and the ATFS IMG Certification Standards. |  |
| 4.3.2.2 | The Group Entity shall designate a Group Manager(s) who is responsible for overseeing the administrative details of Group Certification and for ensuring compliance with all applicable requirements. |  |
| 4.3.2.3 | The Group Entity must have a written commitment to sustainable forestry and conformance to the AFF Standards. |  |
| 4.3.2.4 | The Group Entity must ensure Group Members have a written commitment to sustainable forestry and conformance to the AFF Standards of Sustainability. |  |
| 4.3.2.5 | The Group Entity must document Group Management Systems and verify responsibilities between the Group Entity and Group Members. |  |
| 4.3.2.7 | The Group Entity shall inform Group Members of any and all fees associated with administration of the Group Certification, if any, when they join the Group Organization. |  |
| 4.3.2.8 | The Group Entity shall hold the ATFS Group Certificate on behalf of the Group Members and represents the Group Organization in the certification process. |  |
| 4.3.2.9 | The Group Entity must ensure that Group Members are notified that they are subject to all of the requirements and privileges of membership in the American Tree Farm System®. |  |
| 4.3.2.10 | The Group Entity shall make the AFF Standards of Sustainability accessible to Group Members. |  |
| 4.3.2.11 | The Group Entity shall issue a document to each Group Member that confirms the Group Member participation and coverage by the scope of the third-party certificate. |  |
| 4.3.2.12 | The Group Entity shall follow the ATFS logo use guidelines and ensure proper use of promotional claims about the Group Certification. |  |
| 4.4.3 | The Group Entity shall ensure that each Forest Management Unit included in the Certified Area either has an individual forest management plan or is covered by an Umbrella Management Plan. |  |
| 5.1.4 | The Group Entity shall have a procedures for periodically assessing, planning and implementing any changes in Group Organization structure or the Group Management System needed for ongoing conformance and continual improvement. |  |
| 5.3.1 | The Group Organization must have a procedure for addressing and resolving disputes regarding conformance with the AFF Standards between and among the Group Members and the Group Organization pertaining to Tree Farm certification. |  |
| 5.3.2 | The Group Organization shall follow and conform to the AFF Disputes and Appeals Procedures and assist ATFS in resolving any such complaints. |  |
| 5.4.2 | The Group Entity shall maintain current internal Group Member records and provide updated information on a regular basis to the ATFS database to reflect entries and departures of Group Members from the Group Organization. |  |
| 5.4.4 | The Group Entity shall submit a copy of the IMG Group Certificate and a summary of the audit report that is appropriate for public distribution to ATFS. |  |
| 6.1 | The Group Entity must incorporate a Group Management System to verify that all Group Members are subject to annual internal monitoring. |  |
| 6.2.1 | An ongoing internal monitoring program shall be established and implemented by the Group Entity to assess the effectiveness of the Group Organization in implementing the Group Management System to maintain conformance with the AFF Standards of Sustainability. |  |
| 6.4.2 | The Group Entity shall define and implement an annual internal audit sampling protocol for Group Members to determine the sample size, use of sample categories, allocation of the sample to categories. and selection of Group Members to be audited. |  |
| 6.4.3 | The Internal Audit sample size for Group Members shall be calculated based on the number of Group Members |  |
| 6.4.3a | The size of the sample should generally be the square root of the number of Group Members, rounded up to the upper whole number. |  |
| 6.4.3b | Twenty-five percent of the sample should be selected at random. |  |
| 6.4.3c | The size of the sample may be adapted up or down by taking into account any one or more of the following:   * results of a risk assessment based on other means of gathering information about activities on the ground * results of Internal Audits or External Certification Audits * quality/level of confidence of Internal Monitoring * use of technologies allowing gathering of information for specific requirements * based on other means of gathering information about activities on the ground |  |
| 6.7.2 | In the case that corrective actions are required to address identified non-conformities, the Group Entity shall work with the Group Members and other appropriate parties to ensure timely implementation of the corrective action and monitor its effectiveness in maintaining conformity. |  |
| 6.7.5 | The Group Entity shall keep the Group Organization’s Group Management System up-to-date, and make changes as needed to maintain ongoing conformance with the AFF Standards of Sustainability and the ATFS IMG Certification Standards. |  |