

**Policy**

**MFCC P 1 IA**

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## **Implementation Arrangements**

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MYANMAR FOREST CERTIFICATION COMMITTEE



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Contents

Contents .....	2
1 Policy Background .....	4
1.1 Introduction.....	4
1.2 Scope .....	4
1.3 Normative References.....	4
1.4 Definitions.....	4
2 Policy Standards .....	6
2.2 Certification Bodies .....	6
2.2.1 Acknowledgement and Monitoring .....	6
2.2.2 Certification Body Responsibilities .....	7
2.2.3 Auditors.....	8
2.2.4 Certification.....	8
2.3 Standard Setting Process.....	8
2.4 Certification Standards .....	8
2.5 Notification of Certification Bodies.....	8
2.6 Trademark Usage.....	8
2.7 Complaints, Appeals and Disputes .....	9
2.8 Implementation of Changes to MTLAS and MFCS .....	9
3 Document History .....	10

# 1 Policy Background

## 1.1 Introduction

Myanmar Forest Certification Committee (MFCC) is the National Governing Body (NGB) of forest/timber certification schemes in Myanmar. Currently there are two schemes operating in Myanmar:

- The Myanmar Timber Legality Assurance System (MTLAS);
- The Myanmar Forest Certification Scheme (MFCS).

MFCC grew out of the Timber Certification Committee of Myanmar (TCCM). As a non-profit, non-political and impartial organization TCCM was established in 1998 to support Sustainable Forest Management, Myanmar Timber Legality Assurance System, and improve access for Myanmar timber on the international market. The TCCM was changed to MFCC through a Ministerial Formation Order in 2013 – ‘Notification No. (24/2013)’.

MFCC comprises representatives from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation<sup>1</sup>(MONREC), related and relevant Myanmar Ministries, environmental NGOs, Private Sector and research and academic institutions.

This document covers the implementation arrangements of both MTLAS and MFCS. In accordance with MFCC policies and systems, MFCC has the following overall responsibilities:

- developing, governing and administering MTLAS and MFCS;
- acknowledging Certification Bodies and assessing compliance to MTLAS<sup>2</sup> and MFCS;
- issuance of trademark usage permission;
- supporting and coordinating the standard setting processes for both MTLAS and MFCS;
- communicating and engaging with NGOs/INGOs in connection with MTLAS and MFCS;
- processing complaints, appeals and disputes if any related to its role as the NGB of MTLAS and MFCS.

## 1.2 Scope

This document sets out the key components, requirements, and implementation arrangement with regards MFCC as Myanmar’s National Governing Body with particular reference to MTLAS and MFCS.

## 1.3 Normative References

MFCC Standards (MTLAS and MFCS)  
 MFCC P 2 Guiding Principles  
 MFCC P 3 Standard Setting  
 MFCC P 4 Stakeholder Engagement and Public Documents  
 MFCC P 5 Certification Body Requirements  
 MTLAS P 1 MFCC Trademark Usage<sup>3</sup>  
 MFCC SOP 1 Notification of Certification Bodies  
 MFCC SOP 2 Complaints, Appeals and Disputes  
 MFCC SOP 3 Document Control and Record Management

## 1.4 Definitions

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<sup>1</sup>Previously MOECAF.

<sup>2</sup> This is an interim ‘acknowledgement’ (and not accreditation) role before the Myanmar Department of Research and Innovation has established an IAF recognised Accreditation Body that will subsequently have the capabilities to accredit Certification Bodies. More information can be found below.

<sup>3</sup>This policy applies to MTLAS only. A subsequent unique policy specifically related to logo usage within the MFCS will be produced.

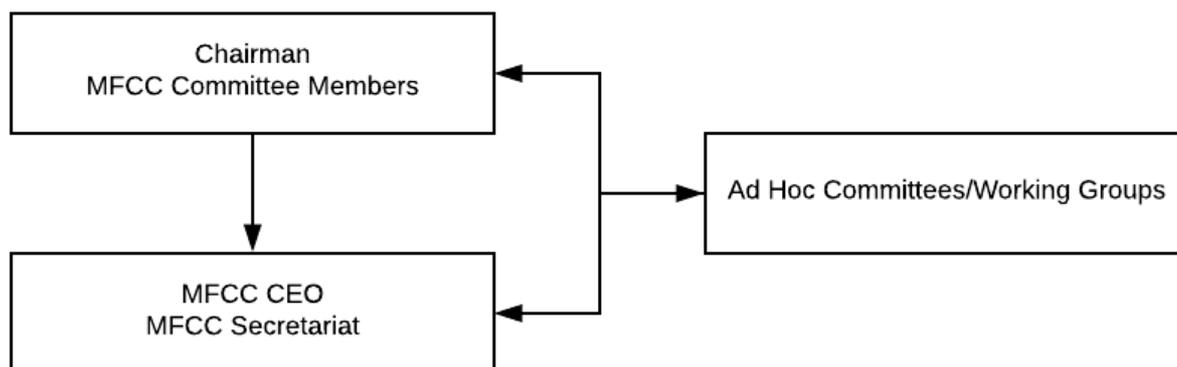
<i>IAF</i>	The International Accreditation Forum is the world association of Conformity Assessment Accreditation bodies in the fields of management systems, products, services, personnel and other programmes of conformity assessment. IAF's primary function is to develop a single worldwide programme of conformity assessment. IAF members accredit certification or registration bodies that issue certificates attesting that an organization's management, products or personnel comply with a specified standard (called conformity assessment).
<i>ISO/IEC 17065</i>	ISO/IEC 17065: 2012: Conformity Assessment - Requirements for Bodies Certifying Product, Processes and Services
<i>ISO/IEC 19011</i>	ISO 19011:2011, Guidelines for auditing management systems
<i>Lead Auditor</i>	"Lead Auditor" as a position title is used throughout this policy. However, MFCC recognises that a Certification Body may choose different job titles. A Lead Auditor will take the lead in the audit planning and execution and in many cases manage, train and lead supporting audit staff.
<i>MFCC</i>	Myanmar Forest Certification Committee
<i>MFCC Employees</i>	In this policy an MFCC employee can refer to full and part time employees, consultants and sub-contractors and volunteers.
<i>MFCS</i>	Myanmar Forest Certification Scheme. MFCS is contained in a range of documents including MFCC policies, Standard Operating Procedures, other supporting system documentation, and the MFCS Forest Certification Standard.
<i>MOECA</i>	Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry.
<i>MONREC</i>	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation.
<i>MTLAS</i>	Myanmar Timber Legality Assurance System. MTLAS is contained in a range of documents including MFCC policies, Standard Operating Procedures, other supporting system documentation, and the MTLAS Timber Legality Standard.
<i>NGB</i>	National Governing Body.
<i>Trainee/Assistant Auditor</i>	Trainee/Assistant Auditor is used in this policy. However, a Certification Body may choose different job titles. This position is a Certification Body employee involved in supporting the auditing process under the Lead Auditor.

## 2 Policy Standards

### 2.1 Organisational Structure

The overall organisation chart of the MFCC is illustrated in Figure 1 below. The Chairman and MFCC members decide the overall policy and direction in carrying out MFCC's activities in broad terms and with particular regards to MFCS and MTLAS.

Figure 1: Organisational Chart of MFCC



MFCC is assisted by the management team (MFCC Secretariat) headed by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The management team implements day-to-day activities of MFCC on behalf of the MFCC Members.

Ad Hoc Committees will be created for specific one-off roles such as dispute resolution and screening and evaluating Certification Body applicants.

### 2.2 Certification Bodies

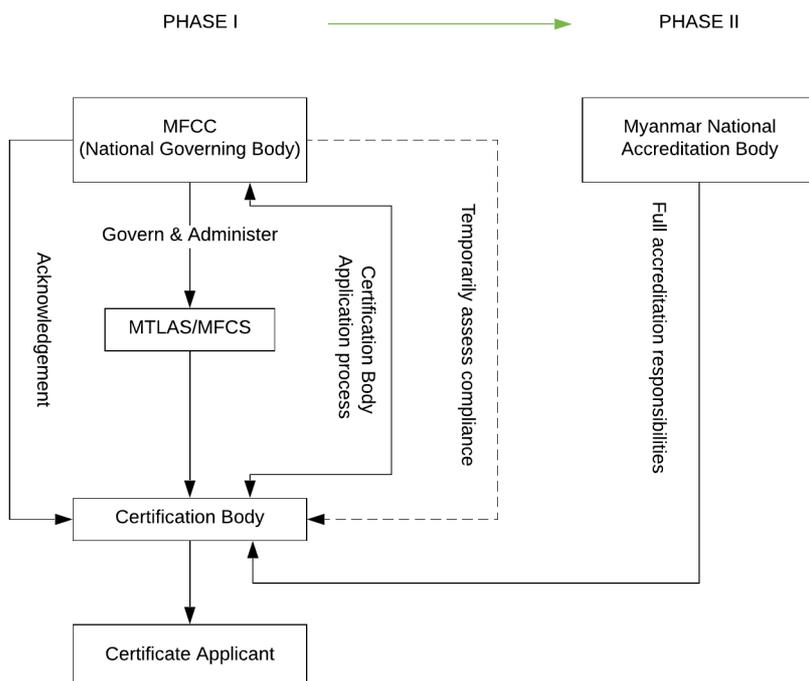
#### 2.2.1 Acknowledgement and Monitoring

Figure 2 below illustrates the temporary role of MFCC to acknowledge (not accredit) Certification Bodies verifying timber against MTLAS and MFCS. The Myanmar Government has created a Department of Research and Innovation that has accreditation capabilities, and international accreditation cooperation agreements. However, Myanmar is still seeking IAF recognition, and needs to develop a process for the accreditation of the various systems that fall under the remit of MFCC (i.e. MTLAS and MFCS). Ultimately, an IAF recognised Myanmar Accreditation Body (and/or an external International body) will be able to accredit Certification Bodies.

Given the process of finalising Myanmar's National Accreditation Body is not yet complete, MFCC will operate a two phased approach:

1. An interim MTLAS Phase I, whereby MFCC will both acknowledge Certification Bodies and assess their performance against MTLAS;
2. MTLAS Phase II whereby Certification Bodies will be accredited by the Myanmar National Accreditation Body (and/or an external IAF recognised body).

Figure 2: Institutional Arrangements



## 2.2.2 Certification Body Responsibilities

Certification against MTLAS and MFCS will be carried out by impartial, competent and independent third party Certification Bodies. Certification Bodies cannot be involved in consultancy or in the standard setting process as governing or decision making bodies, or in forest management, and are independent of the entity in the certification process.

Certification Bodies are responsible for:

1. receiving and processing applications for MTLAS and MFCS certification; <sup>[L, SEP]</sup>
2. carrying out independent audits and making the certification decision; <sup>[L, SEP]</sup>
3. issuing, suspending and withdrawing certificates (MTLAS and MFCS) and notifying MFCC thereof; this includes changes concerning the validity and scope of certification; <sup>[L, SEP]</sup>
4. ensuring compliance to MFCC requirements;
5. establishing internal procedures to deal with appeals, complaints and disputes.

Certification Bodies will demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of any certification scheme they are responsible for auditing.

Furthermore, MFCC will require all Certification Bodies that audit against MTLAS and MFCS to achieve internationally recognised accreditation against ISO/IEC 17065: 2012: Conformity Assessment - Requirements for Bodies Certifying Product, Processes and Services and ISO 19011:2011, Guidelines for auditing management systems.

In addition, Certification Bodies auditing against MFCS, will be required ultimately to become accredited against ISO/IEC 17021-1, Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies <sup>[L, SEP]</sup> providing audit and certification of management systems.

### 2.2.3 *Auditors*

Certification Bodies are responsible for ensuring auditors have suitable academic qualification and adequate technical know-how on MTLAS and/or MFCS the certification processes.

### 2.2.4 *Certification*

Certification Bodies are required to establish internal procedures for auditing and certification against MTLAS and MFCS, and also make publicly accessible, or provide upon request, information describing the auditing and certification processes for granting, recertifying, suspending or withdrawing certification. This will be done prior to full acknowledgement of Certification Body status.

Full details on Certification Body requirements can be found in MFCC P 5 Certification Body Requirements

## 2.3 *Standard Setting Process*

MFCC P 3 Standard Setting describes MFCC's policy on the standard setting process to develop or review the certification standards. The standard setting process shall be independent from the certification or accreditation processes, and shall be conducted through a multi-stakeholder process.

## 2.4 *Certification Standards*

There are currently two certification schemes governed by MFCC.

- 1) Myanmar Timber Legality Assurance System
- 2) Myanmar Forest Certification Scheme

The current standard for the certification of natural forests is 'The Myanmar Criteria and Indicators for Forest Management Certification (2007)'<sup>4</sup>.

Both standards shall be periodically reviewed in the framework of multi stakeholder consultation in order to ensure continuous improvement. The standards shall be reviewed at intervals that do not exceed a five-year period.

## 2.5 *Notification of Certification Bodies*

Certification Bodies will be notified in accordance to MTLAS SOP 1 Notification of Certification Bodies.

## 2.6 *Trademark Usage*

MFCC's policy on trademark usage with regards MTLAS is described in MTLAS P 1 MFCC Trademark Usage.

A second policy that deals with trademark and logo usage of MFCS certified products "Issuance of PEFC Logo Usage Licenses by MFCC", is being developed in parallel with current steps for PEFC Endorsement of MFCS. Once finalised this policy will govern the use of trademarks in the context of MFCS.

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<sup>4</sup>For forest plantation, the standard is currently being developed and sent through a multi-stakeholder process.

## 2.7 *Complaints, Appeals and Disputes*

In the case where an appeal, complaint or dispute is made regarding aspects of Certification Bodies and the certification process, MFCC will never act as an arbitrator or get involved in any disputes whatsoever. Nor will MFCC respond to any complaints or appeals with regards certification decisions. All Certification Bodies auditing against MTLAS and MFCS will have their own policies and operating procedures for dealing with appeals, complaints and disputes.

Complaints and appeals submitted to MFCC shall be limited to concerns, or issues, regarding MFCC activities and their compliance with MFCC requirements in its role as a NGB. The procedures for complaints, appeals and disputes are outlined in MTLAS SOP 2 Complaints, Appeals and Disputes.

## 2.8 *Implementation of Changes to MTLAS and MFCS*

Periodic changes to specific aspects of the MTLAS and MFCS may be necessary in line with the need for continuous improvement. When such changes are made to the MFCS or MFCS, a transition period, not exceeding 12 months, will be allowed for all new certification and re-certification. The Certification Body will also identify the transition period to the client, and conduct an audit to assess compliance at the first audit following compliance deadline.

### 3 Document History

Date of Issue:	Version	Approval date:	Requested by:	Nature of Change	Approved by: