



**Bureau de normalisation  
du Québec**

# **BNQ 9825-300/2025**

**Forest Management Companies —  
Environmental Requirements —  
Certification Program (CEAF Program)**

**CERTIFICATION**



BNQ 9825-300/2025

Forest Management Companies —  
Environmental Requirements —  
Certification Program (CEAF Program)

*Entreprises d'aménagement forestier — Exigences environnementales —  
Programme de certification (programme CEAF)*



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**FOREWORD**

This certification document was prepared by a committee, whose members were:

DUMONT, Isabelle	Ministère des Ressources naturelles et des Forêts — Direction de la certification des processus forestiers et des contrôles
GAGNON, Samuel	Ministère des Ressources naturelles et des Forêts — Direction de la certification des processus forestiers et des contrôles
MARCHAND, Elaine	Ministère des Ressources naturelles et des Forêts — Direction de la certification des processus forestiers et des contrôles

**Bureau de normalisation du Québec (BNQ) Coordination Team**

LANTHIER, Guillaume

TREMBLAY, Carole



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## **INTRODUCTION**

The *Sustainable Forest Development Act* (SFDA), assented to on April 1, 2010, brings about significant changes to the forestry regime.

Among these changes, forest management activities planned by the Ministère des Ressources naturelles et des Forêts (MRNF) will be conducted by companies holding certificates recognized by the Minister to ensure that they act in compliance with the *Politique environnementale et forestière du Secteur des opérations régionales* of the MRNF when they operate on public land.

The Minister currently recognizes two certificates: the current international standard ISO 14001 and the certification program described in this certification document. The latter offers the advantage of a turnkey product that could be more appropriate for small businesses, since it provides a defined framework and a series of documents to guide the companies' approach.

It is thus up to public forest timber harvesting companies, either within the framework of the free timber market, the exercise of a guarantee of supply, a delegation of management agreement for intra-municipal public territories and non-commercial silvicultural companies, to choose the option best suited to their situation.

NOTE — SFDA, c. 62: "Planned forest development activities are carried out by the Minister or by forest development enterprises that hold the certificates recognized by the Minister or that are registered in a program to obtain such certificates. They may also be carried out under the supervision and responsibility of an enterprise that holds the required certificates or is registered in a program to obtain such certificates."

## **1 PURPOSE**

This certification document establishes the requirements for a certification program for companies performing timber harvesting, forest road work, camp management and non-commercial silvicultural work. This certification program aims at confirming that companies fulfill a set of fundamental requirements regarding the control of the impact of their activities on the environment.

NOTE — The certification program requires the use of forms, instructions, guidelines and other documents developed by the MRNF and provided by the BNQ as part of the program.

The certification program applies to companies that carry out planned management activities in public forests under the *Sustainable Forest Development Act* (SFDA).

NOTE — It should be mentioned that the transport of timber, whether carried out by the company or subcontracted to a given company, is excluded from the certification program. However, this activity is supervised by the laws and regulations in force.

It is important to note that the determination of the requirements of Chapter 5 and the accompanying documents presented in Chapter 2 is the exclusive responsibility of the MRNF.

These requirements are based on the MRNF's environmental contractual requirements. The MRNF has mandated the BNQ to lead a committee composed of MRNF representatives, whose names appear in the foreword. The MRNF reserves the right to mandate the BNQ to amend the document in consultation with the committee.

**NOTE** — Conformity with the requirements of the certification program does not imply that a company complies with all laws and regulations applicable to all of its activities or relieve it from this obligation, nor does it relieve it from the obligation to conform to all clauses in contracts or agreements with the MRNF or its delegates.

## **2** **NORMATIVE REFERENCES**

### **2.1** **GENERAL**

The references below (including any amendment or errata) are normative references, and are therefore considered mandatory. They are essential to the understanding and use of this certification document, and are cited in appropriate places in the text.

It should be noted that a dated (normative and informative) reference refers to that specific edition of the reference, while a non-dated reference refers to the latest edition of the reference in question.

**NOTE** — This certification document also cites informative references, which are listed in an annex. A bibliography of references on topics covered in this certification document is also annexed.

### **2.2** **ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTS**

For the purposes of this document, the following accompanying documents contain requirements to be considered and which are mentioned in the appropriate sections in the text.

It should be noted that the latest edition of these documents applies.

**NOTE** — In the event of any inconsistency between the documents below and the laws and regulations, the latter shall prevail.

DIR-01	<i>Work Stoppage.</i> (Arrêt des travaux.)
DIR-02	<i>Equipment Required to Extinguish Fires.</i> (Équipement requis pour l'extinction des incendies.)
DIR-03	<i>Washing of Logging Machines in the Forest.</i> (Lavage des engins forestiers en forêt.)
FO-01	<i>Register of Attendance — Training.</i> (Registre des présences à la formation.)

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FO-02	<i>Inspection of Mobile Tanks.</i> (Inspection des réservoirs mobiles.)
FO-03	<i>Inspection of Logging Machines and Service Trucks.</i> (Inspection des engins forestiers et des camions de service.)
FO-04	<i>Monitoring of Spills.</i> (Suivi des déversements.)
FO-05	<i>HRM Shipping Register.</i> (Registre d'expédition des MDR.)
FO-06	<i>Activation of Permanent and Temporary Forest Camps.</i> (Mise en activité des camps forestiers permanents et temporaires.)
FO-07	<i>Inspection of Temporary and Permanent Forest Camps.</i> (Inspection des camps forestiers permanents et temporaires.)
FO-08	<i>Environmental Inspection.</i> (Inspection environnementale de chantier.)
FO-09	<i>Register of Reported Remedial Actions.</i> (Registre des actions correctives reportées.)
FO-10	<i>Enterprise's Undertaking to Comply with Legislation and Regulations.</i> (Engagement de l'entreprise à l'égard du respect des lois et des règlements.)
FO-443-1	<i>Report Sheet.</i> (Fiche de signalement.)
IN-01	<i>Management of Petroleum Equipment, Petroleum Products and Logging Machines – Work Instruction.</i> (Instruction de travail — Gestion des équipements pétroliers, des produits pétroliers et des engins forestiers.)
IN-02	<i>Logging – Work Instruction.</i> (Instruction de travail — Récolte de bois.)
IN-03	<i>Forest Roads and Watercourse Crossings – Work Instruction.</i> (Instruction de travail — Voirie forestière et traverses de cours d'eau.)

IN-04	<i>Reforestation — Work Instruction.</i> (Instruction de travail — Reboisement.)
IN-05	<i>Clearing and Other Stand Tending Work — Work Instruction.</i> (Instruction de travail — Débroussaillage et autres travaux d'éducation de peuplement.)
IN-06	<i>Land Preparation — Work Instruction.</i> (Instruction de travail — Préparation de terrain.)
MUE-01	<i>Environmental Emergency Measures.</i> (Mesures d'urgence environnementale.)
SGE-ADF	<i>SGE-ADF — General Training.</i> (SGE-ADF — Formation générale.)

### 3 DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this certification document, the following definitions are defined as follow:

**company**, n. Any individual organization, partnership, corporation or legal person holding a Québec registration number that carries out timber harvesting, road or transportation work or non-commercial silvicultural work. French: *entreprise*.

NOTE — For the purposes of this certification program, a band council is considered a company.

**corrective action**, n. Action to eliminate the cause of a detected nonconformity or other undesirable situation (reference: ISO 9000 and ISO/IEC 17000). French: *action corrective*.

NOTES —

- 1 There can be more than one cause of nonconformity.
- 2 A corrective action is taken to prevent recurrence whereas preventive action is taken to prevent occurrence.
- 3 There is a distinction between correction and corrective action.

**corrective action request** (abbrev.: **CAR**), n. Request for action to eliminate the cause of a nonconformity in order to prevent its recurrence (reference: ISO 9000). French: *demande d'action corrective* (abbrev.: **DAC**).

NOTES —

- 1 A major corrective action request is defined as the non-implementation, or inadequate or partial implementation of one or several applicable requirements of the audit referential having a serious impact on the achievement of results anticipated.

- 2 A minor corrective action request is defined as the inadequate or partial implementation of one or several requirements of audit referential having little or no impact on the achievement of results anticipated.

**forest machine**, n. A motorized or non-motorized, mobile or stationary machine, including a machine pulled by a motorized vehicle, used to perform one or more forest management activities (reference: *Regulation respecting the Sustainable Development of Forests in the Domain of the State*). French: **engin forestier**.

**guarantee of supply**, n. A right conferred on a beneficiary to purchase annually a volume of timber from State-owned forest lands to supply the timber processing plant for which the guarantee is granted. French: **garantie d'approvisionnement**.

**hazardous material**, n. Any material that, because of its properties, presents a danger to health or the environment and is, within the meaning of Section 3, Chapter 1, of the *Regulation Respecting Hazardous Materials*, oxidizing, corrosive, explosive, gaseous, flammable, leachable, radioactive or toxic, and any material or object contaminated with a hazardous material (e.g., glove, cloth, soil) (reference: *Regulation Respecting Hazardous Materials* [adaptation]). French: **matière dangereuse**.

**management unit** (abbrev.: **MU**), n. An administrative entity, reporting to the Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs, responsible for managing the operations required for the protection and management of the natural resources of a given region. French: **unité de gestion** (abbrev.: **UG**).

NOTE — Management units are the ministerial gateways for local clients and local actors.

**non-commercial silvicultural work**, n. Interventions aimed at improving or promoting the regeneration of a forest stand and from which no timber is marketed. French: **travaux sylvicoles non commerciaux**.

NOTE — Non-commercial silvicultural work includes, but is not limited to, site preparation, manual reforestation and replanting, mechanical clearing, cleaning, pre-commercial thinning, trimming and phytosanitary pruning. These terms are described in detail in the document *Critères à respecter durant les suivis de conformité des traitements sylvicoles non commerciaux – Forêt publique – Année financière* (in force) of the Ministère des Ressources naturelles et des Forêts.

**nonconformity**, n. Failure to conform to a specified requirement. French: **non-conformité**.

NOTES —

- 1 Under the CEAF program, nonconformities to the requirements mentioned in this certification document are raised and followed up until their closure by the Bureau de normalisation du Québec.
- 2 Any nonconformity to legal or contractual requirements raised with companies by the entity responsible for their conformity is integrated into the CEAF program's nonconformity management process. The Bureau de normalisation du Québec's evaluation consists of a validation of the presence of actions taken or in progress for each nonconformity present in the document FO-09 *Register of Reported Remedial Actions*.

**permanent forest camp**, n. Any forest camp that does not meet the definition of a temporary forest camp. French: *camp forestier permanent*.

**planned management activity**, n. Activity related to the cutting and harvesting of timber, the cultivation and operation of a maple grove for maple syrup production, the construction, improvement, repair, maintenance and closure of infrastructure and the execution of silvicultural work appearing in the Operational Integrated Forest Management Plan of the management unit where these activities take place. French: *activité d'aménagement planifiée*.

**residual hazardous material** (abbrev.: **RHM**), n. Waste that contains a hazardous material. French: *matière dangereuse résiduelle* (abbrev.: **MDR**).

NOTE — Residual hazardous materials include containers of hazardous material that contain a deposit of more than 2.5 cm of oil, grease or other hazardous material, as defined in the *Regulation respecting hazardous materials*.

**temporary forest camp**, n. All the installations and their outbuildings put into operation for a maximum period of six months per twelve-month period to perform forest management work (reference: *Regulation Respecting the Regulatory Scheme Applying to Activities on the Basis of their Environmental Impact* [adaptation]). French: *camp forestier temporaire*.

NOTE — The regulatory requirements applicable to temporary camps, including those of the *Environment Quality Act* and its regulations, differ depending on whether the temporary camp can “serve 20 people or less with drinking water,” “[if it allows for] a maximum of 20 people to stay there” or “can accommodate a maximum of 80 people.” (reference: *Regulation Respecting the Regulatory Scheme Applying to Activities on the Basis of their Environmental Impact*).

#### **4**      **CERTIFICATION PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

All the requirements of this certification program consist of the requirements stipulated in the following documents:

- a) Chapter 5 of this certification document, which specifies the technical requirements;
- b) Chapters 6, 7 and 8 of this certification document, which specify the rules of procedure of the certification program;

NOTE — The determination of the requirements stipulated in these chapters is the responsibility of the Bureau de normalisation du Québec (BNQ) in consultation with the committee mentioned in the foreword of this certification document.

- c) The accompanying documents (work instructions, forms and other documents) indicated in Chapter 2.

## **5            TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS**

### **5.1           TRAINING**

**5.1.1**        The company shall provide the training specified in Clause 5.1.2 to all employees on an annual basis. All employees shall have received training before performing any field work. The company shall also ensure that its subcontractors' employees have received the training or shall provide it to them.

**5.1.2**        The training shall cover at least the content of the following documents:

- a) the document *SGE-ADF — General Training*;
- b) the training document prepared by the company, which shall cover at least the following elements:
  - the environmental emergency measures required in Clause 5.2.1;
  - the document *DIR-01 Work Stoppage* required in Clause 5.11;
  - the management of residual hazardous materials and contaminated soils described in Clause 5.4;
  - the accompanying documents listed in Chapter 2 and applicable to activities and workstations.

**5.1.3**        For the training described in Clause 5.1.2, the company shall complete the document *FO-01 Register of Attendance — Training* or an equivalent record containing all the information requested in that form, including:

- a) the names and signatures of the employees and subcontractors who participated in each training;
- b) the items of Clause 5.1.2 covered during the training;
- c) the date and location of each training session.

### **5.2           PREVENTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL EMERGENCY**

**5.2.1**        The company shall possess and maintain a document in which it indicates the environmental emergency measures that include, at least, the actions to be taken and the means of communication to be used with the telephone numbers of the persons or organizations to be called in the following situations:

- a) forest fires;
- b) building or equipment fires;

- c) spills of petroleum products.

NOTES —

- 1 The MRNF provides, as an example, the document MUE-01 *Environmental Emergency Measures*, which covers these elements. These environmental emergency measures can be included in the company's Emergency Response Plan (ERP). The regulations also require other elements and cover other situations, such as occupational health and safety.
- 2 Conformity to the requirements of this clause does not exempt a company from the obligation to conform to all clauses in contracts or agreements with the MRNF or its delegates, who may request to participate in any environmental emergency simulations they organize.

The company shall ensure that the document MUE-01 *Environmental Emergency Measures* is available for all employees.

The company shall ensure that the means of communication mentioned in its document are effective.

**5.2.2** The company shall carry out preventive environmental inspections.

To this end, the company shall complete, at the indicated frequencies, the following documents, in which it will have added its own information:

- a) the document FO-02 *Inspection of Mobile Tanks* at the beginning of the work season for each of the tanks and for any new tank introduced during the season;
- b) the document FO-03 *Inspection of Logging Machines and Service Trucks* at the beginning of the work season for each motorized forestry machine or service truck and for each motorized forestry machine or service truck introduced during the season, and then every three months thereafter.

**5.2.3** In the event of a petroleum product spill, the company shall provide the Ministère de l'Environnement, de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques, de la Faune et des Parcs (MELCCFP) with a report of the event and complete the document FO-04 *Monitoring of Spills*.

**5.2.4** The company shall maintain, within the boundaries of each response sector, an oil spill recovery kit with a capacity adapted to all equipment used and which consists of at least the following components:

- a) a waterproof resealable container or bag;
- b) absorbent pads (layers) and tubes (booms);
- c) a sealing compound to seal a tank leak;
- d) a shovel.

**5.2.5** Each motorized forestry machine shall have spill recovery equipment on board that includes at least absorbent pads (layers) and a sealing compound.

NOTE — The document *Managing Hydrocarbons — A Practical Guide for Forest Machine Operators* published by FP Innovations provides guidelines for this purpose.

**5.2.6** The company shall ensure that adequate fire-extinguishing equipment is maintained in the workplace, as specified in the document DIR-02 *Equipment Required to Extinguish Fires*.

NOTE — The requirement is based on excerpts from the document *Normes minimales régissant les activités d'aménagement et d'approvisionnement forestier* developed by the Société de protection des forêts contre le feu (SOPFEU) and specifies the type of extinguisher required for petroleum machinery and equipment, and the equipment required for power saw and brush cutter operators and reforestation work.

The required fire extinguishers shall be inspected annually by a recognized competent entity.

### **5.3 MANAGEMENT OF PETROLEUM EQUIPMENT, PETROLEUM PRODUCTS AND FOREST MACHINERY**

**5.3.1** The company shall implement the contents of the document IN-01 *Management of Petroleum Equipment, Petroleum Products and Logging Machines — Work Instruction*, in which it will have added its own information.

**5.3.2** If the company uses high-risk petroleum equipment, it shall hold permits to use any high-risk petroleum equipment when required under the “Installation of Petroleum Equipment” chapters of the *Construction Code* and the *Safety Code*.

NOTE — High-risk petroleum equipment is defined in Clause 8.01 of the *Construction Code* as petroleum equipment in which one of the components above ground or buried in the ground partially or completely has a storage capacity corresponding to the capacities defined in this clause depending on the petroleum product stored and its use.

### **5.4 MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND CONTAMINATED SOILS**

The company shall dispose of its residual hazardous materials and contaminated soils by using a recovery company (recuperator) licensed by the MELCCFP. The company shall keep proof indicating the date, location, type of material and quantity recovered by the recovery company.

In the case of used oils, antifreeze, filters and containers, the company may also dispose of them at a recovery point (collection point) registered with the Société de gestion des huiles usagées (SOGHU). In this case, the company shall obtain proof of receipt of the materials in question by a person assigned to that recovery point and maintain the document FO-05 *HRM Shipping Register*.

NOTE — The signature of a person assigned to the recovery point on the register may serve as proof.

## **5.5 TIMBER HARVESTING AND FOREST ROAD WORK PRACTICES**

**5.5.1** The company shall implement the content of the following documents, in which it will have added its own information:

- a) the document IN-02 *Logging — Work Instruction*;
- b) the document IN-03 *Forest Roads and Watercourse Crossings — Work Instruction*.

**5.5.2** The company shall ensure that all workers involved in the activity have read the operational guidelines included in the silvicultural prescription for each intervention sector and that they understand them.

## **5.6 NON-COMMERCIAL SILVICULTURAL WORK PRACTICES**

**5.6.1** When the company carries out reforestation work, it shall implement the content of the document IN-04 *Reforestation — Work Instruction*, in which it will have added its own information.

**5.6.2** When performing brush clearing or other stand education work, the company shall implement the content of the document IN-05 *Clearing and Other Stand Tending Work — Work Instruction*, in which it will have added its own information.

**5.6.3** When conducting site preparation work, the company shall implement the content of the document IN-06 *Land Preparation — Work Instruction*, in which it will have added its own information.

## **5.7 FOREST CAMP MANAGEMENT**

### **5.7.1 Setting up a forest camp**

A company, whether tenant or owner, that sets up a permanent or temporary logging camp or uses an existing permanent or temporary forest camp, shall complete and implement the content of the document FO-06 *Activation of Permanent and Temporary Forest Camps*, in which it will have added its own information.

If the type of the camp changes in terms of its use (permanent, temporary with more than 20 people or temporary with less than 20 people), the company shall complete once more the document FO-06 *Activation of Permanent and Temporary Forest Camps*.

#### NOTES —

- 1 When a forest camp is dismantled, certain requirements set by the MELCCFP apply.
- 2 This clause does not apply when the company pays for overnight stays (like a hotel) to temporarily accommodate workers in a forest camp where the day-to-day management (for example, meals, waste management or housekeeping) is provided by a third party.

### **5.7.2 Use of a forest camp**

A company using a permanent or temporary forest camp shall, at the opening of the camp and every three months thereafter, complete and implement the content of the document FO-07 *Inspection of Temporary and Permanent Forest Camps*, in which it will have added its own information.

NOTE — This clause does not apply when the company pays for overnight stays (like a hotel) to temporarily accommodate workers in a forest camp where the day-to-day management (e.g., meals, waste management or housekeeping) is provided by a third party.

### **5.8 ENVIRONMENTAL AUDIT OF FOREST WORK SITE CLOSURE**

The company shall carry out environmental verifications on forest work sites.

To do this, the company shall complete the document FO-08 *Environmental Inspection*, every three months following the start of work and when the site closes. Verification of the elements indicated in this document shall be adequately demonstrated to document the result.

NOTE — Conformity to the requirements of this clause does not exempt a company from the obligation to conform to all clauses in contracts or agreements with the MRNF or its delegates, who may request to participate in environmental or sustainable forest management audits.

When a site is being closed, a company, whether tenant or owner, that dismantles a permanent or temporary forest camp or ceases to use a permanent or temporary forest camp that it will leave in place, shall complete the “Dismantling of forest camps” section of the document FO-08 *Environmental Inspection*.

### **5.9 HANDLING OF NONCONFORMITIES**

The company shall immediately correct any situation or item identified as nonconforming to the requirements set out in this certification program or in the documents referred to in Chapter 2 that may cause an environmental impact.

In the event that it is not possible to make an immediate correction to a nonconformity, the company shall indicate on the document FO-09 *Register of Reported Remedial Actions* the description of the nonconformity, the actions the company plans to take to correct the nonconformity, the person responsible for the actions and the date of implementation.

NOTE — Conformity to the requirements of this clause does not relieve a company from the obligation to conform to all clauses in contracts or agreements with the MRNF or its delegates, who may require follow-up on a notice of nonconformity issued by them in their area of jurisdiction. In this case, the company should address them using the document FO-09 *Register of Reported Remedial Actions*.

### **5.10 REPORTING**

The company shall report to the MRNF any item indicated in the MRNF’s document FO-443-1 *Report Sheet*.

### **5.11 CESSATION OF WORK**

The company shall cease its activities in the circumstances indicated in the document DIR-01 *Work Stoppage* and follow the instructions given therein.

### **5.12 COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS AND REGULATIONS**

The company shall undertake to comply at all times with all applicable laws, regulations, policies, guidelines, guides and other provisions of federal, provincial or local jurisdiction having an environmental scope. This commitment shall be confirmed by the company by completing the document FO-10 *Enterprise's Undertaking to Comply with Legislation and Regulations*, which shall be signed by the company's management.

### **5.13 DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT**

The documentary evidence required to demonstrate conformity to the requirements of the program shall be accessible, legible, easily traceable and retained for a period of four years. This evidence shall be provided to the MRNF or its delegates upon request.

The company shall use the current versions of the accompanying documents. Also, inspection forms shall be properly completed on time and in a timely manner.

### **5.14 SUBCONTRACTING**

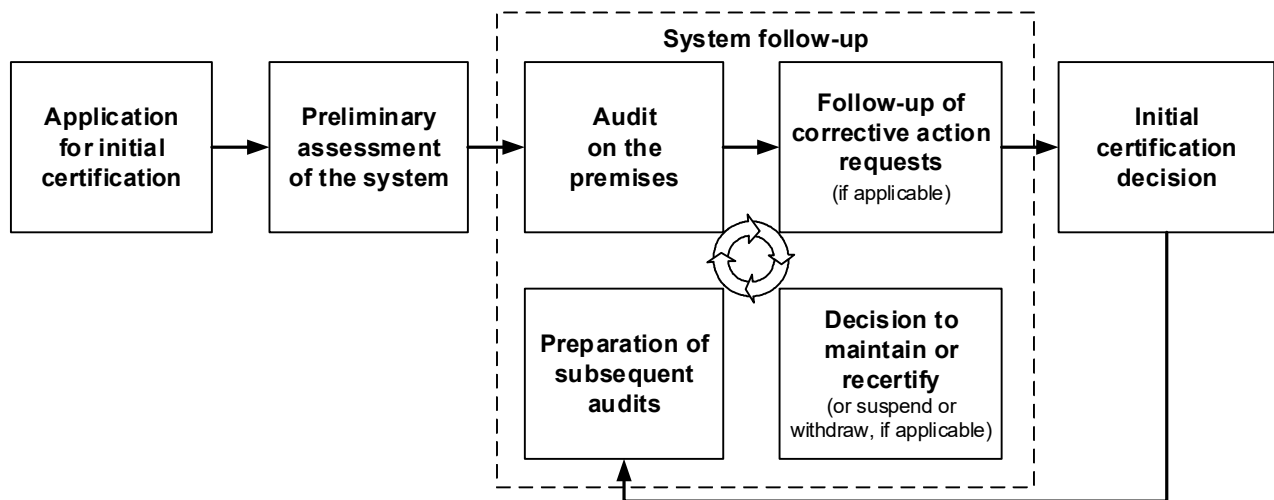
A company that outsources all or part of its work to a subcontractor shall ensure that the subcontractor conforms to the requirements of this certification program.

## **6 RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM**

### **6.1 CERTIFICATION PROCESS**

The certification process and auditing procedure of the BNQ conform to the latest versions in force of international accreditation requirements applicable to bodies that perform audits and certify systems.

The diagram below illustrates the main steps of the process leading to the initial certification of a company, as well as its maintenance and recertification. A certification cycle runs for a period of four years during which maintenance audits are conducted within twelve-month intervals. The purpose of certification and recertification audits is to assess the conformity and effectiveness of the company and cover all requirements of this certification program. The purpose of maintenance audits is to confirm the maintenance of conformity to the requirements and partially cover the requirements of this certification program.



## 6.2 APPLICATION FOR INITIAL CERTIFICATION

**6.2.1** Applicants who wish to obtain certification of their company by the BNQ shall complete the registration form available on the BNQ website [[www.bnq.qc.ca](http://www.bnq.qc.ca)]. Then they may apply by telephone at 1-800-386-5114 or by email at [bnqes@bnq.qc.ca](mailto:bnqes@bnq.qc.ca).

**6.2.2** Following receipt of the registration form, a BNQ employee contacts the applicant to answer his questions, informs him of the steps to follow and conditions to meet, then collects the information needed to send him a service contract as well as all the documents related to the certification program as indicated in Chapter 4.

**6.2.3** By accepting the BNQ service contract, the company confirms having read the content of this certification program and agrees to conform to the rules of certification as described or referred to therein.

**6.2.4** Following receipt of the BNQ service contract signed by the company, accompanied, when appropriate, with the funds required to start the certification process, the BNQ assigns one or several auditors and informs the company of their name(s). In the event of a company's justified objection to the assignment of the auditor(s), the BNQ proposes new auditors.

**6.2.5** The auditor assigned by the BNQ will contact the company to agree on an audit date. This audit shall be held when the company carries out forest management work. After scheduling the date, the list of documents to be prepared is sent to the company, and the return date of the documents is set.

## 6.3 PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT

**6.3.1** Prior to the certification on-site audit, the lead auditor reviews the documentation provided by the company, ensures that it is complete and allows for the on-site audit to be conducted.

**6.3.2** The lead auditor sends the company a written report that will contain a first ruling on its conformity with documentary requirements of the program, as well as the company's level of comprehension and implementation of the requirements of the program.

**6.3.3** When discrepancies are noted or clarification is requested in the report, the company shall provide satisfactory answers to the BNQ prior to the performance of the initial certification audit. In the event where the discrepancies are significant, the date of the initial certification audit could be delayed.

NOTE — However, the on-site audit shall take place within a maximum delay of four months from the date of submission of the preliminary assessment report in order to avoid additional costs associated with a repeat familiarization with the company's documentation.

**6.3.4** At the end of this stage, under certain conditions, the BNQ may issue a temporary attestation of certification. The temporary attestation of certification can only be issued to the company five calendar days before the beginning of the work to which this program applies.

**6.3.5** However, it is important to note that the company's certification process shall not be interrupted in order for its temporary attestation to remain valid. Thus, if one of the following situations occurs, the BNQ will be obliged to withdraw the temporary attestation issued:

- a) If no initial certification audit is conducted at the company's facilities within 45 calendar days of the issuance of the certificate unless there is a case of force majeure or for reasons beyond the control of the BNQ.
- b) If the auditor sends the BNQ a recommendation for non-certification following the initial audit at the company's facilities.
- c) If the timeframe granted by the BNQ to respond to a corrective action request (CAR) made during the initial certification audit at the company's facilities is not met.

## **6.4 INITIAL CERTIFICATION AUDIT**

**6.4.1** Prior to the on-site audit, the lead auditor prepares an audit plan and sends it to the company.

**6.4.2** During an opening meeting with the corporate management, the lead auditor briefly presents the way in which audit activities are carried out, confirms the audit plan and offers the company the opportunity to obtain clarifications with respect to the audit process.

**6.4.3** In the event that the company uses subcontractors, the activities of each of them are verified by the BNQ by the means deemed appropriate considering the nature of the activities concerned and it will be the responsibility of the company to coordinate communications between the BNQ and these subcontractors to plan the activities to be carried out.

**6.4.4** During the audit, the lead auditor or the audit team gathers relevant information related to the objectives, scope of the audit and requirements of the program, and verifies them. This information is gathered through interviews, observation of activities and work environment as well as by means of a document review.

**6.4.5** The lead auditor informs the company of the audit findings and of any difficulty encountered while the audit is being conducted.

**6.4.6** During a closing meeting, the lead auditor presents his conclusions of the audit. If CARs are made, he ensures that they are properly understood and establishes the follow-up deadline with the company.

**6.4.7** At the end of the audit or during the days following its completion, the lead auditor sends the company a written report summarizing his conclusions.

## **6.5 CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUESTS**

**6.5.1** A CAR is issued by the BNQ for any discrepancy related to one or several requirements of the certification program.

**6.5.2** For major CARs follow-up, the BNQ shall examine, accept and ensure the effectiveness of the corrections and corrective actions implemented by the company. For minor CARs, the BNQ shall examine and accept the corrections or corrective actions proposed and implemented by the company.

NOTE — The BNQ reserves the right to conduct an additional unannounced or with short notice on-site audit to verify that the corrections and corrective actions foreseen have been properly implemented.

**6.5.3** The timeframe granted for closing a CAR is usually 30 calendar days after the audit date. In exceptional cases, a period longer than the one required may be agreed upon in writing between the company and the BNQ to allow the company to complete the implementation of corrections and corrective actions proposed.

**6.5.4** In the event that CARs are not resolved to the satisfaction of the BNQ in the timeframe agreed upon, the BNQ will not grant certification.

## **6.6 CERTIFICATION DECISION**

**6.6.1** Following the receipt of the documents related to the audit and the recommendation of the lead auditor with respect to the certification, the BNQ reviews the file to ensure that the certification process has been properly followed.

**6.6.2** Thereafter, the BNQ confirms its certification decision in writing to the company. If the decision is positive, the BNQ sends the company a certificate of conformity and the certification mark that the company is authorized to use to promote its certification according to the provisions foreseen in the license in Annex A.

## **6.7 MAINTENANCE AND RECERTIFICATION AUDITS**

**6.7.1** Prior to a maintenance or recertification audit, the lead auditor reviews additions and changes to the documentation and inquires about significant events since the last audit that may affect conformity to the requirements of the program. In preparing these audits, particular attention is paid to the updated information on forest camps and subcontracted work that the company shall provide to the lead auditor.

**6.7.2** Maintenance audits shall be conducted annually, no later than 45 calendar days after the anniversary date of the initial certification audit.

**6.7.3** In the event that the BNQ cannot schedule a maintenance audit within the timeframe provided for in Clause 6.7.2 because the company has no work in progress covered by the certification or the company no longer performs work requiring certification, the company may request that its certificate become temporarily inactive. The period of inactivity of the certificate may not be less than three months and not exceed twelve months. During this period, the company's name is removed from the list of certified companies appearing on the BNQ website and the company is no longer considered certified.

**6.7.4** To reactivate its certificate, the company shall make a written request to the BNQ at least two weeks before the work resumes. A maintenance audit will then take place during the work, no later than 45 calendar days after the certificate is reactivated, unless the last audit took place less than a year ago. In this case, the audit will be conducted within the timeframe provided for in Clause 6.7.2. A reactivated certificate will remain in effect for at least three months.

**6.7.5** If no request for reactivation of the certificate has been sent in writing to the BNQ by the company before the end of the maximum twelve-month inactivity period, the company will automatically have its certificate withdrawn as described in Clause 8.3.2.

**6.7.6** If the certificate has been continuously inactive for more than nine months from the anniversary date of the initial certification audit, the maintenance audit will not take place. The next audit will then be the one scheduled within the certification cycle.

**6.7.7** For recertification audits, to ensure the validity of the certificate on an ongoing basis, the BNQ will send the company a service contract for a new certification cycle approximately three months prior to the audit date planned by the BNQ. The company shall send the signed contract to the BNQ two months before this date.

**6.7.8** The recertification audit shall be carried out at least three months before the expiry date of the certificate.

**6.7.9** During a maintenance or recertification audit, the performance of the on-site audit and CARs follow-up, if applicable, take place as described previously, and the company shall resolve the CARs issued within the agreed upon deadline in order to ensure the maintenance of certification or the recertification of its company. When conditions are met, the BNQ confirms to the company its certification decision in writing and, when applicable, sends the company an up-to-date certificate.

**6.7.10** The information published by the BNQ on the certificates it issues is updated each time a modification is made.

## **7 RESPONSIBILITIES AND COMMITMENTS OF THE BNQ AND OF THE COMPANY**

### **7.1 BNQ**

The BNQ agrees to:

- a) ensure conformity to international certification requirements applicable to its sector of activity, act with diligence, and uniformly apply rules described in this certification program;
- b) ensure the confidentiality of information to which it has access through its certification activities;
- c) provide updated information allowing the verification of the content and status of certificates on its website at [www.bnq.qc.ca](http://www.bnq.qc.ca), or upon request;
- d) inform in writing, its clients and interested parties that expressly request it, of amendments made to this certification program;
- e) grant its clients with the right to use the license referred to in Annex A when all contractual obligations and certification conditions have been fulfilled.

### **7.2 COMPANY**

The company agrees to:

- a) take all necessary means to ensure at all times respect of the requirements of this program for all activities within the scope of certification;
- b) take all necessary provisions to facilitate the performance of audits at the required intervals, including the preliminary assessment of the company, namely by allowing access to its facilities, personnel and records;
- c) allow, when an audit is conducted, the presence of a BNQ auditor for observation, training or witness audit purposes, when the BNQ so indicates;
- d) inform, in writing, the BNQ program leader, with a maximum delay of one month, of any change likely to have impacts on his certification or hinder the conformity of his company or make the information on the certificate inaccurate; these changes include, but are not limited to, a move or shutdown of activities, a change in its legal, commercial or organizational status, the awarding or disposal of activities to a third party, a change in the nature of the goods or services, a change

or reassignment of the program manager, a change to, or withdrawal of, an operating permit, if applicable;

- e) inform, in writing, the BNQ program leader, of any serious incident or violation of the regulations requiring the intervention of the competent regulatory authority which could affect the ability of the company to meet the applicable certification requirements;
- f) inform, in writing, the BNQ program leader, as soon as possible, of major threats to the continuity of activities, such as an earthquake, a fire, floods, a case of force majeure which could affect the ability of the company to meet the applicable certification requirements;
- g) allow the BNQ access to its forest camps or those of its subcontractors, including their facilities, personnel and records, in accordance with the terms and conditions of this certification program;
- h) maintain updated files on all complaints and corrective actions relative to activities certified and make these files available to the BNQ on request;
- i) use BNQ reports in their entirety and solely for the purpose of demonstrating the conformity of his system; any other use shall first be approved by the BNQ;
- j) consent to the release of updated information on the content and status of its certificate issued by the BNQ;
- k) provide the BNQ with a written notice of 30 calendar days if it voluntarily decides to terminate certification.

## **7.3 PROVISIONS IN THE EVENT OF MODIFICATIONS**

### **7.3.1 Modifications made to the certification program requirements**

The BNQ informs the company and interested parties who make a written request, of modifications made to the requirements of the program. Depending on the nature and importance of the corrections required to conform to the new certification requirements, if applicable, the BNQ informs the company of the timeframe granted for the corrections along with the means it will take to verify their implementation and maintain the validity of the certification issued.

NOTE — The means to verify whether rectifications were implemented by the company can be a desk audit. The desk audit cannot, however, replace a maintenance audit.

### **7.3.2 Modifications made to the company's activities**

Following receipt of written notification from the company regarding modifications likely to have an impact on the conformity of the company's activities, the BNQ requests information on the

means taken by the company to maintain its conformity. Based on the nature of the modifications, the explanations given and the history of the company's audit results, the BNQ may ask the company to provide a detailed action plan and a commitment to implement it, or require the audit planning to be reviewed.

NOTE — The BNQ reserves the right to perform an additional unannounced or short-notice on-site audit to verify the conformity of the activities in question.

#### **7.4 MODIFICATIONS MADE TO THE SCOPE OF CERTIFICATION**

**7.4.1** The scope of certification of the company is based on its activities. Following the initial audit, the scope is confirmed by the auditor and listed on the certificate. Activities that may be included in the scope are: timber harvesting, forest road construction, forest camp management and non-commercial silvicultural work (including the type of work performed in the latter case).

**7.4.2** When a company wishes to add new activities or new sites to the scope of certification, it shall make a written request to the BNQ. The BNQ examines the request, gathers the necessary information and informs the company of the applicable terms related to its request.

NOTE — The BNQ reserves the right to conduct an additional unannounced or short-notice on-site audit to verify the conformity of the activities concerned.

**7.4.3** When a company provides a notification mentioning that certain activities included in the scope of certification no longer apply, the BNQ issues a modified certificate.

#### **7.5 MODIFICATIONS MADE TO THE COMPANY'S LEGAL STATUS OR COMPANY NAME**

When a modification is made to the company's legal status or company name, the company shall notify the BNQ in writing and provide the following information:

- a) documents showing the change;
- b) a description of the consequences the change brings for conformity to the program requirements;
- c) a commitment to provide the BNQ with documentation that reflects the change within a reasonable timeframe, if applicable.

Before making any modification to the certificate, the BNQ examines the documents provided and evaluates whether it is necessary to confirm the change from a contractual point of view. When this change is accompanied by other changes likely to have an impact on conformity of the company to the requirements of this program, the provisions of Clause 7.4 shall apply.

## **8            SUSPENSION AND WITHDRAWAL OF A CERTIFICATE**

### **8.1           GENERAL**

**8.1.1**        Before initiating the process to suspend or withdraw a certificate, the BNQ sends a written warning to the company indicating the discrepancy found in relation to the requirements of the certification program and the timeframe granted to correct the situation.

**8.1.2**        Notwithstanding the above, in exceptional situations, the BNQ however reserves the right to suspend or withdraw the certificate without having sent the company a written warning first.

**8.1.3**        The company who receives a suspension or withdrawal notice for a certificate shall, considering that the certificate is no longer valid, conform to the provisions provided for in the license in Annex A. The MRNF or its delegates are informed of the suspension, withdrawal or inactivity of the certificates as part of this program.

### **8.2           SUSPENSION PROCESS**

**8.2.1**        At the discretion of the BNQ, the certificate issued by the BNQ may be suspended for a limited period generally not exceeding four months, when a company fails to correct within the stipulated timeframe an issue that warranted a warning (for example, without being limited to: non-compliance with the commitments stipulated in this certification document, non-compliance with the frequency between two audits, absence of satisfactory responses to CARs within the timeframe granted, a serious breach of certification requirements).

**8.2.2**        The BNQ's written notice informing the company of the certificate's suspension contains the reason for the suspension and the conditions under which it may be lifted.

NOTE — The BNQ reserves the right to conduct an additional unannounced or short-notice on-site audit to verify the implementation of corrective actions to resolve the discrepancies that led to the suspension.

**8.2.3**        When conditions allowing the suspension to be lifted have been fulfilled by the company, the BNQ reactivates the validity of the certificate and notifies the company and the MRNF or its delegates in writing.

### **8.3           WITHDRAWAL PROCESS**

**8.3.1**        The BNQ may withdraw a certificate when conditions allowing the suspension to be lifted have not been fulfilled by the company within the timeframe stipulated or if the company does not fulfill anymore the requirements described in this certification program, or in the service contract concluded with the BNQ.

**8.3.2**        The BNQ's written notice informing the company of its certificate's withdrawal contains the reason for the withdrawal along with the possibility for the company to file a new application for certification at a later date.

## **8.4 HANDLING OF COMPLAINTS**

### **8.4.1 General**

**8.4.1.1** Any person or certified company may file a complaint with the BNQ in relation with the services provided by the latter as part of its certification programs.

**8.4.1.2** The complaint handling process provided for in this certification program conforms to the international accreditation requirements applying to certification bodies. Thus, the BNQ will take the necessary provisions so that received complaints are handled confidentially by a committee made up of a minimum of three persons having the necessary impartiality.

**8.4.1.3** Information regarding the handling of complaints is periodically subject to BNQ management review through the continuous improvement process of its management system.

### **8.4.2 Terms and steps of the handling of a complaint**

**8.4.2.1** Complaints submitted to the BNQ, whether they are related to BNQ services or a company certified by the BNQ, shall be addressed in writing by the complainant and emailed to the attention of the quality manager to [direction\\_qualite@invest-quebec.com](mailto:direction_qualite@invest-quebec.com).

**8.4.2.2** When a complaint is received from a certified company and it is related to services rendered by the BNQ (e.g., disagreement on audit conclusions, unsatisfactory conduct of an auditor, delays in processing a file), the complainant shall provide a description of the problem encountered and the settlement desired.

**8.4.2.3** When the complaint is received from a third party concerning the companies certified by the BNQ as part of its certification programs, the following information shall be provided by the complainant:

- a) the name of the concerned certified company, if appropriate;
- b) the accurate description of the product, system or practices subject to the complaint and relevant facts justifying it;
- c) supporting evidence, if applicable
- d) procedures already taken to resolve the subject of the complaint.

**8.4.2.4** Within the seven calendar days following the receipt of the complaint, the quality manager processes the file, ensures that the subject is related to certification activities under the responsibility of the BNQ and then acknowledges receipt in writing.

**8.4.2.5** In any case, the complaint is brought to the attention of a committee made up of a minimum of three persons having the necessary impartiality to rule on the admissibility of the complaint. Depending on the conclusions of the committee, the quality manager will send the complainant a written notice regarding the admissibility or otherwise of its complaint.

**8.4.2.6** Whether the complaint is deemed admissible or not, the complainant will only be advised of the general status of the complaint. In the case of an admissible complaint, the file will be transferred afterward to the committee for examination, decision regarding actions to take and follow-up thereof.

NOTE — According to the seriousness and possible impacts that could result from a complaint concerning a company certified by the BNQ, the latter could deem it necessary to undertake an additional on-site audit within 30 calendar days following the receipt of the complaint. In this case, the BNQ will send the certified company a notice and the conditions under which the audit will take place; it will also provide the lead auditor with the information needed to proceed with the review of the system and its effectiveness.

**8.4.2.7** If the complainant is not satisfied with the committee's conclusion regarding the admissibility of a complaint or the handling of complaint deemed admissible, he may ask for an appeal within 30 calendar days following the committee's conclusion as to its admissibility or substance, by submitting the reasons or objections in writing to the quality manager using the email address mentioned in Clause 8.4.2.1. Upon receipt of the request for appeal, the quality manager submits the request for appeal to a representative of Legal Affairs of Investissement Québec who did not participate in the analysis of the admissibility of the complaint or handling thereof.

**8.4.2.8** Within seven calendar days following the receipt of the request for appeal, the representative of Legal Affairs of Investissement Québec will acknowledge receipt and will have 30 calendar days to become acquainted with the file, consult parties, if needed, evaluate the handling performed or conclusion issued, and then send a decision in writing regarding this request for appeal. This decision is final and without appeal.

## **8.5 TREATMENT OF CERTIFICATION DECISION APPEALS**

### **8.5.1 General**

**8.5.1.1** Any company certified by the BNQ that is not satisfied with a certification decision taken by the BNQ may appeal the decision to a committee made up of a minimum of three persons having the necessary impartiality who did not participate in the certification decision nor in the process leading to it.

NOTE — The BNQ's decision appeal process regarding a decision to suspend or withdraw certification does not delay the decision to suspend or withdraw at any time.

**8.5.1.2** The treatment process off certification decision appeal provided for in this certification program conforms to the international accreditation requirements applying to certification bodies. Thus, the BNQ will take the necessary provisions so that certification decision appeals received are treated confidentially by persons having the necessary impartiality.

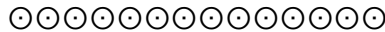
**8.5.1.3** Information regarding the treatment of certification decision appeals is periodically subject to BNQ management review through the continuous improvement process of its management system.

**8.5.2 Terms and steps of the treatment of a certification decision appeal**

**8.5.2.1** Certification decision appeals submitted to the BNQ shall be sent in writing by the certified company and emailed to the attention of the quality manager to [direction\\_qualite@invest-quebec.com](mailto:direction_qualite@invest-quebec.com).

**8.5.2.2** Within seven calendar days following the receipt of the certification decision appeal, the quality manager processes the file, ensures that the subject is related to certification activities under the responsibility of the BNQ, then acknowledges receipt in writing.

**8.5.2.3** The committee made up in conformity to Clause 8.5.1.1 will have 30 calendar days to become acquainted with the file, consult the parties, if needed, evaluate the decision taken and render, in writing, a decision regarding this certification decision appeal. This decision is final and without appeal.



## ANNEX A

### **Licence to use for BNQ certificate and certification mark**

#### **A.1 COPYRIGHT**

The certificate and certification mark issued to the company are the property of the BNQ and are protected by the *Copyright Act* and the *Trademarks Act*, in addition to specific provisions include in international agreements. Consequently, the only user rights granted to the company are those expressly stipulated in this licence.

#### **A.2 RIGHT OF USE AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE COMPANY**

The BNQ grants the company a non-exclusive limited right, not including a sublicensing right, to use the certificate and the mark to promote its certification. This right is solely applicable if the certificate is valid in conformity to this certification program.

The company may use the certification mark or refer to it in administrative and commercial documents (including supporting documents), advertising material (brochures, website, ads, business cards, etc.), and product packaging. Product packaging is defined as packaging that can be removed without damaging the product. For example, a juice container cannot bear the certification mark. However, a crate of juice could bear the mark. It is important to note that labels and nameplates are considered to be part of the product. Moreover, laboratory test reports, calibration or inspection reports, and certificates are considered to be products (deliverables). Therefore, they may not bear the certification mark.

In conclusion, it is the company that is certified, and it shall ensure that the statement of reference to certification is accurate, does not lead to confusion and that no mention implies that the product, process or service provided by the company is certified.

If applicable, the certification mark shall be duplicated and printed in accordance with the following specifications:

- a) association of the certification mark authorized with the name of the company;
- b) use of the following colours: white for the interior of the seal, black for the perimeter of the seal and description of the standard, and white for lettering;
- c) use of a format that makes all characteristics of the certification mark clearly distinct.

It is also suggested that all advertising or press releases mentioning the company's certification specify that it was issued by the BNQ. In the event of a reduction of the scope of certification, the company shall modify its advertising in consequence thereof, when appropriate.

The company shall provide specimens of its use of the certification mark following a request to this effect by the BNQ.

The company agrees to cooperate fully and in good faith with the BNQ to guarantee or protect the rights of the BNQ regarding the certification mark. The BNQ will audit the company's conformity to this license during all initial, maintenance or recertification audits.

### **A.3 RESTRICTIONS OF RIGHT OF USE**

The company agrees not to use the certificate or the certification mark in a manner not authorized by the BNQ and not to make declaration regarding its certification that could be deemed abusive by a reasonable person in similar circumstances. The company also agrees not to use the certificate or the certification mark so as to:

- a) harm the reputation of the BNQ or the credibility of the certification program and jeopardize public confidence in it;
- b) lead to the assumption that the certification applies to activities not covered by the scope of the certification;
- c) give the impression that it consists of a mark of conformity of a product, service or process approved by the BNQ.

### **A.4 BREACH OF REQUIREMENTS OF THE BNQ REGARDING THE USE OF THE CERTIFICATE OR MARK**

Any improper reference to the certification or any abusive use of the certificate or the certification mark by the CLIENT will be subject to a request for immediate rectification, in writing, subject to the suspension of the certificate. In the event that a rectification is not made, or of a repeat offence, the BNQ reserves the right to proceed with a withdrawal of the certificate and take any other action deemed necessary.

Upon the suspension or withdrawal of certification, the company shall cease all use of the certificate or the certification mark in any way whatsoever and return to the BNQ any certification document required.

**ANNEX B**

**Informative references**

**B.1 GENERAL**

The references below are cited for information purposes in this certification document.

**B.2 DOCUMENTS FROM A STANDARDS BODY**

**ISO (International Organization for Standardization)** [[www.iso.org](http://www.iso.org)]

ISO 9000 *Quality Management.*  
(Management de la qualité.)

ISO/IEC 17000 *Conformity Assessment.*  
(Évaluation de la conformité.)

**B.3 LAWS, REGULATIONS AND SIMILAR DOCUMENTS**

CANADA. *Copyright Act.*

CANADA. *Trademarks Act.*

QUÉBEC. *Construction Code.*

QUÉBEC. *Environment Quality Act.*

QUÉBEC. *Regulation Respecting Hazardous Materials.*

QUÉBEC. *Regulation Respecting the Regulatory Scheme Applying to Activities on the Basis of their Environmental Impact.*

QUÉBEC. *Regulation Respecting the Sustainable Development of Forests in the Domain of the State.*

QUÉBEC. *Safety Code.*

QUÉBEC. *Sustainable Forest Development Act.*

**B.4**      **GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS**

MINISTÈRE DES RESSOURCES NATURELLES ET DES FORÊTS (MRNF). *Critères à respecter durant les suivis de conformité des traitements sylvicoles non commerciaux – Forêt publique – Année financière* (in force), [Online], updated every year.

MINISTÈRE DES RESSOURCES NATURELLES ET DES FORÊTS (MRNF). Secteur des opérations régionales (SOR). *Politique environnementale et forestière du Secteur des opérations régionales*, [Online], version in force.

**B.5**      **OTHER DOCUMENTS**

FP INNOVATIONS. *Managing Hydrocarbons — A Practical Guide for Forest Machine Operators*, 2010, 15 p.

SOCIÉTÉ DE PROTECTION DES FORÊTS CONTRE LE FEU (SOPFEU). *Normes minimales régissant les activités d'aménagement et d'approvisionnement forestier*. Reference document used for forest inspections by members of SOPFEU, version 22.0, [Online], March 15, 2022, 18 p.

**ANNEX C**

**Bibliography**

**C.1 GENERAL**

The references below can be consulted for more information on the topics covered in this certification document.

**C.2 LAWS, REGULATIONS OR SIMILAR DOCUMENT**

QUÉBEC. *Regulation Respecting Health and Safety in Forest Development Work.*

**C.3 OTHER DOCUMENT**

ORDRE DES INGÉNIEURS FORESTIERS DU QUÉBEC (OIFQ). *Dictionnaire de la foresterie*, Québec, 2003, 744 p.

## **COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS**

In order to improve the documents published by the Bureau de normalisation du Québec (BNQ) and to facilitate the updating of them, we invite you to send us your comments and suggestions related to this document.

Please contact our customer service department at [bnqinfo@bnq.qc.ca](mailto:bnqinfo@bnq.qc.ca) to share your ideas. In order to easily identify your email, we ask you to write “Comments” as the subject of your email and to provide us with the following information:

- a) the number and title of the document [BNQ 9825-300 *Forest Management Companies — Environmental Requirements — Certification Program (CEAF Program)*];
- b) your comments or suggestions (e.g., to report an error, to suggest a modification, to suggest a new document on a related matter, or other);
- c) your name and contact details.







**Bureau de normalisation**  
du Québec

**QUÉBEC**

333, rue Franquet  
Québec (Québec) G1P 4C7  
**T 1 844 474-6367**

**MONTRÉAL**

1201, boulevard Crémazie Est, bureau 1.210  
Montréal (Québec) H2M 0A6  
**T 1 844 474-6367**

[www.bnq.qc.ca](http://www.bnq.qc.ca)  
[bnqinfo@bnq.qc.ca](mailto:bnqinfo@bnq.qc.ca)