

**Criteria for selection of companies  
for receiving EDGE support  
in implementation and certification for FSC or PEFC standard**

The Economic Development, Governance and Enterprise Growth in Europe and Eurasia (EDGE) project is a USAID-funded regional project that aims to create inclusive and sustainable economic growth, and to support intra-regional and Euro-Atlantic integration in twelve countries from three regions: Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia), Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia), Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus.

Within its core activities EDGE works with companies in selected value chains across the three regions to increase their business sophistication and competitiveness. In order to ensure sustainability of these efforts, EDGE also assists business service providers improve their competences, skills, and body of knowledge that could be shared with the SMEs. In this way, SMEs will get direct access to practical knowledge and professional management skills that will make it possible for them to change and successfully integrate in international supply chains and global markets.

Wood processing and furniture production is one of the value chains that is supported by EDGE. The main focus in this value chain is placed on helping companies improve productivity and marketability.

Certifications and compliance with social and environmental standards are very important. FSC and PEFC, and other technical and social compliance audits are required by international buyers. The purpose of FSC and PEFC certification is to ensure that ecological, social and economic sustainability is taken into account in wood production. Both certificates and technical and social audits ensure that the stages of the production chain can be traced from the finished product all the way back to the forest. Compliance with these two standards is important for the industry, especially for the companies who export out of the region.

EDGE plans to support 5 companies from Ukraine in the wood and furniture industry sector in their efforts to acquire certification for FSC CoC<sup>1</sup> or PEFC CoC<sup>2</sup>.

Criteria for selection of companies:

- Companies involved in the processing of wood or production of furniture
- Profitable companies with positive net profits in two of the last three years
- Level of sales exceeding 500,000 \$US
- Exporting companies with exports constituting at least 10% of total sales
- Number of employees - over 20
- Readiness to invest own resources into certification process.

Previous experience in certification for any of ISO quality management or similar standards is preferable.

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<sup>1</sup> FSC CoC – Forest Stewardship Council Chain of Custody

<sup>2</sup> PEFC CoC – Programme for Endorsement of Forest Certifications Chain of Custody