



Directive

# FSC DIRECTIVE ON FSC COUNTRY REQUIREMENTS

FSC-DIR-60-006



25/06/2025

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## Version control

**Publication date:** 25 June 2025

Version	Description	Date
V1.0	Not applicable	Not applicable

The Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC) is an independent, not for profit, non-government organization established to support environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests.

FSC's vision is that the world's forests meet the social, ecological, and economic rights and needs of the present generation without compromising those of future generations.

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## FOREWORD

FSC received various comments from certification bodies and stakeholders requesting a reduction in the number of normative documents to make the documented certification system more comprehensible. FSC therefore combined all previous Advice Notes into single documents which are called "Directive". A directive includes all advices issued in relation to a single Standard or Procedure. The relation to the respective normative document is reflected in the document code of the Directive. Where new advice is approved, these will be added to the directive and the revised document will be reissued.

The intention of this document is to standardize understanding and implementation of requirements by FSC accredited certification bodies and certificate holders.

This document will be revised as required. The content of a directive will be incorporated into the related standard in the revision process as feasible.

Changes and amendments to the directive will be announced to the FSC Network and FSC accredited certification bodies immediately.

### **Note on use of this directive:**

All aspects of this document are considered to be normative, including the scope, effective date, references, terms and definitions, tables and annexes, unless otherwise stated.

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## A. SCOPE

This document provides FSC's errata and addenda of the requirements included in applicable versions of FSC-STD-60-006 and FSC-PRO-60-006.

## B. REFERENCES

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

<b>FSC-STD-01-001</b>	FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship
<b>FSC-STD-60-004</b>	International Generic Indicators
<b>FSC-STD-60-006</b>	Process Requirements for the Development and Maintenance of National Forest Stewardship Standards
<b>FSC-PRO-60-006</b>	Development and Transfer of National Forest Stewardship Standards to the FSC Principles and Criteria Version 5-1
<b>FSC-PRO-60-006b</b>	FSC Risk Assessment Framework
<b>FSC-PRO-60-007</b>	Structure, Content and Development of Interim National Standards

## C. FSC NORMATIVE DOCUMENTS REPLACED BY THIS DIRECTIVE

1. **FSC-ADV-60-006-01** *Advice Note on Incorporation of new International Generic Indicators introduced with FSC-STD-60-004 V2-0 into National Forest Stewardship Standards*
2. **FSC-ADV-60-006-02** *Advice Note on incorporation of new or revised International Generic Indicators, introduced in future versions of FSC-STD-60-004 into National Standard (National Forest Stewardship Standard and Interim National Standard)*
3. **FSC-ADV-60-006-03** *Advice Note on cut-off date for transfer of national standards (National Forest Stewardship Standards, Regional Forest Stewardship Standards and CB Standards) from P&C V4 to P&C V 5-2 (or higher).*
4. **FSC-ADV-60-006-04** *Advice Note on the use of FSC-PRO-60-006 V2-0 for the revision of an existing P&C V5-X NFSS.*

## D. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Terms and definitions are provided in *FSC-STD-01-002* and in *FSC-STD-60-006*. Further advice-related definitions may be provided in the context of each advice.

## PART 1 GENERAL ISSUES

- 1 The FSC Directive is providing FSC accredited certification bodies (certification bodies) and other stakeholders with clear advice on the implementation of FSC's international policies and standards. A directive is designed to provide formal advice in relation to a single specific issue or question raised with the FSC International Centre. All advice on a series of issues related to a specific FSC international policy or standard are collected in one document to improve accessibility for certification bodies, certificate holders and interested parties.
- 2 If a certification body is in doubt about the correct implementation of an FSC policy or standard, the certification body shall request clarification from the FSC Performance and Standards Unit. If required, such clarification will be provided in the form of a new advice or interpretation.
- 3 Prior to the finalization of an advice, a certification body may make its own decision in relation to a question for which clarification has been sought. In such a case, responsibility for the consequences of the decision shall rest exclusively with the certification body concerned. Formal advice subsequently provided by the FSC International Centre will be applicable retrospectively.
- 4 The advice provided in this document represent the formal position of the FSC International Centre unless and until it is superseded by the approval of a more recent policy, standard, or advice. In such cases the requirements specified in the more recent document shall take precedence.
- 5 Certification bodies are required to conform with the most recent formal advices, and ASI will base its assessments and issue of corrective actions on these.
- 6 Finalized advices are approved by the Policy and Performance Director or the FSC Director General. If a certification body wishes to contest the advice provided it may do so by requesting a formal review and decision by the FSC Policy and Standards Committee. Until and unless such a review and decision has been finalised, the certification body shall continue to comply with the position of the FSC International Centre.
- 7 Advices are under continual review and may be revised or withdrawn in response to new information, experience or changing circumstances, for example by the development of new policies or standards approved by the FSC Board of Directors.

## PART 2 FSC ADVICES

<b>ADV-STD-60-006_01 Advice Note on Incorporation of new International Generic Indicators introduced with FSC-STD-60-004 V2-0 into National Forest Stewardship Standards</b>	
Normative reference	FSC-STD-60-004 V2-0 International Generic Indicators, Section C.
Scope	This Advice Note applies to Standard Development Groups whose National Forest Stewardship Standards were approved or passed the stage of second public consultation before 1st July 2018, when FSC-STD-60-004 V2-0 was published (see Annex 2).
Approval date	20 August 2020 by FSC Director General
Publication date	28 August 2020
Status	Final
Effective date	As of the approval date (20 August 2020)
Background	<p>At their 68<sup>th</sup> meeting in March 2015, the FSC Board of Directors approved the first version of the FSC-STD-60-004 <i>International Generic Indicators</i> (IGI), as the starting point for developing National Standards.</p> <p>In June 2018, the Board approved a second version of this document introducing the changes described in FSC-STD-60-004 V2-0 <i>International Generic Indicators</i>, Section E Preamble.</p> <p>The FSC Board of Directors decided that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Standard Development Groups shall incorporate all new or revised IGI from this version (V2-0) (see Annex 1) into their National Standards under development, in cases where the second consultation has not yet started.</li> <li>○ Standard Development Groups, whose National Standards have passed the stage of second consultation, or have already been approved (see Annex 2), shall incorporate all new or revised IGI from this version (V2-0) into their National Standards within 24 months of the effective date of V2-0 (being this deadline 30 June 2020).</li> </ul> <p>Since then, different groups of stakeholders have raised concerns regarding the additional work outside the normal cycle of review and revision of the standards, stakeholder fatigue, the challenge to reunite Standard Development Groups (often dissolved once the standard development is completed), cost implications, creation of bottlenecks in the standard assessment and decision making process, etc.</p> <p>This Advice Note formally implements the decision made by the FSC Board in January 2020 to address these concerns and to streamline and facilitate the transfer of IGIs V2-0 to National Forest Stewardship Standards.</p>
Advice	Standard Development Groups, whose National Forest Stewardship Standards passed the stage of second public consultation or were approved before 01 July 2018 shall:

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<b>ADV-STD-60-006_02 Advice Note on incorporation of new or revised International Generic Indicators, introduced in future versions of FSC-STD-60-004 into National Standard (National Forest Stewardship Standard and Interim National Standard)</b>	
Normative reference	FSC-STD-60-004 V2-0 International Generic Indicators, Section C.
Scope	This Advice Note applies to Standard Developers whose National and Regional Forest Stewardship Standards are not based on the latest version of IGI.
Approval date	16 December 2021 by FSC Director General
Publication date	11 January 2022
Status	Final
Effective date	As of the approval date (16 December 2021)
Period of validity	Until withdrawn or replaced by other normative documents.
Background	<p>At their 68<sup>th</sup> meeting in March 2015, the FSC Board of Directors approved the first version of the FSC-STD-60-004 <i>International Generic Indicators</i> (IGI), as the starting point for developing National Forest Stewardship Standards.</p> <p>In June 2018, the Board approved a second version of this document introducing the changes described in FSC-STD-60-004 V2-0 <i>International Generic Indicators</i>, Section E Preamble. The Board also decided that Standard Development Groups (SDGs) shall incorporate all new or revised IGI into their National Standards undergoing development process by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020.</p> <p>After this, different groups of stakeholders have raised concerns regarding the additional work outside the normal review and revision cycle of the standards, stakeholder fatigue, the challenge to reunite Standard Development Groups (often dissolved once the standard is completed), cost implications, creation of bottlenecks in the standard assessment and decision-making process, etc.</p> <p>In January 2020, another decision was made by the FSC Board to address these concerns and to streamline and facilitate the incorporation of IGIs V2-0 into National Forest Stewardship Standard. The Board decided that SDGs shall incorporate revised indicators in the next scheduled revision of the national standards and shall submit the final draft for decision making to the FSC Secretariat within 5 years of the effective date of the national standards developed based on IGI V1-0.</p> <p>However, in March 2021 the Board decided that new and revised IGIs (e.g., IGIs resulting from the revised Pesticides Policy) shall be incorporated into national standards no later than in the next scheduled review and revision of the national standard.</p> <p>This Advice Note formally implements the decision made by the FSC Board in March 2021.</p>
Advice	<p>Changes to the IGIs in FSC-STD-60-004 shall be addressed in national standards (National Forest Stewardship Standards and Interim National Standards) as follows:</p> <p>a) For national standards which are in development or revision at the time of the approval of a new version of FSC-STD-60-004 and are at a stage</p>

	<p>prior to the launch of the first consultation, changes to the IGI shall be addressed within the ongoing development or revision process.</p> <p>b) For national standards which are not in development or revision at the time of the approval of a new version of FSC-STD-60-004 or have passed the launch of the first consultation in an ongoing development or revision process, changes to the IGI shall be addressed no later than in the next scheduled regular review and revision of those standards.</p>
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<b>ADV-STD-60-006_03 Advice Note on cut-off date for transfer of national standards (National Forest Stewardship Standards, Regional Forest Stewardship Standards and CB Standards) from P&amp;C V4 to P&amp;C V 5-2 (or higher).</b>	
Normative reference	FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2 Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship FSC-STD-60-006 V2-0 International Generic Indicators
Scope	This Advice Note applies to national standards which are based on P&C V4 and have not been transferred to P&C V 5-2 (or higher).
Approval date	16 December 2021 by FSC Director General
Publication date	11 January 2022
Status	Final
Effective date	As of the approval date (16 December 2021)
Period of validity	Until 31st December 2024 or until replaced by other normative documents..
Background	<p>As per the requirements of FSC-STD-60-006 and FSC-PRO-60-007, the national standards are required to develop indicators based on latest P&amp;C version. However even after rolling out P&amp;C V5 in 2012, there are still significant number of national standards that are not yet transferred to P&amp;C V5-2, either because the process was never registered, or the registered process failed before the completion of the process. Hence, the requirement to enter a transfer process has not been fully implemented. Additionally, FSC does not had an expiry date for CB standards operating based on P&amp;C V4.</p> <p>As a result, in its 87<sup>th</sup> meeting, the FSC Board established a cut-off date for national standard based on P&amp;C V4 to transfer all the existing national standards to the latest P&amp;C V5-2 and mitigate any potential credibility risk for FSC.</p> <p>This Advice Note formally implements the decision made by the FSC Board in March 2021.</p>
Advice	<p>A national standard (National Forest Stewardship Standards, Regional Forest Stewardship Standard or CB standard) which is based on P&amp;C V4 will be considered invalid by FSC if it is not going to be replaced by a revised version based on P&amp;C V5-2 (or higher) that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) is submitted to PSU for final review by 31 January 2024; and</li> <li>b) is approved by PSC or the PSG by 31 December 2024.</li> </ul> <p>Expiry dates will be announced well in advance to affected certification bodies and certificate holders.</p>

<b>ADV-STD-60-006_04 Advice Note on the use of FSC-PRO-60-006 V2-0 for the revision of an existing P&amp;C V5-X NFSS.</b>	
Normative reference	FSC-PRO-60-006 V2-0 <i>Development and Transfer of National Forest Stewardship Standards to the FSC principles and criteria version 5-1</i> , E. Terms and Definitions 1. General requirements, 2. Using the IGIs and 5. Addressing Scale, Intensity and Risk (SIR).
Scope	Countries where P&C V5-x based National Forest Stewardship Standard is due for revision.
Approval date	16 December 2021 by FSC Director General
Publication date	11 January 2022
Status	Final
Effective date	As of the approval date (16 December 2021)
Period of validity	Until withdrawn or replaced by other normative documents..
Background	<p>Some 40 Forest Stewardship Standards (FSS) have been launched since the International Generic Indicators (IGI) were published in 2015. These standards have been developed and transferred according to the procedure FSC-PRO-60-006, aimed for <i>“the development of new NFSS and for transferring existing NFSS to the P&amp;C V5-1”</i>.</p> <p>Earliest of these FSS have become due for the scheduled 5-year revision cycle. At the same time, the procedure FSC-PRO-60-006 is getting outdated, as it does not address the revision of the FSS which are already based on the P&amp;C V5-x. It is also lacking the rules for bringing in new or revised IGIs to FSS.</p> <p>Consequently, a need has arisen to expand the scope of FSC-PRO-60-006 to meet these current needs and clarify which elements in the procedure are still relevant and applicable for FSS revision processes.</p> <p>At the same time, the review and revision for <i>60-series normative documents</i><sup>1</sup> is going on. It is envisaged that this Advice Note will be withdrawn once the revision of the 60-series normative documents is completed.</p>
Advice	<p>For the revision of Forest Stewardship Standards (FSS) which are already based on V5-x of the P&amp;C FSC-PRO-60-006 V2-0 shall be applied as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The following sections of FSC-PRO-60-006 V2-0 shall be applied, while the ones not listed can be ignored: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) E. Terms and Definitions</li> <li>b) 1. General requirements</li> <li>c) 2. Using the IGIs</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

<sup>1</sup> 60-series normative documents mentioned above and under revision process are –  
FSC-STD-60-006 V1-2 Process requirements for the development and maintenance of National Forest Stewardship Standards,  
FSC-STD-60-002 V1-0 Structure and Content of National Forest Stewardship Standards,  
FSC-PRO-60-006 V2-0 Development and Transfer of National Forest Stewardship Standards to the FSC Principles and Criteria Version 5-1  
FSC-PRO-60-007 V1-2 Structure, Content and Development of Interim National Standards

	<p>d) 5. Addressing Scale, Intensity and Risk (SIR)</p> <p>2. SDGs shall use as a starting point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) All indicators in their valid FSS, and</li> <li>b) All new and revised International Generic Indicators which were not addressed in their valid FSS.</li> </ul> <p>3. SDGs shall use the indicators of their approved FSS as the starting point of the revision as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Adopting an existing indicator from the FSS; does not require justification</li> <li>b) Adapting or dropping an existing indicator from the FSS; requires justification</li> <li>c) Adding new indicators; requires justification.</li> </ul> <p>4. SDGs shall use the new and revised International Generic Indicators as the starting point of the revision as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Adopting an IGI; does not require justification</li> <li>b) Adapting or dropping an IGI; requires justification.</li> </ul> <p>5. SDGs shall use the transfer matrix and submit it together with the respective drafts to PSU.</p>
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## ADV-STD-60-006\_05 Extension of the Validity of Forest Stewardship Standards

Normative reference	<p>Section 12 and Clause 15.1 of &lt;<u>FSC-STD-60-006 V1-2 Process requirements for the development and maintenance of National Forest Stewardship Standards</u>&gt;</p> <p>Clause 1.10 of &lt;<u>FSC-PRO-60-006 V2-0 Development and Transfer of National Forest Stewardship Standards to the FSC Principles and Criteria Version 5-1</u>&gt;</p> <p>Sections 9 and 10 of &lt;<u>FSC-PRO-60-007 V1-2 Structure, Content and Development of Interim National Standards</u>&gt;</p>
Scope	This Advice Note applies to or is relevant for organizations applying for or holding FSC Forest Management certification, their certification bodies, and all the parties involved in the development or revision of Forest Stewardship Standards.
Approval date	27 May 2025 by FSC Director General
Publication date	25 June 2025
Status	Final
Effective date	25 June 2025
Transition end date	Not applicable
Period of validity	Until replaced by other normative documents.
Background	<p>As per &lt;<u>FSC-STD-60-006 V1-2 Process requirements for the development and maintenance of National Forest Stewardship Standards</u>&gt;, &lt;<u>FSC-PRO-60-006 V2-0 Development and Transfer of National Forest Stewardship Standards to the FSC Principles and Criteria Version 5-1</u>&gt;, and &lt;<u>FSC-PRO-60-007 V1-2 Structure, Content and Development of Interim National Standards</u>&gt;, an approved FSC Forest Stewardship Standard (FSS) remains valid for a period of five (5) years from the effective date.</p> <p>As on 1 April 2025, there are 88 FSS globally developed based on version 5 of the FSC Principles and Criteria (P&amp;C V5). Out of these FSS, 24 have completed their validity period by April 2025, and 44 will complete their validity period by December 2026. For any forthcoming FSS revision, a different type of validity statement will be used, which does not confine the validity to 5 years only.</p> <p>Regular or extraordinary revisions of FSS based on P&amp;C V5 are being kept to a minimum given current priorities at FSC Secretariat between 2025 and 2027:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Completion of P&amp;C V4-to-V5 FSS transfers, and</li> <li>ii. Development of first generation of FSC Risk Assessments based on the revised Risk Assessment Framework (<u>FSC-PRO-60-006b</u>).</li> </ul> <p>In addition, the revision of normative requirements regulating the development and maintenance of FSS (which will be specified under FSC-PRO-60-006 and FSC-PRO-60-006a) is ongoing and only expected to be finalized by January 2027, with the publication of both procedures.</p>

	<p>The FSC Principles and Criteria V5 is also undergoing revision and is planned to be completed by October 2028. Once the revision is completed, the FSS based on V5 of FSC P&amp;C will be required to transfer to FSC P&amp;C V6.</p> <p>Therefore, due to current priorities at the FSC Secretariat and the overall changes in the FSC Normative framework both at International and Country level there is a need to extend the validity of FSS based on P&amp;C V5.</p>
Advice	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Forest Stewardship Standards based on P&amp;C V5 with a stated validity period of five (5) years shall remain in effect beyond this period until revised, replaced or withdrawn.</li> </ol>



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