



# **FSC INTERIM FOREST STEWARDSHIP STANDARD FOR NATURAL FORESTS FOR SOUTH AFRICA**

FSC-STD-ZAF-01-2026 Natural Forests EN



**FORESTS  
FOR ALL  
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South African natural forest landscape interior © Coert Geldenhuys

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**NOTE ON THIS ENGLISH VERSION:**

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<b>Title:</b>	FSC Interim Forest Stewardship Standard for Natural Forests for South Africa
<b>Document reference code:</b>	FSC-STD-ZAF-01-2026 Natural Forests_EN
<b>Status:</b>	Approved
<b>Scope:</b>	Natural Forests ( <i>Details in section “B.2 Scope” of this standard</i> )
<b>Approval body:</b>	Policy Steering Group
<b>Dates:</b>	<b>Approval date:</b> 4 December 2025
	<b>Publication date:</b> 31 March 2026
	<b>Effective date:</b> 1 July 2026
<b>Timeframes:</b>	<b>Transition period<sup>1</sup>:</b> 18 months from the effective date
	<b>Validity Period:</b> Until revised, replaced or withdrawn
<b>Standard developed by</b>	FSC Policy and Performance Unit
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<sup>1</sup> The transition period is the timeline in which there is a parallel phase-in of the new version and the phase-out of the old version of the standard. By the transition period's end date, certificate holders based on the previous version of this Forest Stewardship Standard are expected to have been evaluated against this revised version and any non-conformities that were identified against the revised set of requirements to be closed (this applies only to major non-conformities, if the certification body still operates under FSC-STD-20-007 V4-0). Certificates issued against the previous version of this Forest Stewardship Standard will automatically expire and be considered terminated at the transition period's end date.

## Version control

Version	Description	Final Approval Date
V1.0	Initial version, FSC-STD-ZAF-01-2026 Natural Forests EN, FSC Interim Forest Stewardship Standard for Natural Forests for South Africa, based on P&C V5-3 and minimal adaptation approach of IGI, approved by FSC Policy Steering Group at its Meeting on 4 December 2026.	04/12/2025

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# A FOREWORD

## A.1 The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)

The Forest Stewardship Council A.C. (FSC) was established in 1993, as a follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (the Earth Summit at Rio de Janeiro, 1992) with the mission to promote environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests.

FSC provides a system for voluntary accreditation and independent third-party certification. This system allows certificate holders to market their products and services as the result of environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial and economically viable forest management. FSC also sets standards for the development and approval of Forest Stewardship Standards and Interim Forest Stewardship Standards which are based on the FSC Principles and Criteria. In addition, FSC sets standards for the accreditation of conformity assessment bodies (also known as certification bodies) that certify conformance with FSC's standards.

Environmentally appropriate forest management ensures that the production of timber, non-timber products\* and ecosystem services\* maintains the forest's biodiversity, productivity, and ecological processes.

Socially beneficial forest management helps both local people and society at large to enjoy long-term benefits and also provides strong incentives to local people to sustain the forest resources and adhere to long-term management plans\*.

Economically viable forest management means that forest operations are structured and managed so as to be sufficiently profitable, without generating financial profit at the expense of the forest resource, the ecosystem\*, or affected communities. The tension between the need to generate adequate financial returns and the principles of responsible forest operations can be reduced through efforts to market the full range of forest products and services for their best value.

## A.2 The FSC Principles and Criteria

FSC first published the FSC Principles and Criteria in November 1994 as a performance-based, outcome-orientated, worldwide standard. The Principles and Criteria focus on field performance of forest management rather than on the management systems for delivering that field performance.

There is no hierarchy between the principles or between the criteria. They share equal status, validity and authority, and apply jointly and severally at the level of the individual Management Unit.

The FSC Principles and Criteria together with the International Generic Indicators (IGI) provide the basis for the development of locally adapted Forest Stewardship Standards (FSS).

## B PREAMBLE

### B.1 Objective

The objective of this standard is to provide a set of requirements for:

1. The Organization to implement responsible forest management within their Management Unit and to demonstrate conformance.
2. FSC-accredited certification bodies (CBs) to determine conformity against this standard as the basis for granting, maintaining or renewing forest management certification.

### B.2 Scope

This standard shall be applied in the following scope:

<b>Geographic region</b>	South Africa
<b>Forest types</b>	Natural Forests
<b>Ownership types</b>	All types of ownerships, including public, private and others
<b>Scale and intensity categories</b> (According to section 6 of FSC-STD-60-002)	All categories of Management Units, including provisions for small or low-intensity managed forests (SLIMFs)
<b>Forest products</b> (According to FSC-STD-40-004a)	Rough wood NTFP: barks; honey; mushrooms; whole trees or plants; gum resin; medicinal plants; natural bamboo.

#### Certification of Invasive Alien Plant (IAP) species

The interpretation INT-FSC-STD-ZAF-01-2017\_01 (see [Interpretations of the Normative Framework - Country Requirements](#)) specifies that it is possible to certify Invasive Alien Plant species in South Africa provided that the area meets the definition of 'forest' as prescribed in the National Forests Act, 1998 (Act No. 84 of 1998) of South Africa (hereafter referred to as 'National Forests Act'), and the management system is in conformity with the FSC Principles and Criteria, demonstrated through the applicable forest stewardship standard. This Forest Stewardship Standard shall be used if the forest type meets the legal definition of natural forest and/or woodland, as per the National Forests Act.

### B.3 Responsibility for Conformance

The requirements in this standard cover all of The Organization's management activities that are related to the Management Unit, whether within the Management Unit or outside, whether directly undertaken or contracted out.

In terms of geographical space, the requirements in this standard apply generally to the entire geographical space inside the boundary of the Management Unit which is being submitted for (re)certification. However, some of the criteria and indicators apply beyond the boundary of the Management Unit. This would include those infrastructural facilities that are part of the Management Unit, as defined by the FSC Principles and Criteria.

National standards are to be used in conjunction with international, national and local laws and regulations.

Where there might be situations of conflict between the requirements in this standard and laws, specific FSC procedures will apply.

Responsibility for ensuring conformity with the requirements in this standard lies with the person(s) or entities that is/are the certification applicant or holder. For the purpose of FSC certification, this person(s) or entities are referred to as 'The Organization'.

The Organization is responsible for decisions, policies and management activities related to the Management Unit.

The Organization is also responsible for demonstrating that other persons or entities that are permitted or contracted by The Organization to operate in, or for the benefit of, the Management Unit conform with the requirements in this standard.

The Organization is required to take corrective actions in the event of such persons or entities not being in conformance with the requirements in this standard.

### B.4 Note on the use of normative and non-normative elements in the standard

Normative elements in the standard are:

Scope, effective date, validity period, glossary of terms, principles, criteria, indicators, tables and annexes.

Note: with regard to the auditing of Annexes, when an indicator refers to an Annex, the conformity assessment shall cover both the indicator and the corresponding requirements in the Annex, unless the Annex is explicitly categorised as 'informative'.

Sub-indicators in an Annex contribute to the conformity assessment at the level of criterion in the same way as sub-indicators listed in an indicator within the main body of the standard.

Non-normative elements in the standard that can be used for guidance only are:

Verifiers, guidance notes, and examples are attached to some of the indicators (as well as other notes which might be produced in association with this standard).

Auditors may use other means for verification where appropriate. The Organization may also use verifiers as a guide to what may be required to demonstrate conformity.

Normative elements that have been greyed out are not applicable in the country, but they are kept in the standard for transparency.

'SLIMF' (small or low-intensity managed forest): The Organizations managing Management Units which qualify as SLIMF shall conform with all indicators in the standard, except where specific SLIMF indicators exist (marked as, e.g., 'SLIMF 1.6.1'). The Organizations above shall conform with them instead.

SLIMF eligibility criteria	National threshold
<b>Small Management Units</b>	<p>Natural Forest Management Units of up to 1,000 hectares.</p> <p>The majority of these Management Units are a single contiguous property.</p> <p>The standard specifies where requirements can be met at the group level.</p>
<b>Low-intensity Management Units</b>	<p>The rate of harvesting is less than 20% of the mean annual increment (MAI) within the total production forest area of the unit, AND</p> <p>EITHER the annual harvest from the total production forest area is less than 5,000 cubic metres,</p> <p>OR the <i>average</i> annual harvest from the total production forest is less than 5,000 m<sup>3</sup>/year during the period of validity of the certificate as verified by harvest reports and surveillance audits.</p>

Organizations including NTFPs in their certification scope shall conform with all generic indicators in the standard. Where specific NTFP indicators exist (marked as, e.g., 'NTFP 8.5.1.1'), these Organizations shall conform with them in addition.

#### Verbal forms for the expression of provisions

[Adapted from *ISO/IEC Directives Part 2: Rules for the structure and drafting of International Standards*]

<b>'shall'</b>	indicates requirements to be strictly followed in order to conform with the standard; 'shall not' indicates a prohibition.
<b>'should'</b>	indicates that among several possibilities one is recommended as particularly suitable, without mentioning or excluding others, or that a certain course of action is preferred but not necessarily required. The Organization can meet these requirements in an equivalent way provided that this can be demonstrated and justified.
<b>'may'</b>	indicates a course of action permissible within the limits of the standard.
<b>'can'</b>	is used for statements of possibility and capability, whether material, physical or causal.

The text of the Principles and the Criteria under section F contains terms that are formatted in italics and marked with an asterisk\*. These terms are defined in Annex M Glossary of Terms.

This document is subject to the review and revision cycle as described in [<FSC-PRO-60-007 EN Structure, Content and Development of Interim National Standards>](#).

## B.5 Interpretations and Disputes

Interpretation requests regarding Interim Forest Stewardship Standards are submitted directly to FSC for processing and approval. Approved interpretations are published on FSC's international website (see: INT-STD-60-006\_01 in [Forest Management Interpretations](#)).

Disputes between stakeholders concerning certification requirements are managed according to the FSC dispute resolution procedure (see: <[FSC-PRO-01-008-Processing Complaints in the FSC Certification Scheme Procedure](#)>).

## C CONTEXT

### C.1 General description of the forestry sector

Natural forests of South Africa are among the most ecologically rich and diverse in the world. The evergreen natural forest cover of the country is approximately 500,000 hectares or 0.5% of the country's land area. These forests are in pockets in the south and east between the coast and the inland plateau, and their distribution is limited by soil, rainfall, fire and human intervention. They are strictly protected with minimal timber harvesting possible under strict licencing conditions (National Forests Act 84/1998). Most natural forests are conserved as state forests or within formal conservation areas, although some exist on private land. The dry deciduous natural forest of South Africa is part of the Savanna Biome. This biome covers approximately 40 million hectares or 38% of South Africa (Rutherford et al. in Mucina, L., Rutherford, M.C. [eds.], 2024). These are the iconic African savannah woodlands, including Mopane woodland, Miombo woodland and Acacias (now *Vachellia* and *Senegalia*), that typically support wild and domestic herbivore populations, are fire adapted, and have relatively high levels of biodiversity. Much of this biome has been converted to various forms of agriculture, but some remains dedicated to extensive ranching and wildlife conservation. Conserved areas of the dry woodlands have significant potential for Ecosystem Service claims and played a major role in the wider conservation of FSC. The country currently has 8,800 hectares of certified natural forest area and two group certificate holders operating under the CB Standard based on P&C V4.

Several provinces and biomes across South Africa are affected by Invasive Alien Plant (IAP) species, including woody species that were originally introduced for commercial purposes. Over time, many of these species have expanded beyond their intended areas and become naturalised ([Geographical Distribution of IAPs in Southern Africa \[SAPIA\]](#)).

The management of certain IAPs, particularly Black Wattle (*Acacia mearnsii*), falls within the scope of this standard. FSC Group Schemes are currently using the standard to certify the responsible management of approximately 9,000 hectares of invasive wattle, pine, and eucalyptus. These operations produce woodchips, pellets, biochar, and charcoal.

Although still limited in scale, this emerging model demonstrates promising potential as a sustainable solution to IAP challenges in several countries within the region.

It is important to note, however, that some IAP species also function as natural pioneer species within forest ecosystems. Research suggests that both planted and naturalising (invasive) trees and non-tree species can play a role in facilitating the recovery of native vegetation (Geldenhuys C.J. et al., 2017).

### C.2 Background information on the standard development

(Informative section)

Since March 2024, the South African FSC Standard Development Group (SDG) has been working to develop a Forest Stewardship Standard (FSS) tailored for natural forests and woodlands, including the management of invasive alien plant species, in alignment with the National Forests Act (Act No. 84 of 1998), which strictly regulates forest use. This effort aimed to replace the outdated 2014 Certification Body-adapted standards based on FSC Principles and Criteria Version 4, which was set to expire on 31 December 2025, following a decision by the FSC International Board. While South Africa currently uses [<FSC-STD-ZAF-01-2017 V1-0>](#) for plantation forests, the development of a new standard for natural forests, registered on 21 October 2024, was halted in August 2025 by FSC's Policy and Performance Unit (P&P), citing insufficient time for public consultation and review before yearend. In response, a Technical Working Group (TWG) that included P&P, the Africa Policy Manager, and the Southern Africa Sub-

Regional Coordinator was formed to develop an Interim Forest Stewardship Standard (IFSS-GFSS) using minimally adapted International Generic Indicators (IGI), and drawing on the SDG's prior work and verifiers from the previous V4 standard to ensure contextual relevance.

This standard was developed in compliance with the requirements and regulations outlined in <FSC-PRO-60-007 V1-2> from 9 September 2025 10 to November 2025. A public consultation meeting was held from 1 October 2025 to 31 October 2025. Following this consultation, a virtual stakeholder workshop was held on 5 November 2025.

NOTE: further information is available from P&P upon request.

## D REFERENCES

(Informative section)

The following referenced documents are relevant for the application of this standard. For references without a version number, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

<b>FSC-POL-20-003</b>	<i>FSC Policy on the Excision of Areas from the Scope of Certification</i>
<b>FSC-POL-30-001</b>	<i>FSC Pesticides Policy</i>
<b>FSC-POL-30-602</b>	<i>FSC Interpretation on GMOs (Genetically Modified Organisms)</i>
<b>FSC-STD-20-007</b>	<i>Forest Management Evaluations</i>
<b>FSC-STD-30-005</b>	<i>FSC Standard for Group Entities in Forest Management Groups</i>
<b>FSC-PRO-01-008</b>	<i>Processing Complaints in the FSC Certification Scheme</i>
<b>FSC-PRO-30-006</b>	<i>Ecosystem Services Procedure: Impact Demonstration and Market Tools</i>
<b>FSC-DIR-20-007</b>	<i>FSC Directive on FSC Forest Management Evaluations</i>
<b>FSC-GUI-30-003</b>	<i>FSC Guidelines for the implementation of the right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC)</i>
<b>FSC-STD-01-003</b>	<i>SLIMF Eligibility Criteria</i>
<b>FSC-GUI-60-100</b>	<i>Guidance on the Interpretation of the FSC Principles and Criteria, taking account of the Scale and Intensity of Forest Management</i>

NOTE: When applying this standard, consider relevant interpretations by inquiring with local FSC representatives (e.g. National Offices or representatives, or FSC's Policy and Performance Unit, if no national FSC presence exists), or your certification body. International interpretations are available through the FSC Document Centre (<https://fsc.org/en/document-centre>).

## E LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

(Informative section)

<b>CITES</b>	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
<b>DFFE</b>	Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
<b>EIA</b>	Environmental Impact Assessment
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization
<b>FPIC</b>	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
<b>FSC</b>	Forest Stewardship Council
<b>FSS</b>	Forest Stewardship Standard
<b>HCV</b>	High Conservation Value
<b>IAP</b>	Invasive Alien Plant
<b>IFSS</b>	Interim Forest Stewardship Standard
<b>IGI</b>	International Generic Indicators
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>IPILRA</b>	Interim Protection of Informal Land Rights Act
<b>IUCN</b>	International Union for Conservation of Nature
<b>NEMA</b>	National Environmental Management Act
<b>NEMBA</b>	National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act
<b>NF</b>	Normative Framework
<b>P&amp;P</b>	Policy and Performance Unit
<b>PFM</b>	Participatory Forest Management
<b>SARS</b>	South African Revenue Service
<b>SLIMF</b>	Small or Low-Intensity Managed Forest
<b>TOPS</b>	Threatened or Protected Species
<b>UNDRIP</b>	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
<b>WWF</b>	World Wildlife Fund for Nature

## F PRINCIPLES\*, CRITERIA\* AND INDICATORS\*

(Normative section)

### PRINCIPLE\* 1: COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS

**The Organization\*** shall comply with all *applicable laws\**, regulations and nationally *ratified\** international treaties, conventions and agreements.

**1.1** **The Organization\*** shall be a legally defined entity with clear, documented and unchallenged *legal registration\**, with written authorization from the *legally competent\** authority for specific activities.

1.1.1 Legal registration to carry out all activities within the scope of the certificate is documented and unchallenged.

1.1.2 Legal registration is granted by a legally competent authority according to legally prescribed processes.

**Guidance note:** Refer to Appendix A for the list of applicable South African laws, regulations, and guidelines.

**Verifiers** (1.1.1 – 1.1.2): Evidence of legal registration.

**1.2** **The Organization\*** shall demonstrate that the *legal\* status of the Management Unit\**, including *tenure\** and *use rights\**, and its boundaries, are clearly defined.

1.2.1 Legal tenure to manage and use resources within the scope of the certificate is documented.

1.2.2 Legal tenure is granted by a legally competent authority according to legally prescribed processes.

1.2.3 The boundaries of all Management Units within the scope of the certificate are clearly marked or documented and clearly shown on maps.

**Verifiers** (1.2.1 – 1.2.3): Documentation with appropriate legal status; maps clearly indicating the boundaries of the Management Unit.

**1.3** **The Organization\*** shall have *legal\* rights to operate in the Management Unit\**, which fit the *legal\* status of The Organization\** and of the *Management Unit\**, and shall comply with the associated *legal\* obligations in applicable national and local laws\** and regulations and administrative requirements. The *legal\* rights* shall provide for harvest of products and/or supply of *ecosystem services\** from within the *Management Unit\**. **The Organization\*** shall pay the legally prescribed charges associated with such rights and obligations.

1.3.1 All activities undertaken in the Management Unit are carried out in compliance with:

- 1) Applicable laws and regulations and administrative requirements,
- 2) Legal and customary rights; and
- 3) Obligatory codes of practice.

**Verifiers:** Interviews with and information supplied by regulatory authorities, other stakeholders and forest managers; control of required legal documentation, policies, operational procedures and standards demonstrates compliance with requirements, field observation; for SLIMF, documentation available showing that legislation is being complied with in the field.

- 1.3.2 Payment is made in a timely manner of all applicable legally prescribed charges connected with forest management.

**Verifiers:** Invoices; tax returns; receipts; interviews with and information supplied by regulatory authorities and other stakeholders; no evidence of non-payment; valid water use licences for Stream Flow Reduction Activities (section 36 of NWA, 1998) and Municipal Property Rates.

- 1.3.3 Activities covered by the management plan are designed to comply with all applicable laws.

**Verifiers:** Interviews with forest managers and field observations; list of applicable laws, regulations and national guidelines.

**1.4 The Organization\* shall develop and implement measures, and/or shall engage with regulatory agencies, to systematically protect the Management Unit\* from unauthorized or illegal resource use, settlement and other illegal activities.**

- 1.4.1 Measures are implemented to provide protection from unauthorized or illegal harvesting, hunting, fishing, trapping, collecting, settlement and other unauthorized activities.

- 1.4.2 Where protection is the legal responsibility of regulatory bodies, a system is implemented to work with these regulatory bodies to identify, report, control and discourage unauthorized or illegal activities.

- 1.4.3 If illegal or unauthorized activities are detected, measures are implemented to address them.

**Guidance note:** Relevant Legislation includes:

- Prevention of Illegal Eviction from and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act (No. 19 of 1998)
- Extension of Security of Tenure Act (ESTA) No. 67 of 1997.

**Verifiers (1.4.1 – 1.4.3):** Field observations show no damage from unauthorized or illegal activities; manager's explanation of protection/prevention activities, e.g. signs, gates, patrols, etc.; copies of reports made to the authorities of problem activities; boundaries are known to the manager and local communities and are easily identified in the field; signs of boundaries are marked in areas where there is a high risk of encroachment.

**1.5 The Organization\* shall comply with the applicable national laws\*, local laws, ratified\* international conventions and obligatory codes of practice\* relating to the transportation and trade of forest products within and from the Management Unit\*, and/or up to the point of first sale.**

- 1.5.1 Compliance with applicable national laws, local laws, ratified international conventions and obligatory codes of practice relating to the transportation and trade of forest products up to the point of first sale is demonstrated.

- 1.5.2 Compliance with CITES provisions is demonstrated, including through possession of certificates for harvest and trade in any CITES species.

**Guidance note:** The National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (Act No. 10 of 2004) encapsulates the obligations of CITES, and Schedule B2 of the List of Threatened and Protected Species (in terms of section 56[1] of the Act) refers to all species listed in the Appendices of CITES as 'Other Protected Species'. South Africa is a signatory to CITES.

**Verifiers (1.5.1 – 1.5.2):** Interviews with forest managers; operational documentation; required licences are in place. For SLIMFs, list of local species that are covered by the requirements of CITES; reports of awareness-raising activities among workers.

**1.6 The Organization\* shall identify, prevent and resolve disputes\* over issues of statutory or customary law\*, which can be settled out of court in a timely manner\*, through engagement\* with affected stakeholders\*.**

1.6.1 A publicly available dispute resolution process is in place, developed through culturally appropriate engagement with affected stakeholders.

1.6.2 Disputes related to issues of applicable laws or customary law that can be settled out of court are responded to in a timely manner and are either resolved or are in the dispute resolution process.

**Guidance note:** In large organizations, documented procedures play a critical role in ensuring that decision-making processes are transparent, inclusive, and widely accepted. These procedures are designed to facilitate open dialogue among stakeholders and reach consensus through fair and equitable consultation. These procedures promote impartial facilitation and provide culturally sensitive mechanisms for resolving disagreements. This structured approach not only enhances trust and cooperation among parties but also ensures that outcomes are aligned with organizational values and stakeholder expectations.

**Verifiers** (1.6.1 – 1.6.2): Evidence of steps that have been taken by the organization to identify land claims on the Management Unit (MU); records of location and status of claims, boundary or use rights disputes; register of disputes about rights, entitlements and access and use by local communities with legal or customary rights; records of disputes over management agreements; evidence of cooperation and dispute resolution activities.

1.6.3 Up-to-date records of disputes related to issues of applicable laws or customary law are held, including:

- 1) Steps taken to resolve disputes;
- 2) Outcomes of all dispute resolution processes; and
- 3) Unresolved disputes, the reasons they are not resolved, and how they will be resolved.

**Verifiers:** Records of disputes relating to land claims and any other land use rights issues.

1.6.4 Operations cease in areas where disputes exist:

- 1) of substantial magnitude; or
- 2) of substantial duration; or
- 3) involving a significant number of interests.

**Verifiers:** Evidence of the dispute resolution process.

**1.7** *The Organization\** shall publicize a commitment not to offer or receive bribes in money or any other form of corruption, and shall comply with anti-corruption legislation where this exists. In the absence of anti-corruption legislation, *The Organization\** shall implement other anti-corruption measures proportionate to the *scale\** and *intensity\** of management activities and the *risk\** of corruption.

1.7.1 A policy is implemented that includes a commitment not to offer or receive bribes of any description.

SLIMF 1.7.1 A written or verbal declaration not to give or receive bribes (money) or to engage in other forms of corruption is communicated to neighbours and customers.

**Guidance note:** The policy can be readily accessible upon request and may be included as part of the publicly available summary of The Organization's management plan.

**Verifiers:** A written policy; evidence of communication not to give or receive bribes.

1.7.2 The policy meets or exceeds related legislation.

1.7.3 The policy is publicly available at no cost.

**Verifiers** (1.7.2 – 1.7.3): For non-SLIMF, the policy is available on a public platform such as a website or broadly distributed publication.

1.7.4 Bribery, coercion and other acts of corruption do not occur.

1.7.5 Corrective measures are implemented if corruption does occur.

**Verifiers** (1.7.4 – 1.7.5): Evidence of action taken in response to cases of corruption.

**1.8** *The Organization\** shall demonstrate a *long-term\** commitment to adhere to the *FSC Principles\** and *Criteria\** in the *Management Unit\**, and to related *FSC Policies and Standards*. A statement of this commitment shall be contained in a *publicly available\** document made freely available.

1.8.1 A written policy, endorsed by an individual with authority to implement the policy, includes a long-term commitment to forest management practices consistent with FSC Principles and Criteria and related Policies and Standards.

**Guidance:** For a group scheme, the policy forms part of the agreement between the group manager and forest manager.

**Verifiers:** A written policy with an appropriate statement is available; for SLIMFs, the management plan; (written or informal) plans for investment, training, and sharing of income or other benefits; past management has been compatible with the P&C.

1.8.2 The policy is publicly available at no cost.

**Verifiers:** The policy is available upon request and can form part of the publicly available summary of the management plan; interviews with forest managers, workers and stakeholders.

## PRINCIPLE\* 2: WORKERS\* RIGHTS AND EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS

*The Organization\** shall maintain or enhance the social and economic well-being of *workers\**.

2.1 *The Organization\** shall *uphold\** the principles and rights at work as defined in the *ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work\** (1998) based on the eight *ILO Core Labour Conventions\**.

2.1.1 The Organization shall not use child labour.

2.1.1.1 The Organization shall not employ workers below the age of 15, or below the minimum age as stated under national or local laws or regulations, whichever age is higher, except as specified in 2.1.1.2.

2.1.1.2 Employment of persons aged 15 to 18 engaged in light work or family-related operations is permitted only if it does not interfere with schooling and is not harmful to their health or development. When compulsory education laws apply, such work shall take place only outside school hours and during normal daytime working hours.

2.1.1.3 No person under the age of 18 is employed in hazardous or heavy work except for the purpose of training within approved national laws and regulation.

2.1.1.4 The Organization shall prohibit worst forms of child labour.

**Guidance note:** In family forestry operations, it is common for children to assist their parents during school holidays or weekends. However, such involvement is typically informal and does not constitute formal employment.

**Verifiers** (2.1.1 – 2.1.1.4): Documents include Chapter six, section 44 of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA), Act No. 75 of 1997, pay records, records of the labour inspectorate, employer records (Age Register), identity documents such as copies of birth certificates or national ID cards; risk assessment and hazardous substance assessment; employment policy/procedures; local/national law; findings of employment surveys; school records and social workers; interviews with sample of workers, representatives of workers and unions, school authorities and social workers, representatives of the employer; field observation includes field inspections and interviews with forest managers; records of labour inspectorate.

2.1.2 The Organization shall eliminate all forms of forced and compulsory labour.

2.1.2.1 Employment relationships are voluntary and based on mutual consent, without threat of a penalty.

2.1.2.2 There is no evidence of any practices indicative of forced or compulsory labour, including, but not limited to, the following:

- 1) Physical and sexual violence;
- 2) Bonded labour;
- 3) Withholding of wages/including payment of employment fees and or payment of deposit to commence employment;
- 4) Restriction of mobility/movement;
- 5) Retention of passport and identity documents;
- 6) Threats of denunciation to the authorities.

**Verifiers** (2.1.2 – 2.1.2.2): Documents include pay records, records of the labour inspectorate, employment contracts, statutory deductions (tax, social security), national/industry pay standards (for comparison); dispute and grievance records; records of licenced recruitment agencies, work agreements; interviews with sample of workers, representatives of workers and unions, social workers and NGOs, supervisors and representatives of the employer; observation includes a visit to camps or housing sites.

2.1.3 The Organization shall ensure that there is no discrimination in employment and occupation.

2.1.3.1 Employment and occupation practices are non-discriminatory.

**Verifiers** (2.1.3 – 2.1.3.1): Documents such as pay records, records of the labour inspectorate, adverts, job application records, grievances/complaints register, job evaluation (appraisals), affirmative action programmes, policies and procedures, employment demographic/gender ratio in job types, discriminatory reports/social responsibility reports; interviews with representatives of the employer, sample of workers, representatives of workers and unions; observation includes welfare facilities for men and women.

2.1.4 The Organization shall respect freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining.

2.1.4.1 Workers are able to establish or join workers' organizations of their own choosing.

2.1.4.2 The Organization respects the rights of workers to engage in lawful activities related to forming, joining or assisting a workers' organization, or to refrain from doing the same, and will not discriminate or punish workers for exercising these rights.

2.1.4.3 The Organization negotiates with lawfully established workers' organizations and/or duly selected representatives in good faith and with the best efforts to reach a collective bargaining agreement.

2.1.4.4 Collective bargaining agreements are implemented where they exist.

**Verifiers** (2.1.4 – 2.1.4.4): Documents such as organizational policies, complaints register, collective agreements, minutes of bilateral meetings, Minister of Labour/Industrial Relations reports, court reports/awards; interviews with workers and trade union representatives, human resource personnel and representatives of the employer.

## **2.2 *The Organization\** shall promote *gender equality\** in employment practices, training opportunities, awarding of contracts, processes of *engagement\** and management activities.**

2.2.1 Systems are implemented that promote gender equality and prevent gender discrimination in employment practices, training opportunities, awarding of contracts, processes of engagement and management activities.

**Verifiers:** Records (e.g. outsourcing criteria, employment criteria, evidence of employment, job advertisements, etc.); stakeholder consultation.

2.2.2 Job opportunities are open to both women and men under the same conditions, and women are encouraged to participate actively in all levels of employment.

**Verifiers:** Records (e.g. outsourcing criteria, employment criteria, evidence of employment, job advertisements, etc.); stakeholder consultation.

2.2.3 Work typically carried out by women (nurseries, silviculture, non-timber forest products harvesting, weighing, packing, etc.) is included in training and health and safety programmes to the same extent as work typically carried out by men.

**Verifiers:** Training records.

2.2.4 Women and men are paid the same wage when they do the same work.

**Verifiers:** Payment records, payslips and contracts.

2.2.5 Women are paid directly and using mutually agreed methods (e.g. direct bank transfer, direct payments for school fees, etc.) to ensure they safely receive and retain their wages.

2.2.6 Maternity leave is no less than a six-week period after childbirth.

**Verifiers:** Contracts; interviews with labour.

2.2.7 Paternity leave is available and there is no penalty for taking it.

**Guidance note:** In accordance with section 27 of the BCEA, workers with at least four months of service are entitled to fully paid family responsibility leave of three days during each annual leave cycle (12 months). Family responsibilities include the birth of a child, among other family events. Upon the request, a worker provides reasonable proof of the event necessitating family responsibility leave. In other words, if the employee's child is born, a birth certificate and proof of paternity should be provided to the employer.

2.2.8 Meetings, management committees and decision-making forums are organized to include women and men, and to facilitate the active participation of both.

**Guidance note:** Where women are employed in the appropriate positions, they are included in decision-making structures.

**Verifiers:** Minutes or records of meetings.

2.2.9 Confidential and effective mechanisms exist for reporting and eliminating cases of sexual harassment and discrimination based on gender, marital status, parenthood or sexual orientation.

**Verifiers:** Records of consultation; interviews with workers.

**2.3 *The Organization\** shall implement health and safety practices to protect *workers\** from occupational safety and health hazards. These practices shall, proportionate to *scale, intensity and risk\** of management activities, meet or exceed the recommendations of the ILO Code of Practice on Safety and Health in Forestry Work.**

2.3.1 Health and safety practices are developed and implemented that meet or exceed the ILO Code of Practice on Safety and Health in Forestry Work.

SLIMF 2.3.1 Each worker is informed about the health and safety measures corresponding to their activity and these meet or exceed the ILO Code of Practice on Safety and Health in Forestry Work.

**Guidance note:** The requirements of the ILO Code of Practice are contained in the Occupational Health and Safety Act (No. 85 of 1993). The key requirements are grouped in the indicators below, which follow the process of developing a legally compliant and fully functional health and safety system. For organizations that lodge displaced workers, accommodation provided on the MU complies with the minimum requirements outlined in Annex L.

2.3.2 Workers have personal protective equipment (PPE) appropriate to their assigned tasks.

**Verifiers:** Evidence that PPE has been issued to workers; evidence of PPE being correctly used.

2.3.3 Use of personal protective equipment is enforced.

**Verifiers:** Inspections of the workplace.

2.3.4 Records are kept on health and safety practices including accident rates and lost time to accidents.

SLIMF 2.3.4 The use of health and safety measures by workers is checked, and accidents are recorded when they occur.

**Guidance note:** Safe work procedures include the following:

- Adequate supervision is provided to ensure that work is conducted safely;
- A trained first aider is on site during all hazardous operations (e.g. harvesting, spraying);
- First aid kits and fire-fighting equipment must be available and accessible.

During the implementation of any hazardous operation, safe procedures include:

- A system to restock first aid boxes is in place;
- Protective clothing is worn and is in a condition so as to protect the labourer against injuries as intended;
- Specific safe work procedures for each hazardous task exist, which are too numerous to specify.

**Verifiers:** Inspections of the workplace.

2.3.5 The frequency and severity of accidents are consistently low compared to national forest industry averages.

SLIMF 2.3.5 Accident level is reduced over time.

2.3.6 The health and safety practices are reviewed and revised as required after major incidents or accidents.

**Guidance note:** For injury investigations, an Annexure 1 form is required to be completed (Occupational Health and Safety Act No. 85 of 1993).

**Verifiers** (2.3.5 – 2.3.6): Documented evidence of accident/injury investigations; records of minor injuries to identify trends and causes and to establish the effectiveness of training and personal protective clothing; examination of safety statistics; evidence for adjustments in safety measures to address causes; for SLIMFs, description of measures taken to improve safety performance based on previous incidents.

**2.4** ***The Organization\* shall pay wages that meet or exceed minimum forest\* industry standards or other recognized forest\* industry wage agreements or living wages\*, where these are higher than the legal\* minimum wages. When none of these exist, The Organization\* shall through engagement\* with workers\* develop mechanisms for determining living wages\*.***

2.4.1 Wages paid by The Organization in all circumstances meet or exceed legal minimum wage rates, where such rates exist.

**Verifiers:** Payslips.

2.4.2 Wages paid meet or exceed:

- 1) Minimum forest industry standards; or
- 2) Other recognized forest industry wage agreements; or
- 3) Living wages that are higher than legal minimum wages.

**Guidance note:** Sectoral Determination 12 Forestry Worker Sector (SD 12) is revised annually and determines the obligatory minimum wage on an hourly, weekly and monthly basis. It is possible to apply to the Department of Labour for an exemption from minimum wage based on the affordability of the business. The statutory minimum hourly rate must be paid according to hours worked and irrespective of the completion of the task.

**Verifiers:** Payslips.

2.4.3 When no minimum wage levels exist, wages are established through culturally appropriate engagement with workers and/or formal and informal workers' organizations.

2.4.4 Wages, salaries and contracts are paid on time.

**Verifiers:** Payslips; interviews with workers and unions.

**2.5 *The Organization\* shall demonstrate that workers\* have job-specific training and supervision to safely and effectively implement the Management Plan\* and all management activities.***

2.5.1 Workers have job specific training consistent with Annex B and supervision to safely and effectively contribute to the implementation of the management plan and all management activities.

**Guidance note:** Organizations are required by law to pay into the skills development funds, and this is unavoidable for registered taxpayers as it forms part of the tax return, as per Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998.

**Verifiers:** Training records and training plan.

2.5.2 Up-to-date training records are kept for all relevant workers.

**Verifiers:** Training records; skills certificates.

**2.6 *The Organization\* through engagement\* with workers\* shall have mechanisms for resolving grievances and for providing fair compensation\* to workers\* for loss or damage to property, occupational diseases\*, or occupational injuries\* sustained while working for The Organization\*.***

2.6.1 A dispute resolution process is in place, developed through culturally appropriate engagement with workers.

**Verifiers:** Interviews with workers; evidence that workers were engaged in formulating the dispute resolution process; for non-SLIMFs, a documented dispute resolution mechanism; for SLIMFs, there is a common understanding between managers and workers regarding what to do in case of a dispute.

2.6.2 Workers grievances are identified and responded to and are either resolved or are in the dispute resolution process.

**Verifiers:** Interviews with workers.

2.6.3 Up-to-date records of workers grievances related to workers' loss or damage to property, occupational diseases or injuries are maintained including:

- 1) Steps taken to resolve grievances;
- 2) Outcomes of all dispute resolution processes including fair compensation; and
- 3) Unresolved disputes, the reasons they are not resolved, and how they will be resolved.

**Verifiers:** Examination of grievance records.

2.6.4 Fair compensation is provided to workers for work-related loss or damage to property and occupational disease or injuries.

**Verifiers:** Compliance with the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act (No. 130 of 1993); examination of records and interviews with workers.

## PRINCIPLE\* 3: INDIGENOUS PEOPLES'\* RIGHTS

**The Organization\* shall identify and uphold\* Indigenous Peoples\* legal\* and customary rights\* of ownership, use and management of land, territories\* and resources affected by management activities.**

**Guidance:** The KhoeSan are officially recognized as the Indigenous Peoples of South Africa, comprising hunter-gatherer San and pastoralist Khoekhoe groups who suffered severe marginalization and cultural erasure following European colonization from 1652 onward. Today, an estimated 300,000 individuals – approximately 1% of the national population – self-identify as KhoeSan, with most residing in arid regions not associated with natural forests. While some San descendants live near forested areas, such as the Drakensberg region, their numbers are small and their original languages extinct. Khoekhoe groups such as the Nama, Koranna, and Griqua mostly live outside forest zones, though a few communities are located near plantation forestry areas. South Africa's legal framework protects all citizens equally and aims to redress historical injustices, but distinguishing KhoeSan as a separate principle from other previously disadvantaged groups is complex and may hinder social cohesion. Therefore, protections for Indigenous Peoples under forestry standards are integrated with broader community rights. Importantly, only the KhoeSan are considered Indigenous under South African law and international frameworks, while the majority Black African population, descendants of Bantu-speaking migrants, is not classified as Indigenous. Contemporary African ethno-linguistic groups in South Africa trace their origins to Bantu-speaking populations that migrated from East and Central Africa, while the San and Khoekhoe represent the region's pre-settler Indigenous Peoples, currently inhabiting arid areas not associated with natural forests. These groups have strong cultural and resource-based connections to their territories, especially in the semi-desert regions of western South Africa. They are recognized as custodians of commercially valuable plants such as rooibos and hoodia. Although they are not dominant within South African society, their cultural heritage is acknowledged through legislation, notably the Traditional and Khoi-San Leadership Act of 2019. However, their geographic distribution and environmental context mean they are not directly relevant to the management or conservation of South Africa's natural forest biomes (Choudhury, A. et al. Bantu-speaker migration and admixture in southern Africa, *Human Molecular Genetics*, Volume 30, Issue R1, 1 March 2021, pp. R56–R63), <https://doi.org/10.1093/hmg/ddaa274> National Hearing Report on the Human Rights of the Khoi-San - 14 March 2018 (003).pdf; People and Culture of South Africa | South African History Online).

**3.1 The Organization\* shall identify the Indigenous Peoples\* that exist within the Management Unit\* or those that are affected by management activities. The Organization\* shall then, through engagement\* with these Indigenous Peoples\*, identify their rights of tenure\*, their rights of access to and use of forest\* resources and ecosystem services\*, their customary rights\* and legal\* rights and obligations that apply within the Management Unit\*. The Organization\* shall also identify areas where these rights are contested.**

- 3.1.1 Indigenous Peoples that may be affected by management activities are identified.
- 3.1.2 Through culturally appropriate engagement with the Indigenous Peoples identified in 3.1.1, the following are documented and/or mapped:
  - 1) Their legal and customary rights of tenure;
  - 2) Their legal and customary access to, and use rights of, the forest resources and ecosystem services;
  - 3) Their legal and customary rights and obligations that apply;
  - 4) The evidence supporting these rights and obligations;
  - 5) Areas where rights are contested between Indigenous Peoples, governments and/or others;

- 6) Summary of the means by which the legal and customary rights and contested rights are addressed by The Organization; and
- 7) The aspirations and goals of Indigenous Peoples related to management activities, Intact Forest Landscapes and Indigenous cultural landscapes.

**Guidance note:**

- Disputes related to Land Restitution, the Extension of Security of Tenure Act (ESTA), Labour Tenants Act (LTA) and Interim Protection of Informal Land Rights Act (IPILRA) are addressed through the mechanisms provided for in the law.
- A binding agreement is in place containing the duration, provisions for renegotiation, renewal, termination, economic conditions and other terms and conditions.
- A structure with beneficiary representation is in place to oversee management activities on beneficiary owned plantation land.
- This structure holds regular meetings and issues raised by members are addressed satisfactorily.

**Verifiers (3.2.1 – 3.2.2):** Records/documentation/maps of all relevant tenure and access rights for local Indigenous communities on the Management Unit; records of disputes; for non-SLIMFs, the causes and nature of disputes are monitored, and consultation with Indigenous community representatives/farm dwellers is held.

**3.2 The Organization\* shall recognize and uphold\* the legal\* and customary rights\* of Indigenous Peoples\* to maintain control over management activities within or related to the Management Unit\* to the extent necessary to protect their rights, resources and lands and territories\*. Delegation by Indigenous Peoples\* of control over management activities to third parties requires Free, Prior and Informed Consent\*.**

- 3.2.1 Through culturally appropriate engagement, Indigenous Peoples are informed of when, where and how they can comment on and request modification to management activities to the extent necessary to protect their rights, resources, lands and territories.
- 3.2.2 The legal and customary rights of Indigenous Peoples are not violated by The Organization.
- 3.2.3 Where evidence exists that legal and customary rights of Indigenous Peoples related to management activities have been violated, the situation is corrected, if necessary, through culturally appropriate engagement and/or through the dispute resolution process as required in Criteria 1.6 or 4.6.

**Verifiers:** Documentation such as contracts and agreements; records of disputes and resolutions, consultation with Indigenous community representatives/farm dwellers.

- 3.2.4 Free, Prior and Informed Consent is granted by Indigenous Peoples prior to management activities that affect their identified rights through a process that includes:
  - 1) Ensuring Indigenous Peoples know their rights and obligations regarding the resource;
  - 2) Informing the Indigenous Peoples of the value of the resource, in economic, social and environmental terms;
  - 3) Informing the Indigenous Peoples of their right to withhold or modify consent to the proposed management activities to the extent necessary to protect their rights, resources, lands and territories; and
  - 4) Informing the Indigenous Peoples of the current and future planned forest management activities.

**Verifiers:** Contracts and lease agreements; evidence of consultation.

3.2.5 Where the process of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) has not yet resulted in an FPIC agreement, The Organization and the affected Indigenous Peoples are engaged in a mutually agreed FPIC process that is advancing in good faith and with which the community is satisfied.

**3.3 In the event of delegation of control over management activities, a *binding agreement*\* between *The Organization*\* and the *Indigenous Peoples*\* shall be concluded through *Free, Prior and Informed Consent*\*. The agreement shall define its duration, provisions for renegotiation, renewal, termination, economic conditions and other terms and conditions. The agreement shall make provision for monitoring by *Indigenous Peoples*\* of *The Organization*\*'s compliance with its terms and conditions.**

3.3.1 Where control over management activities has been granted through Free, Prior and Informed Consent based on culturally appropriate engagement, the binding agreement contains the duration, provisions for renegotiation, renewal, termination, economic conditions and other terms and conditions.

**Verifiers:** Consultation with local community representatives; documentary evidence of agreements/signed agreements.

3.3.2 Records of binding agreements are maintained.

**Verifiers:** Documentary evidence of agreements/signed agreements.

3.3.3 The binding agreement contains the provision for monitoring by Indigenous Peoples of The Organization's compliance with its terms and conditions.

**Verifiers:** Review of documentary evidence of agreements/signed agreements.

**3.4 *The Organization*\* shall recognize and *uphold*\* the rights, customs and culture of *Indigenous Peoples*\* as defined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of *Indigenous Peoples*\* (2007) and *ILO Convention*\* 169 (1989).**

3.4.1 The rights, customs and culture of Indigenous Peoples as defined in UNDRIP and ILO Convention 169 are not violated by The Organization.

**Verifiers:** Evidence of documented FPIC process; records of consultations with Indigenous communities during planning and decision-making; maps and management plans identifying sacred sites, burial grounds, and cultural areas and evidence of their protection.

3.4.2 Where evidence that rights, customs and culture of Indigenous Peoples, as defined in UNDRIP and ILO Convention 169, have been violated by The Organization, the situation is documented including steps to restore these rights, customs and culture of Indigenous Peoples, to the satisfaction of the rights holders.

**Verifiers:** Existence of a functioning grievance mechanism with documented cases and resolutions; review reports or records violations; a formal restoration plan approved by the Indigenous communities; evidence that corrective actions were accepted by the Indigenous community.

**3.5 The Organization\*, through engagement\* with Indigenous Peoples\*, shall identify sites which are of special cultural, ecological, economic, religious or spiritual significance and for which these Indigenous Peoples\* hold legal\* or customary rights\*. These sites shall be recognized by The Organization\* and their management, and/or protection\* shall be agreed through engagement\* with these Indigenous Peoples\*.**

3.5.1 Sites of special cultural, ecological, economic, religious or spiritual significance for which Indigenous Peoples hold legal or customary rights are identified through culturally appropriate engagement.

**Guidance note:** The following types of sites of special significance are commonly found within natural forests: 1) grave sites; 2) sacred and historical sites; 3) areas of significant scenic value; 4) rock art; 5) buildings protected under the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA); 6) historical routes. These include, but are not limited to, sites of significance to Indigenous communities.

**Verifiers:** Maps of identified sacred or culturally significant sites; records of community consultations/evidence that mapping was done with the involvement of Indigenous communities.

3.5.2 Measures to protect such sites are agreed, documented and implemented through culturally appropriate engagement with Indigenous Peoples. When Indigenous Peoples determine that physical identification of sites in documentation or on maps would threaten the value or protection of the sites, then other means will be used.

**Verifiers:** Management plans or operational guidelines showing exclusion of identified sites from harvesting operations.

3.5.3 Wherever sites of special cultural, ecological, economic, religious or spiritual significance are newly observed or discovered, management activities cease immediately in the vicinity until protective measures have been agreed to with the Indigenous Peoples, and as directed by local and national laws.

**Verifiers:** For non-SLIMFs, the procedure for actions to take when discovering new sites of potential significance to Indigenous communities; for SLIMFs, the manager can explain what the procedure is for protecting new sites; groups schemes can have such a procedure as part of the group management system.

**3.6 The Organization\* shall uphold\* the right of Indigenous Peoples\* to protect\* and utilize their Traditional Knowledge\* and shall compensate local communities\* for the utilization of such knowledge and their intellectual property\*. A binding agreement\* as per Criterion\* 3.3 shall be concluded between The Organization\* and the Indigenous Peoples\* for such utilization through Free, Prior and Informed Consent\* before utilization takes place, and shall be consistent with the protection\* of intellectual property\* rights.**

3.6.1 Traditional knowledge and intellectual property are protected and are only used when the acknowledged owners of that traditional knowledge and intellectual property have provided their Free, Prior and Informed Consent formalized through a binding agreement.

**Verifiers:** Signed FPIC agreements between The Organization and the acknowledged owner of the traditional knowledge; a legally enforceable contract or Memorandum of Understanding (MoU); meeting minutes and communication records showing culturally appropriate engagement with the concerned.

3.6.2 Indigenous Peoples are compensated according to the binding agreement reached through Free, Prior and Informed Consent for the use of traditional knowledge and intellectual property.

**Verifiers:** Proof of agreed benefits delivered to rights holders (financial or non-financial).

## PRINCIPLE\* 4: COMMUNITY RELATIONS

**The Organization\*** shall contribute to maintaining or enhancing the social and economic well-being of **local communities\***.

**4.1 The Organization\*** shall identify the **local communities\*** that exist within the **Management Unit\*** and those that are affected by management activities. **The Organization\*** shall then, through **engagement\*** with these **local communities\***, identify their rights of **tenure\***, their rights of access to and use of **forest\*** resources and **ecosystem services\***, their **customary rights\*** and **legal\*** rights and obligations that apply within the **Management Unit\***.

4.1.1 Local communities that exist in the Management Unit and those that may be affected by management activities are identified.

**Guidance note:** Stakeholder lists including neighbours (see 7.6.1). The goal of this indicator is to determine the relationship between The Organization and the community while outlining potential risks and opportunities.

**Verifiers:** Interviews with responsible staff to assess knowledge of residents and neighbouring communities; interviews with stakeholders; for non-SLIMFs, a map showing the location of resident communities, neighbours and nearby settlements; for SLIMFs, a verbal description of who their neighbours are.

4.1.2. Through culturally appropriate engagement with the local communities identified in 4.1.1, the following are documented and/or mapped:

- 1) Their legal and customary rights of tenure;
- 2) Their legal and customary access to, and use rights of, the forest resources and ecosystem services;
- 3) Their legal and customary rights and obligations that apply;
- 4) The evidence supporting these rights and obligations;
- 5) Areas where rights are contested between local communities, governments and/or others;
- 6) Summary of the means by which the legal and customary rights and contested rights are addressed by The Organization; and
- 7) The aspirations and goals of local communities related to management activities.

**Guidance note:** The Constitution guarantees the securing of customary land rights and restitution of land rights lost as a result of racially discriminatory laws and actions in the past. On private property and state forest land, only tenants and other occupiers have legally recognized tenure rights, in terms of a lease or legislation that protects the tenure and use rights of occupants (ESTA, LTA, IPILRA). Communities can acquire tenure rights through the land claims process, but these have no legal standing until the claim is settled through an order of the Land Claims Court (section 35[1] of the Restitution of Land Rights Act, 1994). Precedents have been set for Indigenous Peoples' claims for rights and recognition in relation to land, and this may occur in forestry areas in the future. On state forest land, the National Forest Act gives everyone a reasonable right of access to State Forests for recreational, cultural, spiritual and educational purposes, including local communities. Organizations leasing state forests are required, in terms of the lease agreement, to provide access and use rights to local communities where reasonable. On communal land under the control of Traditional Authorities, customary rights pertain and are legally vested through the Interim Protection of Informal Land Rights Act (IPILRA) No. 31 of 1996. This is an interim measure until comprehensive legislation is in place to upgrade tenure rights in communal lands.

**Verifiers:** List of resident households on the Management Unit and their tenure and use rights; access rights and agreements with surrounding communities and other users; record of land claims and their status.

**4.2** *The Organization\* shall recognize and uphold\* the legal\* and customary rights\* of local communities\* to maintain control over management activities within or related to the Management Unit\* to the extent necessary to protect their rights, resources, lands and territories\*. Delegation by traditional peoples\* of control over management activities to third parties requires Free, Prior and Informed Consent\*.*

4.2.1 Through culturally appropriate engagement, local communities are informed of when, where and how they can comment on and request modification to management activities to the extent necessary to protect their rights.

4.2.2 The legal and customary rights of local communities to maintain control over management activities are not violated by The Organization.

**Guidance note:**

- Disputes related to Land Restitution, ESTA, LTA and IPILRA are addressed through the mechanisms provided for in the law.
- A binding agreement is in place containing the duration, provisions for renegotiation, renewal, termination, economic conditions and other terms and conditions.
- A structure with beneficiary representation is in place to oversee management activities on beneficiary owned plantation land.
- This structure holds regular meetings and issues raised by members are addressed satisfactorily.

**Verifiers** (4.2.1 – 4.2.2): Records/documentation/maps of all relevant tenure and access rights for local communities on the Management Unit; records of disputes; for non-SLIMFs, the causes and nature of disputes are monitored.

4.2.3 Where evidence exists that legal and customary rights of local communities related to management activities have been violated, the situation is corrected, if necessary, through culturally appropriate engagement and/or through the dispute resolution process in Criteria 1.6 or 4.6.

**Verifiers:** Documentation such as contracts and agreements; records of disputes and resolutions.

4.2.4 Free, Prior and Informed Consent is granted by traditional peoples prior to management activities that affect their identified rights through a process that includes:

- 1) Ensuring the traditional peoples know their rights and obligations regarding the resource;
- 2) Informing the traditional peoples of the value of the resource, in economic, social and environmental terms;
- 3) Informing the traditional peoples of their right to withhold or modify consent to the proposed management activities to the extent necessary to protect their rights and resources; and
- 4) Informing the traditional peoples of the current and future planned forest management activities.

**Verifiers:** Contracts and lease agreements; evidence of consultation.

4.2.5 Where the process of Free, Prior and Informed Consent has not yet resulted in an FPIC agreement, The Organization and the affected traditional peoples are engaged in a mutually agreed FPIC process that is advancing in good faith and with which the community is satisfied.

**4.3 The Organization\* shall provide reasonable\* opportunities for employment, training and other services to local communities\*, contractors and suppliers proportionate to scale\* and intensity\* of its management activities.**

4.3.1 Reasonable opportunities are communicated and provided to local communities, local contractors and local suppliers for:

- 1) Employment;
- 2) Training; and
- 3) Other services.

SLIMF 4.3.1 Preference is given to local people for employment, training and other services.

**Verifiers:** Recruitment policies of The Organization; training programmes run by The Organization in local communities.

**4.4 The Organization\* shall implement additional activities, through engagement\* with local communities\*, that contribute to their social and economic development, proportionate to the scale\*, intensity\* and socio-economic impact of its management activities.**

**Guidance note:** The approach outlined under P4 requires an active involvement by the forestry organization in local communities, with The Organization seeing itself as being part of the community. There is a need to shift away from ad-hoc handout-type interventions to genuine engagement and partnership in local development. Contributions should be in proportion to the capability of The Organization to respond, with an emphasis on partnerships. The need to maintain communication with local communities is applicable at all scales. From this dialogue, development challenges will emerge, and The Organization should respond to these in relation to its capacity. The key aspect will be to demonstrate commitment to supporting locally driven socio-economic development.

4.4.1 Opportunities for local social and economic development are identified through culturally appropriate engagement with local communities and other relevant organizations.

**Verifiers:** Community engagement reports and development plans; interviews with community leaders; documented evidence of engagement.

SLIMF 4.4.1 Opportunities for local social and economic development are identified and implemented.

**Verifiers:** Community engagement reports and development plans; interviews with community leaders.

4.4.2 Projects and additional activities are implemented and/or supported that contribute to local social and economic benefit and are proportionate to the socio-economic impact of management activities.

SLIMF 4.4.2 Local products and services are preferably used.

**Verifiers:** Evidence of implementation of social programmes; for non-SLIMFs, progress is monitored; interviews with representatives from local communities; interviews with forest managers.

**Guidance note:** Provision of decent employment contributes to local social and economic development, and this should be taken into consideration when evaluating additional activities or projects. The exact nature of the project should depend on the outcome of the joint needs analysis. The goal is for the broader community to work together for the common good. Refer to 4.4.

**4.5 *The Organization\**, through *engagement\** with local *communities\**, shall take action to identify, avoid and mitigate *significant\** negative social, environmental and economic impacts of its management activities on affected communities. The action taken shall be proportionate to the *scale, intensity and risk\** of those activities and negative impacts.**

4.5.1 Through culturally appropriate engagement with local communities, measures are implemented to identify, avoid and mitigate significant negative social, environmental and economic impacts of management activities.

SLIMF 4.5.1 Measures are implemented to avoid and mitigate significant negative social, environmental and economic impacts of management activities on affected communities and communicated to them accordingly.

**Verifiers:** Assessment of the impacts of operations on members of the community; measures to avoid and mitigate negative impacts; interviews with affected local communities; for non-SLIMFs, these assessments are documented.

**4.6 *The Organization\**, through *engagement\** with local *communities\**, shall have mechanisms for resolving grievances and providing *fair compensation\** to local *communities\** and individuals with regard to the impacts of management activities of *The Organization\**.**

**Guidance note:** African approaches to resolving grievances and disputes are grounded in the principle that the harmony and well-being of the community take precedence over individual interests (Faris, 2015). For this philosophy to be effective, The Organization is considered and is viewed by others as an integral part of the community. Likewise, all South Africans should feel a sense of belonging and shared identity within the nation.

In this standard, 'community' is understood as: a group of people who, regardless of the diversity of their backgrounds, have been able to accept and transcend their differences, enabling them to communicate effectively and openly and to work together toward goals identified as being for their common good.

Understanding that total harmony is not possible, the goal is to assess and document when the system is functioning well enough and is stable. It is important to understand the early signs of conflict or disharmony in order to prevent a breakdown in relationships.

4.6.1 A publicly available dispute resolution process is in place, developed through culturally appropriate engagement with local communities.

**Guidance note:** Resolutions seek to restore community harmony. These may require fair compensation for the affected parties. Grievances may be related to loss or damage caused by the forest enterprise and affecting the legal or customary rights, property, resources or livelihoods of identified local communities.

**Verifiers:** Examination of records of grievances and steps to resolve them; for non-SLIMFs, documented procedure; awareness-raising reports and interviews with community members.

4.6.2 Grievances related to the impacts of management activities are responded to in a timely manner, and are either resolved or are in the dispute resolution process.

- 4.6.3 An up-to-date record of grievances related to the impacts of management activities is held, including:
- 1) Steps taken to resolve grievances;
  - 2) Outcomes of all dispute resolution processes, including fair compensation to local communities and individuals; and
  - 3) Unresolved disputes, the reasons they are not resolved, and how they will be resolved.

**Verifiers** (4.6.2 – 4.6.3): For non-SLIMFs, documented records; for SLIMFs, interviews.

- 4.6.4 Operations cease in areas while disputes exist of:

- 1) Substantial magnitude;
- 2) Substantial duration; or
- 3) Involving a significant number of interests.

**Guidance note:** Suspension of operations would take place in the case of very serious disputes.

**Verifiers:** Record of disputes; consultation with both parties.

**4.7 *The Organization\**, through *engagement\** with *local communities\**, shall identify sites which are of special cultural, ecological, economic, religious or spiritual significance, and for which these *local communities\** hold *legal\** or *customary rights\**. These sites shall be recognized by *The Organization\**, and their management and/or *protection\** shall be agreed through *engagement\** with these *local communities\**.**

- 4.7.1 Sites of special cultural, ecological, economic, religious or spiritual significance for which local communities hold legal or customary rights are identified through culturally appropriate engagement and are recognized by The Organization.

**Guidance note:** The following types of sites of special significance are commonly found within natural forests: 1) grave sites; 2) sacred and historical sites; 3) areas of significant scenic value; 4) rock art; 5) buildings protected under the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA); 6) historical routes. These include, but are not limited to, sites of significance to local communities.

**Verifiers:** Maps; records of community consultations.

- 4.7.2 Measures to protect such sites are agreed, documented and implemented through culturally appropriate engagement with local communities. When local communities determine that physical identification of sites in documentation or on maps would threaten the value or protection of the sites, then other means will be used.

**Verifiers:** Management prescriptions for sites of special interest.

- 4.7.3 Whenever sites of special cultural, ecological, economic, religious or spiritual significance are newly observed or discovered, management activities cease immediately in the vicinity until protective measures have been agreed to with the local communities, and as directed by local and national laws.

**Verifiers:** For non-SLIMFs, the procedure for actions to take when discovering new sites of potential significance to communities; for SLIMFs, the manager can explain what the procedure is for protecting new sites; groups schemes can have such a procedure as part of the group management system.

**4.8** *The Organization\* shall uphold\* the right of traditional peoples\* to protect\* and utilize their traditional knowledge\* and shall compensate them for the utilization of such knowledge and their intellectual property\*. A binding agreement\* as per Criterion\* 3.3 shall be concluded between The Organization\* and the traditional peoples\* for such utilization through Free, Prior and Informed Consent\* before utilization takes place, and shall be consistent with the protection\* of intellectual property\* rights.*

4.8.1 Traditional knowledge and intellectual property of traditional peoples are protected and are only used when the owners of that traditional knowledge and intellectual property have provided their Free, Prior and Informed Consent formalized through a binding agreement.

4.8.2 Traditional peoples are compensated according to the binding agreement reached through Free, Prior and Informed Consent for the use of traditional knowledge and intellectual property.

## PRINCIPLE\* 5: BENEFITS FROM THE FOREST\*

**The Organization\*** shall efficiently manage the range of multiple products and services of the **Management Unit\*** to maintain or enhance **long-term\* economic viability\*** and the range of social and environmental benefits.

**5.1** **The Organization\*** shall identify, produce, or enable the production of, diversified benefits and/or products, based on the range of resources and **ecosystem services\*** existing in the **Management Unit\*** in order to strengthen and diversify the local economy proportionate to the **scale\*** and **intensity\*** of management activities.

5.1.1 The range of resources and ecosystem services that could strengthen and diversify the local economy are identified.

5.1.2 Consistent with management objectives, the identified benefits and products are produced by The Organization and/or made available for others to produce, to strengthen and diversify the local economy.

**Guidance note:** The diversification of the operations may not always yield financial returns that seem to justify the effort; however, consideration should be given to the role that opening access to the diversity of forest products will bring to promoting community harmony.

**Verifiers** (5.1.1 – 5.1.2): The range of products and services available is being utilized where opportunities exist; evidence shows how opportunities are communicated to the community. This includes sharing information through word of mouth, notices to neighbours, agendas of liaison meetings with stakeholders, and publicity campaigns.

5.1.3 When The Organization uses FSC Ecosystem Services Claims, The Organization shall comply with applicable requirements in FSC-PRO-30-006.

**5.2** **The Organization\*** shall normally harvest products and services from the **Management Unit\*** at or below a level which can be permanently sustained.

**Guidance note:** The following may be considered as sources of Best Available Information for the management of Invasive Alien Plants (IAPs) in South Africa.

- General guideline document for Invasive Alien Plant control (General Invasive Alien Plant Control – Guideline Document)
- Guide on controlling Invasive Alien Plants (Controlling Invasive Alien Plants)
- Handbook for the management of Invasive Alien Plants (A practical guide to managing Invasive Alien Plants)
- Blog page on Invasive Alien Plants in South Africa (Invasive Alien Plants in South Africa: threats, laws and how to manage them)

Black Wattle (*Acacia mearnsii*) is the most frequently encountered and widespread of the IAPs. It is listed as a Category 2 Invasive Species, which requires that outside of demarcated areas it must be controlled or eradicated.

5.2.1 Timber harvesting levels for the duration of the management plan are based on an analysis of information on growth and yield on growth and yield, inventory of the forest, mortality rates, and maintenance of ecosystem functions.

**Verifiers:** Best Available Information, including data on IAP harvesting and regulatory requirements; analysis report on timber harvesting levels; for SLIMFs, interviews with managers.

**NOTE:** For IAPs, harvesting is 100% as stated by the law.

- 5.2.2 Based on the analysis of timber harvesting levels, a maximum allowable annual cut for timber is determined that does not exceed the harvest level that can be permanently sustained, including by ensuring that harvest rates do not exceed growth.
- 5.2.3 Actual annual harvest levels for timber are recorded and the harvest over a defined period does not exceed the allowable cut determined in 5.2.2 for the same defined period.

**Verifiers:** Management plan, inventory information, growth and yield models.

- 5.2.4 Commercial harvesting of non-timber forest products and/or the use of ecosystem services are at or below a level which can be permanently sustained, based on Best Available Information.

**Verifiers** (5.2.2 – 5.2.4): Growth rate assessments; sustainable harvest levels based on NTFP availability, management plan, inventory information, demand and supply chain; evidence of sustainable harvesting practices; interviews with operators/collectors; direct observation in the field to verify that there is no evidence of adverse environmental impacts.

**5.3 *The Organization\** shall demonstrate that the positive and negative externalities\* of operations are included in the management plan\*.**

- 5.3.1 Costs related to preventing, mitigating or compensating for negative social and environment impacts of management activities are quantified and documented in the management plan.
- 5.3.2 Benefits related to positive social and environment impacts of management activities are identified and included in the management plan.

**Verifiers** (5.3.1 – 5.3.2): For non-SLIMFs, the budget and management plan; for SLIMFs, budget estimates.

**5.4 *The Organization\** shall use local processing, local services, and local value adding to meet the requirements of *The Organization\** where these are available, proportionate to scale, intensity and risk\*. If these are not locally available, *The Organization\** shall make reasonable\* attempts to help establish these services.**

- 5.4.1 Where cost, quality and capacity of non-local and local options are at least equivalent, local goods, services, processing and value-added facilities are used.

**Verifiers:** The Organization's procurement processes.

- 5.4.2 Reasonable attempts are made to establish and encourage capacity where local goods, services, processing and value-added facilities are not available.

**Verifiers:** Evidence of efforts to encourage local businesses.

**5.5 *The Organization\** shall demonstrate through its planning and expenditures, proportionate to scale, intensity and risk\*, its commitment to long-term\* economic viability\*.**

- 5.5.1 Sufficient funds are allocated to implement the management plan in order to meet this standard and to ensure long-term economic viability.

**Verifiers:** For non-SLIMFs, the budget and management plan; for SLIMFs, interviews.

- 5.5.2 Expenditures and investments are made to implement the management plan in order to meet this standard and to ensure long-term economic viability.

**Verifiers:** For non-SLIMFs, budget and management plan and evidence of expenditure; for SLIMFs, interviews.

## PRINCIPLE\* 6: ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES\* AND IMPACTS

**The Organization\*** shall maintain, *conserve\** and/or *restore\** *ecosystem services\** and *environmental values\** of the *Management Unit\**, and shall avoid, repair or mitigate negative environmental impacts.

**6.1** **The Organization\*** shall assess *environmental values\** in the *Management Unit\** and those values outside the *Management Unit\** potentially affected by management activities. This assessment shall be undertaken with a level of detail, scale and frequency that is proportionate to the *scale, intensity and risk\** of management activities, and is sufficient for the purpose of deciding the necessary *conservation\** measures, and for detecting and monitoring possible negative impacts of those activities.

6.1.1 Best Available Information is used to identify environmental values within and, where potentially affected by management activities, outside of the Management Unit.

**Verifiers:** Interviews with forest managers, environmental NGOs and government conservation agencies, research briefs, licences and permits.

6.1.2 Assessments of environmental values are conducted with a level of detail and frequency so that:

- 1) Impacts of management activities on the identified environmental values can be assessed as per Criterion 6.2;
- 2) Risks to environmental values can be identified as per Criterion 6.2;
- 3) Necessary conservation measures to protect values can be identified as per Criterion 6.3; and,
- 4) Monitoring of impacts or environmental changes can be conducted as per Principle 8.

**Verifiers:** Interviews with forest managers, also testing their basic knowledge of environmental impact assessments (EIAs); records of assessments and decisions; environmental management plans.

**6.2** **Prior to the start of site-disturbing activities, The Organization\*** shall identify and assess the *scale, intensity and risk\** of potential impacts of management activities on the identified *environmental values\**.

**Guidance note:** For all operations or activities conducted within the Management Unit, it is essential to assess potential negative environmental impacts. Specifically, evaluations should consider whether the activity may lead to soil erosion and compaction, alterations in soil productivity, changes to invasive exotic, native or naturalized flora or fauna species abundance, diversity or distribution, habitat fragmentation, pesticide, lubricant, nutrient or fertilizer pollution (by runoff, spray drift or spillage) and sedimentation of watercourses or water bodies; changes to water flow and drainage regimes of watercourses, water bodies, visual changes to prominent landscapes. Working Instruction 01 regarding on-site processing plants must be used as a reference.

If the introduction of exotic fish is being considered (e.g. trout, bass, grass carp, etc.), permission from the relevant Provincial Authority is recommended, and an impact assessment is necessary (see 6.1.2). If exotic animal species are introduced for biological control purposes, see 6.8. In the case of the introduction of livestock (cattle, sheep, goats), access to wetlands and watercourses and other sensitive areas must be prohibited/strictly controlled. Where communities drive their cattle onto the Management Unit without permission, there must be evidence of action and communication with such communities to discourage this and/or to provide alternative grazing.

6.2.1 An environmental impact assessment identifies potential present and future impacts of management activities on environmental values, from the stand level to the landscape level.

**Verifiers:** Interviews with forest managers, also testing their basic knowledge of EIAs; records of assessments and decisions; environmental management plans.

**Verifiers:** Manager's knowledge of the site and impacts of operations; field observations; management plan; documented environmental statement or assessment where legally required.

6.2.2 The environmental impact assessment identifies and assesses the impacts of the management activities prior to the start of site-disturbing activities.

SLIMF 6.2.1 Prior to implementing site-disturbing activities, an assessment is conducted to identify possible adverse impacts on environmental values from planned management activities.

**Guidance note:** The EIA regulations under the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) contain listing notices, which are periodically updated. These regulations must be consulted before undertaking activities such as afforestation, construction of dams or weirs, sewage treatment plants, new roads, waste disposal sites and others, to see if the planned activity triggers the requirement of an EIA. Note that certain activities affecting fresh water also require a water use licence. This requirement is included in 6.7.

**Verifiers:** Interviews with forest managers, also testing their basic knowledge of EIAs; records of assessments and decisions; environmental management plans.

**6.3 *The Organization\* shall identify and implement effective actions to prevent negative impacts of management activities on the environmental values\*, and to mitigate and repair those that occur, proportionate to the scale, intensity and risk\* of these impacts.***

6.3.1 Management activities are planned and implemented to prevent negative impacts and to protect environmental values.

**Verifiers:** Interviews with forest managers, supervisors and workers, also testing their knowledge of minimum requirements; field observations and operational plans.

6.3.2 Management activities prevent negative impacts to environmental values.

**Verifiers:** Forest management monitoring reports – comparison of the quality of ongoing operations and associated record of past operations.

6.3.3 Where negative impacts to environmental values occur, measures are adopted to prevent further damage, and negative impacts are mitigated and/or repaired.

**Verifiers:** Records of operations, monitoring and corrective actions; for SLIMFs, interviews with the forest manager and workers and field observations.

6.4 *The Organization\* shall protect rare species\* and threatened species\* and their habitats\* in the Management Unit\* through conservation zones\*, Protection Areas\*, connectivity\* and/or (where necessary) other direct measures for their survival and viability. These measures shall be proportionate to the scale, intensity and risk\* of management activities and to the conservation\* status and ecological requirements of the rare and threatened species\*. The Organization\* shall take into account the geographic range and ecological requirements of rare and threatened species\* beyond the boundary of the Management Unit\*, when determining the measures to be taken inside the Management Unit\*.*

**Guidance note:** Best Available Information includes:

- National Vegetation Map from the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) for information on vegetation unit, species lists, geology and soils, climate,

important taxa, conservation status, etc.: [The VEGMAP Project, the National Vegetation Map and National Vegetation Database – SANBI](#).

- The SANBI Red List of Threatened Plants: [Threatened Species Programme | SANBI Red List of South African Plants](#).
- Systematic conservation plans for the province: conservation agencies can provide information on priority species depending on what habitats are present in the Management Unit.
- Data on biodiversity from conservation NGOs such as the Endangered Wildlife Trust: [Biodiversity data | Endangered Wildlife Trust](#).
- Group schemes could provide support to members by conducting landscape-level assessments and listing potential priority species in the management system.
- Statutory requirements and best practices for the management of plantation forestry: [Environmental Guidelines for Commercial Forestry Plantations in South Africa, Revision 5, 2024](#).
- Guiding framework on biodiversity and ecological infrastructure conservation through the promotion of sustainable development: [2023 Western Cape Biodiversity Spatial Plan and Guidelines](#).

6.4.1 The presence or likely presence of Threatened or Protected Species (TOPS) and their habitats, including CITES species and those listed on national, regional and local lists, occurring within and adjacent to the Management Unit, is assessed using Best Available Information, including Annex D.

**Guidance note:** Where survey data on TOPS are incomplete, it should be assumed that relevant species are present. The current TOPS list can be accessed on the South African Government website ([National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act: Lists of threatened and protected species: Draft](#)).

**Verifiers:** Evidence of surveys for TOPS species and/or published studies/reports/maps; relevant biodiversity conservation plans; interviews with forest managers; consultation with local experts and government agencies, including Annex D; for SLIMFs, manager's and workers' knowledge of rare, threatened and endangered species in the area; reports of training for forest workers on protection issues; field observations of nesting and feeding areas of rare, threatened and endangered species; reports of the conservation status of the Management Unit from other sources; for group schemes, guidance on identifying the presence or likely presence of threatened or protected species.

6.4.2 Potential impacts of management activities on rare and threatened species and their conservation status and habitats are identified, and management activities are modified to avoid negative impacts.

**Verifiers:** Operational plans and post-operations forest monitoring reports; evidence that the Best Available Information is being used for management of priority species and their habitats; documented evidence of collaboration with species protection programmes with respect to monitoring and management of priority species.

SLIMF 6.4.2 Management activities are designed or modified to avoid negative impacts on rare and threatened species and their habitats.

**Verifiers:** Evidence that the Best Available Information is being used for management of priority species and their habitats; interviews with forest managers, local experts and government agencies.

- 6.4.3 Rare and threatened species and their habitats are protected, including through the provision of conservation zones, protection areas, connectivity, and other direct means for their survival and viability, such as species' recovery programmes.

**Guidance note:** For large operations, the Grasslands Programme's Biodiversity Conservation Planning Tool can be used as a first-level assessment tool for prioritizing conservation zones. The National Freshwater Ecosystem Priority Areas (NFEPA) allows for the use of national criteria to identify FEPAs, which is available on the wetlands portal of South Africa ([www.wetlands.za.net](http://www.wetlands.za.net)). SLIMF operations need to be able to describe a rationale for prioritizing the conservation zones on the Management Unit.

**Verifiers:** Documented evidence of collaboration with species protection programmes with respect to monitoring and management of priority species; evidence that the Best Available Information is being used for management of priority species and their habitats; the representative ecosystems are mapped and designated as conservation zones; use of systematic conservation planning and condition as key information sources for prioritizing the conservation value of the conservation zones; for SLIMFs, prioritization can be based on other practical factors that may be relevant.

- 6.4.4 Hunting, fishing, trapping and collection of rare or threatened species is prevented.

**Verifiers:** Company policies and procedures; interviews; examination of permits if culling of TOPS has occurred.

**6.5 *The Organization\* shall identify and protect\* Representative Sample Areas\* of native ecosystems\* and/or restore\* them to more natural conditions\*. Where Representative Sample Areas\* do not exist or are insufficient, The Organization\* shall restore\* a proportion of the Management Unit\* to more natural conditions\*. The size of the areas and the measures taken for their protection\* or restoration\*, including within plantations, shall be proportionate to the conservation\* status and value of the ecosystems\* at the landscape\* level, and to the scale, intensity and risk\* of management activities.***

- 6.5.1 Best Available Information is used to identify native ecosystems that exist, or would exist under natural conditions, within the Management Unit.

**Guidance note:** The SANBI National Vegetation Map is available on the SANBI website. [National Vegetation Map Project \(VEGMAP\) - Biodiversity BGIS](#).

**Verifiers:** A map of the vegetation units according to the national vegetation map (Mucina and Rutherford, 2006); for SLIMFs, an interview with the forest manager to test their knowledge of the broad vegetation units to be able to apply best management practices.

6.5.2 Representative Sample Areas of native ecosystems are protected, where they exist.

**Verifiers:** Plans and maps showing Representative Sample Areas; interviews with forest managers, local experts and government agencies.

6.5.3 Where Representative Sample Areas do not exist, or where existing sample areas inadequately represent native ecosystems, or are otherwise insufficient, a proportion of the Management Unit is restored to more natural conditions.

**Verifiers:** Management plans and maps; field inspections.

6.5.4 The size of the Representative Sample Areas and/or restoration areas is proportionate to the conservation status and value of the ecosystems at the landscape level, the size of the Management Unit and the intensity of forest management.

**Verifiers:** Management plans and maps; field inspections.

6.5.5 Representative Sample Areas, in combination with other components of the conservation areas network, comprise 10% minimum of the area of the Management Unit.

**Verifiers:** Check maps and figures at the Management Unit level.

**6.6** ***The Organization\* shall effectively maintain the continued existence of naturally occurring native species\* and genotypes\*, and prevent losses of biological diversity\*, especially through habitat\* management in the Management Unit\*. The Organization\* shall demonstrate that effective measures are in place to manage and control hunting, fishing, trapping and collecting.***

6.6.1 Management activities maintain the plant communities and habitat features found within native ecosystems in which the Management Unit is located.

**Verifiers:** Field inspections; planned protection measures.

6.6.2 Where past management has eliminated plant communities or habitat features, management activities aimed at re-establishing such habitats are implemented.

**Verifiers:** Interviews with forest managers and local experts; plans, maps and field observations.

6.6.3 Management maintains, enhances, or restores habitat features associated with native ecosystems, to support the diversity of naturally occurring species and their genetic diversity.

**Verifiers:** Field inspections; planned protection measures.

6.6.4 Effective measures are taken to manage and control hunting, fishing, trapping and collecting activities to ensure that naturally occurring native species, their diversity within species and their natural distribution are maintained.

**Guidance note:** In South Africa, all such activities are regulated through the provincial conservation agencies. Certain species are protected and require permits. The legislation covering this consists of the various Nature Conservation ordinances in the provinces and the Threatened or Protected species regulations of the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (NEMBA) No. 10 of 2004.

**Verifiers:** Field observations for compliance with the provisional and national legislation for hunting, fishing, and trapping in the Management Unit.

**6.7** *The Organization\* shall protect\* or restore\* natural watercourses, water bodies\*, riparian zones\* and their connectivity\*. The Organization\* shall avoid negative impacts on water quality and quantity and mitigate and remedy those that occur.*

6.7.1 Protection measures are implemented to protect natural watercourses, water bodies, riparian zones and their connectivity, including water quantity and water quality.

**Verifiers:** Field inspection of wetlands and riparian areas; maps showing wetlands; documents or maps showing the wetlands and riparian areas, and how wetland systems are prioritized; prioritization includes catchment or regional considerations, e.g. use of national or provincial wetland datasets.

6.7.2 Where implemented protection measures do not protect watercourses, water bodies, riparian zones and their connectivity, and water quantity or water quality from impacts of forest management, restoration activities are implemented.

**Verifiers:** Field inspections, plans and maps; Forestry South Africa (FSA) Environmental Guidelines; WET-Rehab Methods national guidelines and methods for wetland rehabilitation.

6.7.3 Where natural watercourses, water bodies, riparian zones and their connectivity, and water quantity or water quality have been damaged by past activities on land and water by The Organization, restoration activities are implemented.

**Verifiers:** Interviews with forest managers, local experts; plans, maps and field observations.

6.7.4 Where continued degradation exists to watercourses, water bodies, water quantity and water quality caused by previous managers and the activities of third parties, measures are implemented that prevent or mitigate this degradation.

**Verifiers:** Interviews with forest managers and local experts; plans, maps and field observations.

**6.8** *The Organization\* shall manage the landscape\* in the Management Unit\* to maintain and/or restore\* a varying mosaic of species, sizes, ages, spatial scales\* and regeneration cycles appropriate for the landscape values\* in that region, and for enhancing environmental and economic resilience\*.*

6.8.1 A varying mosaic of species, sizes, ages, spatial scales, and regeneration cycles is maintained appropriate to the landscape.

**Verifiers:** Plans and maps; interviews with forest managers and local experts.

6.8.2 The mosaic of species, sizes, ages, spatial scales, and regeneration cycles is restored where it has not been maintained appropriate to the landscape.

**Verifiers:** Restoration plans and maps; interviews with forest managers and local experts.

**6.9** *The Organization\* shall not convert natural forest\* or High Conservation Value Areas\* to plantations\* or to non-forest land use\*, nor transform plantations\* on sites directly converted from natural forest\* to non-forest land use\*, except when the conversion\*:*

- a) *Affects a very limited portion\* of the Management Unit\*, and*
- b) *Will produce clear, substantial, additional, secure long-term conservation\* and social benefits in the Management Unit\*, and*
- c) *Does not damage or threaten High Conservation Values\*, nor any sites or resources necessary to maintain or enhance those High Conservation Values\*.*

6.9.1 There is no conversion of natural forest or High Conservation Value Areas to plantations, or to non-forest land use, nor transformation of plantations on sites directly converted from natural forest to non-forest land use, except when it:

- 1) Affects a very limited portion of the Management Unit, and
- 2) Will produce clear, substantial, additional, secure, long-term conservation and social benefits in the Management Unit; and
- 3) Does not damage or threaten High Conservation Values, nor any sites or resources necessary to maintain or enhance those High Conservation Values.

**Guidance note:** Clearing natural forests to establish plantations has never been authorized in South Africa. The 1998 National Forest Act prohibits the conversion of natural forests.

**Verifiers:** Field observations; best available GIS degradation/conversion data analysis.

**6.10** *Management Units\* containing plantations\* that were established on areas converted from natural forest\* between 1 December 1994 and 31 December 2020 shall not qualify for certification, except where:*

- a) *The conversion affected a very limited portion\* of the Management Unit\* and is producing clear, substantial, additional\*, secure long-term conservation\* benefits in the Management Unit\*, or*
- b) *The Organization\* which was directly\* or indirectly\* involved in the conversion demonstrates restitution\* of all social harms\* and proportionate\* remedy\* of environmental harms\* as specified in the applicable FSC Remedy Framework, or*
- c) *The Organization\* which was not involved in the conversion but has acquired Management Units\* where conversion has taken place demonstrates restitution\* of priority social harms\* and partial remedy\* of environmental harms\* as specified in the applicable FSC Remedy Framework.*

6.10.1 Based on Best Available Information, accurate data is compiled on all conversions between 1 December 1994 and 31 December 2020 within the Management Unit.

**Verifiers:** The Organization's conversion history documentation.

6.10.2 Areas converted from natural forest to plantations between 1 December 1994 and 31 December 2020 are not certified, except where:

- 1) The conversion affected a very limited portion of the Management Unit and is producing clear, substantial, additional, secure long-term conservation benefits in the Management Unit, or
- 2) The Organization which was directly or indirectly involved in the conversion demonstrates restitution of all social harms and proportionate remedy of environmental harms as specified in the applicable FSC Remedy Framework, or
- 3) The Organization which was not involved in the conversion but has acquired Management Units where conversion has taken place demonstrates restitution of

priority social harms and partial remedy of environmental harms as specified in the applicable FSC Remedy Framework, or

- 4) The Organization qualifies as a small-scale smallholder.

**Verifiers** (6.10.1 - 6.10.2): The Organization's conversion history documentation.

**6.11 Management Units\* shall not qualify for certification if they contain natural forests\* or High Conservation Value Areas\* converted after 31 December 2020, except where the conversion\*:**

- a) **Affected a very limited portion\* of the Management Unit\*, and**
- b) **Is producing clear, substantial, additional\*, secure long-term\* conservation\* and social benefits in the Management Unit\*, and**
- c) **Did not threaten High Conservation Values\*, nor any sites or resources necessary to maintain or enhance those High Conservation Values\*.**

6.11.1 Based on Best Available Information, accurate data is compiled on all conversions of natural forests and High Conservation Value Areas after 31 December 2020 within the Management Unit.

6.11.2 Areas where natural forests or High Conservation Value Areas have been converted after 31 December 2020 are not certified, except where the conversion:

- 1) Affected a very limited portion of the Management Unit, and
- 2) Is producing clear, substantial, additional, secure long-term conservation and social benefits in the Management Unit, and
- 3) Did not threaten High Conservation Values, nor any sites or resources necessary to maintain or enhance those High Conservation Values.

**Verifiers** (6.11.1 – 6.11.2): The Organization's conversion history documentation.

## PRINCIPLE\* 7: MANAGEMENT PLANNING

**The Organization\*** shall have a **management plan\*** consistent with its policies and **objectives\*** and proportionate to the **scale, intensity and risks\*** of its management activities. The **management plan\*** shall be implemented and kept up to date based on monitoring information in order to promote **adaptive management\***. The associated planning and procedural documentation shall be sufficient to guide staff, inform **affected stakeholders\*** and **interested stakeholders\*** and to justify management decisions.

**7.1** **The Organization\*** shall, proportionate to the **scale, intensity and risk\*** of its management activities, set policies (visions and values) and **objectives\*** for management, which are environmentally sound, socially beneficial and economically viable. Summaries of these policies and **objectives\*** shall be incorporated into the **management plan\***, and publicized.

7.1.1 Policies (vision and values) that contribute to meeting the requirements of this standard are defined.

**Verifiers:** Documented policies; for SLIMFs, interview on how the management plan ensures sustainable forestry; for group schemes, such policies can form part of the group management system.

7.1.2 Specific, operational management objectives that address the requirements of this standard are defined.

**Verifiers:** Management plan.

7.1.3 Summaries of the defined policies and management objectives are included in the management plan and publicized.

**Verifiers:** Published management plan summary.

**7.2** **The Organization\*** shall have and implement a **management plan\*** for the **Management Unit\*** which is fully consistent with the policies and **management objectives\*** as established according to **Criterion\*** 7.1. The **management plan\*** shall describe the natural resources that exist in the **Management Unit\*** and explain how the plan will meet the FSC certification requirements. The **management plan\*** shall cover **forest\*** management planning and social management planning proportionate to the **scale, intensity and risk\*** of the planned activities.

7.2.1 The management plan includes management actions, procedures, strategies and measures to achieve the management objectives.

**Verifiers:** Evidence gathered throughout the audit demonstrates that the management plan is implemented. The management planning system addresses elements listed in 7.2.1; for SLIMFs: Management Unit's map and sustainable harvesting plan; depending on the scale and intensity of the operation, and in order to cater for community forestry operations, elements of the management plan may be verbally expressed in interviews with the responsible people; for group schemes, define the elements of the management plan that require documentation.

7.2.2 The management plan addresses the elements listed in Annex E and is implemented.

**Verifiers:** The management planning system addresses elements listed in Annex E where relevant.

**7.3 The *management plan*\* shall include *verifiable targets*\* by which progress towards each of the prescribed *management objectives*\* can be assessed.**

7.3.1 Verifiable targets, and the frequency with which they are assessed, are established for monitoring the progress towards each management objective.

**Verifiers:** The existence of verifiable targets and the monitoring of progress reports.

**7.4 The *Organization*\* shall update and revise periodically the management planning and procedural documentation to incorporate the results of monitoring and evaluation, stakeholder *engagement*\* or new scientific and technical information, as well as to respond to changing environmental, social and economic circumstances.**

7.4.1 The management plan is revised and updated periodically consistent with Annex F to incorporate:

- 1) Monitoring results, including results of certification audits;
- 2) Evaluation results;
- 3) Stakeholder engagement results;
- 4) New scientific and technical information; and
- 5) Changing environmental, social, or economic circumstances.

**Verifiers:** Examination of the current and previous versions of the management plan to determine if/how the management plan has been updated.

**7.5 The *Organization*\* shall make *publicly available*\* a summary of the *management plan*\* free of charge. Excluding *confidential information*\*, other relevant components of the *management plan*\* shall be made available to *affected stakeholders*\* on request, and at cost of reproduction and handling.**

7.5.1 A summary of the management plan in a format comprehensible to stakeholders, including maps and excluding confidential information, is made publicly available at no cost.

**Verifiers:** Examination of the management plan public summary; evidence that stakeholders have been made aware of their rights to request the public summary.

7.5.2 Relevant components of the management plan, excluding confidential information, are available to affected stakeholders on request at the actual costs of reproduction and handling.

**Guidance note:** Confidential information could include data and content related to investment rights, intellectual property rights, client confidentiality, legal confidentiality, information that could put at risk the protection of certain species and habitats, and about sites of special cultural, ecological, economic, spiritual or religious significance to communities, as requested by the communities.

**Verifiers:** Evidence that stakeholders have been made aware of their rights to request elements of the management plan.

**7.6 The Organization\* shall, proportionate to the scale, intensity and risk\* of management activities, proactively and transparently engage affected stakeholders\* in its management planning and monitoring processes, and shall engage interested stakeholders\* on request.**

7.6.1 Culturally appropriate engagement is used to ensure that affected stakeholders are proactively and transparently engaged in the following processes:

- 1) Dispute resolution processes (Criterion 1.6, Criterion 2.6, Criterion 4.6);
- 2) Definition of living wages (Criterion 2.4);
- 3) Identification of rights (Criterion 3.1, Criterion 4.1), Indigenous cultural landscapes (Criterion 3.1), sites (Criterion 3.5, Criterion 4.7) and impacts (Criterion 4.5);
- 4) Local communities' socio-economic development activities (Criterion 4.4); and
- 5) High Conservation Value assessment, management and monitoring (Criterion 9.1, Criterion 9.2, Criterion 9.4).

**Verifiers:** Records of stakeholder engagements; High Conservation Value (HCV) assessment report; Collective Bargaining Agreement; interviews with stakeholders; evidence of ongoing communication. For Extended Public Works Programme (EPWP) workers, the National Minimum Wage Act 2018 (Act No. 9 of 2018) explicitly excludes EPWP workers due to the nature of the programme, which is designed to provide temporary, poverty-relief employment rather than permanent jobs.

7.6.2 Culturally appropriate engagement is used to:

- 1) Determine appropriate representatives and contact points (including, where appropriate, local institutions, organizations and authorities);
- 2) Determine mutually agreed communication channels allowing for information to flow in both directions;
- 3) Ensure all actors (women, youth, elderly, minorities) are represented and engaged equitably;
- 4) Ensure all meetings, all points discussed and all agreements reached are recorded;
- 5) Ensure the content of meeting records is approved; and
- 6) Ensure the results of all culturally appropriate engagement activities are shared with those involved.

**Verifiers:** Records of stakeholder engagement; interviews.

7.6.3 Affected rights holders and affected stakeholders are provided with an opportunity for culturally appropriate engagement in monitoring and planning processes of management activities that affect their interests.

**Verifiers:** Records of stakeholder engagement; interviews.

7.6.4 On request, interested stakeholders are provided with an opportunity for engagement in monitoring and planning processes of management activities that affect their interests.

**Verifiers:** Records of stakeholder requests; interviews.

## **PRINCIPLE\* 8: MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT**

**The Organization\*** shall demonstrate that progress towards achieving the *management objectives\**, the impacts of management activities and the condition of the *Management Unit\** are monitored and evaluated proportionate to the *scale, intensity and risk\** of management activities, in order to implement *adaptive management\**.

**8.1** **The Organization\*** shall monitor the implementation of its *Management Plan\**, including its policies and *management objectives\**, its progress with the activities planned, and the achievement of its *verifiable targets\**.

8.1.1 Procedures are documented and executed for monitoring the implementation of the management plan, including its policies and management objectives and achievement of verifiable targets.

**Verifiers:** Documented systems for checking, monitoring, evaluation and reporting.

**8.2** **The Organization\*** shall monitor and evaluate the environmental and social impacts of the activities carried out in the *Management Unit\**, and changes in its environmental condition.

8.2.1 The social and environmental impacts of management activities are monitored consistent with Annex G.

**Verifiers:** Environmental and social monitoring and evaluation reports.

8.2.2 Changes in environmental conditions are monitored consistent with Annex G.

**Verifiers:** Environmental and social monitoring and evaluation reports.

**8.3** **The Organization\*** shall analyse the results of monitoring and evaluation and feed the outcomes of this analysis back into the planning process.

8.3.1 Adaptive management procedures are implemented so that monitoring results feed into periodic updates to the planning process and the resulting management plan.

**Verifiers:** Check revised management documents.

8.3.2 If monitoring results show non-conformities with the FSC Standard, then management objectives, verifiable targets and/or management activities are revised.

**Verifiers:** Check revised management documents.

**8.4** **The Organization\*** shall make *publicly available\** a summary of the results of monitoring free of charge, excluding *confidential information\**.

8.4.1 A summary of the monitoring results consistent with Annex G, in a format comprehensible to stakeholders including maps and excluding confidential information, is made publicly available at no cost.

**Verifiers:** Published summary of the annual monitoring and evaluation report.

**8.5 The Organization\* shall have and implement a tracking and tracing system proportionate to the scale, intensity and risk\* of its management activities for demonstrating the source and volume, in proportion to projected output for each year, of all products from the Management Unit\* that are marketed as FSC certified.**

8.5.1 A system is implemented to track and trace all products that are marketed as FSC certified. As part of that:

- 1) *Transaction verification\** is supported by providing FSC transaction data, as requested by the certification body;
- 2) *Fibre testing\** is supported by surrendering samples and specimens of materials and information about species composition for verification, as requested by the certification body.

NTPF 8.5.1.1 It is demonstrated based on Best Available Information or pollen analysis that at least 50% of the collected pollen originates from within the FSC-certified Management Unit (MU) before the honey can be sold with the FSC claim: FSC 100%.

8.5.2 Information about all products sold is compiled and documented, including:

- 1) Common and scientific species name;
- 2) Product name or description;
- 3) Volume (or quantity) of product;
- 4) Information to trace the material to the source of origin logging block;
- 5) Logging date;
- 6) If basic processing activities take place in the forest, the date and volume produced; and
- 7) Whether or not the material was sold as FSC certified.

8.5.3 Sales invoices or similar documentation are kept for a minimum of five years for all products sold with an FSC claim, which identify, at a minimum, the following information:

- 1) Name and address of purchaser;
- 2) The date of sale;
- 3) Common and scientific species name;
- 4) Product description;
- 5) The volume (or quantity) sold;
- 6) Certificate code; and
- 7) The FSC Claim 'FSC 100%' identifying products sold as FSC certified.

**Verifiers** (8.5.1-8.5.3): Audit of sales invoices and related records.

## PRINCIPLE\* 9: HIGH CONSERVATION VALUES\*

The *Organization\** shall maintain and/or enhance the *High Conservation Values\** in the *Management Unit\** through applying the *precautionary approach\**.

9.1 *The Organization\**, through *engagement\** with *affected stakeholders\**, *interested stakeholders\** and other means and sources, shall assess and record the presence and status of the following *High Conservation Values\** in the *Management Unit\**, proportionate to the *scale, intensity and risk\** of impacts of management activities, and likelihood of the occurrence of the *High Conservation Values\**:

**HCV 1 – Species diversity.** Concentrations of *biological diversity\** including endemic species, and *rare\**, *threatened\** or endangered species that are *significant\** at global, regional or national levels.

**HCV 2 – Landscape\*-level ecosystems\* and mosaics.** *Intact Forest Landscapes\** and large *landscape\*-level ecosystems\** and *ecosystem\** mosaics that are *significant\** at global, regional or national levels, and that contain viable populations of the great majority of the naturally occurring species in natural patterns of distribution and abundance.

**HCV 3 – Ecosystems\* and habitats\*.** *Rare\**, *threatened\**, or endangered *ecosystems\**, *habitats\** or *refugia\**.

**HCV 4 – Critical\* ecosystem services\*.** Basic *ecosystem services\** in *critical\** situations, including *protection\** of water catchments and control of erosion of vulnerable soils and slopes.

**HCV 5 – Community needs.** Sites and resources fundamental for satisfying the basic necessities of *local communities\** or *Indigenous Peoples\** (for livelihoods, health, nutrition, water, etc.), identified through *engagement\** with these communities or *Indigenous Peoples\**.

**HCV 6 – Cultural values.** Sites, resources, *habitats\** and *landscapes\** of global or national cultural, archaeological or historical significance, and/or of *critical\** cultural, ecological, economic or religious/sacred importance for the traditional cultures of *local communities\** or *Indigenous Peoples\**, identified through *engagement\** with these *local communities\** or *Indigenous Peoples\**.

9.1.1 An assessment is completed using Best Available Information, including Annex J, High Conservation Value Framework, that records the location and status of High Conservation Value Categories 1-6, as defined in Criterion 9.1 and Annex J, the High Conservation Value Areas they rely upon, and their condition.

**Guidance note:** According to the National Forests Act No. 84 of 1998, all natural forests in South Africa are completely protected. Under Section 7 of the Act, it is illegal to cut, disturb, damage or destroy Indigenous trees or to remove them from an Indigenous forest unless the Minister has issued a licence or an exemption to do so. The Act further defines a 'natural' or 'indigenous' forest as a group of Indigenous trees whose crowns are contiguous. In this regard, all natural forests in South Africa may be classified as HCV forests without expert evaluation.

**Verifiers:** Interviews with forest managers and local experts; evidence of assessments or assessment reports.

9.1.2 This assessment includes identification of Intact Forest Landscapes, as of 1 January 2017.

9.1.3 The assessment uses results from culturally appropriate engagement with affected rights holders and affected and interested stakeholders with an interest in the conservation of the High Conservation Values.

**Verifiers:** Consultation with affected local experts and communities, stakeholders and/or government agencies or evidence of input by these agents; management plans or HCV assessment reports and maps.

**9.2** *The Organization\* shall develop effective strategies that maintain and/or enhance the identified High Conservation Values\*, through engagement\* with affected stakeholders\*, interested stakeholders\* and experts.*

9.2.1 Threats to High Conservation Values are identified using Best Available Information.

**Verifiers:** Management plans or HCV assessment reports and maps.

9.2.2 Management strategies and actions, including ones consistent with Annex I and Annex J, High Conservation Value Framework, are developed to maintain and/or enhance the identified High Conservation Values and to maintain associated High Conservation Value Areas prior to implementing potentially harmful management activities.

**Verifiers:** Management plans, HCV management and monitoring plans.

9.2.3 Affected rights holders, affected and interested stakeholders and experts are engaged in the development of management strategies and actions to maintain and/or enhance the identified High Conservation Values.

**Verifiers:** Consultation with affected local experts and communities, stakeholders and/or government agencies or evidence of input by these agents; management plans, HCV management and monitoring plans.

9.2.4 Management strategies are developed to protect core areas.

9.2.5 The vast majority of each Intact Forest Landscape is designated as a core area.

9.2.6 The strategies developed are effective to maintain and/or enhance the High Conservation Values.

**Verifiers:** HCV management, monitoring and evaluation reports.

9.2.7 Management strategies allow limited industrial activity within core areas only if all effects of industrial activity including fragmentation:

- 1) Are restricted to a very limited portion of the core area;
- 2) Do not reduce the core area below 50,000 ha; and
- 3) Will produce clear, substantial, additional, long-term conservation and social benefits.

**9.3** *The Organization\* shall implement strategies and actions that maintain and/or enhance the identified High Conservation Values\*. These strategies and actions shall implement the precautionary approach\* and be proportionate to the scale, intensity and risk\* of management activities.*

9.3.1 The High Conservation Values and the High Conservation Value Areas on which they depend are maintained and/or enhanced, including by implementing the strategies developed.

**Verifiers:** HCV management and monitoring/evaluation reports; interviews with forest managers and local experts; field observations.

9.3.2 The strategies and actions prevent damage and avoid risks to High Conservation Values, even when the scientific information is incomplete or inconclusive, and when the vulnerability and sensitivity of High Conservation Values are uncertain.

**Verifiers:** HCV assessment reports, Management plans, HCV management plans; HCV management and monitoring/evaluation reports; interviews with forest managers and local experts.

9.3.3 Core areas are protected consistent with Criterion 9.2.

9.3.4 Limited industrial activity in core areas is consistent with Indicator 9.2.7.

9.3.5 Activities that harm High Conservation Values cease immediately, and actions are taken to restore and protect the High Conservation Values.

**Verifiers:** HCV management and monitoring reports, corrective action reports; interviews with forest managers and local experts.

**9.4 The Organization\* shall demonstrate that periodic monitoring is carried out to assess changes in the status of High Conservation Values\*, and shall adapt its management strategies to ensure their effective protection\*. The monitoring shall be proportionate to the scale, intensity and risk\* of management activities, and shall include engagement\* with affected stakeholders\*, interested stakeholders\* and experts.**

9.4.1 A programme of periodic monitoring assesses:

- 1) The implementation of strategies;
- 2) The status of High Conservation Values, including High Conservation Value Areas on which they depend; and
- 3) The effectiveness of the management strategies and actions for the protection of High Conservation Values to fully maintain and/or enhance the High Conservation Values.

**Verifiers:** HCV monitoring and evaluation plans; HCV monitoring and evaluation reports; interviews with forest managers and local experts.

9.4.2 The monitoring programme includes engagement with affected rights holders, affected and interested stakeholders and experts.

**Verifiers:** Consultation with affected local experts and communities, stakeholders and/or government agencies or evidence of input by these agents; HCV monitoring and evaluation plans.

9.4.3 The monitoring programme has sufficient scope, detail and frequency to detect changes in High Conservation Values, relative to the initial assessment and status identified for each High Conservation Value.

**Verifiers:** Assess HCV monitoring and evaluation plans.

9.4.4 Management strategies and actions are adapted when monitoring or other new information show that these strategies and actions are insufficient to ensure the maintenance and/or enhancement of High Conservation Values.

**Verifiers:** HCV monitoring and evaluation plans and reports, corrective action plans and reports; interviews with forest managers and local experts.

## PRINCIPLE\* 10: IMPLEMENTATION OF MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Management activities conducted by or for *The Organization\** for the *Management Unit\** shall be selected and implemented consistent with *The Organization\**'s economic, environmental and social policies and *objectives\** and in compliance with the *Principles\** and *Criteria\** collectively.

**10.1** After harvest or in accordance with the *management plan\**, *The Organization\** shall, by natural or artificial regeneration methods, regenerate vegetation cover in a timely fashion to pre-harvesting or more *natural conditions\**.

10.1.1 Harvested sites are regenerated in a timely manner that:

- 1) Protects affected environmental values; and
- 2) Is suitable to recover overall pre-harvest or natural forest composition and structure.

**Verifiers:** Examination of the management plan, harvesting and planting records; field observations.

10.1.2 Regeneration activities are implemented in a manner that:

- 1) For harvest of existing plantations, regenerate the vegetation cover that existed prior to the harvest or to more natural conditions using ecologically well-adapted species;
- 2) For harvest of natural forests, regenerate to pre-harvest or to more natural conditions; or
- 3) For harvest of degraded natural forests, regenerate to more natural conditions.

**Verifiers:** Examination of the management plan; field observations.

**10.2** *The Organization* shall use species for regeneration that are ecologically well adapted to the site and to the *management objectives\**. *The Organization\** shall use *native species\** and *local genotypes\** for regeneration, unless there is clear and convincing justification for using others.

10.2.1 Species chosen for regeneration are ecologically well adapted to the site, are native species and are of local provenance, unless clear and convincing justification is provided for using non-local genotypes or non-native species.

**Verifiers:** Examination of the management plan; scientific evidence, and interviews with local experts.

10.2.2 Species chosen for regeneration are consistent with the regeneration objectives and with the management objectives.

**Verifiers:** Examination of the management plan; scientific evidence and interviews with local experts.

**10.3** *The Organization\** shall only use *alien species\** when knowledge and/or experience have shown that any invasive impacts can be controlled and effective mitigation measures are in place.

10.3.1 Alien species are used only when direct experience and/or the results of scientific research demonstrate that invasive impacts can be controlled.

**Verifiers:** Examination of the management plan; scientific evidence and interviews with local experts.

10.3.2 Alien species are used only when effective mitigation measures are in place to control their spread outside the area in which they are established.

**Verifiers:** Examination of the management plan and species management plan; interviews with local experts.

10.3.3 The spread of invasive species introduced by The Organization is controlled.

**Verifiers:** Examination of species monitoring reports; field observations.

10.3.4 Management activities are implemented, preferably in cooperation with separate regulatory bodies where these exist, with an aim to control the invasive impacts of alien species that were not introduced by The Organization.

**Verifiers:** Examination of species monitoring plans and reports; evidence of collaboration with regulatory bodies, where applicable.

**10.4 The Organization\* shall not use genetically modified organisms\* in the Management Unit\*.**

10.4.1 Genetically modified organisms are not used.

**Verifiers:** Examination of the management plan.

**10.5 The Organization\* shall use silvicultural\* practices that are ecologically appropriate for the vegetation, species, sites and management objectives\*.**

10.5.1 Silvicultural practices are implemented that are ecologically appropriate for the vegetation, species, sites and management objectives.

**Verifiers:** Documented policy and procedures; manager demonstrates understanding of risks of residue management practices, and of the practices required to avoid or minimise these risks; examine systems to categorize site sensitivity; inspection of post-harvest sites to verify compliance; for SLIMF, inspection of post-harvest sites, manager demonstrates understanding of risks of residue management practices; and of the practices required to avoid or minimize these risks; manager demonstrates knowledge regarding which sites are sensitive; field inspections of high risk sites to verify compliance; for group schemes, policies and procedures in group management system.

**10.6 The Organization\* shall minimize or avoid the use of fertilizers\*. When fertilizers\* are used, The Organization\* shall demonstrate that use is equally or more ecologically and economically beneficial than the use of silvicultural\* systems that do not require fertilizers, and prevent, mitigate, and/or repair damage to environmental values\*, including soils.**

10.6.1 The use of fertilizers is minimized or avoided.

**Verifiers:** Documented policy and procedures; interviews with forest managers.

10.6.2 When fertilizers are used, their ecological and economic benefits are equal to or higher than those of silvicultural systems that do not require fertilizers.

**Verifiers:** Documented policy and procedures; documented evidence.

10.6.3 When fertilizers are used, their types, rates, frequencies and site of application are documented.

**Verifiers:** Records of fertilizer use.

10.6.4 The Organization manages soil fertility by the natural nutrient cycling process within the Management Unit, and the use of artificial fertilizers is not allowed.

**Verifiers:** Records (e.g. records of chemical use in the forest management unit); field observations and interviews.

10.6.5 Damage to environmental values resulting from fertilizer use is mitigated or repaired.

**Verifiers:** Records (e.g. records of chemical use in the forest management unit); field observations and interviews.

**10.7** *The Organization\* shall use integrated pest management and silviculture\* systems which avoid, or aim at eliminating, the use of chemical pesticides\*. The Organization\* shall not use any chemical pesticides\* prohibited by FSC policy. When pesticides\* are used, The Organization\* shall prevent, mitigate, and/or repair damage to environmental values\* and human health.*

10.7.1 Integrated pest management, including selection of silviculture systems, is used to avoid, or aim to eliminate, the frequency, extent and amount of chemical pesticide applications, and result in non-use or overall reductions in applications.

**Verifiers:** Documented integrated pest management (IPM) programmes and evidence of implementation; for SLIMFs, description of what IPM approaches they employ; examination of records of pesticide use; field observations and interviews.

10.7.2 Prior to using chemical pesticides, the requirements of the Environmental and Social Risk Assessment framework for Organizations (clause 4.12 of FSC-POL-30-001 V3-0 FSC Pesticides Policy) are met.

**Verifiers:** Examination of the Environmental and Social Risk Assessments.

10.7.3 Affected rights holders and affected and interested stakeholders are provided with an opportunity for engagement in the development of the Environmental and Social Risk Assessment in a culturally appropriate manner.

**Verifiers:** Consultation with affected local experts and communities, stakeholders and/or government agencies or evidence of input by these agents; examination of ESRA reports.

10.7.4 The Environmental and Social Risk Assessment is reviewed and, if necessary, revised within the certificate cycle.

**Verifiers:** Examination of ESRA reports.

10.7.5 A decision process and rationale are in place to select the pest, weed or disease control option that demonstrates least social and environmental damages, more effectiveness and equal or greater social and environmental benefits.

**Verifiers:** Scientific evidence of pesticide selection; field observations and interviews.

10.7.6 Records of pesticide usage are maintained, including trade name, active ingredient, quantity of active ingredient used, period of use, number and frequency of applications, location and area of use and reason for use.

**Verifiers:** Examination of records of pesticide use; field observations, and interviews.

10.7.7 The use of pesticides complies with the ILO document 'Safety in the use of chemicals at work' regarding requirements for the transport, storage, handling, application and emergency procedures for cleanup following accidental spillages.

**Verifiers:** Examination of pesticides use policies and procedures; field observations and interviews.

10.7.8 If pesticides are used, application methods minimize quantities used, while achieving effective results, and provide effective protection to surrounding landscapes.

**Verifiers:** Integrated pest management; records of pesticide use; field observations and interviews; inspections of chemical storage areas.

10.7.9 Damage to environmental values and human health from pesticide use is prevented and mitigated or repaired where damage occurs.

**Verifiers:** Integrated pest management; records of pesticide use; field observations and interviews; inspections of chemical storage areas.

10.7.10 When pesticides are used:

- 1) The selected pesticide, application method, timing and pattern of use offers the least risk to humans and non-target species; and
- 2) Objective evidence demonstrates that the pesticide is the only effective, practical and cost-effective way to control the pest.

**Verifiers:** Integrated pest management; records of pesticide use; field observations and interviews; inspections of chemical storage areas.

**10.8 *The Organization\* shall minimize, monitor and strictly control the use of biological control agents\* in accordance with internationally accepted scientific protocols\*. When biological control agents\* are used, The Organization\* shall prevent, mitigate, and/or repair damage to environmental values\*.***

10.8.1 The use of biological control agents is minimized, monitored and controlled.

**Verifiers:** Records of use; integrated pest management; field observations and interviews.

10.8.2 Use of biological control agents complies with internationally accepted scientific protocols.

**Guidance note:** International protocols require:

- that the use of biological control agents is recorded, including type, quantity, date of deployment, location and reason for use.
- that damage to environmental values caused by the use of biocontrol agents is prevented and mitigated, or repaired where damage occurs.

**Verifiers:** Evidence confirming that the release of biocontrol agents was conducted by an authorized organization; NEMA requires EIAs before the release of biological agents.

10.8.3 The use of biological control agents is recorded including type, quantity, period, location and reason for use.

**Verifiers:** Records of use; integrated pest management; field observations and interviews.

10.8.4 Damage to environmental values caused by the use of biological control agents is prevented and mitigated or repaired where damage occurs.

**Verifiers:** Records of use; integrated pest management; field observations and interviews.

**10.9 *The Organization\* shall assess risks\* and implement activities that reduce potential negative impacts from natural hazards\* proportionate to scale, intensity, and risk\*.***

10.9.1 Potential negative impacts of natural hazards on infrastructure, forest resources and communities in the Management Unit are assessed.

**Verifiers:** Documented records of past natural hazards, which include the number of natural hazards, extent of damage, and examination of causes and analysis of trends; for SLIMFs, an interview to determine if the manager understands the causes and risks of past natural hazards; evidence of how the management plan has been modified as a result of analysis of past natural hazards.

10.9.2 Management activities mitigate these impacts.

SLIMF 10.9.2 Where capacity and resources allow, management activities mitigate potential unacceptable negative impacts of natural hazards. If capacity or resources do not allow, The Organization or manager communicates with the government or relevant local organizations about mitigation capacity and possibilities.

**Verifiers:** Documented natural hazards management strategy; for SLIMFs, interview on natural hazards management strategy.

10.9.3 The risk for management activities to increase the frequency, distribution or severity of natural hazards is identified for those hazards that may be influenced by management.

**Verifiers:** Documented natural hazards risk assessment and management strategy.

10.9.4 Management activities are modified and/or measures are developed and implemented that reduce the identified risks.

**Verifiers:** Documented procedures that cover rehabilitation after damage from uncontrolled fires; evidence of implementation and monitoring; for SLIMF, interview – actions taken to rehabilitate damage caused by wildfires and infield evidence, if possible.

**10.10 *The Organization\* shall manage infrastructural development, transport activities and silviculture\* so that water resources and soils are protected, and disturbance of and damage to rare and threatened species\*, habitats\*, ecosystems\* and landscape values\* are prevented, mitigated and/or repaired.***

10.10.1 Development, maintenance and use of infrastructure, as well as transport activities, are managed to protect environmental values identified in Criterion 6.1.

**Guidance note:** For a group scheme, guidelines can be included in the group certification scheme or refer to existing guidance. This guidance may cover at least the following aspects:

- Minimizing the road density, without compromising harvest and transport systems.
- Low-impact construction and maintenance techniques including the use of equipment and methods that minimize environmental impacts and the risk of sedimentation.
- The construction and upgrade of crossings to ensure stream flow and the passage of aquatic species, while preventing bank scouring and impoundments.
- The setback distances specified for wetlands, water bodies and watercourses in Criterion 6.7 apply to roads and other infrastructural developments.

**Verifiers:** Guidelines incorporating best practice to minimize environmental damage caused by the road network, including impacts resulting from road construction and maintenance; inspection of roads.

10.10.2 Silviculture activities are managed to ensure protection of the environmental values identified in Criterion 6.1.

**Verifiers:** Guidelines incorporating best practices, implemented for operations with a high risk of erosion to minimize and control induced erosion.

10.10.3 Disturbance or damages to watercourses, water bodies, soils, rare and threatened species, habitats, ecosystems and landscape values are prevented, mitigated and repaired in a timely manner, and management activities modified to prevent further damage.

**Verifiers:** Management plans; documented procedures; for SLIMFs, an interview with the manager to describe the steps taken to protect these values; field inspections.

**10.11 *The Organization\** shall manage activities associated with harvesting and extraction of timber and *non-timber forest products\** so that *environmental values\** are conserved, merchantable waste is reduced, and damage to other products and services is avoided.**

10.11.1 Harvesting and extraction practices for timber and non-timber forest products are implemented in a manner that conserves environmental values as identified in Criterion 6.1 and High Conservation Values identified in Criteria 9.1 and 9.2.

**Verifiers:** Documented operational guidelines; for SLIMFs, an interview with the manager to justify the choice of harvesting system; determination of harvesting systems in use; field inspections of harvesting sites.

10.11.2 Harvesting practices optimize the use of forest products and merchantable materials.

**Verifiers:** Examination of operational harvesting guidelines; examination of the management plan.

10.11.3 Sufficient amounts of dead and decaying biomass and forest structure are retained to conserve environmental values.

**Verifiers:** Field inspections of harvesting sites.

10.11.4 Harvesting practices avoid damage to standing residual trees, residual woody debris on the ground and other environmental values.

**Verifiers:** Field inspections of harvesting sites.

**10.12 *The Organization\** shall dispose of *waste materials\** in an environmentally appropriate manner.**

10.12.1 Collection, clean-up, transportation and disposal of all waste materials is done in an environmentally appropriate way that conserves environmental values as identified in Criterion 6.1.

**Verifiers:** Interview with the manager to determine if recycling options have been investigated and implemented.

## G ANNEXES

(Normative section)

### Annex A Minimum list of applicable laws, regulations and nationally ratified international treaties, conventions and agreements (Principle 1)

The following is the minimum list of applicable laws, regulations and nationally ratified international treaties, conventions and agreements in FSC-STD-60-004 International Generic Indicators.

**NOTE:** This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of applicable legislation. If any additional legislation applies, certificate holders (CHs) shall also comply with it.

Category	Law/Regulation
<b>1. Legal rights to harvest</b>	
<b>1.1 Land tenure and management rights</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Constitution of South Africa (1996)</li> <li>○ Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act (2003)</li> <li>○ Land reform policies for restitution, redistribution and tenure reform</li> <li>○ Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act (2003)</li> <li>○ KwaZulu-Natal Ingonyama Trust Act (Act No. 3KZ of 1994)</li> <li>○ Interim Protection of Informal Land Rights Act (Act No. 31 of 1996)</li> <li>○ Forest Sector Transformation Charter 2007</li> <li>○ Property rights, freehold land: Title Deeds, Lease Agreement</li> </ul>
<b>1.2 Concession licences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ National Forests Act (1998)</li> <li>○ Forestry Laws Amendment Act, 2005</li> <li>○ National Forest and Fire Laws Amendment Act, 2001</li> <li>○ Regulations under the National Forests Act</li> <li>○ Department of Trade and Industry regulations</li> <li>○ Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act (PRECCA), 2004</li> </ul>
<b>1.3 Management and harvesting planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ National Forests Act (1998)</li> <li>○ National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (NEMA)</li> <li>○ National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act 10 of 2004</li> <li>○ Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014</li> </ul>
<b>1.4 Harvesting permits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Section 23 of the National Forests Act</li> </ul>
<b>2. Taxes and fees</b>	
<b>2.1 Payment of royalties and harvesting fees</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Companies Act, 2008</li> <li>○ National Water Act (Act No. 36 of 1998)</li> </ul>

Category	Law/Regulation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Local Government: Municipal Property Rates Act (Act No. 6 of 2004)</li> </ul>
<b>2.2 Value added taxes and other sales taxes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ South African Revenue Service Act 1997 (Act No. 34 of 1997)</li> <li>○ Value-Added Tax Act (Act No. 89 of 1991)</li> <li>○ Tax Administration Act (Act No. 28 of 2011)</li> <li>○ Rates and Monetary Amounts and Amendment of Revenue Laws Act</li> <li>○ Taxation Laws Amendment Acts (Annual)</li> <li>○ Customs and Excise Act (Act No. 91 of 1964)</li> </ul>
<b>2.3 Income and profit taxes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Companies Act, 2008</li> <li>○ South African Revenue Service Act 1997 (Act No. 34 of 1997)</li> <li>○ Income Tax Act (Act No. 58 of 1962)</li> </ul>
<b>3. Timber harvesting activities</b>	
<b>3.1 Timber harvesting regulations</b>	<p>Any legal requirements for harvesting techniques and technology, including selective cutting, shelter wood regenerations, clear felling, transport of timber from the felling site, seasonal limitations, etc. Typically, this includes regulations on the size of felling areas, minimum age and/or diameter for felling activities, and elements that shall be preserved during felling, etc. Establishment of skidding or hauling trails, road construction, drainage systems and bridges etc. shall also be considered, as well as the planning and monitoring of harvesting activities. Any legally binding codes for harvesting practices shall be considered.</p>
<b>3.2 Protected sites and species</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ KwaZulu-Natal Amafa and Research Institute Act (Act No. 5 of 2018)</li> <li>○ National Heritage Resources Act (Act No. 25 of 1999)</li> <li>○ National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (Act No. 10 of 2004)</li> <li>○ NEMBA (No. 10 of 2004) – Threatened or Protected Species Regulations, 2013</li> </ul>
<b>3.3 Environmental requirements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ National Water Act (Act No. 36 of 1998)</li> <li>○ National Environmental Management Act (Act No. 107 of 1998)</li> <li>○ National Environmental Management Amendment Act (Act No. 56 of 2002)</li> <li>○ National Environmental Management Laws Second Amendment Act (Act No. 30 of 2013)</li> <li>○ National Environmental Management Laws Amendment Act (Act No. 25 of 2014)</li> <li>○ National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (Act No. 10 of 2004)</li> <li>○ National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act (Act No. 57 of 2003)</li> <li>○ National Environmental Management: Waste Act (Act No. 59 of 2008)</li> </ul>

Category	Law/Regulation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ National Environmental Management: Waste Amendment Act (Act No. 26 of 2014)</li> <li>○ National Environmental Management: Air Quality Act (Act No. 39 of 2004)</li> <li>○ National Environmental Management: Air Quality Amendment Act (Act No. 20 of 2014)</li> <li>○ NEMA EIA Regulation 2014 – Listing Notices</li> <li>○ NEMBA (No. 10 of 2004) Alien and Invasive Species Regulations, 2014</li> <li>○ National Veld and Forest Fire Act (Act No. 101 of 1998)</li> <li>○ Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act (Act No. 43 of 1983), as amended in 2001</li> <li>○ Agricultural Pests Act (Act No. 36 of 1983)</li> <li>○ Animal Disease Act (No. 35 of 1984)</li> <li>○ Fertilizers, Farm Feeds, Agricultural Remedies and Stock Remedies Act (No. 36 of 1947)</li> <li>○ Hazardous Substances Act (Act No. 15 of 1973)</li> <li>○ Environment Conservation Act (No. 73 of 1989)</li> </ul>
<b>3.4 Health and safety</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Occupational Health and Safety Act (Act No. 85 of 1993)</li> <li>○ National Health Act (Act No. 61 of 2003)</li> <li>○ Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act (Act No. 130 of 1993)</li> <li>○ National Road Traffic Act (Act No. 93 of 1996)</li> <li>○ Firearms Control Act (Act 60 of 2000)</li> <li>○ Water Services Act (Act No. 108 of 1997)</li> </ul>
<b>3.5 Legal employment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Constitution of South Africa (1996)</li> <li>○ Basic Conditions of Employment Act (No. 75 of 1997)</li> <li>○ Sectoral Determination 12: Forestry Sector</li> <li>○ Labour Relations Act (LRA), 1995 (Act No. 66 of 1995)</li> <li>○ Employment Equity Act, 1998 (Act No. 55 of 1998)</li> <li>○ Unemployment Insurance Act, 2001 (Act No. 63 of 2001)</li> </ul>
<b>4. Third parties' rights</b>	
<b>4.1 Customary rights</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ National Forests Act (Act No. 84 of 1998) Sections 19, 24 and 29</li> <li>○ National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act (Act No. 57 of 2003)</li> <li>○ Restitution of Land Rights Act (Act No. 22 of 1994)</li> <li>○ Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act (Act No. 41 of 2003)</li> <li>○ Participatory Forest Management (PFM) Framework from the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE)</li> </ul>

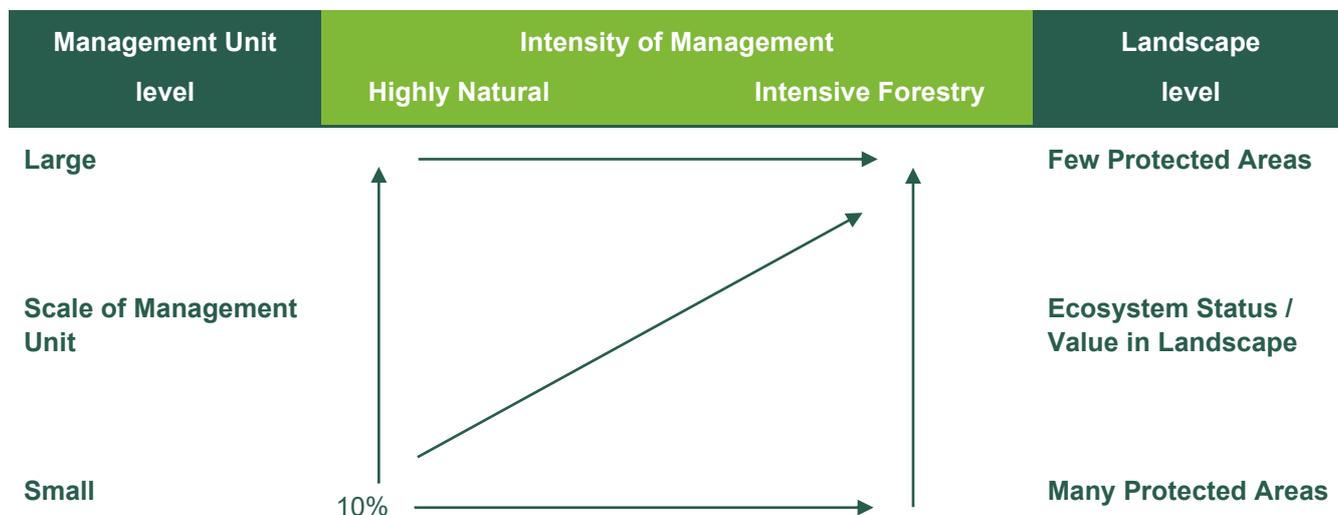
Category	Law/Regulation
<b>4.2 Free, Prior and Informed Consent</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ National Forests Act (Act No. 84 of 1998)</li> <li>○ Interim Protection of Informal Land Rights Act (IPILRA) (Act No. 31 of 1996)</li> <li>○ National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) No. 107 of 1998</li> <li>○ White Paper on Sustainable Forest Development (1996)</li> </ul>
<b>4.3 Indigenous Peoples' rights</b>	Legislation that regulates the rights of Indigenous Peoples as far as it is related to forestry activities. Possible aspects to consider are land tenure, and rights to use certain forest-related resources and practise traditional activities, which may involve forest lands.
<b>5. Trade and transport</b>	
<b>NOTE:</b> This section covers requirements for <i>forest*</i> management operations as well as processing and trade.	
<b>5.1 Classification of species, quantities, qualities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ National Environmental Management Act (NEMA)</li> <li>○ Nature Conservation Ordinances and Provincial Regulations</li> </ul>
<b>5.2 Trade and transport</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ National Forests Act (Act No. 84 of 1998)</li> <li>○ National Road Traffic Act (Act No. 93 of 1996)</li> </ul>
<b>5.3 Offshore trading and transfer pricing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ International Trade Administration Act (Act No. 71 of 2002)</li> <li>○ Currency and Exchanges Act (Act No. 9 of 1933)</li> <li>○ South African Revenue Service (SARS) Regulations</li> </ul>
<b>5.4 Custom regulations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Customs and Excise Act (Act No. 91 of 1964)</li> <li>○ Value-Added Tax Act (Act No. 89 of 1991)</li> <li>○ International Trade Administration Act (Act No. 71 of 2002)</li> </ul>
<b>5.5 CITES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (NEMBA), Act No. 10 of 2004</li> </ul>
<b>6. Due diligence / due care</b>	
<b>6.1 Due diligence / due care procedures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Companies Act (Act No. 71 of 2008)</li> <li>○ Customs and Excise Act (Act No. 91 of 1964)</li> <li>○ National Environmental Management Acts (NEMA and NEMWA)</li> <li>○ Financial Intelligence Centre Act (FICA)</li> </ul>
<b>7. Ecosystem Services</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) No. 107 of 1998</li> <li>○ National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (NEMBA) No. 10 of 2004</li> <li>○ National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act (Act No. 57 of 2003)</li> </ul>

## Annex B Training requirements for workers (Principle 2)

Workers shall be able to:

- 1) Implement forest activities to comply with applicable legal requirements (Criterion 1.5);
- 2) Understand the content, meaning and applicability of the eight ILO Core Labour Conventions (Criterion 2.1);
- 3) Recognize and report on instances of sexual harassment and gender discrimination (Criterion 2.2);
- 4) Safely handle and dispose of hazardous substances to ensure that use does not pose health risks (Criterion 2.3);
- 5) Carry out their responsibilities for particularly dangerous jobs or jobs entailing a special responsibility (Criterion 2.5);
- 6) Identify where Indigenous Peoples and local communities, including traditional peoples, have legal and customary rights to management activities (Criterion 3.2 and Criterion 4.2);
- 7) Identify and implement applicable elements of UNDRIP and ILO Convention 169 (Criterion 3.4);
- 8) Identify sites of special cultural, ecological, economic, religious or spiritual significance to Indigenous Peoples and implement the necessary measures to protect them before the start of forest management activities to avoid negative impacts (Criterion 3.5 and Criterion 4.7);
- 9) Carry out social, economic and environmental impact assessments and develop appropriate mitigation measures (Criterion 4.5);
- 10) Implement activities related to the maintenance and/or enhancement of ecosystem services, when FSC Ecosystem Services Claims are used (Criterion 5.1);
- 11) Handle, apply and store pesticides (Criterion 10.7); and
- 12) Implement procedures for cleaning up spills of waste materials (Criterion 10.12).

## Annex C Conservation Area Network conceptual diagram (Principle 6)



The diagram shows how the area of the Management Unit included in the Conservation Area Network is generally expected to increase from the 10% minimum as the size, intensity of management, and/or the status and value of ecosystems at the landscape level each increase. The arrows and their direction represent these increases.

The far-right column titled 'Ecosystems Status/Value in Landscape' signifies the extent to which native ecosystems are protected at the landscape level and the relative requirements for further protection in the Management Unit.

The far-left column titled 'Scale of Management Unit' shows that, as the Management Unit area increases, the Management Unit will itself be at the landscape level and so will be expected to have a Conservation Area Network containing functional examples of all of the naturally occurring ecosystems for that landscape.

## **Annex D List of rare and threatened species in the country or region (Principle 6)**

Under the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (NEMBA) No. 10 of 2004, a list of Threatened or Protected Species (TOPS) is regularly published in the Government Gazette. The most recent version of the list is produced and updated periodically by the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (List of terrestrial species and freshwater species that are regulations pertaining to threatened or protected or protected, and restricted activities that are exempted).

## Annex E Elements of the management plan (Principle 7)

- 1) The results of assessments, including:
  - i. Natural resources and environmental values, as identified in Principle 6 and Principle 9;
  - ii. Social, economic and cultural resources and condition, as identified in Principle 6, Principle 2 to Principle 5 and Principle 9;
  - iii. Intact Forest Landscapes and core areas, as identified in Principle 9;
  - iv. Indigenous cultural landscapes, as identified with affected rights holders in Principle 3 and Principle 9;
  - v. Major social and environmental risks in the area, as identified in Principle 6, Principle 2 to Principle 5 and Principle 9; and
  - vi. The maintenance and/or enhancement of ecosystem services for which promotional claims are made as identified in Criterion 5.1.
- 2) Programmes and activities regarding:
  - i. Workers' rights, occupational health and safety and gender equality, as identified in Principle 2;
  - ii. Indigenous Peoples, community relations, local economic and social development, as identified in Principle 3, Principle 4 and Principle 5;
  - iii. Stakeholder engagement and the resolution of disputes and grievances, as identified in Principle 1, Principle 2 and Principle 7;
  - iv. Planned management activities and timelines, silvicultural systems used, typical harvesting methods and equipment, as identified in Principle 10;
  - v. The rationale for harvesting rates of timber and other natural resources, as identified in Principle 5.
- 3) Measures to conserve and/or restore:
  - i. Rare and threatened species and habitats;
  - ii. Water bodies and riparian zones;
  - iii. Landscape connectivity, including wildlife corridors;
  - iv. Ecosystem services when FSC Ecosystem Services Claims are used, as identified in Criterion 5.1;
  - v. Representative Sample Areas, as identified in Principle 6; and
  - vi. High Conservation Values, as identified in Principle 9.
- 4) Measures to assess, prevent, and mitigate negative impacts of management activities on:
  - i. Environmental values, as identified in Principle 6 and Principle 9;
  - ii. Ecosystem services when FSC Ecosystem Services Claims are used, as identified in Criterion 5.1;
  - iii. Social values and Indigenous cultural landscapes, as identified in Principle 2 to Principle 5 and Principle 9; and
  - iv. Intact Forest Landscapes and core areas, as identified in Principle 9.

- 5) A description of the monitoring programme, as identified in Principle 8, including:
- i. Growth and yield, as identified in Principle 5;
  - ii. Ecosystem services when FSC Ecosystem Services Claims are used, as identified in Criterion 5.1;
  - iii. Environmental values, as identified in Principle 6;
  - iv. Operational impacts, as identified in Principle 10;
  - v. High Conservation Values, as identified in Principle 9;
  - vi. Monitoring systems based on stakeholder engagement planned or in place, as identified in Principle 2 to Principle 5 and Principle 7;
  - vii. Maps describing the natural resources and land use zoning on the Management Unit;
  - viii. Description of the methodology to assess and monitor any development and land use options allowed in Intact Forest Landscapes and core areas, including their effectiveness in implementing the precautionary approach;
  - ix. Description of the methodology to assess and monitor any development and land use options allowed in Indigenous cultural landscapes, including their effectiveness in implementing the precautionary approach; and
  - x. Global Forest Watch map, or more accurate national or regional map, describing the natural resources and land use zoning on the Management Unit, including the Intact Forest Landscapes core areas.

## Annex F Conceptual framework for planning and monitoring (Principle 7)

Sample Management Plan Document (Note: These will vary with SIR and jurisdiction)	Management Plan Revision Periodicity	Element Being Monitored (Partial List)	Monitoring Periodicity	Who Monitors This Element? (Note: These will vary with SIR and jurisdiction)	FSC Principle/ Criterion
<b>Site Plan (Harvest Plan)</b>	Annual	Creek crossings	When in the field and annually	Operational staff	P10
		Roads	When in the field and annually	Operational staff	P10
		Retention patches	Annually sample	Operational staff	P6, P10
		Rare threatened and endangered species	Annually	Consulting Biologist	P6
		Annual harvest levels	Annually	Woodlands Manager	C5.2
		Insect disease outbreaks	Annually, sample	Consulting Biologist/ Ministry of Forests	
<b>Budgeting</b>	Annual	Expenditures	Annually	Chief Financial Officer	P5
		Contribution to local economy	Quarterly	General Manager	P5
<b>Engagement Plan</b>	Annual	Employment statistics	Annually	General Manager	P3, P4
		Social Agreements	Annually, or as agreed in Engagement Plan	Social Coordinator	P3, P4

<b>Sample Management Plan Document</b> (Note: These will vary with SIR and jurisdiction)	<b>Management Plan Revision Periodicity</b>	<b>Element Being Monitored (Partial List)</b>	<b>Monitoring Periodicity</b>	<b>Who Monitors This Element?</b> (Note: These will vary with SIR and jurisdiction)	<b>FSC Principle/ Criterion</b>
		Grievances	Ongoing	Human Resources Manager	P2, P3, P4
<b>5-Year management plan</b>	5 years	Wildlife populations	To be determined	Ministry of Environment	P6
		Coarse Woody Debris	Annually	Ministry of Forests	P10
		Free growing/ regeneration	Annually, sample		
<b>Sustainable Forestry management plan</b>	10 years	Age class distribution Size class distribution	Ten years	Ministry of Environment	P6
		10-year Allowable Annual Cut	Annually, ten years	Ministry of Forests/ Woodlands Manager	C5.2
<b>Ecosystem Services Certification Document</b>	5 years	Prior to validation and verification	Prior to validation and verification	General Manager	FSC-PRO-30-006

## Annex G Monitoring requirements (Principle 8)

- 1) Monitoring in 8.2.1 is sufficient to identify and describe the environmental impacts of management activities, including, where applicable:
  - i. The results of regeneration activities (Criterion 10.1);
  - ii. The use of ecologically well adapted species for regeneration (Criterion 10.2);
  - iii. Invasiveness or other adverse impacts associated with any alien species within and outside the Management Unit (Criterion 10.3);
  - iv. The use of genetically modified organisms to confirm that they are not being used (Criterion 10.4);
  - v. The results of silvicultural activities (Criterion 10.5);
  - vi. Adverse impacts to environmental values from fertilizers (Criterion 10.6);
  - vii. Adverse impacts from the use of pesticides (Criterion 10.7);
  - viii. Adverse impacts from the use of biological control agents (Criterion 10.8);
  - ix. The impacts from natural hazards (Criterion 10.9);
  - x. The impacts of infrastructural development, transport activities and silviculture to rare and threatened species, habitats, ecosystems, landscape values, water and soils (Criterion 10.10);
  - xi. The impacts of harvesting and extraction of timber on non-timber forest products, environmental values, merchantable wood waste and other products and services (Criterion 10.11); and
  - xii. Environmentally appropriate disposal of waste materials (Criterion 10.12).
  
- 2) Monitoring in 8.2.1 is sufficient to identify and describe social impacts of management activities, including, where applicable:
  - i. Evidence of illegal or unauthorized activities (Criterion 1.4);
  - ii. Compliance with applicable laws, local laws, ratified international conventions and obligatory codes of practice (Criterion 1.5);
  - iii. Resolution of disputes and grievances (Criterion 1.6, Criterion 2.6 and Criterion 4.6);
  - iv. Programmes and activities regarding workers' rights (Criterion 2.1);
  - v. Gender equality, sexual harassment and gender discrimination (Criterion 2.2);
  - vi. Programmes and activities regarding occupational health and safety (Criterion 2.3);
  - vii. Payment of wages (Criterion 2.4);
  - viii. Workers' training (Criterion 2.5);
  - ix. Where pesticides are used, the health of workers exposed to pesticides (Criterion 2.5 and Criterion 10.7);
  - x. The identification of Indigenous Peoples and local communities and their legal and customary rights (Criterion 3.1 and Criterion 4.1);
  - xi. Full implementation of the terms in binding agreements (Criterion 3.2 and Criterion 4.2);
  - xii. Indigenous Peoples and community relations (Criterion 3.2, Criterion 3.3 and Criterion 4.2);
  - xiii. Protection of sites of special cultural, ecological, economic, religious or spiritual significance to Indigenous Peoples and local communities (Criterion 3.5 and Criterion 4.7);
  - xiv. The persistence of Indigenous cultural landscapes and associated values of significance to Indigenous Peoples (Criterion 3.1 and Criterion 3.5);

- xv. The use of traditional knowledge and intellectual property (Criterion 3.6 and Criterion 4.8);
  - xvi. Local economic and social development (Criterion 4.2, Criterion 4.3, Criterion 4.4 and Criterion 4.5);
  - xvii. The production of diversified benefits and/or products (Criterion 5.1);
  - xviii. The maintenance and/or enhancement of ecosystem services (Criterion 5.1);
  - xix. Activities to maintain or enhance ecosystem services (Criterion 5.1);
  - xx. Actual compared to projected annual harvests of timber and non-timber forest products (Criterion 5.2);
  - xxi. The use of local processing, local services and local value-added manufacturing (Criterion 5.4);
  - xxii. Long-term economic viability (Criterion 5.5); and
  - xxiii. High Conservation Values 5 and 6 identified in Criterion 9.1.
- 3) Monitoring procedures in 8.2.2 are sufficient to identify and describe changes in environmental conditions, including, where applicable:
- i. The maintenance and/or enhancement of ecosystem services (Criterion 5.2) (when The Organization uses FSC Ecosystem Services Claims);
  - ii. Environmental values and ecosystem functions including carbon sequestration and storage (Criterion 6.1), including the effectiveness of actions identified and implemented to prevent, mitigate and repair negative impacts to environmental values (Criterion 6.3);
  - iii. Rare and threatened species, and the effectiveness of actions implemented to protect them and their habitats (Criterion 6.4);
  - iv. Representative Sample Areas and the effectiveness of actions implemented to conserve and/or restore them (Criterion 6.5);
  - v. Naturally occurring native species and biological diversity and the effectiveness of actions implemented to conserve and/or restore them (Criterion 6.6);
  - vi. Watercourses, water bodies, water quantity and water quality and the effectiveness of actions implemented to conserve and/or restore them (Criterion 6.7);
  - vii. Landscape values and the effectiveness of actions implemented to maintain and/or restore them (Criterion 6.8);
  - viii. Conversion of natural forest to plantations or conversion to non-forest (Criterion 6.9);
  - ix. The status of plantations established after 1994 (Criterion 6.10); and
  - x. High Conservation Values 1 to 4 identified in Criterion 9.1 and the effectiveness of actions implemented to maintain and/or enhance them.

## **Annex H Instructions for Standard Developers to develop indicators for Intact Forest Landscape core areas (Principle 9)**

### **A. Threshold for vast majority**

The definition of vast majority is 80% of the total area of Intact Forest Landscapes within the Management Unit as of 1 January 2017. The vast majority also meets or exceeds the definition of Intact Forest Landscape.

The threshold for vast majority may be established below 80% providing it achieves the greatest amount of conservation gains based on national or eco-regional considerations and still meets or exceeds the definition of Intact Forest Landscape.

Thresholds above 80% shall be considered in nations and/or eco-regions where Intact Forest Landscapes are relatively rare and/or fragmented, and/or where large amounts of Intact Forest Landscapes have been lost since 2000.

In developing nationally or eco-regionally specific thresholds of vast majority, Standard Developers shall consider the following:

1. Evidence to demonstrate the relative abundance of Intact Forest Landscapes and the level of risk of degradation to Intact Forest Landscapes from human activities, including:
  - a. Relative scarcity of Intact Forest Landscapes nationally or eco-regionally. The more scarce Intact Forest Landscapes, then the higher the threshold for vast majority.
  - b. The degree to which national or eco-regional Intact Forest Landscapes have been degraded by human activities since 2000 and are therefore scarce, rare or fragmented. The quicker the degradation of Intact Forest Landscapes, then the higher the threshold for vast majority.
  - c. The types of human activities that have resulted in the degradation of Intact Forest Landscapes since 2000. The more damaging the human activities to the intactness of Intact Forest Landscapes, then the higher the threshold for vast majority.
  - d. The risk of damage to Intact Forest Landscapes from human activities. The greater the risk to Intact Forest Landscapes, then the higher the threshold for vast majority.
  - e. Amount and relative permanence of protection of Intact Forest Landscape core areas comparing different intensities of industrial activity. Protection should maintain or enhance the integrity and other ecological attributes of Intact Forest Landscape core areas. The more permanent the protection of Intact Forest Landscapes, then the lower the threshold for vast majority.
  - f. The nature and distribution of ecological values within and adjacent to Intact Forest Landscapes. The greater the concentration of these values within and adjacent to Intact Forest Landscapes, then the higher the threshold for vast majority.
  - g. The nature and distribution of cultural values and legal and customary rights within and adjacent to Intact Forest Landscapes.
  - h. The outcomes of culturally appropriate engagement with affected rights holders affected and interested stakeholders.

### **B. Developing Indicators for Assessing and Protecting Intact Forest Landscapes**

Standard Developers shall consider the following information when developing indicators for Criteria 9.1 and 9.2.

The outcome shall be nationally or eco-regionally appropriate requirements to identify, assess and protect the vast majority of Intact Forest Landscapes as core areas.

Core areas are intended to be protected from activities that impact their intactness, including commercial logging, mining, and the construction of roads, dams, and other infrastructure.

1. The indicators developed for the identification and designation of core areas shall:
  - a. Respect the right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent of affected rights holders (Criteria 3.1 and 4.1);
  - b. Ensure that the legal and customary rights of affected rights holders to use the core areas are upheld;
  - c. Ensure that core areas contain the most ecologically valuable, contiguous, and intact portions of the Intact Forest Landscapes;
  - d. Ensure that the shape of core areas is designed to maximize their interior habitats.
  - e. Ensure that core areas contain habitats for rare, threatened and endangered species and other wildlife that depend on large contiguous areas of unaltered forest;
  - f. Ensure that core areas maintain or restore connectivity between core areas both within and adjacent to the Management Unit; and
  - g. Ensure that core areas are not smaller than 50,000 ha.
2. The indicators developed for the protection of core areas shall ensure:
  - a. The legal and customary rights of affected rights holders to use the core areas are upheld;
  - b. Indigenous Peoples, traditional peoples and forest dependent communities are given priority to design and implement alternative management and conservation activities compatible with protection of core areas;
  - c. Prevention of illegal logging, windthrow, degradation, and other edge effect impacts within core areas;
  - d. Management of road construction and the intensity of other activities adjacent to core areas to prevent illegal logging, windthrow, degradation, and other edge effect impacts within core areas; and
  - e. Identification of appropriate buffer zone widths adjacent to core areas where road construction and other activities are managed to prevent edge effect impacts within the core areas.
3. The indicators developed for the protection of core areas shall ensure intactness of core areas, considering activities that impact intactness, including commercial logging, mining, and the construction of roads, dams, and other infrastructure. Examples of management that protects the intactness of core areas include conservation zones as well as areas that may or not have legal protection such as set asides, reserves, deferrals, community reserves, and Indigenous protected areas.
4. The indicators developed for Intact Forest Landscapes shall clarify that the portions of Intact Forest Landscapes not designated as core areas shall be managed to protect and/or maintain High Conservation Values Category 2.

## Annex I Strategies for maintaining High Conservation Values (Principle 9)

Strategies for maintaining High Conservation Values may not necessarily preclude harvesting. However, the only way to maintain some High Conservation Values will be through protection of the High Conservation Value Area that supports them.

- **HCV 1** – Protection zones, harvest prescriptions, and/or other strategies to protect threatened, endangered, endemic species, or other concentrations of biological diversity and the ecological communities and habitats upon which they depend, sufficient to prevent reductions in the extent, integrity, quality, and viability of the habitats and species occurrences. Where enhancement is identified as the objective, measures to develop, expand, and/or restore habitats for such species are in place.
- **HCV 2** – Strategies that fully maintain the extent and intactness of the forest ecosystems and the viability of their biodiversity concentrations, including plant and animal indicator species, keystone species, and/or guilds associated with large intact natural forest ecosystems. Examples include protection zones and set-aside areas, with any commercial activity in areas that are not set-aside being limited to low-intensity operations that fully maintain forest structure, composition, regeneration, and disturbance patterns at all times. Where enhancement is identified as the objective, measures to restore and reconnect forest ecosystems, their intactness, and habitats that support natural biological diversity are in place.
- **HCV 3** – Strategies that fully maintain the extent and integrity of rare or threatened ecosystems, habitats, or refugia. Where enhancement is identified as the objective, measures to restore and/or develop rare or threatened ecosystems, habitats, or refugia are in place.
- **HCV 4** – Strategies to protect any water catchments of importance to local communities located within or downstream of the Management Unit, and areas within the unit that are particularly unstable or susceptible to erosion. Examples may include protection zones, harvest prescriptions, chemical use restrictions, and/or prescriptions for road construction and maintenance, to protect water catchments and upstream and upslope areas. Where enhancement is identified as the objective, measures to restore water quality and quantity are in place. Where identified HCV 4 ecosystem services include climate regulation, strategies to maintain or enhance carbon sequestration and storage are in place.
- **HCV 5** – Strategies to protect the community's and/or Indigenous Peoples' needs in relation to the Management Unit are developed in cooperation with representatives and members of local communities and Indigenous Peoples.
- **HCV 6** – Strategies to protect the cultural values are developed in cooperation with representatives and members of local communities and Indigenous Peoples.

## Annex J High Conservation Values framework (Principle 9)

The objective of this High Conservation Value (HCV) Framework is to provide nationally specific interpretations of HCVs and Best Available Information for addressing HCVs.

This National HCV Framework is to be used by accredited Certification bodies and certificate holders.

The national HCV interpretations and Best Available Information provided in this Framework are not necessarily exhaustive; additional examples of HCV occurrences may exist and shall be identified at the forest management unit scale.

The national or regional interpretations of the HCV categories and elements apply to all certificate holders, wherever occurrences of those HCVs may exist. Conversely, the Best Available Information for addressing those national/regional HCV interpretations may vary, depending on whether the certificate holder is a SLIMF or non-SLIMF, as indicated in the Framework.

Specific sections of this Framework are also applicable to National and Centralized National Risk Assessments for Controlled Wood, and to Certification Bodies and Certificate Holders seeking certification under FSC-STD-30-010 and FSC-STD-40-005. The applicable sections are: The National or Regional HCV Interpretations and Best Available Information for each HCV category; the Best Available Information for Assessments for each HCV category.

### Overarching Best Available Information

The following tables show the types of overarching Best Available Information (BAI) that is applicable for assessments, strategies, and monitoring for all HCVs or specific categories of HCVs. The BAI applies to all Organizations that are not SLIMFs. For SLIMFs, the BAI applies where indicated. The purpose of listing overarching BAI here is to avoid having to list it repetitively in the following sections. BAI that is more specific to individual HCV Interpretations is included in the following sections.

Best Available Information for Identifying and Assessing National or Regional HCV Interpretations		SLIMF
<b>All HCV Categories, All Elements</b>	Data, facts, documents, expert opinions, and results of field surveys or consultations with stakeholders that are most credible, accurate, complete, and/or pertinent and that can be obtained through reasonable effort and cost, subject to the scale and intensity of the management activities and the precautionary approach.  High Conservation Value surveys of the Management Unit; relevant databases and maps; culturally appropriate engagement with Indigenous Peoples, affected rights holders, affected and interested stakeholders, and relevant local and regional experts; FSC Guidelines for the Implementation of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (2021); review of the results by knowledgeable expert(s) independent of The Organization.	Y
<b>HCV 2, Element 1, IFLs</b>	Global Forest Watch Intact Forest Landscapes maps (2017) <a href="http://www.globalforestwatch.org">www.globalforestwatch.org</a> , or other maps based on a more recent and accurate Intact Forest Landscapes inventory using a refined methodology.	Y

<b>Best Available Information for Identifying and Assessing National or Regional HCV Interpretations</b>		<b>SLIMF</b>
<b>HCV 5, Element 1, and HCV 6, Element 2, Values fundamental to local communities</b>	Culturally appropriate engagement with local communities is the primary BAI for these elements.	Y
<b>HCV 5, Element 2, and HCV 6, Element 3, Values fundamental to Indigenous Peoples</b>	Culturally appropriate engagement with Indigenous Peoples is the primary BAI for these elements.	Y
<b>Best Available Information for Developing Management Strategies for National or Regional HCV Interpretations</b>		<b>SLIMF</b>
<b>All HCV Categories, All Elements</b>	<p>Identification of threats, using: data, facts, documents, expert opinions, and results of field surveys or consultations with stakeholders that are most credible, accurate, complete, and/or pertinent and that can be obtained through reasonable effort and cost, subject to the scale and intensity of the management activities and the precautionary approach.</p> <p>Engagement with Indigenous Peoples, affected rights holders, affected and interested stakeholders, and experts.</p>	Y
<b>HCV 5, Element 1, and HCV 6, Element 2, Values fundamental to local communities</b>	Culturally appropriate engagement with local communities is the primary BAI for these elements. The 'fundamentality' and 'critical ... importance' of the resources should also be determined through engagement.	Y
<b>HCV 5, Element 2, and HCV 6, Element 3, Values fundamental to Indigenous Peoples</b>	Culturally appropriate engagement with Indigenous Peoples is the primary BAI for these elements. The 'fundamentality' and 'critical ... importance' of the resources should also be determined through engagement.	Y
<b>Best Available Information* for Monitoring National or Regional HCV Interpretations</b>		<b>SLIMF</b>
<b>All HCV Categories, All Elements</b>	BAI includes: engagement with rights holders, consistent with Criteria 3.5, 4.5 and 4.7; culturally appropriate engagement with Indigenous Peoples and affected and interested stakeholders; information on engaging with representatives of the Indigenous Peoples and/or local communities; monitoring conducted by the Indigenous Peoples and/or local communities; engagement with experts.	Y

**HCV 1 – Species diversity. Concentrations of biological diversity including endemic species, and rare, threatened or endangered species, that are significant at global, regional or national levels.**

All information in the following sections applies to all Organizations. The exception is BAI that is not shown as applicable to SLIMFs; however, the Interpretations, Strategies, and Assessment and Monitoring methods still apply. See also the Overarching BAI listed above.

**A. National or Regional Interpretations of HCV 1, for HCV Identification**

National or Regional Interpretations of HCV 1	Best Available Information (BAI) for identifying occurrences of the Interpretations	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
<b>Element 1: Concentrations of biological diversity that are significant at global, regional, or national levels</b>		
<p><b>Protected areas, including: National Parks, Nature Reserves, Special Nature Reserves, Mountain Catchment Areas, World Heritage Sites, Protected Environments, Forest Nature Reserves, Forest Wilderness Areas, and Provincial Reserves. (As per: SGS, 2022; others)</b></p>	<p>DFFE’s Biodiversity &amp; Conservation Branch (B&amp;C), South Africa Protected Areas Database (SAPAD), and South Africa Conservation Area Database (SACAD). See also Provincial conservation and environmental affairs departments. For mapped examples as of 2022, see DFFE (2022) (in References below).</p>	<p>N</p>
<p><b>Critical Biodiversity Areas (CBAs) and Ecological Support Areas (ESAs). (As per: Skowno, 2019; FSC, 2017)</b></p>	<p>Provincial conservation and environmental affairs departments.</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p><b>Pending further assessment: Municipal Reserves, Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCAs), and proposed protected areas. TFCAs include:  Ai- Ais/Richtersveld; Great Limpopo; Kgalagadi; Limpopo/Shashe; Maloti-Drakensberg; Lubombo.</b></p>	<p>For TFCAs, see SANParks and Peace Parks (see References). For other proposed protected areas, see: SANBI, the B&amp;C Branch of DFFE, and the National Protected Areas Expansion Strategy (as per: DFFE, 2018; SA, 2024; Appendices 4 and 5 of WFSP et al [2005] may also be helpful, where conditions have not changed).</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p><b>Pending further assessment: sacred forests and groves; other relatively intact occurrences of natural/indigenous forest, including but not limited to Northern Coastal, Mistbelt, Scarp, and Indian Ocean Coastal Forests; and occurrences of natural/indigenous forest in otherwise substantially disturbed landscapes. (As per: Sinthumule, et al, 2020; FSC, 2018b; Poulsen, 2020; Smith et al, 2017;</b></p>	<p>For sacred forests and groves: local communities and custodians of the sacred forests and groves. For other Interpretations, see the Overarching BAI.</p>	<p>Y</p>

National or Regional Interpretations of HCV 1	Best Available Information (BAI) for identifying occurrences of the Interpretations	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
Sinthumule, 2025; Berens et al, 2014)		
Pending further assessment, other relatively intact occurrences of native ecosystems in Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs).	For lists and maps, see Key Biodiversity Areas (in References).	Y
Migratory staging areas, breeding areas, hibernation areas, and other significant seasonal concentrations of species. Examples of areas with important migratory routes include the Gouritz Cluster Biosphere Reserve.	See the Overarching BAI. For the Gouritz Cluster, see UNESCO Biosphere Reserves (in References).	Y
<b>Element 2: Concentrations of endemic species that are significant at global, regional, or national levels</b>		
The Sneeuwberg Mountain Complex; the Barberton Centre of Plant Endemism; the Drakensberg Mountains. (As per: Clark et al, 2012; CEPF, 2010; WWF, no date; SA, 2014)	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
Pending further assessment, relatively undisturbed examples of: Succulent Karoo, Grassland, and fynbos biomes, and ecosystems in the Richtersveld region (for plants). (As per: Skowno, 2019)	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
Pending further assessment, other relatively intact occurrences of native ecosystems in Endemic Bird Areas (EBAs), i.e. South African Forests, Southeast African Coast, Lesotho Highlands, South African Grasslands, and Cape fynbos EBAs.	For lists and maps, see Endemic Bird Areas (in References).	Y
Other significant concentrations of endemic plant or animal species, e.g. populations of an endemic species that is vulnerable, endangered, critically endangered, or near threatened, and/or	Habitat assessments and field surveys. For lists of rare, threatened, and endangered species, see: IUCN Red List; EWT (no date); Lee et al (2025); SANBI (2024); and SANBI (no date) (see References). For examples of sites likely to support RTE species, see Provincial conservation and	Y (except for databases)

National or Regional Interpretations of HCV 1	Best Available Information (BAI) for identifying occurrences of the Interpretations	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
populations of multiple endemic species.	environmental affairs departments and their CBAs and ESAs (as per: SA, 2025). For databases with examples of occurrences of RTE plant species, consider SANBI POSA and iNaturalist (see References). For databases with examples of occurrences of RTE animal species, consider SANBI Advisor Animal Search (see References).	
(Note that areas listed at Element 1 may also be important to endemic species.)	N/A	N/A
<b>Element 3: Concentrations of rare, threatened, or endangered species that are significant at global, regional, or national levels</b>		
Sites with CITES listed animal or plant species.	CITES (see References).	Y
<b>Alliance for Zero Extinction (AZE) sites. As of 2019, sites included: Cedarberg-Koue Bokkeveld Complex; Table Mountain; Cape Whale Coast; Caledon Klein Swarberg; Woody Cape Section of Addo Elephant National Park; Waterberg System; Wolkberg Forest Belt; Selati Game Reserve North; Blyde River Canyon.</b>	For sites as of 2019, see GFW AZE Sites (in References). (Additional sites can be viewed at AZE Sites in References; however, they are extensive, and it is not clear if they are limited to RTE species that exist in only one or two relatively small sites.)	Y
<b>RTE species of special conservation concern, e.g. those recognized by: Protected Tree Species list; Champion Trees list; and provincial agencies.</b>	For protected trees, see: Protected Tree Species list (in References). For Champion Trees list, see DFFE. For other species, see Provincial conservation and environmental affairs departments. (As per: FSC, 2017a)	Y
<b>Pending further assessment: sacred forests and groves; rivers and estuaries; habitats for reptiles and amphibians in forest biomes; habitats for amphibians along the East coast of KwaZulu-Natal, on the Drakensberg foothills, and in the Cape on the Cape Peninsula, Cape Hangklip and Agulhas Plain; bird habitats in savannah, grassland, and Indian Coastal Belt biomes in Northeastern South Africa. (As per: Sinthumule, 2025; Skowno, 2019; SA, 2014)</b>	For sacred forests and groves: local communities and custodians of the sacred forests and groves. For the other Interpretations, see the Overarching BAI.	Y

National or Regional Interpretations of HCV 1	Best Available Information (BAI) for identifying occurrences of the Interpretations	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
<p>Other significant occurrences of terrestrial and freshwater plant or animal species listed by the IUCN Red List or national species lists as Vulnerable, Endangered, Critically Endangered, or Near Threatened or the equivalent, including occurrences of: any Critically Endangered species, more than 1% of a listed species' population, several or more listed species, and/or listed species in special ecological niches, e.g. wide-ranging carnivores, keystone species, umbrella species, species with very small populations or ranges.</p>	<p>Habitat assessments and field surveys. For lists of rare, threatened, and endangered species, see: IUCN Red List; EWT (no date); Lee et al (2025); SANBI (2024); and SANBI (no date) (see References). For examples of sites likely to support RTE species, see Provincial conservation and environmental affairs departments and their CBAs and ESAs (as per: SA, 2025). For databases with examples of occurrences of RTE plant species, consider SANBI POSA and iNaturalist (see References). For databases with examples of occurrences of RTE animal species, consider SANBI Advisor Animal Search (see References).</p>	<p>Y (except for databases)</p>

## B. Assessments for HCV 1

National or regional methodologies for assessing occurrences of the HCV 1 Interpretations	Best Available Information (BAI) for assessing occurrences	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
<p>For all HCV 1 Interpretations: identifying occurrences of the HCV 1 Interpretations listed above, along with any other HCV 1 occurrences, is the first, essential part of assessments.</p>	<p>See the BAI in Section A and the Overarching BAI, including re. engagement with Indigenous Peoples and rights holders, and stakeholders interested in HCV conservation.</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p>For all HCV 1 Interpretations: other assessment elements include identifying HCV Areas, the condition of the HCVs, and threats to the HCVs. Threats in natural/indigenous forest, savannah woodland, and some other ecosystems may include: invasive alien species (e.g. wattles, pines, eucalypts, and acacia); illegal or unsustainable harvest of fuelwood, bark, medicinal plants, bushmeat/wildlife, and building materials; poor fire management; unauthorized land clearance; climate change and desertification.</p> <p>(As per: DEFF, 2020; WFSP et al, 2005; FSC, 2018b; Skowno, 2018; DAFF, 2011)</p>	<p>See the BAI in Section A and the Overarching BAI, including re. engagement.</p>	<p>Y</p>

<b>National or regional methodologies for assessing occurrences of the HCV 1 Interpretations</b>	<b>Best Available Information (BAI) for assessing occurrences</b>	<b>BAI also applies to SLIMF?</b>
For protected areas: confirm whether policies and practices effectively protect the area and its HCVs.	See the Overarching BAI.	N
For KBAs and EBAs.	For summary descriptions of their values, see the factsheets at Key Biodiversity Areas and Endemic Bird Areas (in References).	Y
For natural/indigenous forest habitats and ecosystems, note that even small remnants can be valuable for wildlife species, especially in otherwise degraded landscapes. (As per: Berens et al, 2014; others)	N/A	N/A
For additional guidance in identifying and assessing HCV 1 that may exist in the Management Unit, consider FSC (2020a) and HCVN (2017) (Chapter 2, Best Practice Considerations for HCV Assessments, and Chapter 3.1, Identification of HCV 1).	N/A	N/A

### C. Strategies for Maintaining and Enhancing HCV 1

<b>National or regional strategies for maintaining and/or enhancing the HCV 1 Interpretations</b>	<b>Best Available Information (BAI) for management strategies</b>	<b>BAI also applies to SLIMF?</b>
For all HCV 1 Interpretations: see the strategies in Annex I.	See the Overarching BAI, including re. engagement with Indigenous Peoples, rights holders, stakeholders, and experts. Also consider relevant conservation plans, species recovery plans, and other published information.	Y
For all HCV 1 Interpretations: consider co-management with Indigenous Peoples and local communities, management that enables local communities to benefit from conservation, and that facilitates and rewards use of traditional knowledge.	See the Overarching BAI. For model programmes, consider the Biodiversity Stewardship Programme of Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife.	N
For protected areas: also develop and implement management and enforcement plans that were absent (e.g. Mountain	See the Overarching BAI.	N

National or regional strategies for maintaining and/or enhancing the HCV 1 Interpretations	Best Available Information (BAI) for management strategies	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
Catchment Areas); prevent unauthorized use; and consider supporting sustainable, value-added community NTFP harvest. (As per: Skowno et al, 2019; others)		
For sacred groves and forests: also recognize and support their protection, support the authority of their local custodians, and support initiatives for more formal protection. (As per: DEFF, 2020; Sinthumule, 2025; others)	N/A	N/A
For endemic and rare, threatened, or endangered wildlife species: also restrict hunting, except for sustainable levels of traditional harvest by local communities and Indigenous Peoples. Consult relevant Biodiversity Conservation/Management Plans.	See the Overarching BAI. For Biodiversity Conservation/ Management Plans, see SANBI and the B&C Branch of DFFE.	Y
Where fire is a threat, consider clearing of invasive alien plants, use of fire breaks and prescribed burns, and adoption of a fire management plan. (As per: DEFF, 2018; FSC, 2017)	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
Where invasive alien species are a threat, remove occurrences and restore native vegetation, and consider adopting a control plan. (As per: FSC, 2017)	See the Overarching BAI.	N
For additional guidance, consider: FSC (2020a), including re. engaging Indigenous Peoples and communities, and HCVN (2018) (e.g. Part 2), including re. the overall process for developing strategies.	N/A	N/A

#### D. Monitoring for HCV 1

National or regional methodologies for monitoring occurrences of the HCV 1 Interpretations	Best Available Information (BAI) for monitoring occurrences	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
For all HCV 1 Interpretations: monitoring that addresses Criterion 9.4 and its Indicators. Also consider monitoring for	See the Overarching BAI.	Y

National or regional methodologies for monitoring occurrences of the HCV 1 Interpretations	Best Available Information (BAI) for monitoring occurrences	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
changes in internal and external threats to the HCVs.		
For some HCV Interpretations and occurrences, direct indicators should be used, e.g. field surveys of flora and fauna, or surveillance with drones. For others, indirect indicators may be sufficient and more efficient, e.g. changes in the quantity and quality of habitats for RTE species.	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
Consider co-monitoring with local communities and Indigenous Peoples, including for monitoring of potential illegal or unauthorized activities. Information management systems like SMART may be helpful ( <a href="https://smartconservationtools.org/">https://smartconservationtools.org/</a> ).	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
For protected areas.	See the Biodiversity & Conservation Branch and the People and Parks Programme of the Environmental Programmes Branch of DFFE.	N
For additional guidance on monitoring programmes, consider: FSC (2020a) and HCVN (2018) (e.g. Part 3, the resources in Annex 1, and the example monitoring techniques in Annex 2). Lucey et al (2023) may also be helpful.	N/A	N/A

**HCV 2 – Landscape-level ecosystems and mosaics. Intact forest landscapes and large landscape-level ecosystems and ecosystem mosaics that are significant at global, regional or national levels, and that contain viable populations of the great majority of the naturally occurring species in natural patterns of distribution and abundance.**

All information in the following sections applies to all Organizations. The exception is BAI that is not shown as applicable to SLIMFs; however, the Interpretations, Strategies, and Assessment and Monitoring methods still apply. See also the Overarching BAI listed above.

**A. National or Regional Interpretations of HCV 2, for HCV Identification**

National or Regional Interpretations of HCV 2	Best Available Information (BAI) for identifying occurrences of the Interpretations	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
<b>Element 1: Intact forest landscapes</b>		
Not applicable. Intact Forest Landscapes as defined in the FSC International Generic Indicators and by Global Forest Watch are not present in South Africa.	N/A	N/A
<b>Element 2: Large landscape-level ecosystems that are significant at global, regional or national levels, and that contain viable populations of the great majority of the naturally occurring species in natural patterns of distribution and abundance</b>		
<b>Important wetlands, e.g. Ramsar sites and the iSimangaliso Wetland Park – Maputo National Park.</b>	For Ramsar sites, see References. For iSimangaliso, see World Heritage Sites (in References), and also protected areas at HCV 1. For wetlands datasets, see SANBI, and possibly also SANBI Wetlands (in References).	Y
<b>Pending further assessment, relatively intact occurrences of savannah woodland and other ecosystems that are larger than 20,000 ha.</b>	Field surveys; vegetation and ecosystem maps; information on anthropogenic disturbance levels above baselines of traditional indigenous/community management; SANBI. See also the Overarching BAI.	N
<b>Element 3: Ecosystem mosaics that are significant at global, regional or national levels, and that contain viable populations of the great majority of the naturally occurring species in natural patterns of distribution and abundance</b>		
<b>Priority wildlife and habitat connectivity corridors between protected areas and/or other HCV 1, HCV 2, or HCV 3 occurrences. Examples include: ecological linkage areas within TFCAs and proposed TFCAs; the proposed Greater Ukuwela Nature Reserve. Pending further assessment, other</b>	SANBI; regional conservation organizations. For linkage areas in TFCAs, see Peace Parks (in References) and SANParks. For the Greater Ukuwela Nature Reserve, see Wild Tomorrow (in References). For provincial bioregional plans and systematic	Y

National or Regional Interpretations of HCV 2	Best Available Information (BAI) for identifying occurrences of the Interpretations	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
<p>examples may include: areas identified in provincial bioregional plans and National Critical Biodiversity Areas; areas within priority forest clusters; areas important for migration of elephants and other wide-ranging species; conservation zones in plantation estates, depending on their configuration and location. (As per: Samways et al, 2010 and 2015; FSC, 2017; SA, 2025)</p>	<p>biodiversity plans, see provincial conservation and environmental affairs departments. For priority forest clusters, see Appendix 5 of DWAF (2005). For elephant migration areas, see Figure 2 of Purdon et al (2018).</p>	

## B. Assessments for HCV 2

National or regional methodologies for assessing occurrences of the HCV 2 Interpretations	Best Available Information (BAI) for assessing occurrences	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
<p>For all HCV 2: identifying occurrences of the HCV 2 Interpretations listed above, along with any other HCV 2 occurrences, is the first, essential part of assessments.</p>	<p>See the BAI in Section A and the Overarching BAI, including re. engagement with Indigenous Peoples and rights holders, and stakeholders interested in HCV conservation. Also consider HCV assessors with local experience.</p>	Y
<p>For all HCV 2: other assessment elements include identifying HCV Areas, the condition of the HCVs, and threats to the HCVs. Potential threats to large, relatively intact ecosystems may include conversion to intensive agriculture and other development. Potential threats to wildlife and habitat connectivity may include excessive or poorly placed fencing, construction of roads and other infrastructure.</p>	<p>See the BAI in Section A and the Overarching BAI, including re. engagement.</p>	Y
<p>For wildlife and migration corridors: note that some species are able to re-establish currently unused migration routes, when enabled. Note that establishing corridors may also benefit communities by reducing wildlife conflicts. (As per: Bartlam-Brooks, 2011; Augustin, 2019)</p>	N/A	N/A

National or regional methodologies for assessing occurrences of the HCV 2 Interpretations	Best Available Information (BAI) for assessing occurrences	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
For additional guidance in identifying and assessing HCV 2 that may exist in the management unit, see: FSC (2020a) and HCVN (2017) (Chapter 2, Best Practice Considerations for HCV Assessments, and Chapter 3.2, Identification of HCV 2).	N/A	N/A

### C. Strategies for Maintaining and Enhancing HCV 2

National or regional strategies for maintaining and/or enhancing the HCV 2 Interpretations	Best Available Information (BAI) for management strategies	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
For all HCV 2 Interpretations: see the strategies in Annex I.	See the Overarching BAI, including re. engagement with Indigenous Peoples, rights holders, stakeholders, and experts.	Y
For all HCV 2: also consider co-management with Indigenous Peoples and local communities, management that enables local communities to benefit from conservation, and that facilitates and rewards use of traditional knowledge.	See the Overarching BAI. For model programmes, consider the Biodiversity Stewardship programme of Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife.	Y
For large, relatively intact ecosystems: also restrict conversion to plantations, intensive agriculture, and industrial development. Manage for natural fire regimes where possible. Limit grazing, hunting, harvest of fuelwood, and other uses to levels that are sustainable and do not harm ecosystems and habitats.	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
For connectivity corridors: also maintain or restore natural vegetation, minimize new impediments to wildlife passage, and reduce existing impediments where practicable. Consider adopting measures to prevent the areas from becoming focal points for poaching.	For TFCAs and proposed TFCAs and Nature Reserves, see SANParks, Peace Parks Foundation, and Wild Tomorrow. For areas identified in provincial bioregional plans and National Critical Biodiversity Areas, see provincial conservation and environmental affairs departments. For elephants, see the Biodiversity Conservation Plans at SANBI, and possibly consider Purdon et al (2018). See also the Overarching BAI.	Y

National or regional strategies for maintaining and/or enhancing the HCV 2 Interpretations	Best Available Information (BAI) for management strategies	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
Where fire and/or invasive alien species are a threat, see the strategies at HCV 1.	N/A	N/A
For additional guidance, consider FSC (2020a), including re. engaging Indigenous Peoples and communities, and HCVN (2018) (e.g., Part 2), including with regard to the overall process for developing strategies.	N/A	N/A

#### D. Monitoring for HCV 2

National or regional methodologies for monitoring occurrences of the HCV 2 Interpretations	Best Available Information (BAI) for monitoring occurrences	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
For all HCV 2 Interpretations: monitoring that addresses Criterion 9.4 and its Indicators. Also consider monitoring for changes in internal and external threats to the HCVs.	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
For some HCV 2 occurrences, remote surveillance with drones or satellite imagery may be helpful. If satellite imagery is used, it should be of sufficient resolution to detect below-the-canopy conditions where relevant.	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
Consider co-monitoring with local communities and Indigenous Peoples (see HCV 1 for more detail).	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
For additional guidance on monitoring programmes, consider FSC (2020a) and HCVN (2018) (e.g. Part 3, the resources in Annex 1, and the example monitoring techniques in Annex 2).	N/A	N/A

### HCV 3 – Ecosystems and habitats. Rare, threatened, or endangered ecosystems, habitats or refugia.

All information in the following sections applies to all Organizations. The exception is BAI that is not shown as applicable to SLIMFs; however, the Interpretations, Strategies, and Assessment and Monitoring methods still apply. See also the Overarching BAI listed above.

#### A. National or Regional Interpretations of HCV 3, for HCV Identification

National or Regional Interpretations of HCV 3	Best Available Information (BAI) for identifying occurrences of the Interpretations	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
<b>Element 1: Rare, threatened, or endangered ecosystems</b>		
<p><b>Nationally-recognized threatened ecosystems, i.e.: Lowveld Riverine Forest ecosystem in the Forests biome; Maputaland Wooded Grassland ecosystem in Indian Ocean Coastal Belt biome; Muzi Palm Veld &amp; Wooded Grassland ecosystem in the Savanna Biome; Umtiza Forest Thicket and Buffels, Gouritz, Motherwell Karroid, and Umtiza Thicket ecosystems in the Albany Thicket biome; and some other ecosystems in the Azonal Vegetation, Desert, Fynbos, Grassland, Indian Ocean Coastal Belt, Savannah, and Succulent Karoo biomes. (As per: DFFE, 2022b)</b></p>	<p>Field surveys. For the complete list of ecosystems, see DFFE (2022b). For a map viewer, see SANBI Ecosystems (in References).</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p><b>All occurrences of natural/indigenous forest ecosystems, and any other Ecosystems of Special Concern. (Note that this likely includes all primary forests.) (As per: FSC, 2018b; Skowno, 2018; others)</b></p>	<p>Field surveys; SANBI. See also the Overarching BAI.</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p><b>Sand forest. (As per: Poulson, 2020)</b></p>	<p>Field surveys; SANBI. See also the Overarching BAI.</p>	<p>Y (field surveys)</p>
<p><b>Swamp forests and mangrove forests. (As per: Poulson, 2020)</b></p>	<p>Field surveys; SANBI. A coarse-scale map for mangroves is available at GFW Mangroves (in References).</p>	<p>Y (field surveys)</p>
<p><b>Rivers, natural wetlands, and riparian ecosystems. (See also HCV 2.) (As per: SANBI, 2025; Samways et al, 2016)</b></p>	<p>Field surveys. For rivers datasets, see the Department of Human Settlements, Water, and Sanitation. For wetlands datasets, see SANBI, and possibly also SANBI Wetlands (in References).</p>	<p>Y (field surveys)</p>

National or Regional Interpretations of HCV 3	Best Available Information (BAI) for identifying occurrences of the Interpretations	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
For wetlands field identification, see DWS (no date).		
<b>Element 2: Rare, threatened, or endangered habitats</b>		
Stands of natural/indigenous forest that are old-growth or 'relict' forest. Pending further assessment, also smaller occurrences of old Indigenous and woodland trees where they provide habitats for cavity nesters or other species that are RTE.	Field surveys. See also the Overarching BAI.	Y
Other habitats and habitat features that are vulnerable and/or important to HCV 1 biodiversity or species.	See the Interpretations for HCV 1. See also the Overarching BAI.	Y
(Note that RTE ecosystems listed above may also be RTE habitats.)	N/A	N/A
<b>Element 3: Refugia</b>		
Inselbergs and other isolated or inaccessible areas or features where significant human disturbance has been precluded, or that are especially resilient to climate change, enabling the survival of native biodiversity.	Field surveys. See the Overarching BAI.	Y
(Note that protected areas and areas important to migratory species may also be refugia; see HCV 1.)	N/A	N/A

## B. Assessments for HCV 3

National or regional methodologies for assessing occurrences of the HCV 3 Interpretations	Best Available Information (BAI) for assessing occurrences	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
For all HCV 3: identifying occurrences of the HCV 3 Interpretations listed above, along with any other HCV 3 occurrences, is the first, essential part of assessments.	See the BAI in Section A and the Overarching BAI, including re. engagement with Indigenous Peoples and rights holders, and stakeholders interested in HCV conservation. Also consider HCV assessors with local experience.	Y

National or regional methodologies for assessing occurrences of the HCV 3 Interpretations	Best Available Information (BAI) for assessing occurrences	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
<p>For all HCV 3: other assessment elements include identifying HCV Areas, the condition of the HCVs, and threats to the HCVs. Threats in riparian/gallery forests, grassland and savannah biomes, natural/indigenous forests. Some other ecosystems may include: water diversions; bush thickening; overgrazing and excessive burning; invasive alien species (e.g. wattles, pines, eucalypts, and acacia); illegal or unsustainable harvest of fuelwood, bark, and building materials; poor fire management; unauthorized land clearance; climate change and desertification. (As per: DEFF, 2020; WFSP et al, 2005; FSC, 2018b; Skowno, 2018; DAFF, 2011; Poulsen, 2020)</p>	<p>See the BAI in Section A and the Overarching BAI, including re. engagement.</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p>For additional guidance in identifying and assessing HCV 3 that may exist in the management unit, see FSC (2020a) and HCVN (2017) (Chapter 2, Best Practice Considerations for HCV Assessments, and Chapter 3.3, Identification of HCV 3).</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>

### C. Strategies for Maintaining and Enhancing HCV 3

National or regional strategies for maintaining and/or enhancing the HCV 3 Interpretations	Best Available Information (BAI) for management strategies	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
<p>For all HCV 3 Interpretations: see the strategies in Annex I.</p>	<p>See the Overarching BAI, including re. engagement with Indigenous Peoples, rights holders, stakeholders, and experts.</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p>For all HCV 3: consider co-management with Indigenous Peoples and local communities, management that enables local communities to benefit from conservation, and that facilitates and rewards use of traditional knowledge.</p>	<p>See the Overarching BAI.</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p>For rivers, wetlands, and riparian ecosystems: also remove invasive alien vegetation in riparian and headwater zones and restore native vegetation and</p>	<p>For model programmes and management recommendations, see: Working for Wetlands</p>	<p>Y</p>

National or regional strategies for maintaining and/or enhancing the HCV 3 Interpretations	Best Available Information (BAI) for management strategies	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
buffer zones. Where feasible, facilitate nature fire regimes. (As per: Samways et al, 2016; DFFE, 2014)	Programme of the Environmental Programmes Branch of DFFE. For wetland restoration, also consider Russell et al (2010). See also the Overarching BAI.	(except Russell et al [2010])
Where invasive alien species are a threat in other ecosystems and habitats: see the Strategies at HCV 1.	See the BAI for HCV 1.	Y
For additional guidance, consider FSC (2020a), including re. engaging Indigenous Peoples and communities, and HCVN (2018) (e.g., Part 2), including re. the overall process for developing strategies.	N/A	N/A

#### D. Monitoring for HCV 3

National or regional methodologies for monitoring occurrences of the HCV 3 Interpretations	Best Available Information (BAI) for monitoring occurrences	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
For all HCV 3 Interpretations: monitoring that addresses Criterion 9.4 and its Indicators. Also consider monitoring for changes in internal and external threats to the HCVs.	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
For some HCV Interpretations and occurrences, direct indicators should be used, e.g. field surveys of the extent and condition of ecosystems and habitat. For others, indirect indicators may be sufficient and more efficient, e.g. monitoring of indicator species.	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
Consider co-monitoring with local communities and Indigenous Peoples (see HCV 1 for more detail).	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
For additional guidance on monitoring programmes, consider FSC (2020a) and HCVN (2018) (e.g. Part 3, the resources in Annex 1 and the example monitoring techniques in Annex 2).	N/A	N/A

**HCV 4 – Critical ecosystem services. Basic ecosystem services in critical situations, including protection of water catchments and control of erosion of vulnerable soils and slopes.**

All information in the following sections applies to all Organizations. The exception is BAI that is not shown as applicable to SLIMFs; however, the Interpretations, Strategies, and Assessment and Monitoring methods still apply. See also the Overarching BAI listed above.

**A. National or Regional Interpretations of HCV 4, for HCV Identification**

National or Regional Interpretations of HCV 4	Best Available Information (BAI) for identifying occurrences of the Interpretations	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
<b>Element 1: Water catchments in critical situations</b>		
<p><b>Watersheds, wetlands, and aquifers that are sources of rivers, other water bodies, or groundwater. Examples include: Strategic Water Source Areas (SWSAs); Kruger to Canyons, Waterberg, and Marico Biosphere Reserves (for Ramsar sites and other important wetlands, see HCV 2). (Per SA, 2025; others)</b></p>	<p>For SWSAs and map layers, see SANBI SWSA (in References). For Biosphere Reserves, see UNESCO Biosphere Reserves (in References). For other wetlands, consider SANBI Wetlands (in References). See also the Overarching BAI.</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p><b>Watersheds, streams, rivers, wetlands, and other water sources relied upon by Indigenous Peoples or communities for drinking water, irrigation, or other daily uses, or that are otherwise a priority for water provisioning (see HCV 5). (As per: FSC, 2017; others)</b></p>	<p>See the BAI for HCV 5.</p>	<p>Y</p>
<b>Element 2: Control of erosion of vulnerable soils and slopes in critical situations</b>		
<p><b>Landslide-prone areas, especially those likely to affect populated areas or infrastructure.</b></p>	<p>Field observations; SANBI National Vegetation map; flood risk maps; communities and local authorities.</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p><b>Erosion-prone slopes, soils, and sites likely to affect water bodies and water quality. Examples include Miombo woodlands and slopes above water bodies. Pending further assessment, other examples include other savannah woodlands. (As per: FSC, 2017; WWF, 2021; DAFF, 2011)</b></p>	<p>Field observations; SANBI; National Vegetation map.</p>	<p>Y</p>

National or Regional Interpretations of HCV 4	Best Available Information (BAI) for identifying occurrences of the Interpretations	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
<b>Element 3: Other ecosystem services in critical situations:</b>		
Provision of food, water, and shelter to local communities or Indigenous Peoples (see HCV 5).	See the BAI for HCV 5.	Y
Natural fire barriers (e.g. some natural/indigenous forests) and semi-natural fire barriers in more disturbed landscapes, where important to protect other populated areas, infrastructure, or other HCVs. (As per: FSC, 2018b)	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
Savannah woodlands that are important for bees, other pollinators, or seed dispersers. (As per: FSC, 2019)	See the Overarching BAI.	N
As per the precautionary approach and pending further assessment, carbon storage in forest reserves, and in the Miombo woodlands and other savannah woodlands. (As per: FAO, 2021; DAFF, 2011)	See the Overarching BAI.	N
Low-impact tourism in locales where communities or Indigenous Peoples have few other opportunities for ecologically sustainable revenue generation.	See the Overarching BAI.	N
Recreational opportunities in parks and other public forests near urban centres.	See the Overarching BAI.	N
Pending further assessment, Critical Biodiversity Areas (CBAs) and Ecological Support Areas (ESAs) may also be important for ecosystem services (see HCV 1). (As per: SA, 2024b and 2025)	Provincial conservation and environmental affairs departments.	Y

## B. Assessments for HCV 4

National or regional methodologies for assessing occurrences of the HCV 4 Interpretations	Best Available Information (BAI) for assessing occurrences	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
For all HCV 4: identifying occurrences of the HCV 4 Interpretations listed above, along with any other HCV 4 occurrences, is the first, essential part of assessments.	See the BAI in Section A and the Overarching BAI, including re. engagement with Indigenous Peoples and rights holders, and stakeholders interested in HCV conservation.	Y
For all HCV 4: other assessment elements include identifying HCV Areas, the condition of the HCVs, and threats to the HCVs. Potential threats to water catchments and water bodies may include: invasive alien species (e.g. wattles, pines, eucalypts, and acacia); water diversions; poor fire management; climate change.	Environmental Programmes Branch of DFFE. See the BAI in Section A and the Overarching BAI, including re. engagement.	Y
For water catchments and other ecosystem services critical to local communities or Indigenous Peoples.	See the BAI for HCV 5.	Y
For various ecosystem services.	See the Overarching BAI. The FSC Ecosystem Services Procedure (2021b) may also be helpful in some situations.	Y
For additional guidance in identifying and assessing HCV 4 that may exist in the management unit, see FSC (2020a) and HCVN (2017) (Chapter 2, Best Practice Considerations for HCV Assessments, and Chapter 3.4, Identification of HCV 4).	N/A	N/A

## C. Strategies for Maintaining and Enhancing HCV 4

National or regional strategies for maintaining and/or enhancing the HCV 4 Interpretations	Best Available Information (BAI) for management strategies	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
For all HCV 4: see the strategies in Annex I.	See the Overarching BAI, including re. engagement with Indigenous Peoples, rights holders, stakeholders, and experts. For additional considerations, see FSC	Y

National or regional strategies for maintaining and/or enhancing the HCV 4 Interpretations	Best Available Information (BAI) for management strategies	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
	(2020a) and HCVN (2018) (e.g. Part 2, including section 2.3.4).	
For water catchments and water bodies.	For model programmes and management recommendations, see: Environment & Rural Solutions and the Umzimvubu Catchment Partnership; WWF South America's Water Balance Programme. See also the BAI for strategies for rivers, wetlands, and riparian ecosystems at HCV 3.	Y
Where water catchments and water bodies are threatened by alien invasive species: see the strategies for rivers, wetlands, and riparian ecosystems at HCV 3.	See the preceding BAI.	Y
For additional guidance, consider FSC (2020a), including re. engaging Indigenous Peoples and communities, and HCVN (2018) (e.g. Part 2), including re. the overall process for developing strategies.	N/A	N/A

#### D. Monitoring for HCV 4

National or regional methodologies for monitoring occurrences of the HCV 4 Interpretations	Best Available Information (BAI) for monitoring occurrences	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
For all HCV 4 Interpretations: monitoring that addresses Criterion 9.4 and its Indicators. Also consider monitoring for changes in internal and external threats to the HCVs.	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
For water quality and quantity, soils, and other ecosystem services: see Annex B of FSC (2025) for basic factors to consider monitoring.	N/A	N/A
For additional guidance on monitoring programmes, consider FSC (2020a) and HCVN (2018) (e.g. Part 3, the resources in	N/A	N/A

**National or regional methodologies for monitoring occurrences of the HCV 4 Interpretations**

**Best Available Information (BAI) for monitoring occurrences**

**BAI also applies to SLIMF?**

**Annex 1, and the example monitoring techniques in Annex 2).**

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**HCV 5 – Community needs. Sites and resources fundamental for satisfying the basic necessities of local communities or Indigenous Peoples (for livelihoods, health, nutrition, water, etc.), identified through engagement with these communities or Indigenous Peoples.**

All information in the following sections applies to all Organizations. The exception is BAI that is not shown as applicable to SLIMFs; however, the Interpretations, Strategies, and Assessment and Monitoring methods still apply. See also the Overarching BAI listed above.

**A. National or Regional Interpretations of HCV 5, for HCV Identification**

National or Regional Interpretations of HCV 5	Best Available Information (BAI) for identifying occurrences of the Interpretations	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
<b>Element 1: Sites and resources fundamental for satisfying the basic necessities of local communities (for livelihoods, health, nutrition, water, etc.)</b>		
<b>Watersheds, rivers, streams, and other water sources relied upon for drinking, other daily use, or irrigation.</b>	Culturally appropriate engagement with the local communities.	Y
<b>Hunting grounds, fisheries, grazing areas and fodder, plants and growing areas for subsistence or traditional medicine, plant habitats for edible insects, and trees for beehives and honey production, fuelwood, traditional fencing, and other traditional building or craft materials. Examples include Mopane trees, including as fodder for Mopane worms. (Not inclusive of poaching, harvest, or grazing that is unsustainable or harms RTEs or other HCVs.) (As per: DeCauwer, 2018; Skowno, 2018; DAFF, 2011; Samways et al, 2016)</b>	Culturally appropriate engagement with the local communities.	Y
<b>NTFP cultivation and/or harvest that is sustainable, does not harm RTEs or other HCVs, and that supports livelihoods in communities with few other opportunities.</b>	Culturally appropriate engagement with the local communities.	Y
<b>Other sites and resources from which local communities satisfy basic needs.</b>	Culturally appropriate engagement with the local communities.	Y
<b>For all HCV Interpretations.</b>	Supplementary BAI may include: databases and maps; community development organizations and professionals; and sociologists	N

National or Regional Interpretations of HCV 5	Best Available Information (BAI) for identifying occurrences of the Interpretations	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
and other experts. See also the Overarching BAI.		
<b>Element 2: Sites and resources fundamental for satisfying the basic necessities of Indigenous Peoples (for livelihoods, health, nutrition, water, etc.)</b>		
<b>Watersheds, rivers, streams, and other water sources relied upon for drinking, other daily use, or irrigation.</b>	Culturally appropriate engagement with the Indigenous Peoples.	Y
<b>Hunting grounds and wildlife; foraging sites and trees and shrubs providing fruits, nuts, berries, roots, fuelwood, and bark. (As per: FSC, 2018b; IWGIA, 2023)</b>	Culturally appropriate engagement with the Indigenous Peoples.	Y
<b>Grazing areas for subsistence. (As per: IWGIA, 2023)</b>	Culturally appropriate engagement with the Indigenous Peoples.	Y
<b>Other sites and resources used by Indigenous Peoples to satisfy basic, traditional needs.</b>	Culturally appropriate engagement with the Indigenous Peoples.	Y
<b>For all HCV Interpretations.</b>	Supplementary BAI may include: databases and maps; organizations that represent or provide services for Indigenous Peoples; and anthropologists and other experts. See also the Overarching BAI.	N

## B. Assessments for HCV 5

National or regional methodologies for assessing occurrences of the HCV 5 Interpretations	Best Available Information (BAI) for assessing occurrences	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
<b>For all HCV 5: identifying occurrences of the HCV 5 Interpretations listed above, along with any other HCV 5 occurrences, is the first, essential part of assessments.</b>	Culturally appropriate engagement with local communities and Indigenous Peoples is the primary BAI. For supplementary BAI, see Section A and the Overarching BAI.	Y
<b>For all HCV 5: other assessment elements include engaging with stakeholders interested in HCV conservation, and identifying HCV Areas, the condition of the HCVs, and</b>	Culturally appropriate engagement with local communities and Indigenous Peoples is the primary BAI. For	Y

National or regional methodologies for assessing occurrences of the HCV 5 Interpretations	Best Available Information (BAI) for assessing occurrences	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
threats to the HCVs. For potential threats to water sources, also consider the threats listed at HCV 4.	supplementary BAI, see Section A and the Overarching BAI.	
For all HCV 5: consider conducting participatory mapping with the local communities or Indigenous Peoples.	The local communities and Indigenous Peoples.	Y
Consider whether specific levels and practices of hunting, fishing, fuelwood harvest, and other forest utilization are sustaining the resource, and also avoiding harm to biodiversity and other HCVs. (As per: Skowno, 2018; others)	See the Overarching BAI. For medicinal plants and botanicals, consider information from the Botanical Society of South Africa, BSSA (2024), and SANBI's Biodiversity Economy Project.	Y
For Indigenous Peoples' resources: in addition to currently used sites, assessments may need to consider sites that were important prior to dislocations. (As per: IWGIA, 2023 and 2025)	The Indigenous Peoples; organizations that represent Indigenous Peoples.	Y (Indigenous Peoples)
For additional guidance in identifying and assessing HCV 5, see FSC (2020a) and HCVN (2017) (Chapter 2, Best Practice Considerations for HCV Assessments, and Chapter 3.5, Identification of HCV 5).	N/A	N/A

### C. Strategies for Maintaining and Enhancing HCV 5

National or regional strategies for maintaining and/or enhancing the HCV 5 Interpretations:	Best Available Information (BAI) for management strategies	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
For all HCV 5 Interpretations: see the strategies in Annex I.	Culturally appropriate engagement with local communities and Indigenous Peoples is the primary BAI. For supplementary BAI, see Section A and the Overarching BAI.	Y
Where harvest of fuelwood, bark, NTFPs, or other resources is unsustainable or harms other HCVs, work with local communities to support access to alternative fibre and energy sources, e.g.	See the Overarching BAI.	N

National or regional strategies for maintaining and/or enhancing the HCV 5 Interpretations:	Best Available Information (BAI) for management strategies	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
community woodlots, more efficient wood stoves, rural electrification.		
For additional guidance, consider FSC (2020a), including re. engaging Indigenous Peoples and communities, and HCVN (2018) (e.g. Part 2).	N/A	N/A

#### D. Monitoring for HCV 5

National or regional methodologies for monitoring occurrences of the HCV 5 Interpretations	Best Available Information (BAI) for monitoring occurrences	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
For all HCV 5 Interpretations: monitoring that addresses Criterion 9.4 and its Indicators. Also consider monitoring for changes in internal and external threats to the HCVs.	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
For all HCV 5 Interpretations: monitoring conducted by or with the local communities or Indigenous Peoples, or using methodologies developed in cooperation with them through culturally appropriate engagement. Monitoring not conducted by the local communities or Indigenous Peoples should be validated by them.	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
For all HCV 5 Interpretations: factors to consider monitoring include the condition of the sites and resources, whether access is sufficient, whether use levels are sustainable, and the extent and nature of any conflicts regarding the HCV occurrences.	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
For additional guidance, consider FSC (2020a) and HCVN (2018) (e.g. Part 3 and the resources in Annex 1).	N/A	N/A

**HCV 6 – Cultural values. Sites, resources, habitats and landscapes of global or national cultural, archaeological or historical significance, and/or of critical cultural, ecological, economic or religious/sacred importance for the traditional cultures of local communities or Indigenous Peoples, identified through engagement with these local communities or Indigenous Peoples.**

All information in the following sections applies to all Organizations. The exception is BAI that is not shown as applicable to SLIMFs; however, the Interpretations, Strategies, and Assessment and Monitoring methods still apply. See also the Overarching BAI listed above.

**A. National or Regional Interpretations of HCV 6, for HCV Identification**

National or Regional Interpretations of HCV 6	Best Available Information for identifying occurrences of the Interpretations	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
<b>Element 1: Sites, resources, habitats and landscapes of global or national cultural, archaeological or historical significance</b>		
<b>World Heritage Sites with cultural resources, i.e.: Fossil Hominid Sites of South Africa; Nelson Mandela Legacy Sites; Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape; Richtersveld Cultural and Botanical Landscape; Robben Island; Pleistocene Occupation Sites of South Africa; #Khomani Cultural Landscape; and Maloti-Drakensberg Park.</b>	See World Heritage Sites (in References). For maps and location information, see the BAI for protected areas at HCV 1, Element 1.	Y
<b>Biosphere Reserves with significant archaeological values, i.e.: Magaliesberg, Gouritz Cluster, Cape West Coast, and Vhembe.</b>	See UNESCO Biosphere Reserves (in References).	Y
<b>Major National Sites such as Taung Fossil Site, Klasies River Cave, Wonderwerk Cave, Kaditshwene Cultural Landscape, Makapans Valley, Bushmanskloof Rock Painting Landscape, Lake Fundudzi, Game Pass Shelter.</b>	South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) and the South African Heritage Resources Information System (SAHRIS).	Y
<b>Other internationally or nationally important cultural, archaeological, paleontological, or historical sites, resources, habitats, or landscapes. Significant meteorites.</b>	SAHRA and SAHRIS; provincial heritage authorities, e.g. the KZN Amafa and Research Institute. SANParks. Other BAI may include museums, archaeologists, and anthropologists.	Y

National or Regional Interpretations of HCV 6	Best Available Information for identifying occurrences of the Interpretations	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
<b>Element 2: Sites, resources, habitats and landscapes of critical cultural, ecological, economic or religious/sacred importance for the traditional cultures of local communities</b>		
<p>Sacred forests and groves, caves, grave sites; other sites protected by taboo. Examples include: the Vondo, Thathe, Musanzhe, and Vhutanda forests, the Phiphidi waterfall, and Fundudzi lake in Limpopo; the Mazizini and Mabasa forests KwaZulu-Natal; the Hogsback in Eastern Cape; and in Free State, Motouleng (between Fouriesburg and Clarens), Mautse (between Rosendal and Ficksburg), Mantsopa (at Modderpoort near Ladybrand), Badimong near Rosendal. (As per: Skowno, 2018; Sinthumule, 2025; DAFF, 2011)</p>	<p>Culturally appropriate engagement with the local communities.</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p>Caves, river pools, trees, plants, and other sites, resources, habitats, or landscapes of cultural, ecological, economic, or religious/sacred importance to local communities. Examples include the wild olive tree. (As per: Skowno, 2018)</p>	<p>Culturally appropriate engagement with the local communities.</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p>Other sites, resources, habitats, or landscapes of cultural, ecological, economic, or religious/sacred importance to local communities.</p>	<p>Culturally appropriate engagement with the local communities.</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p>For all Interpretations.</p>	<p>Supplementary BAI may include: databases and maps; community development organizations and other experts. See also the Overarching BAI.</p>	<p>N</p>
<b>Element 3: Sites, resources, habitats and landscapes of critical cultural, ecological, economic or religious/sacred importance for the traditional cultures of Indigenous Peoples</b>		
<p>Sites, resources, habitats, or landscapes of cultural, ecological, economic, or religious/sacred importance to Indigenous Peoples, including but not limited to plants, animals, and sites used for traditional ceremonies.</p>	<p>Culturally appropriate engagement with the Indigenous Peoples.</p>	<p>Y</p>

National or Regional Interpretations of HCV 6	Best Available Information for identifying occurrences of the Interpretations	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
<p>Rock paintings and other archaeological and historical sites associated with Indigenous People. Examples include Maloti-Drakensberg Park World Heritage Site (including for rock art) and the Waterberg and Garden Route Biosphere Reserves (including for rock art and plants, respectively). (As per: Prins, 2009; FSC, 2018b)</p>	<p>See World Heritage Sites and UNESCO Biosphere Reserves (in References).</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>For all Interpretations.</p>	<p>Supplementary BAI may include: databases; organizations that represent or provide services for Indigenous Peoples; archaeologists, anthropologists, and other experts. See also the Overarching BAI.</p>	<p>N</p>

## B. Assessments for HCV 6

National or regional methodologies for assessing occurrences of the HCV 6 Interpretations	Best Available Information for assessing occurrences	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
<p>For all HCV 6: identifying occurrences of the HCV 6 Interpretations listed above, along with any other HCV 6 occurrences, is the first, essential part of assessments.</p>	<p>For Elements 2 and 3, HCVs important to local communities and Indigenous Peoples, culturally appropriate engagement with the communities and Indigenous Peoples is the primary BAI. For Element 1 and supplementary BAI for Elements 2 and 3, see Section A and the Overarching BAI.</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p>For all HCV 6: other assessment elements include engaging with stakeholders interested in HCV conservation; and identifying HCV Areas, the condition of the HCVs, and threats to the HCVs.</p>	<p>The BAI in Section A and the Overarching BAI.</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p>For Element 1, sites of global or national significance.</p>	<p>See the assessment requirements of the National Heritage Resources Act.</p>	<p>Y</p>

National or regional methodologies for assessing occurrences of the HCV 6 Interpretations	Best Available Information for assessing occurrences	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
For Elements 2 and 3, HCVs important to communities and Indigenous Peoples: consider interactive mapping with the local communities and the Indigenous Peoples.	The communities and Indigenous Peoples, including site custodians or elders who may have knowledge of sites whose secrecy is to be guarded.	Y
For values related to Indigenous Peoples: in addition to currently used sites, assessments may need to consider sites that were important prior to dislocations. (As per: IWGIA, 2023 and 2025)	The Indigenous Peoples. Organizations that represent Indigenous Peoples.	Y
For additional guidance in identifying and assessing HCV 6, see FSC (2020a) and HCVN (2017) (Chapter 2, Best Practice Considerations for HCV Assessments, and Chapter 3.6, Identification of HCV 6).	N/A	N/A

### C. Strategies for Maintaining and Enhancing HCV 6

National or regional strategies for maintaining and/or enhancing the HCV 6 Interpretations	Best Available Information for management strategies	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
For Element 1, sites of global or national significance: strategies are based on Best Available Information, and considered effective for maintaining and/or enhancing the HCV.	SAHRA, African Conservation Trust, and the People and Parks Programme of the Environmental Programmes Branch of DFFE. See also the Overarching BAI.	Y
For Elements 2 and 3, HCVs important to communities and Indigenous Peoples: see the strategies in Annex I.	Culturally appropriate engagement with local communities and Indigenous Peoples is the primary BAI. For supplementary BAI, see Section A and the Overarching BAI.	Y
For additional guidance, consider FSC (2020a), including re. engaging Indigenous Peoples and communities, and HCVN (2018) (e.g. Part 2).	N/A	N/A

## D. Monitoring for HCV 6

National or regional methodologies for monitoring occurrences of the HCV 6 Interpretations	Best Available Information for monitoring occurrences	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
For all HCV 6 Interpretations: monitoring that addresses Criterion 9.4 and its Indicators. Also consider monitoring for changes in internal and external threats to the HCVs.	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
For Element 1, sites of global or national significance.	See the BAI for strategies, above.	Y
For Elements 2 and 3, HCVs important to local communities or Indigenous Peoples: monitoring conducted by or with the local communities or Indigenous Peoples, or using methodologies developed in cooperation with them through culturally appropriate engagement. Monitoring not conducted by the local communities or Indigenous Peoples should be validated by them.	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
For all HCV 6 Interpretations: factors to consider monitoring include the condition of the sites and resources, whether access is sufficient where appropriate, whether the secrecy of the sites is protected where appropriate, and the extent and nature of any conflicts regarding the HCV occurrences.	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
For additional guidance, consider FSC (2020a) and HCVN (2018) (e.g. Part 3), and the resources in Annex 1).	N/A	N/A

### Examples of Relevant Stakeholders and Experts

This is a list of stakeholder and expert organizations likely to be relevant to HCV assessments, strategies, and/or monitoring, either in general, or for particular HCV categories or elements. The list is not exhaustive, may need to change over time, and can be updated by standard developers. Where additional stakeholders and experts are relevant to specific Management Units, they should also be identified and considered by managers.

#### Environmental Stakeholders:

- African Conservation Trust
- BirdLife South Africa
- Cape Action for People and the Environment
- Endangered Wildlife Trust

- Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife
- Fynbos Fish Trust
- GeaSphere
- Kalahari Wildlands Trust (KWT)
- Peace Parks Foundation
- Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa
- WWF South Africa

**Social Stakeholders and Community Development Organizations:**

- African Conservation Trust
- Greenpop

**Indigenous Peoples Organizations:**

- Elsie Vaalbooi Development Organization
- Indigenous Peoples Network of Southern Africa
- Kalahari Peoples Fund
- Kalahari Wildlands Trust (KWT)
- South African San Institute (SASI)
- Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (WIMSA)

**Other Expert Organizations:**

- African Conservation Trust
- Animal Demography Unit, University of Cape Town
- Botanical Society of South Africa
- Centre for African Conservation Ecology, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University
- Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
- Department of Conservation Ecology and Entomology, University of Stellenbosch
- Forest Science Postgraduate Programme, University of Pretoria
- Freshwater Research Centre
- Mammal Research Institute, University of Pretoria
- Plant Protection Research Institute, University of Pretoria
- South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI)
- Sustainable African Rivers Initiative (SARI) / Rivers of Life
- University of KwaZulu-Natal
- Upland River Conservation

**Government Agencies:**

- Biodiversity and Conservation (B&C) Branch, DFFE
- Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE)
- Environmental Programmes (EP) Branch, DFFE
- Fisheries Management Branch, DFFE
- Forestry Management (FOM) Branch, DFFE

- National Heritage Council, Department of Arts and Culture
- People and Parks, DFFE
- Provincial Environmental Affairs, Conservation, and Planning Departments and Commissions. <https://www.gov.za/links/provincial-government>
- South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA)
- South African National Parks (SANParks)
- Provincial Heritage Authorities

## References

Relevant references may include weblinks or full references for BAI listed above, as well as supporting references for HCV Interpretations.

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## **Annex K International Generic Indicators for the use and risk management of highly hazardous pesticides [NOT APPLICABLE]**

10.7.11 A trend of replacement, reduction and/or removal of highly hazardous pesticides over time is demonstrated, or continued use is justified.

10.7.12 Control measures are proactively considered and/or implemented based on the likely impacts of the targeted pest, weed or disease and any intervention threshold to avoid unacceptable impacts on economic, environmental or social values.

10.7.13 Programmes are in place that have specific actions, timelines, targets and resources allocated to conduct, or support, research to identify and test less hazardous alternatives to replace FSC highly restricted highly hazardous pesticides and restricted highly hazardous pesticides.

**NOTE:** Less hazardous alternatives may include changes to management practices, species choice and tree breeding, biological control agents, non-chemical pesticides or other chemical pesticides.

10.7.14 Risk mitigation measures prioritize avoiding exposure of workers, affected stakeholders and/or environmental values to highly hazardous pesticides.

10.7.15 Risk mitigation measures for workers include the use of appropriate personal protective equipment consistent with FSC-POL-30-001b Personal Protective Equipment.

10.7.16 A pesticides buffer zone is established where a highly hazardous pesticide and/or application method requires one to ensure the protection of environmental values and social values.

10.7.17 An exclusion zone is established where a highly hazardous pesticide and/or application method requires one, as instructed by the label or other applicable sources, to avoid workers and affected stakeholders from being exposed to harm.

10.7.18 The location and duration of such an exclusion zone is communicated in a culturally appropriate manner.

10.7.19 Training programmes (see Criterion 2.5) for the use of highly hazardous pesticides include informing workers of known risks to human health and environmental values, and mitigation measures identified in the Environmental and Social Risk Assessment.

10.7.20 The implementation of risk mitigation measures is monitored.

10.7.21 The exposure of individual workers to highly hazardous pesticides is monitored.

**NOTE:** Examples of monitoring approaches can include:

- Records of highly hazardous pesticide applications,
- Checks on correct personal protective equipment use,
- Records of reported or observed health effects,
- Medical biomonitoring.

10.7.22 Environmental impacts of highly hazardous pesticide use and changes in environmental condition are monitored.

**NOTE:** Examples of monitoring approaches can include:

- Records of highly hazardous pesticide applications,
- Records of reported or observed environmental impacts,
- Environmental biomonitoring, e.g. using trigger values for particular organisms or groups of organisms.

- 10.7.23 Environmental and Social Risk Assessment(s), site operational plans, and site-specific risk mitigation and monitoring measures are consistent with safety data sheets (MSDS) and chemical label instructions.
- 10.7.24 Based on monitoring results, corrective action is taken where mitigation measures are not implemented as appropriate, or are not effective in managing risks to human health and environmental values.
- 10.7.25 Harm caused to workers and affected stakeholders by over-exposure to highly hazardous pesticide is treated. When treatment is not possible, fair compensation is provided.
- 10.7.26 Damage caused to environmental values by highly hazardous pesticides is repaired. When repairing damage is not possible, fair compensation is provided.
- 10.7.27 When highly hazardous pesticides are used in an emergency or by government order, use conforms with the procedure for the exceptional use of prohibited highly hazardous pesticides in Annex 3 of FSC-POL-30-001 FSC Pesticides Policy.

**NOTE:** While Annex 3 of the FSC Pesticides Policy addresses the use of prohibited highly hazardous pesticides in emergency situations or by government orders, this indicator allows certificate holders to apply the same procedure to restricted highly hazardous pesticides and highly restricted highly hazardous pesticides in these situations, providing a window of thirty (30) days after starting the use of the chemical pesticide in which to complete a site specific Environmental and Social Risk Assessment.

**Table. Reference Documents of HHP:**

Reference Document	HC 1	HC 2	HC 3	HC 4	HC 5	HC 6	HC 7	HC 8	HC 9	HC 10
<b>FSC POL-30-001a FSC Lists of highly hazardous pesticides (FSC)</b>	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All
<b>Global Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (UN)</b>	Pt. 3 Ch 3.1, 3.5, 3.9 & Pt. 4 Ch. 4.2	Pt. 3, Ch. 3.1	Pt. 3, Ch. 3.6	Pt. 3, Ch. 3.5	Pt. 3, Ch. 3.7	Pt. 3, Ch. 3.9			Pt. 3, Ch. 3.8	Pt. 3, Pt. 4
<b>The WHO Recommended Classification of Pesticides by Hazard and Guidelines to Classification (WHO, IPCS &amp; IOMC)</b>	Tbl. 1, 6, 7	Tbl. 1, 2, 3, 7	Tbl. 1, 2, 3, 7	Tbl. 1, 2, 3, 7	Tbl. 1, 2, 3, 7	Tbl. 1, 2, 3, 4, 7				
<b>International tools for preventing local pesticide problems: A consolidated guide to chemical codes and conventions (ECSPHR)</b>	Sec. 3, Sec. 5.2.1		Ch. 3, Sec. 4.2.5, 4.3.5 & Ch. 6	Ch. 3, Sec. 4.2.5, 4.3.5 & Ch. 6						
<b>International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management. Guidelines for personal protection when handling and applying pesticides (FAO &amp; WHO)</b>	Pt. 1, Sec. 1.1, 1.3, 1.4 & Annex 6	Pt. 1, Sec. 1.1, 1.3, 1.4 & Annex 6	Pt. 1, Sec. 1.1, 1.3, 1.4 & Annex 6	Pt. 1, Sec. 1.1, 1.3, 1.4 & Annex 6	Pt. 1, Sec. 1.1, 1.3, 1.4 & Annex 6	Pt. 1, Sec. 1.1, 1.3, 1.4 & Annex 6				
<b>International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management. Guidelines on Highly Hazardous Pesticides (FAO &amp; WHO)</b>		Ch. 2,3 & 6			Ch. 2,3 & 6	Ch. 2,3 & 6				
<b>Considerations for assessing the risks of combined exposure to multiple chemicals. Series on testing and assessment. No 296. 2018 (OECD)</b>							Ch. 7			
<b>WHO IPCS Integrated Risk Assessment (WHO)</b>							All	Ch. 7		
<b>Metabolites impact on non-target arthropods and pollinators</b>								All		
<b>International Code of Practice for use of pesticides (WHO)</b>									All	All
<b>Strategic Approach to International Chemicals management (UNEP)</b>									All	All

Pt = Part, Ch = Chapter, Tbl = Table, Sec = Section, UN = United Nation, WHO = World Health Organization, IPCS = International Programme on Chemical Safety, IOMC = Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals, ECSPHR = European Centre on Sustainable Policies for Human and Environmental Rights, FAO = Food and Agriculture Organization, OECD = Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and UNEP = United Nations Environment Programme

## Annex M Glossary of terms

Normative definitions for terms are given in FSC-STD-01-002 FSC Glossary of Terms apply. This glossary includes internationally accepted definitions whenever possible. These sources include, for instance, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Convention on Biological Diversity (1992), the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (2005) as well as definitions from online glossaries as provided on the websites of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Invasive Alien Species Programme of the Convention on Biological Diversity. When other sources have been used, they are referenced accordingly.

The term 'based on' means that a definition was adapted from an existing definition as provided in an international source.

Words used in the International Generic Indicators, if not defined in this Glossary of Terms or other normative FSC documents, are used as defined in the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary or the Concise Oxford Dictionary.

**Active ingredient:** Part of the product that provides the pesticidal action (Source: FAO International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management).

**Adaptive management:** A systematic process of continually improving management policies and practices by learning from the outcomes of existing measures (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2, based on the International Union for Conservation of Nature [IUCN]. Glossary definitions as provided on IUCN website).

### **Additionality:**

- **Additionality outside the Management Unit:** Conservation and/or restoration outcomes over and above those already achieved or planned to be achieved, and that would not have been achieved without the support and/or intervention of the organization.

Projects must either be new (i.e. not already being implemented or planned), amended or extended so that conservation and/or restoration outcomes are enhanced beyond what would have been achieved, or planned or funded to be achieved without The Organization planning to remedy for historical conversion.

- **Additionality inside the Management Unit:** Conservation and/or restoration outcomes above and beyond those required by the applicable FSC standards.

**Affected Rights Holder:** Persons and groups, including Indigenous Peoples, traditional peoples and local communities with legal or customary rights whose free, prior and informed consent is required to determine management decisions.

**Affected stakeholder:** Any person, group of persons or entity that is or is likely to be subject to the effects of the activities of a Management Unit. Examples include, but are not restricted to (for example in the case of downstream landowners), persons, groups of persons or entities located in the neighbourhood of the Management Unit. The following are examples of affected stakeholders:

- Local communities
- Indigenous Peoples
- Workers
- Forest dwellers
- Neighbours
- Downstream landowners
- Local processors

- Local businesses
- Tenure and use rights holders, including landowners
- Organizations authorized or known to act on behalf of affected stakeholders, for example social and environmental NGOs, labour unions, etc.

(Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Affirmative action:** A policy or a programme that seeks to redress past discrimination through active measures to ensure equal opportunity, as in education and employment (Source: FSC report on generic criteria and indicators based on ILO Core Conventions principles, 2017).

**Alien species:** A species, subspecies or lower taxon introduced outside its natural past or present distribution; includes any part, gametes, seeds, eggs, or propagules of such species that might survive and subsequently reproduce (Source: Convention on Biological Diversity [CBD], Invasive Alien Species Programme. Glossary of Terms as provided on CBD website).

**Applicable law:** Means applicable to The Organization as a legal person or business enterprise in or for the benefit of the Management Unit and those laws which affect the implementation of the FSC Principles and Criteria. This includes any combination of statutory law (Parliamentary-approved) and case law (court interpretations), subsidiary regulations, associated administrative procedures, and the national constitution (if present) which invariably takes legal precedence over all other legal instruments (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Aquifer:** A formation, group of formations, or part of a formation that contains sufficient saturated permeable material to yield significant quantities of water to wells and springs for that unit to have economic value as a source of water in that region. (Source: Gratzfeld, J. 2003. Extractive Industries in Arid and Semi-Arid Zones. International Union for Conservation of Nature [IUCN]).

**Best Available Information:** Data, facts, documents, expert opinions, and results of field surveys or consultations with stakeholders that are most credible, accurate, complete, and/or pertinent and that can be obtained through reasonable effort and cost, subject to the scale and intensity of the management activities and the precautionary approach.

**Binding Agreement:** A deal or pact, written or not, which is compulsory to its signatories and enforceable by law. Parties involved in the agreement do so freely and accept it voluntarily.

**Biological control agents:** Organisms used to eliminate or regulate the population of other organisms (Source: based on FSC-STD-01-001 V4-0 and International Union for Conservation of Nature [IUCN]. Glossary definitions as provided on IUCN website).

**Biological diversity:** The variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are a part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems (Source: Convention on Biological Diversity 1992, Article 2).

**Chemical pesticide:** Synthetically produced pesticide (Source: FSC-POL-30-001 V3-0).

**Child:** Any person under the age of 18 (ILO Convention 182, Article 2).

**Collective bargaining:** A voluntary negotiation process between employers or employers' organization and workers' organization, with a view to the regulation of terms and conditions of employment by means of collective agreements (ILO Convention 98, Article 4).

**Confidential information:** Private facts, data and content that, if made publicly available, might put at risk The Organization, its business interests or its relationships with stakeholders, clients and competitors.

**Conflicts between the Principles and Criteria and laws:** Situations where it is not possible to comply with the Principles and Criteria and a law at the same time (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Connectivity:** A measure of how connected or spatially continuous a corridor, network, or matrix is. The fewer gaps, the higher the connectivity. Related to the structural connectivity concept, functional or behavioural connectivity refers to how connected an area is for a process, such as an animal moving through different types of landscape elements. Aquatic connectivity deals with the accessibility and transport of materials and organisms, through groundwater and surface water, between different patches of aquatic ecosystems of all kinds. (Source: based on R.T.T. Forman. 1995. Land Mosaics. The Ecology of Landscapes and Regions. Cambridge University Press, 632 pp.).

**Conservation Areas Network:** Those portions of the Management Unit for which conservation is the primary and, in some circumstances, exclusive objective; such areas include representative sample areas, conservation zones, protection areas, connectivity areas and High Conservation Value Areas.

**Conservation/Protection:** These words are used interchangeably when referring to management activities designed to maintain the identified environmental or cultural values in existence long term. Management activities may range from zero or minimal interventions to a specified range of appropriate interventions and activities designed to maintain, or compatible with maintaining, these identified values (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Conservation zones and protection areas:** Defined areas that are designated and managed primarily to safeguard species, habitats, ecosystems, natural features or other site-specific values because of their natural environmental or cultural values, or for purposes of monitoring, evaluation or research, not necessarily excluding other management activities. For the purposes of the Principles and Criteria, these terms are used interchangeably, without implying that one always has a higher degree of conservation or protection than the other. The term 'protected area' is not used for these areas, because this term implies legal or official status, covered by national regulations in many countries. In the context of the Principles and Criteria, management of these areas should involve active conservation, not passive protection (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Conversion:** A lasting change of natural forest cover or High Conservation Value areas, induced by human activity. This may be characterized by significant loss of species diversity, habitat diversity, structural complexity, ecosystem functionality or livelihoods and cultural values. The definition of conversion covers gradual forest degradation as well as rapid forest transformation (Source: FSC-POL-01-007 V1-0).

- **Induced by human activity:** In contrast to drastic changes caused by natural calamities like hurricanes or volcanic eruptions. It also applies in cases of naturally ignited fires where human activities (e.g. draining of peatlands) have significantly increased the risk of fire.
- **Lasting change of natural forest cover:** Permanent or long-term change of natural forest cover. Temporary changes of forest cover or structure (e.g. harvesting followed by regeneration in accordance with the FSC normative framework) is not considered conversion.
- **Lasting change of High Conservation Value (HCV) Areas:** Permanent or long-term change of any of the High Conservation Values. Temporary changes of HCV Areas that do not negatively and permanently impact the values (e.g. harvesting followed by regeneration in accordance with Principle 9) is not considered a lasting change.
- **Significant loss of species diversity:** Loss of species is considered significant where rare species and threatened species or other locally important, keystone and/or flagship species are lost, whether in terms of number of individuals or in terms of number of species. This refers to both displacement and extinction.

NOTE: The establishment of ancillary infrastructure necessary to implement the objectives of responsible forest management (e.g. forest roads, skid trails, log landings, fire protection, etc.) is not considered conversion.

**Conversion Threshold:** The point at which degradation and/or clearing has occurred to an extent where recovery to natural forest conditions and/or High Conservation Value Areas is unlikely to be achieved without direct intervention (Source: FSC-POL-01-007 V1-0).

NOTE: Examples of direct intervention include, but are not limited to, removal of exotic species, physical protection of existing remnant native vegetation, re-wetting of drained soils, reintroduction of appropriate native species, and reintroduction of High Conservation Value species where suitable habitat remains or is re-established.

**Core area:** The portion of each Intact Forest Landscape designated to contain the most important cultural and ecological values. Core areas are managed to exclude industrial activity. Core Areas meet or exceed the definition of Intact Forest Landscape.

**Criterion** (pl. Criteria): A means of judging whether or not a Principle (of forest stewardship) has been fulfilled (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V4-0).

**Critical:** The concept of criticality or fundamentality in Principle 9 and HCVs relates to irreplaceability and to cases where loss or major damage to this HCV would cause serious prejudice or suffering to affected stakeholders. An ecosystem service is considered to be critical (HCV 4) where a disruption of that service is likely to cause, or poses a threat of, severe negative impacts on the welfare, health or survival of local communities, on the environment, on HCVs, or on the functioning of significant infrastructure (roads, dams, buildings, etc.). The notion of criticality here refers to the importance and risk for natural resources and environmental and socio-economic values (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Critical population density:** Maximum acceptable number or density of individuals in a pest population, beyond which the pest threatens the achievement of management objectives. Assessment of the critical population density should take into account historical records from the affected area, the type of pest (insects, weeds, pathogens, etc.), and how the pest population is likely to change in relation to its density, including situations in which small populations show a positive relationship between population density and growth rate (the Allee effect) (based on: International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and use of Pesticides, 2006).

**Culturally appropriate** [mechanisms]: Means/approaches for outreach to target groups that are in harmony with the customs, values, sensitivities, and ways of life of the target audience.

**Customary law:** Interrelated sets of customary rights may be recognized as customary law. In some jurisdictions, customary law is equivalent to statutory law, within its defined area of competence and may replace the statutory law for defined ethnic or other social groups. In some jurisdictions customary law complements statutory law and is applied in specified circumstances (Source: based on N.L. Peluso and P. Vandergeest. 2001. Genealogies of the political forest and customary rights in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand, *The Journal of Asian Studies* 60(3):761–812).

**Customary rights:** Rights which result from a long series of habitual or customary actions, constantly repeated, which have, by such repetition and by uninterrupted acquiescence, acquired the force of a law within a geographical or sociological unit (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Degradation:** Changes within a natural forest or High Conservation Value area that significantly and negatively affect its species composition, structure and/or function, and reduces the ecosystem's capacity to supply products, support biodiversity and/or deliver ecosystem services (Source: FSC-POL-01-007 V1-0).

**Direct involvement:** Situations in which the associated organization or individual is first-hand responsible for the unacceptable activities (Source: FSC-POL-01-004 V2-0).

**Discrimination:** Includes a) any distinction, exclusion or preference made on the basis of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction, social origin, sexual orientation, which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation; b) such other distinction, exclusion or preference which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation as may be determined by the member concerned after consultation with representative employers' and workers' organization where such exist, and with other appropriate bodies (adapted from ILO Convention 111, Article1). 'Sexual orientation' was added to the definition

provided in Convention 111, as it has been identified as an additional type of discrimination which may occur.

**Dispute:** For the purpose of the IGI, this is an expression of dissatisfaction by any person or organization presented as a complaint to The Organization, relating to its management activities or its conformity with the FSC Principles and Criteria, where a response is expected (Source: based on FSC-PRO-01-005 V3-0 Processing Appeals).

**Dispute of substantial duration:** Dispute that continues for more than twice as long as the predefined timelines in the FSC System (this is, for more than 6 months after receiving the complaint, based on FSC-STD-20-001).

**Dispute of substantial magnitude:** For the purpose of the IGI, a dispute of substantial magnitude is a dispute that involves one or more of the following:

- Affects the legal or customary rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities;
- Where the negative impact of management activities is of such a scale that it cannot be reversed or mitigated;
- Physical violence;
- Destruction of property;
- Presence of military bodies;
- Acts of intimidation against forest workers and stakeholders.

This list should be adapted or expanded by Standard Developers.

**Due consideration:** To give such weight or significance to a particular factor as under the circumstances it seems to merit, and this involves discretion (Black's Law Dictionary, 1979).

**Economic viability:** The capability of developing and surviving as a relatively independent social, economic or political unit. Economic viability may require, but is not synonymous with, profitability (Source: based on the definition provided on the website of the European Environment Agency).

**Eco-regional:** Large unit of land or water containing a geographically distinct assemblage of species, natural communities, and environmental conditions (Source: WWF Global 200. Priority ecoregions for global conservation).

**Ecosystem:** A dynamic complex of plant, animal and micro-organism communities and their non-living environment interacting as a functional unit (Source: Convention on Biological Diversity 1992, Article 2).

**Ecosystem function:** An intrinsic ecosystem characteristic related to the set of conditions and processes whereby an ecosystem maintains its integrity (such as primary productivity, food chain, biogeochemical cycles). Ecosystem functions include such processes as decomposition, production, nutrient cycling, and fluxes of nutrients and energy. For FSC purposes, this definition includes ecological and evolutionary processes such as gene flow and disturbance regimes, regeneration cycles and ecological seral development (succession) stages. (Source: based on R. Hassan, R. Scholes and N. Ash. 2005. Ecosystems and Human Well-being: Synthesis. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment Series. Island Press, Washington D.C.; and R.F. Noss. 1990. Indicators for monitoring biodiversity: a hierarchical approach. Conservation Biology 4[4]:355–364).

**Ecosystem services:** The benefits people obtain from ecosystems. These include:

- Provisioning services such as food, forest products and water;
- Regulating services such as regulation of floods, drought, land degradation, air quality, climate and disease;
- Supporting services such as soil formation and nutrient cycling; and
- Cultural services and cultural values such as recreational, spiritual, religious and other non-material benefits.

(Source: based on R. Hassan, R. Scholes and N. Ash. 2005. Ecosystems and Human Well-being: Synthesis. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment Series. Island Press, Washington D.C.).

**Emergency:** A situation that requires immediate action to control the sudden invasion or infestation of a pest, which threatens either long-term stability of the ecosystem, human well-being or economic viability. Events that happen cyclically and scenarios which are predicted through planning, monitoring or the application of an integrated pest management system cannot be considered an emergency. For the purpose of the FSC Pesticides Policy, emergency situations require immediate action and cannot feasibly be controlled by a less hazardous alternative (Source: FSC-POL-30-001 V3-0).

**Employment and occupation:** Includes access to vocational training, access to employment and to particular occupations, and terms and conditions of employment (ILO Convention 111, Article 1.3).

**Engaging/engagement:** The process by which The Organization communicates, consults and/or provides for the participation of interested and/or affected stakeholders ensuring that their concerns, desires, expectations, needs, rights and opportunities are considered in the establishment, implementation and updating of the management plan (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Environmental and social risk assessment (ESRA):** A process to predict, assess and review the likely or actual environmental and social effects of a well-defined action, evaluate alternatives, and design appropriate mitigation, management and monitoring measures. In the context of the FSC Pesticides Policy, it relates to chemical pesticide use (Source: FSC-POL-30-001 V3-0).

**Environmental biomonitoring:** Act of observing and assessing the state and ongoing changes in ecosystems, components of biodiversity and landscape, including the types of natural habitats, populations and species (Source: Encyclopaedia of Toxicology, third edition, 2014).

**Environmental harm:** Any impact on the environment values as a result of human activity that has the effect of degrading the environment, whether temporarily or permanently (Source: FSC-POL-01-007 V1-0).

**Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA):** Systematic process used to identify potential environmental and social impacts of proposed projects, to evaluate alternative approaches, and to design and incorporate appropriate prevention, mitigation, management and monitoring measures (Source: based on Environmental impact assessment, guidelines for FAO field projects. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations [FAO]. Rome, FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Environmental values:** The following set of elements of the biophysical and human environment:

- Ecosystem functions (including carbon sequestration and storage);
- Biological diversity;
- Water resources;
- Soils;
- Atmosphere;

- Landscape values (including cultural and spiritual values).

The actual worth attributed to these elements depends on human and societal perceptions (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value:** It refers to rates of remuneration established without discrimination based on sex (ILO Convention 100, Article 1b).

**Equivalent:** For ecological equivalence, the same specific type of natural forest or High Conservation Value is restored or conserved as was destroyed. For social remedy, equivalence shall be based on an independent assessment and agreement on remedy through Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) with the affected rights holders of the nature, quality, and quantity of all social harms as well as the ongoing future benefits these would have provided. Equivalence shall entail provision of the best means possible to ensure future community well-being (Source: FSC-POL-01-007 V1-0).

**Exclusion zone:** Area in which chemical pesticides are used, and which people are prevented from entering during and after pesticide application in order to avoid unacceptable risk of exposure. The exclusion zone remains in force until the risk of exposure has reduced to an acceptable level (the period of re-entry).

**Externalities:** The positive and negative impacts of activities on stakeholders that are not directly involved in those activities, or on a natural resource or the environment, which do not usually enter standard cost accounting systems, such that the market prices of the products of those activities do not reflect the full costs or benefits (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Fair compensation:** Remuneration that is proportionate to the magnitude and type of services rendered by another party or of the harm that is attributable to the first party.

**Fertilizer:** Mineral or organic substances, most commonly N, P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub> and K<sub>2</sub>O, which are applied to soil for the purpose of enhancing plant growth.

**Fibre Testing:** A suite of wood identification technologies used to identify the family, genus, species and origin of solid wood and fibre-based products.

**Focal species:** Species whose requirements for persistence define the attributes that must be present if that landscape is to meet the requirements of the species that occur there (Source: Lambeck, R., J. 1997. Focal Species: A multi-species Umbrella for Nature Conservation. Conservation Biology Vol 11 [4]: 849-856).

**Forced or compulsory labour:** Work or service exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered themselves voluntarily (ILO Convention 29, Article 2.1).

**Forest:** A tract of land dominated by trees (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-0. Derived from FSC Guidelines for Certification Bodies, Scope of Forest Certification, Section 2.1 first published in 1998, and revised as FSC-GUI-20-200 in 2005, and revised again in 2010 as FSC-DIR-20-007 FSC Directive on Forest Management Evaluations, ADVICE-20-007-01).

**Formal and informal workers' organization:** Association or union of workers, whether recognized by law or by The Organization or neither, which have the aim of promoting workers' rights and to represent workers in dealings with The Organization, particularly regarding working conditions and compensation.

**Fragmentation:** The process of dividing habitats into smaller patches, which results in the loss of original habitat, loss in connectivity, reduction in patch size, and increasing isolation of patches. Fragmentation is considered to be one of the single most important factors leading to loss of native species, especially in forested landscapes, and one of the primary causes of the present extinction crisis. In reference to Intact Forest Landscapes, the fragmentation of concern is understood to be that caused by human industrial

activities (Source: adapted from Gerald E. Heilman, Jr. James R. Strittholt Nicholas C. Slosser Dominick A. Dellasala, BioScience [2002] 52 (5):411-422).

**Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC):** A legal condition whereby a person or community can be said to have given consent to an action prior to its commencement, based upon a clear appreciation and understanding of the facts, implications and future consequences of that action, and the possession of all relevant facts at the time when consent is given. Free, prior and informed consent includes the right to grant, modify, withhold or withdraw approval (Source: based on the Preliminary working paper on the principle of Free, Prior and Informed Consent of Indigenous Peoples ... [E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.4/2004/4 8 July 2004] of the 22nd Session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, Sub-commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, Working Group on Indigenous Populations, 19–23 July 2004).

**FSC Transaction:** Purchase or sale of products with FSC claims on sales documents (Source: ADV-40-004-14).

**Gender equality:** Gender equality or gender equity means that women and men have equal conditions for realizing their full human rights and for contributing to, and benefiting from, economic, social, cultural and political development (Source: adapted from FAO, IFAD and ILO workshop on 'Gaps, trends and current research in gender dimensions of agricultural and rural employment: differentiated pathways out of poverty', Rome, 31 March to 2 April 2009).

**Genetically modified organism:** An organism in which the genetic material has been altered in a way that does not occur naturally by mating and/or natural recombination (Source: based on FSC-POL-30-602 FSC Interpretation on GMO [Genetically Modified Organisms]).

**Genotype:** The genetic constitution of an organism (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Good faith:** A process of engagement where the parties make every effort to reach an agreement, conduct genuine and constructive negotiations, avoid delays in negotiations, respect agreements concluded and under development, and give sufficient time to discuss and settle disputes (adapted from Motion 40:2017).

**Good faith in negotiation:** The Organization (employer) and workers' organizations make every effort to reach an agreement, conduct genuine and constructive negotiations, avoid unjustified delays in negotiations, respect agreements concluded and give sufficient time to discuss and settle collective disputes (Gerning B, Odero A, Guido H [2000], Collective Bargaining: ILO Standards and the Principles of the Supervisory Bodies. International Labour Office, Geneva).

**Governmental order:** The use of a specific chemical pesticide is ordered or carried out by governmental authorities independent of the Organization (Source: FSC-POL-30-001 V3-0).

**Grassland:** Land covered with herbaceous plants with less than 10% tree and shrub cover (Source: UNEP, cited in FAO. 2002. Second Expert Meeting on Harmonizing Forest-Related Definitions for use by various stakeholders).

**Habitat:** The place or type of site where an organism or population occurs (Source: based on the Convention on Biological Diversity, Article 2).

**Habitat features:** Forest stand attributes and structures, including but not limited to:

- Old commercial and non-commercial trees whose age noticeably exceeds the average age of the main canopy;
- Trees with special ecological value;
- Vertical and horizontal complexity;
- Standing dead trees;
- Dead fallen wood;
- Forest openings attributable to natural disturbances;

- Nesting sites;
- Small wetlands, bogs, fens;
- Ponds;
- Areas for procreation;
- Areas for feeding and shelter, including seasonal cycles of breeding;
- Areas for migration;
- Areas for hibernation.

**Hazardous work (in the context of child labour):** Any work which is likely to jeopardize children's physical, mental or moral health should not be undertaken by anyone under the age of 18 years. Hazardous child labour is work in dangerous or unhealthy conditions that could result in a child being killed or injured/maimed (often permanently) and/or made ill (often permanently) as a consequence of poor safety and health standards and working arrangements.

In determining the type of hazardous child labour referred to under Article 3(d) of Convention No. 182, and in identifying where they exist, consideration should be given, inter alia, to:

- Work which exposes children to physical, psychological or sexual abuse;
- Work underground, under water at dangerous heights or in confined spaces;
- Work with dangerous machinery, equipment and tools, or which involves the manual handling or transport of heavy loads;
- Work in unhealthy environment which may, for examples, expose children to hazardous substances, agents or processes, or to temperatures, noise levels, or vibrations damaging to their health;
- Work under particularly difficult conditions such as work for long hours or during the night or work where the child is unreasonably confined to the premises of the employer (ILO, 2011: IPEC Mainstreaming child labour concerns in education sector plans and programmes, Geneva, 2011 and ILO Handbook on hazardous child labour, 2011).

**Heavy work (in the context of child labour):** Refers to work that is likely to be harmful or dangerous to children's health (Source: FSC report on generic criteria and indicators based on ILO Core Conventions principles, 2017).

**High Conservation Value (HCV):** Any of the following values:

- **HCV1:** Species Diversity. Concentrations of biological diversity including endemic species, and rare, threatened or endangered species, that are significant at global, regional or national levels.
- **HCV 2:** Landscape-level ecosystems and mosaics. Intact Forest Landscapes, large landscape-level ecosystems and ecosystem mosaics that are significant at global, regional or national levels, and that contain viable populations of the great majority of the naturally occurring species in natural patterns of distribution and abundance.
- **HCV 3:** Ecosystems and habitats. Rare, threatened, or endangered ecosystems, habitats or refugia.
- **HCV 4:** Critical ecosystem services. Basic ecosystem services in critical situations, including protection of water catchments and control of erosion of vulnerable soils and slopes.
- **HCV 5:** Community needs. Sites and resources fundamental for satisfying the basic necessities of local communities or Indigenous Peoples (for example for livelihoods, health, nutrition, water), identified through engagement with these communities or Indigenous Peoples.
- **HCV 6:** Cultural values. Sites, resources, habitats and landscapes of global or national cultural, archaeological or historical significance, and/or of critical cultural, ecological, economic or

religious/sacred importance for the traditional cultures of local communities or Indigenous Peoples, identified through engagement with these local communities or Indigenous Peoples.

(Source: based on FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

NOTE: The HCV concept applies to all ecosystems, including HCV Areas in savannahs, grasslands, peatlands and wetlands – not only to natural forests and forest plantations.

**High Conservation Value Areas:** Zones and physical spaces which possess and/or are needed for the existence and maintenance of identified High Conservation Values.

**High grading:** High grading is a tree removal practice in which only the best quality, most valuable timber trees are removed, often without regenerating new tree seedlings or removing the remaining poor quality and suppressed understory trees and, in doing so, degrading the ecological health and commercial value of the forest. High grading stands as a counterpoint to sustainable resource management (Source: based on Glossary of Forest Management Terms. North Carolina Division of Forest Resources. March 2009).

**Highly hazardous pesticide (HHP):** Chemical pesticides that are acknowledged to present particularly high levels of acute or chronic hazards to health and environment according to internationally accepted classification systems or are listed in relevant binding international agreements or conventions, or contain dioxins, or heavy metals. In addition, pesticides that appear to cause severe or irreversible harm to health or the environment under conditions of use in a country may be considered to be and treated as highly hazardous.

FSC distinguishes between FSC prohibited HHPs, FSC highly restricted HHPs and FSC restricted HHPs:

- **FSC prohibited HHPs:** chemical pesticides that: a) are listed or recommended for listing under Annex A (elimination) of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants or Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure or listed under the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer; or b) are acutely toxic and that can induce cancer (carcinogenic and likely to be carcinogenic); or c) contain dioxins or d) contain heavy metals).
- **FSC highly restricted HHPs:** chemical pesticide presenting two or three out of the following hazards: acute toxicity, chronic toxicity and environmental toxicity.
- **FSC restricted HHPs:** chemical pesticide presenting one out of three of the following hazards: acute toxicity, chronic toxicity and environmental toxicity.

(Source: FSC-POL-30-001 V3-0).

**ILO Committee on Freedom of Association:** A Governing Body Committee set up in 1951 for the purpose of examining complaints about violations of freedom of association, whether or not the country concerned had ratified the relevant conventions. It is composed of an independent chairperson and three representatives each of governments, employers, and workers. If it decides to receive the case, it establishes the facts in dialogue with the government concerned. If it finds that there has been a violation of freedom of association standards or principles, it issues a report through the Governing Body and makes recommendations on how the situation could be remedied. Governments are subsequently requested to report on the implementation of its recommendations (Source: FSC report on generic criteria and indicators based on ILO Core Conventions principles, 2017).

**ILO Core (Fundamental) Conventions:** These are labour standards that cover fundamental principles and rights at work: freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining; the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour; the effective abolition of child labour; and the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

The eight Fundamental Conventions are:

- Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87)

- Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)
- Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)
- Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)
- Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)
- Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)
- Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100)
- Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)

Source: FSC report on generic criteria and indicators based on ILO Core Conventions principles, 2017.

**ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up, adopted by the International Labour conference at its Eighty-sixth Session, Geneva, 18th June 1998 (Annex revised 15 June 2010):** A resolute reaffirmation of ILO principles (Art. 2) which declares that all Members, even if they have not ratified the Conventions in question, have an obligation, arising from the very fact of membership in the organization, to respect, to promote and to realize, in good faith and in accordance with the Constitution, the principles concerning the fundamental rights which are the subject of those Conventions, namely:

- Freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;
- The elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour;
- The effective abolition of child labour; and
- The elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

Source: FSC report on generic criteria and indicators based on ILO Core Conventions principles, 2017.

**Indicator:** A quantitative or qualitative variable which can be measured or described, and which provides a means of judging whether a Management Unit complies with the requirements of an FSC Criterion. Indicators and the associated thresholds thereby define the requirements for responsible forest management at the level of the Management Unit and are the primary basis of forest evaluation (Source: FSC-STD-01-002 V1-0 FSC Glossary of Terms [2009]).

**Indigenous cultural landscapes:** Indigenous cultural landscapes are living landscapes to which Indigenous Peoples attribute environmental, social, cultural and economic value because of their enduring relationship with the land, water, fauna, flora and spirits and their present and future importance to their cultural identity. An Indigenous cultural landscape is characterized by features that have been maintained through long-term interactions based on land-care knowledge, and adaptive livelihood practices. They are landscapes over which Indigenous Peoples exercise responsibility for stewardship.

NOTE: The adoption of the term Indigenous cultural landscapes is voluntary by Standard Development Groups. Standard Development Groups may choose not to use it. Through Free, Prior and Informed Consent, Indigenous Peoples may choose to use different terminology.

**Indigenous Peoples:** People and groups of people that can be identified or characterized as follows:

- The key characteristic or criterion is self-identification as Indigenous Peoples at the individual level and acceptance by the community as their member;
- Historical continuity with pre-colonial and/or pre-settler societies;
- Strong link to territories and surrounding natural resources;
- Distinct social, economic or political systems;
- Distinct language, culture and beliefs;
- Form non-dominant groups of society;

- Resolve to maintain and reproduce their ancestral environments and systems as distinctive peoples and communities.

(Source: adapted from United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Factsheet 'Who are Indigenous Peoples', October 2007; United Nations Development Group, 'Guidelines on Indigenous Peoples' Issues', United Nations, 2009, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 13 September 2007).

**Indirect involvement:** Situations in which the associated organization or individual, with a minimum ownership or voting power of 51%, is involved as a parent or sister company, subsidiary, shareholder or Board of Directors to an organization directly involved in unacceptable activities. Indirect involvement also includes activities performed by subcontractors when acting on behalf of the associated organization or individual (Source: FSC-POL-01-004 V2-0).

**Industrial activity:** Industrial forest and resource management activities such as road building, mining, dams, urban development and timber harvesting.

**Infrastructure:** In the context of forest management, roads, bridges, culverts, log landings, quarries, impoundments, buildings and other structures required in the course of implementing the management plan.

**Intact Forest Landscape:** A territory within today's global extent of forest cover which contains forest and non-forest ecosystems minimally influenced by human economic activity, with an area of at least 500 km<sup>2</sup> (50,000 ha) and a minimal width of 10 km (measured as the diameter of a circle that is entirely inscribed within the boundaries of the territory) (Source: Intact Forests / Global Forest Watch. Glossary definition as provided on Intact Forest website. 2006-2014).

**Integrated pest management (IPM):** Careful consideration of all available pest control techniques and subsequent integration of appropriate measures that discourage the development of pest populations, encourage beneficial populations and keep pesticides and other interventions to levels that are economically justified and reduce or minimize risks to human and animal health and/or the environment. IPM emphasizes the growth of a healthy forest with the least possible disruption to ecosystems and encourages natural pest control mechanisms (Source: based on FAO International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management).

**Intellectual property:** Practices as well as knowledge, innovations and other creations of the mind (Source: based on the Convention on Biological Diversity, Article 8[j]; and World Intellectual Property Organization. What is Intellectual Property? WIPO Publication No. 450[E]).

**Intensity:** A measure of the force, severity or strength of a management activity or other occurrence affecting the nature of the activity's impacts (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Interested stakeholder:** Any person, group of persons, or entity that has shown an interest, or is known to have an interest, in the activities of a Management Unit. The following are examples of interested stakeholders.

- Conservation organizations, for example environmental NGOs;
- Labour (rights) organizations, for example labour unions;
- Human rights organizations, for example social NGOs;
- Local development projects;
- Local governments;
- National government departments functioning in the region;
- FSC National Offices;
- Experts on particular issues, for example High Conservation Values.

(Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Internationally accepted scientific protocol:** A predefined science-based procedure which is either published by an international scientific network or union, or referenced frequently in the international scientific literature (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Intervention threshold:** Population density level where the controlling measures of the targeted pest should start. It is determined in the IPM system and it is usually lower than the critical population density level.

**Invasive species:** Species that are rapidly expanding outside of their native range. Invasive species can alter ecological relationships among native species and can affect ecosystem function and human health (Source: based on the International Union for Conservation of Nature [IUCN]. Glossary definitions as provided on IUCN website).

**Lands and territories:** For the purposes of the Principles and Criteria these are lands or territories that Indigenous Peoples or local communities have traditionally owned, or customarily used or occupied, and where access to natural resources is vital to the sustainability of their cultures and livelihoods (Source: based on World Bank safeguard OP 4.10 Indigenous Peoples, section 16[a], July 2005).

**Landscape:** A geographical mosaic composed of interacting ecosystems resulting from the influence of geological, topographical, soil, climatic, biotic and human interactions in a given area (Source: based on the International Union for Conservation of Nature [IUCN]. Glossary definitions as provided on IUCN website).

**Landscape values:** Landscape values can be visualized as layers of human perceptions overlaid on the physical landscape. Some landscape values, like economic, recreation, subsistence value or visual quality are closely related to physical landscape attributes. Other landscape values such as intrinsic or spiritual value are more symbolic in character and are influenced more by individual perception or social construction than physical landscape attributes (Source: based on the website of the Landscape Value Institute).

**Legal:** In accordance with primary legislation (national or local laws) or secondary legislation (subsidiary regulations, decrees, orders, etc.). 'Legal' also includes rule-based decisions made by legally competent agencies where such decisions flow directly and logically from the laws and regulations. Decisions made by legally competent agencies may not be legal if they do not flow directly and logically from the laws and regulations and if they are not rule-based but use administrative discretion (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Legally competent:** Mandated in law to perform a certain function (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Legal registration:** National or local legal license or set of permissions to operate as an enterprise, with rights to buy and sell products and/or services commercially. The licence or permissions can apply to an individual, a privately-owned enterprise or a publicly owned corporate entity. The rights to buy and sell products and/or services do not carry the obligation to do so, so *legal* registration applies also to organizations operating a Management Unit without sales of products or services; for example, for unpriced recreation or for conservation of biodiversity or habitat (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Legal status:** The way in which the Management Unit is classified according to law. In terms of tenure, it means the category of tenure, such as communal land or leasehold or freehold or State land or government land, etc. If the Management Unit is being converted from one category to another (for example, from State land to communal Indigenous land), the status includes the current position in the transition process. In terms of administration, legal status could mean that the land is owned by the nation as a whole, is administered on behalf of the nation by a government department, and is leased by a government Ministry to a private sector operator through a concession (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Light work:** National laws or regulations may permit the employment or work of persons of 13 to 15 years of age on light work which is: a) not likely to be harmful to their health or development; and b) not such as to prejudice their attendance at school, their participation in vocational orientation or training programmes approved by the competent authority or their capacity to benefit from the instruction received (ILO Convention 138, Article 7).

**Living wage:** The remuneration received for a standard work week by a worker in a particular place sufficient to afford a decent standard of living for the worker and their family. Elements of a decent standard of living include food, water, housing, education, health care, transport, clothing, and other essential needs including provision for unexpected events (Source: A Shared Approach to a Living Wage. ISEAL Living Wage Group. November 2013).

**Local communities:** Communities of any size that are in or adjacent to the Management Unit, and also those that are close enough to have a significant impact on the economy or the environmental values of the Management Unit or to have their economies, rights or environments significantly affected by the management activities or the biophysical aspects of the Management Unit (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Local laws:** The whole suite of primary and secondary laws (acts, ordinances, statutes, decrees) which is limited in application to a particular geographic district within a national territory, as well as secondary regulations, and tertiary administrative procedures (rules/requirements) that derive their authority directly and explicitly from these primary and secondary laws. Laws derive authority ultimately from the Westphalian concept of sovereignty of the Nation State (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Long-term:** The timescale of the forest owner or manager as manifested by the objectives of the management plan, the rate of harvesting, and the commitment to maintain permanent forest cover. The length of time involved will vary according to the context and ecological conditions and will be a function of how long it takes a given ecosystem to recover its natural structure and composition following harvesting or disturbance, or to produce mature or primary conditions (Source: FSC-STD-01-002 V1-0 FSC Glossary of Terms, 2009).

**Management objective:** Specific management goals, practices, outcomes, and approaches established to achieve the requirements of this standard.

**Management plan:** The collection of documents, reports, records and maps that describe, justify and regulate the activities carried out by any manager, staff or organization within or in relation to the Management Unit, including statements of objectives and policies (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Management plan monitoring:** Follow up and oversight procedures for the purpose of evaluating the achievement of the management objectives. The results of the monitoring activities are utilized in the implementation of adaptive management.

**Management Unit:** A spatial area or areas submitted for FSC certification with clearly defined boundaries managed to a set of explicit long-term management objectives which are expressed in a management plan. This area or areas include(s):

- all facilities and area(s) within or adjacent to this spatial area or areas under legal title or management control of, or operated by or on behalf of The Organization, for the purpose of contributing to the management objectives; and
- all facilities and area(s) outside, and not adjacent to this spatial area or areas and operated by or on behalf of The Organization, solely for the purpose of contributing to the management objectives.

(Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Managerial control:** Responsibility of the kind defined for corporate directors of commercial enterprises in national commercial law, and treated by FSC as applicable also to public sector organizations (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Medical Biomonitoring:** Analysis of a chemical pesticide or one of its metabolites in the human body, using samples of substances such as blood, urine or breastmilk (Source: based on FAO and WHO, 2016, International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management: Guidelines on Highly Hazardous Pesticides. FAO and WHO, Rome).

**Minimum age (of employment):** Not less than the age of finishing compulsory education, and which in any case, should not be less than 15 years. However, a country, whose economy and educational facilities are insufficiently developed, may initially specify a minimum age of 14 years. National laws may also permit the employment of 13-15-year-olds in light work which is neither prejudicial to school attendance, nor harmful to a child's health or development. The ages 12-13 can apply for light work in countries that specify a minimum age of 14 (ILO Convention 138, Article 2).

**National laws:** The whole suite of primary and secondary laws (acts, ordinances, statutes, decrees), which is applicable to a national territory, as well as secondary regulations, and tertiary administrative procedures (rules/requirements) that derive their authority directly and explicitly from these primary and secondary laws (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Native species:** Species, subspecies, or lower taxon occurring within its natural range (past or present) and dispersal potential (that is, within the range it occupies naturally or could occupy without direct or indirect introduction or care by humans) (Source: Convention on Biological Diversity [CBD]. Invasive Alien Species Programme. Glossary of Terms as provided on CBD website).

**Natural conditions/native ecosystem:** For the purposes of the Principles and Criteria and any applications of restoration techniques, terms such as 'more natural conditions', 'native ecosystem' provide for managing sites to favour or restore native species and associations of native species that are typical of the locality, and for managing these associations and other environmental values so that they form ecosystems typical of the locality. Further guidelines may be provided in FSC Forest Stewardship Standards (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Natural forest:** A forest area with many of the principal characteristics and key elements of native ecosystems, such as complexity, structure and biological diversity, including soil characteristics, flora and fauna, in which all or almost all the trees are native species, not classified as plantations.

'Natural forest' includes the following categories:

- Forest affected by harvesting or other disturbances, in which trees are being or have been regenerated by a combination of natural and artificial regeneration with species typical of natural forests in that site, and where many of the above-ground and below-ground characteristics of the natural forest are still present. In boreal and north temperate forests, which are naturally composed of only one or few tree species, a combination of natural and artificial regeneration to regenerate forest of the same native species, with most of the principal characteristics and key elements of native ecosystems of that site, is not by itself considered as conversion to plantations;
- Natural forests which are maintained by traditional silvicultural practices including natural or assisted natural regeneration;
- Well-developed secondary or colonizing forest of native species which has regenerated in non-forest areas;
- The definition of 'natural forest' may include areas described as wooded ecosystems, woodland and savannah.

The description of natural forests and their principal characteristics and key elements may be further defined in FSC Forest Stewardship Standards, with appropriate descriptions or examples.

'Natural forest' does not include land which is not dominated by trees, was previously not forest, and which does not yet contain many of the characteristics and elements of native ecosystems. Young regeneration may be considered as natural forest after some years of ecological progression. FSC Forest Stewardship

Standards may indicate when such areas may be excised from the Management Unit, should be restored towards more natural conditions, or may be converted to other land uses.

FSC has not developed quantitative thresholds between different categories of forests in terms of area, density, height, etc. FSC Forest Stewardship Standards may provide such thresholds and other guidelines, with appropriate descriptions or examples. Pending such guidance, areas dominated by trees, mainly of native species, may be considered as natural forest.

Thresholds and guidelines may cover areas such as:

- Other vegetation types and non-forest communities and ecosystems included in the Management Unit, including grassland, bushland, wetlands, and open woodlands;
- Very young pioneer or colonizing regeneration in a primary succession on new open sites or abandoned farmland, which does not yet contain many of the principal characteristics and key elements of native ecosystems. This may be considered as natural forest through ecological progression after the passage of years;
- Young natural regeneration growing in natural forest areas may be considered as natural forest, even after logging, clear-felling or other disturbances, since many of the principal characteristics and key elements of native ecosystems remain, above-ground and below-ground;
- Areas where deforestation and forest degradation have been so severe that they are no longer 'dominated by trees' may be considered as non-forest, when they have very few of the principal above-ground and below-ground characteristics and key elements of natural forests. Such extreme degradation is typically the result of combinations of repeated and excessively heavy logging, grazing, farming, fuelwood collection, hunting, fire, erosion, mining, settlements, infrastructure, etc. FSC Forest Stewardship Standards may help to decide when such areas should be excised from the Management Unit, should be restored towards more natural conditions, or may be converted to other land uses.

(Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Natural hazards:** Disturbances that can present risks to social and environmental values in the Management Unit but that may also comprise important ecosystem functions; examples include drought, flood, fire, landslide, storm, avalanche, etc.

**Non-forest land use:** Land-use system, where the land is not dominated by trees.

**Non-timber forest products (NTFP):** All products other than timber derived from the Management Unit (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Objective:** The basic purpose laid down by The Organization for the forest enterprise, including the decision of policy and the choice of means for attaining the purpose (Source: based on F.C. Osmaston. 1968. The Management of Forests. Hafner, New York; and D.R. Johnston, A.J. Grayson and R.T. Bradley. 1967. Forest Planning. Faber & Faber, London).

**Obligatory code of practice:** A manual or handbook or other source of technical instruction which The Organization must implement by law (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Occupational accident:** An occurrence arising out of, or in the course of, work which results in fatal or non-fatal injury (Source: International Labour Organization [ILO]. Bureau of Library and Information Services. ILO Thesaurus as provided on ILO website).

**Occupational disease:** Any disease contracted as a result of an exposure to risk factors arising from work activity (Source: International Labour Organization [ILO]. Bureau of Library and Information Services. ILO Thesaurus as provided on ILO website).

**Occupational injuries:** Any personal injury, disease or death resulting from an occupational accident (Source: International Labour Organization [ILO]. Bureau of Library and Information Services. ILO Thesaurus as provided on ILO website).

**Organism:** Any biological entity capable of replication or of transferring genetic material (Source: Council Directive 90/220/EEC).

**Peatland:** It is constituted by flooded and soggy areas, with large accumulations of organic material, covered by a layer of poor vegetation associated with a certain degree of acidity, and which presents a characteristic amber colour (Source: Aguilar, L. 2001. About Fishermen, Fisherwomen, Oceans and tides. IUCN. San Jose, Costa Rica).

**Pest:** Any species, strain or biotype of plant, animal or pathogenic agent injurious to plants and plant products, materials or environments and includes vectors of parasites or pathogens of human and animal disease and animals causing public health nuisance (Source: FSC-POL-30-001 V3-0).

**Pesticide:** Any substance or mixture of substances of chemical or biological ingredients intended for repelling, destroying or controlling any pest, or regulating plant growth. This definition includes insecticides, rodenticides, acaricides, molluscicides, larvicides, nematocides, fungicides and herbicides (Source: FSC-POL-30-001).

**Pesticide Buffer zone:** Area established around environmental and/or social values to protect them from damage, within which pesticides are not used or are used only with additional risk mitigation measures.

**Plantation:** A forest area established by planting or sowing with using either alien or native species, often with one or few species, regular spacing and even ages, and which lacks most of the principal characteristics and key elements of natural forests. The description of plantations may be further defined in FSC Forest Stewardship Standards, with appropriate descriptions or examples, such as:

- Areas which would initially have complied with this definition of 'plantation' but which, after the passage of years, contain many or most of the principal characteristics and key elements of native ecosystems, may be classified as natural forests.
- Plantations managed to restore and enhance biological and habitat diversity, structural complexity and ecosystem functionality may, after the passage of years, be classified as natural forests.
- Boreal and north temperate forests which are naturally composed of only one or few tree species, in which a combination of natural and artificial regeneration is used to regenerate forest of the same native species, with most of the principal characteristics and key elements of native ecosystems of that site, may be considered as natural forest, and this regeneration is not by itself considered as conversion to plantations.

(Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Precautionary approach:** An approach requiring that when the available information indicates that management activities pose a threat of severe or irreversible damage to the environment or a threat to human welfare, The Organization will take explicit and effective measures to prevent the damage and avoid the risks to welfare, even when the scientific information is incomplete or inconclusive, and when the vulnerability and sensitivity of environmental values are uncertain (Source: based on Principle 15 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, 1992, and Wingspread Statement on the Precautionary Principle of the Wingspread Conference, 23–25 January 1998).

**Pre-harvest [condition]:** The diversity, composition, and structure of the forest or plantation prior to felling timber and appurtenant activities such as road building.

**Principle:** An essential rule or element, in FSC's case, of forest stewardship (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Priority social harms:** See definition of social harm (Source: FSC-POL-01-007 V1-0).

**Protection:** See definition of Conservation.

**Protection Area:** See definition of Conservation Zone.

**Proportionate:** A 1:1 ratio; the area to be restored or conserved is the same as the area of natural forest and/or High Conservation Value destroyed (Source: FSC-POL-01-007 V1-0).

**Publicly available:** In a manner accessible to or observable by people generally (Source: Collins English Dictionary, 2003 Edition).

**Rare species:** Species that are uncommon or scarce, but not classified as threatened. These species are located in geographically restricted areas or specific habitats, or are scantily scattered on a large scale. They are approximately equivalent to the IUCN (2001) category of Near Threatened (NT), including species that are close to qualifying for, or are likely to qualify for, a threatened category in the near future. They are also approximately equivalent to imperilled species (Source: based on IUCN, 2001, IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria: Version 3.1. IUCN Species Survival Commission. IUCN. Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, UK).

**Ratified:** The process by which an international law, convention or agreement (including multilateral environmental agreement) is legally approved by a national legislature or equivalent legal mechanism, such that the international law, convention or agreement becomes automatically part of national law or sets in motion the development of national law to give the same legal effect (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Reasonable:** Judged to be fair or appropriate to the circumstances or purposes, based on general experience (Source: Shorter Oxford English Dictionary).

**Reduced impact harvesting:** Harvesting (or logging) using techniques to reduce the impact on the residual stand (Source: based on Guidelines for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity in Tropical Timber Production Forests, IUCN 2006).

**Refugia:** An isolated area where extensive changes, typically due to changing climate or by disturbances such as those caused by humans, have not occurred and where plants and animals typical of a region may survive (Source: Glen Canyon Dam, Adaptive Management Program Glossary as provided on website of Glen Canyon Dam website).

**Remedy:** To correct or return something as near as possible to its original state or condition (Source: Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, UN, 2011).

- For environmental harms, this includes actions taken to remedy deforestation, conversion degradation, or other harms to natural forest and High Conservation Value areas. Environmental remedy actions may include, but are not limited to: conservation of standing forests, habitats, ecosystems and species; restoration and protection of degraded ecosystems.
- For social harms, this includes providing redress for identified social harms through agreements made during an FPIC-based process with the affected rights holders, and facilitating a transition to the position before such harms occurred; or developing alternative measures to ameliorate harms by providing gains recognized by the affected stakeholders as equivalent to the harms, through consultation and agreement. Remedy may be achieved through a combination of apologies, restitution, rehabilitation, financial or non-financial compensation, satisfaction, punitive sanctions, injunctions, and guarantees of non-repetition (Source: FSC-POL-01-007 V1-0).

**Remuneration:** Includes the ordinary, basic or minimum wage or salary and any additional emoluments whatsoever payable directly or indirectly, whether in cash or in kind, by the employer to the worker and arising out of the workers employment (ILO Convention 100, Article1a).

**Repair:** Process of assisting the recovery of environmental values and human health (Source: FSC-POL-30-001).

**Representative Sample Areas:** Portions of the Management Unit delineated for the purpose of conserving or restoring viable examples of an ecosystem that would naturally occur in that geographical region.

**Resilience:** The ability of a system to maintain key functions and processes in the face of stresses or pressures by either resisting or adapting to change. Resilience can be applied to both ecological systems and social systems (Source: IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas [IUCN-WCPA]. 2008. Establishing Marine Protected Area Networks – Making it Happen. Washington D.C.: IUCN-WCPA National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and The Nature Conservancy).

**Restitution:** Measures agreed with affected stakeholders to restore lands, properties or damaged natural resources to their original owners in their original condition. Where such lands, properties or natural resources cannot be returned or restored, measures are agreed on to provide alternatives of equivalent quality and extent. Restitution to affected rights holders is agreed on through an FPIC-based process (Source: FSC-POL-01-007 V1-0).

**Restoration/Ecological Restoration:** Process of assisting the recovery of an ecosystem, and its associated conservation values, that have been degraded, damaged, or destroyed (Source: adapted from 'International principles and standards for the practice of ecological restoration'. Gann et al 2019. Second edition. Society for Ecological Restoration) (shortened version – refer to the FSC Remedy Framework for full definition).

Note: The Organization is not necessarily obliged to restore those environmental values that have been affected by factors beyond the control of The Organization, for example by natural disasters, by climate change, or by the legally authorized activities of third parties, such as public infrastructure, mining, hunting or settlement. FSC-POL-20-003 The Excision of Areas from the Scope of Certification describes the processes by which such areas may be excised from the area certified, when appropriate.

The Organization is also not obliged to restore environmental values that may have existed at some time in the historic or pre-historic past, or that have been negatively affected by previous owners or organizations – with the exception of those values negatively affected through instances of conversion and whose restoration forms part of a Remedy Plan which The Organization is required to follow. In all instances, however, The Organization is expected to take reasonable measures to mitigate, control and prevent environmental degradation which is continuing in the Management Unit as a result of such previous impacts.

**Riparian zone:** Interface between land and a water body, and the vegetation associated with it.

**Risk:** The probability of an unacceptable negative impact arising from any activity in the Management Unit combined with its seriousness in terms of consequences (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Scale:** A measure of the extent to which a management activity or event affects an environmental value or a Management Unit, in time or space. An activity with a small or low spatial scale affects only a small proportion of the forest each year, an activity with a small or low temporal scale occurs only at long intervals (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Scale, intensity and risk:** See individual definitions of the terms 'scale', 'intensity', and 'risk'.

**Significant:** For the purposes of Principle 9, HCVs 1, 2 and 6 there are three main forms of recognizing significance.

- A designation, classification or recognized conservation status, assigned by an international agency such as IUCN or BirdLife International;

- A designation by national or regional authorities, or by a responsible national conservation organization, on the basis of its concentration of biodiversity;
- A voluntary recognition by the manager, owner or Organization, on the basis of available information, or of the known or suspected presence of a significant biodiversity concentration, even when not officially designated by other agencies.

Any one of these forms will justify designation as HCVs 1, 2 and 6. Many regions of the world have received recognition for their biodiversity importance, measured in many different ways. Existing maps and classifications of priority areas for biodiversity conservation play an essential role in identifying the potential presence of HCVs 1, 2 and 6 (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Silviculture:** The art and science of controlling the establishment, growth, composition, health and quality of forests and woodlands to meet the targeted diverse needs and values of landowners and society on a sustainable basis (Source: Nieuwenhuis, M. 2000. Terminology of Forest Management. IUFRO World Series Vol. 9. IUFRO 4.04.07 SilvaPlan and SilvaVoc).

**Small-scale smallholder:** Any person that is depending on the land for most of their livelihood, and/or employs labour mostly from family or neighbouring communities and has land use rights on a Management Unit of less than 50 hectares. Standard Developers may define this to less than 50 hectares (Source: FSC-POL-01-007 V1-0).

**Social harms:** Negative impacts on persons or communities, perpetrated by individuals, corporations or states, which include, but may go beyond, criminal acts by legal persons. Such harms include negative impacts on persons' or groups' rights, livelihoods and well-being, such as property (including forests, lands, waters), health, food security, healthy environment, cultural repertoire and happiness, as well as physical injury, detention, dispossession and expulsion (Source: FSC-POL-01-007 V1-0).

- **Ongoing social harms:** social harms which have not been remedied.
- **Priority social harms:** social harms prioritized by an FPIC-based process with affected rights holders or identified in consultation with affected stakeholders (Source: FSC-PRO-01-007 V1-0. Shortened version – refer to the FSC Remedy Framework for full definition).

**Stakeholder:** See definitions of 'affected stakeholder' and 'interested stakeholder'.

**Statutory law or statute law:** The body of law contained in Acts of Parliament (national legislature) (Source: Oxford Dictionary of Law).

**Tenure:** Socially defined agreements held by individuals or groups, recognized by legal statutes or customary practice, regarding the 'bundle of rights and duties' of ownership, holding, access and/or usage of a particular land unit or the associated resources there within (such as individual trees, plant species, water, minerals, etc.) (Source: International Union for Conservation of Nature [IUCN]. Glossary definitions provided on IUCN website).

**The Organization:** The person or entity holding or applying for certification and therefore responsible for demonstrating compliance with the requirements upon which FSC certification is based (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Threat:** An indication or warning of impending or likely damage or negative impacts (Source: based on Oxford English Dictionary).

**Threatened species:** Species that meet the IUCN (2001) criteria for Vulnerable (VU), Endangered (EN) or Critically Endangered (CR), and are facing a high, very high or extremely high risk of extinction in the wild. These categories may be re-interpreted for FSC purposes according to official national classifications (which have legal significance) and to local conditions and population densities (which should affect decisions about appropriate conservation measures) (Source: based on IUCN, 2001, IUCN Red List

Categories and Criteria: Version 3.1. IUCN Species Survival Commission. IUCN. Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, UK).

**Timber harvesting level:** The actual harvest quantity executed on the Management Unit, tracked by either volume (e.g. cubic metres or board feet) or area (e.g. hectares or acres) metrics for the purpose of comparison with calculated (maximum) allowable harvest levels.

**Timely manner:** As promptly as circumstances reasonably allow; not intentionally postponed by The Organization; in compliance with applicable laws, contracts, licences or invoices.

**Traditional Knowledge:** Information, know-how, skills and practices that are developed, sustained and passed on from generation to generation within a community, often forming part of its cultural or spiritual identity (Source: based on the definition by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). Glossary definition as provided under Policy/Traditional Knowledge on the WIPO website).

**Traditional peoples:** Traditional peoples are social groups or peoples who do not self-identify as Indigenous and who affirm rights to their lands, forests and other resources based on long established custom or traditional occupation and use (Source: Forest Peoples Programme, Marcus Colchester, 7 October 2009).

**Transaction verification:** Verification by certification bodies and/or Accreditation Services International (ASI) that FSC output claims made by certificate holders are accurate and match with the FSC input claims of their trading partners (Source: FSC-STD-40-004 V3-0).

**Trigger Value:** Trigger values are expressed as the value of toxicity exposure ratio (TER) above which exposure is considered to be an unacceptable risk. The TER is calculated based on the acute toxicity value and exposure for each pesticide. Its value will be local and will be based on exposure parameters.

**Uphold:** To acknowledge, respect, sustain and support (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Use rights:** Rights for the use of resources of the Management Unit that can be defined by local custom, mutual agreements, or prescribed by other entities holding access rights. These rights may restrict the use of particular resources to specific levels of consumption or particular harvesting techniques (Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2).

**Vast majority:** 80% of the total area of Intact Forest Landscapes within the Management Unit as of 1 January 2017. The vast majority also meets or exceeds the minimum definition of Intact Forest Landscape.

**Verifiable targets:** Specific goals, such as desired future forest conditions, established to measure progress towards the achievement of each of the management objectives. These goals are expressed as clear outcomes, such that their attainment can be verified and it is possible to determine whether they have been accomplished or not.

**Very limited portion:** The affected area shall not exceed 5% of the Management Unit, irrespective of whether the conversion activities have taken place prior to or after The Organization is awarded with FSC Forest Management certification (Source: FSC-POL-01-007 V1-0).

**Very limited portion of core area:** The area affected shall not exceed 0.5% of the area of the core area in any one year, nor affect a total of more than 5% of the area of the core area.

**Waste materials:** Unusable or unwanted substances or by-products, such as:

- Hazardous waste, including chemical waste and batteries;
- Containers;
- Motor and other fuels and oils;
- Rubbish including metals, plastics and paper; and
- Abandoned buildings, machinery and equipment.

**Water bodies** (including watercourses): Seasonal, temporary, and permanent brooks, creeks, streams, rivers, ponds, and lakes. Water bodies include riparian or wetland systems, lakes, swamps, bogs and springs.

**Water scarcity:** A water supply that limits food production, human health, and economic development. Severe scarcity is taken to be equivalent to 1,000 cubic metres per year per person or greater than 40% use relative to supply (Source: Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. 2005. Ecosystems and Human Well-Being: Policy Responses. Findings of the Responses Working Group. Washington D.C.: Island Press, Pages 599-605).

**Water stress:** Occurs when the demand for water exceeds the available amount during a certain period or when poor quality restricts its use. Water stress causes deterioration of freshwater resources in terms of quantity (aquifer over-exploitation, dry rivers, etc.) and quality (eutrophication, organic matter pollution, saline intrusion, etc.) (Source: UNEP, 2003, cited in Gold Standard Foundation. 2014. Water Benefits Standard).

**Wetlands:** Transitional areas between terrestrial and aquatic systems in which the water table is usually at or near the surface or the land is covered by shallow water (Source: Cowardin, L.M., Carter, V., Golet, F.C., Laroe, E.T. 1979. Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States. DC US Department: Washington). Under the Ramsar Convention, wetlands can include tidal mudflats, natural ponds, marshes, potholes, wet meadows, bogs, peatlands, freshwater swamps, mangroves, lakes, rivers and even some coral reefs (Source: IUCN, No Date, IUCN Definitions – English).

**Workers:** All employed persons including public employees as well as 'self-employed' persons. This includes part-time and seasonal employees, of all ranks and categories, including labourers, administrators, supervisors, executives, contractor employees as well as self-employed contractors and sub-contractors (Source: ILO Convention 155, Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981).

**Workers' organization:** Any organization of workers for furthering and defending the interest of workers (adapted from ILO Convention 87, Article 10). It is important to note that rules and guidance on composition of workers' organization vary from country to country, especially in relation to those who are considered as rank and file members, as well those who are deemed to have power to 'hire and fire'. Workers' organizations tend to separate association between those who can 'hire and fire' and those who cannot (Source: FSC report on generic criteria and indicators based on ILO Core Conventions principles, 2017).

**Worst forms of child labour:** Comprises: a) all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict; b) the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performance; c) the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties; d) work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children (ILO Convention 182, Article 3).



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