



FSC INTERIM FOREST STEWARDSHIP STANDARD FOR SIERRA LEONE

FSC-STD-SLE-01-2026 EN



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Standard developed by	Soil Association Certification Limited Spear House, 51 Victoria Street, Bristol, BS1 6AD, United Kingdom. Email: forestry@soilassociation.org
Contact for comments:	FSC International – Policy and Performance Unit Adenauerallee 134 53113 Bonn Germany Phone: +49 -(0)228 -36766 -0 Fax: +49 -(0)228 -36766 -65 Email: country_requirements@fsc.org

¹ 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 Interim Forest Stewardship Standard are expected to have been evaluated against this revised version and any nonconformities 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 Interim Forest Stewardship Standard will automatically expire and be considered terminated at the transition period's end date.

Version control

Version	Description	Final approval date
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A FOREWORD

(Informative section)

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 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

(Informative section)

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

(Normative section)

This standard shall be applied in the following scope:

Geographic region	Sierra Leone
Forest types	All forest types
Ownership types	All types of ownerships, including public, private and others
Scale and intensity categories (According to section 6 of FSC-STD-60-002)	All categories of Management Units, including provisions for small or low intensity managed forests (SLIMFs)
Forest products (According to FSC-STD-40-004a)	Rough wood (NTFPs not applicable)

B.3 Responsibility for Conformance

(Normative section)

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 geographic 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 section)

Normative elements in the standard are:

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

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.

Not normative elements in the standard that can be used for guidance only, are:

Verifiers, notes, guideline and examples which are attached to some of the indicators

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 are kept in the standard for transparency.

"SLIMF" (small or low-intensity managed forest(s)): The Organizations managing Management Units which qualify as SLIMF shall conform with all generic indicators in the standard, except where specific SLIMF indicators exist (marked as e.g., "SLIMF 1.7.1"), The Organizations above shall conform with them instead.

SLIMF eligibility criteria	National threshold
Small Management Units	Up to 100 hectares
Low intensity Management Units	<p>The rate of harvesting is less than 20% of the mean annual increment (MAI) within the total production forest area of the management unit, AND</p> <p>EITHER the annual harvest from the total production forest area is less than 5000 cubic meters,</p> <p>OR the <i>average</i> annual harvest from the total production forest is less than 5000 m³ / year during the period of validity of the certificate as verified by harvest reports and surveillance audits.</p>

The requirements in Indicator 10.2.1 are divided - the first part of indicator is applicable only for natural forests and the second only for plantations. The relevant specifications have been made in the indicator.

Sub-indicator 10.12.1.1 is marked as NON-SLIMF, because it is not applicable for SLIMF (but is applicable for all other Management Units).

Verbal forms for the expression of provisions

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

“shall” : indicates requirements strictly to be followed in order to conform with the standard; ‘shall not’ indicates a prohibition.

“should” : 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 re-quired. The Organization can meet these requirements in an equivalent way provided this can be demonstrated and justified.

“may” : indicates a course of action permissible within the limits of the standard; ‘need not’ indicates that a specified course of action is not a requirement.

“can” : is used for statements of possibility and capability, whether material, physical or causal.

The text of the Principles and the Criteria under section E contain terms that are formatted in italics and marked with an *asterisk**. These terms are defined in the annex of Glossary of terms. The terms that have been marked with an asterisk and formatted in italics in the indicators’ text, are local terms which have been added to apply to the local circumstances for this standard only. These local terms are defined in the annex of 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

(Normative section)

Interpretation requests regarding Interim Forests Stewardship Standards are submitted directly to FSC for processing and approval. Approved interpretations are published in the international FSC website (see: INT-STD-60-006_01 of Forest Management Interpretations).

Disputes between stakeholders concerning certification requirements are managed by 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

(Informative section)

The Republic of Sierra Leone (Sierra Leone) is a coastal country in West Africa and lies between latitude 7° and 10° N and longitudes 10° and 14° W, covering an area of 71,740 Km². It is bordered on the north and east by Guinea, on the south-east by Liberia and on the south-west and west by the Atlantic Ocean. The country's topography ranges from coastal plains to mountainous regions, including the Loma Mountains in the northeast which rise to an elevation of 1,945 meters. Sierra Leone has a tropical climate with a wet season from May to October (characterized by heavy rainfall and high humidity with precipitation ranging from 2,000 mm in the north to more than 5,000 mm along the coast) and a dry season from November to April, (FAO 2022).

Sierra Leone is moderately forested with 14.7% forest cover, and a further 61.1% of land classified as 'other wooded land'. The National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan assessment identified lowland rainforest, savannah, montane, wetlands and mangroves as the principal ecosystems (FAO 2022). Soils in Sierra Leone have been grouped into 12 soil associations by the Land and Water Development Division (LWDD) each with different attributes. Most soils in Sierra Leone are acidic (pH 4-5). The soils of Sierra Leone, like most tropical soils, are ferralitic and excessively leached because of the humid tropical conditions.

Sierra Leone's vegetation is classified by the two biomes in which it falls, Guinea-Savanna/Sudan -Guinea biome in the north and the Guinea-Congo Forest biome in the south-east, characterised by a savanna zone and closed forest zone respectively. The Guinean Forests are considered a biodiversity hotspot that stretches from Guinea and Sierra Leone eastward to Liberia, covering Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Benin and Nigeria. Across the biomes, the country hosts 30 species that are listed in the IUCN Red List (2019) and BirdLife International (2018) under the following threatened categories: 2 Critically Endangered (CR); 3 Endangered (EN), 11 Vulnerable (VU); 11 Near threatened (NT); and 3 Data deficient (DD) (Okoni-Williams et al. 2001).

Recent analysis of long-term losses shows that more than 80% of the region's forests have vanished (CEPF 2022). Most of the pristine forest and woodlands have been transformed into farmlands and much of the country is now covered in farm bush and fallow vegetation. Sierra Leone's increase in deforestation is reportedly due to slash and burn agriculture, firewood and charcoal production, mining, and timber production (Forest Trends 2021).

Sierra Leone relies primarily on traditional biomass fuels such as firewood, charcoal, and agricultural residues for cooking and heating, traditional biomass accounts for over 90% of total final energy consumption in the country (World Bank 2015). The government has introduced policies and programs to increase access to modern energy services and reduce dependency on traditional biomass.

The last national forest inventory took place in 1975 and has not been officially updated since. Forest resources were highly exploited during the 10-year civil conflict in Sierra Leone, and tree cover has continued to decrease by 30% since 2000 (Global Forest Watch Dashboard 2024).

Forest tenure in Sierra Leone operates under a dual legal structure which incorporates both elements of traditional or customary law and current National laws based on English common law. The majority of Sierra Leone falls under the jurisdiction of customary law. Two land tenure systems are in place i.e. land held under a freehold system with transferable titles and land under the custodianship of the chiefs. The governance structure in Sierra Leone is based on a decentralised system structured into central government, local (city-, municipal-, and district-) and chiefdom councils. Local administration is supported

by a traditional system comprising of tribal headmen, who are selected through consultations with elders and opinion leaders of the tribe and then endorsed by the President, and village headmen who are democratically elected and provide village representation. The tribal headmen advise on matters concerning their specific ethnic group and once in position, rule for life. The provinces, comprising a Northern, Eastern, and Southern Province, are ruled through a traditional system of chiefdoms where local administration is coordinated through Paramount Chiefs and chiefdom councils. Each of the 149 chiefdoms in Sierra Leone has a Paramount Chief, or a Regent Chief. Paramount Chiefs also rule for life but are elected by the councillors of the chiefdom and come from a ruling family.

In August 2022, Sierra Leone enacted land laws that empowered local communities to protect their lands against industrial development and negotiate their value. They include: the Customary Land Rights Act, which grants land owning and land using communities the right to Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) over all industrial projects on their lands; and the National Land Commission Act, which establishes local land use committees to secure effective and holistic land administration. The Act explicitly provides for the protection of customary land rights, the elimination of discrimination under customary law, and the management and administration of land subject to customary law. This law guarantees women's equal rights and access to land and bans industrial development (mining, plantations, farming, and housing) in protected, conserved or ecologically sensitive areas (wetlands, wildlife habitats, steep slopes and old growth or virgin forests).

The Forestry Act of 1988 is the primary basis for law that guides forest management in Sierra Leone. The Forestry Regulations 1989, provide rules and procedures for the implementation of the Act. The Forestry Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security is responsible for forest management and biodiversity conservation within Sierra Leone. Under the Forestry Act of 1988, 38 forest reserves were protected. The Forestry Policy 2010 directs the Government to focus on land degradation, deforestation and biodiversity loss. The exploitation of forest resources in Sierra Leone has seen a steady increase over the years while the establishment of forest plantations has witnessed a drastic decline. The relationship between forest exploitation and plantation forest decline is broadly assumed to be influenced by population growth, weak forest policies, legislatures, forest management and monitoring policies over the past century (Fayiah 2021). The 1988 Forest Act is due to be updated by end 2024.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in Sierra Leone is a government agency established to protect and conserve the environment. Founded in 2002 under the Environmental Protection Agency Act to address environmental issues, environmental licensing, audits, and enforces environmental laws and regulations. The EPA in Sierra Leone plays a key role in the land-based sector.

Sierra Leone is generally considered a poor country, with its GDP per capita level behind neighbouring countries. The 1991 war and 2014 Ebola outbreak have had an impact on the overall economy, as a result of these major occurrences the timber industry has adversely affected, with very little activity beyond small scale planting and illegal extraction and sales.

The forestry sector contributes approximately 8.94% to the Gross Domestic Product of the country (World Bank 2020). Trade in timber is largely influenced by overseas demands, with Europe being an important market for Sierra Leone, there has been a well-developed intra-regional timber trade flow that is made up of sawn wood from Sierra Leone to Guinea Conakry and Liberia.

Ethnicity in Sierra Leone

According to the 2015 census there are officially 15 ethnic groups recognized in Sierra Leone, with the major ones being the Mende, Temne, Limba, and Krio. However, it is essential to note that there are also many subgroups and smaller ethnic communities within these larger groups.

No single ethno-linguistic group forms an absolute majority of Sierra Leone's population. Previous censuses have tended not to collect ethnic data, possibly out of fear of creating ethnic tensions. Indeed, the 2015 census itself proved controversial, with many members of the then opposition Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) questioning the relative composition estimates of the southern parts of the country, where most of its supporters reside, compared to the north. Notwithstanding this debate, the results of the census found that the largest communities were Mende (31.9 per cent) and Temne (31.4 per cent) (though other sources suggest Temne are the largest ethnic group) followed by Limba (8.4 per cent), Kono (5.1 per cent), Koranko (4.4 per cent), Fullah (3.8 per cent), Susu (2.9 per cent), Kissi (2.5 per cent), Loko (2.3 per cent), Madingo (2.3 per cent), Sherbro (1.9 per cent), Yalunka (0.7 per cent), Krim (0.2 per cent), Vai and other smaller communities.

The Mende inhabit the south and have benefited from the relative prosperity of their southern homeland. The Temne reside in an area inland from the coast to an area north of Mendeland; the Limba, in the Northern Province; and the Kono and Kissi in the Eastern Province. Kuranko, Fula, Loko, Susu and Mandinka also live in the north. Limba are among the earliest inhabitants of Sierra Leone and speak various dialects of a language largely unrelated to other languages in the area. They are concentrated in the north. Sherbro live in the coastal region together with the smaller groups of Vai and Gola, all of which have larger numbers living across the border in Liberia.

Krios are descendants of freed slaves who returned to Africa from the Americas, and their Krio language, based largely on English and African languages, is used as a lingua franca across the country. They mostly live in the Freetown area, where small numbers of Lebanese, Indians and Europeans are also found. The Krio community was dominant during the colonial era but never held a monopoly of power similar to that of the Americo-Liberian elite in Liberia.

Northern-based groups such as the Fula, Temne, Loko, Mandinka and Susu, are mostly Sunni, while most of the southern or eastern Mende, Kono, Kissi, Sherbro and Krio are Christian.

None of these groups currently self-identify as Indigenous Peoples. The Government of Sierra Leone does not identify any specific group as Indigenous. There are no UN Special Rapporteur reports on Indigenous Peoples in Sierra Leone, neither are any UNHCR reports about Indigenous People in Sierra Leone (<https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-Indigenous-peoples/country-visits>).

Stakeholders consulted across all 3 chambers and several local communities of different ethnicities were unanimous that references to Traditional Peoples in Principle 4 is sufficient to ensure that legal & customary rights are respected and upheld in FSC-certified forest management units, which has been considerably adapted with contents of the 2022 Customary Land Act.

In the FSC Principles & Criteria V5-3, the definition of "Traditional peoples" refers to 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 (2009). In all of the in-person Stakeholder consultation meetings carried out in August 2024, "Traditional peoples" was fully supported as the most appropriate term for use in Sierra Leone, rather than Indigenous Peoples.

However, Principle 3 has been retained as a precautionary approach to safeguard the evolution of Indigenous identity in Sierra Leone in synchrony with other African countries where this sensitive topic is developing in response to growing respect for customary rights. All Organisations are, therefore, required in Indicator 3.1.1 to identify any Indigenous Peoples that may be affected by management activities through culturally appropriate engagement with the affected, or potentially affected, rights holders, supported by the Guidance Note and <FSC-GUI-30-003 V2-0 FSC Guidelines for the Implementation of the Right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC)>. If no Indigenous Peoples are identified, then the remaining indicators of P3 would be considered not applicable.

Social Aspects

Sierra Leone's current population is estimated at 7.8 million. Between 2004 and 2015, the population grew by 42% according to the country's 2015 Census data. The World Bank has estimated an annual population growth forecast of 2.2%; resulting in the population reaching 9.5 million in 2030.

Sierra Leone scored 35 on a scale from 0 ("highly corrupt") to 100 ("very clean") on the Transparency International's 2022 Corruption Perceptions Index. When ranked by score, Sierra Leone ranked 108th among the 180 countries in the Index, where the country ranked first is perceived to have the most honest public sector.

Minimum wage is determined by the government and implemented through the National Minimum Wage Board. The Board sets and reviews the minimum wage periodically to ensure that it is fair and reflective of the economic conditions in the country. The regulatory body responsible for overseeing the implementation and enforcement of minimum wage laws in Sierra Leone is the Ministry of Labour and Social Security. The minimum wage is not compared against living wage methodologies and may not necessarily align with a living wage that would adequately cover the basic needs of individuals and families.

The Sierra Leonean Gender Inequality Index (GII) value dropped between 2004 and 2005 (GII value of 0.663 in 2005) signifying a decrease in the inequalities that exist in the participation of women in labour markets, in the number of women parliamentarians, in secondary and higher education attainment by both men and women, and in terms of falling adolescent birth rates. New Sierra Leone legislation is set to further improve equality of women and is a priority for government.

Harvesting and Indigenous Hardwoods

Details on Indigenous hardwood trade for the country are limited. The sector has faced many challenges since the outbreak of the 1991 civil war and the Ebola outbreak of 2014. The main challenge the sector faces is the dwindling supply of logs from the ever-decreasing natural forest resource base. As a result of these major occurrences, the timber industry has been adversely affected. Today there are no value-added processing mills in the country and most of the forest activities are based on the extraction of chainsaw lumber from natural forests. These forests are increasingly being converted to national parks to reduce forest depletion and to meet biodiversity and conservation policies.

Of the Indigenous hardwoods, only rose wood (*Pterocarpus* spp) sawlogs are permitted for export under stringent control. The Forestry Division, a unit under the Ministry of Agriculture Fishing and Forestry is faced with operational challenges limiting its ability to process export permits. Following a regional CITES ban of *P. erinaceus* exports, research in 2021 showed Sierra Leone supplying 36% of all reported rosewood imports into China (Forest Trends 2022).

Commercial Timber Plantations

Small- and large-scale commercial plantations to date have historically been established on community-owned land, leased to companies with the approval of the Government. In return, the land-owning community obtain payment for the lease area and frequently a benefit-sharing arrangement is agreed. There are small-scale woodlots of *Gmelina Arborea* (Yemane) scattered around the country, following a drive to plant these in the colonial period.

Rubber plantations in Sierra Leone have a long history dating back to the colonial period when the British established rubber plantations in the country. These plantations were primarily located in the southern part of Sierra Leone, especially in areas such as Moyamba and Pujehun districts. The rubber industry in Sierra Leone played a significant role in the country's economy during the colonial era and continued to be

important post-independence. Recently, rubber plantations in Sierra Leone have faced various challenges including fluctuating prices in the global and regional market and diseases affecting productivity of rubber trees. Many individual owners of former small-scale rubber plantations would like to convert areas to commercial species under an FSC Group Scheme.

Miro Forestry Sierra Leone Limited is currently the only large-scale commercial plantation company in Sierra Leone. The project consists of the establishment of commercial forestry plantations (mainly eucalyptus, acacia and gmelina), for producing sawn timber, poles, plywood and biomass, for domestic and international markets. The Company has been present in Sierra Leone since 2012 and comprises of 24,147 ha, 1,500 employees and a Plymill with Plywood output capacity of 60,000m³ per annum (Miro Annual Report 2023). The company gained FSC certification in 2017 with Licence Number FSC-C135138 (FSC^a Search 2024). The presence of the company has resulted in an increase of collectively or privately-owned plots with trees grown for timber within the region and increased interest in timber species. There has been interest in the formation of an FSC certified Group Scheme from individual and family landowners.

C.2 Background information on the standard development

(Informative section)

This standard was developed according to the rules and regulations laid out in FSC-PRO-60-007 V1-2 in the period from 5 June 2023 to 31 October 2024. Two stakeholder consultations were conducted. The first consultation was conducted from 18 July 2024 to 18 August 2024. The second consultation was conducted from 30 September 2024 to 7 October 2024.

D REFERENCES

(Informative section)

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

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

Verifiers: For companies: certificate of incorporation from Corporate Affairs Commission, Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN).

Guidance Note: Individual landowners are not required to register as a company unless they wish to operate under the name of a business rather than their own name.

1.1.2 Legal registration is granted by the National Land Commission according to the National Land Commission Act, 2022.

Verifiers: Land registration confirmation, proof of application to Land Commission.

Guidance Note: Due to the recent implementation of the National Land Commission Act, there may be delays in National Land Commission confirmation.

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.

Verifiers: Lease agreements for leaseholders, timber harvesting license from the Forestry Division of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, on Customary Land, customary tenure rights for local community members can be presumed, unless there is evidence to the contrary (e.g. ownership disputes, expansion into communal areas used for other purposes).

Guidance Note: Legal tenure can be granted by landowners through Chiefdom Councils according to the Customary Land Rights Act 2022. Prescriptions for leasing land directly from land owning families and Chiefdom Councils are detailed in the Customary Land Rights Act 2022 and include Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) criteria. Non-citizens or foreign companies shall not acquire a lease hold interest in land subject to customary law for a period exceeding 50 years and shall not initially exceed 10,000 ha.

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

Verifiers: Lease agreement, land registration, customary land use agreement

Guidance Note: Tenure in Sierra Leone operates under a dual legal structure that incorporates elements of both traditional or customary law and current National law. This is formally documented in The Customary Land Rights Act 2022.

- 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: Maps indicating boundaries, land use plans, in- field marker inspection, community interviews.

- 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: Updated legal register with legal compliance monitoring, no substantiated outstanding claims of non-compliance, evidence of corrective action on any identified noncompliance, field observations, interviews with workers.

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

Verifiers: Evidence of payment of annual lease payments.

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

Verifiers: Documentation (including Forest Management Plan); site visits; interviews with workers and affected stakeholders.

- 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.

Verifiers: Communication materials; activity records; training records; interviews with managers, staff and contractors; site visits; stakeholder interviews.

For SLIMF: Activity records, interviews with owner/manager, site visits.

- 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.

Verifiers: Minutes of meetings/record of agreements reached with communities and/or regulatory bodies; activity reports; site visits; interviews with regulatory bodies and stakeholders.

For SLIMF: Interviews with owner/manager and relevant stakeholders.

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

Verifiers: Records of incidents and measures taken; minutes of meetings/records of agreements reached with customary bodies; evidence of measures taken such as police reports, security improvements, forest guard training and awareness raising; trends in incident numbers and type.

Guidance Note: Frequently customary and Chiefdom by-laws exist for control of illegal activities, e.g. use of fire in agriculture and protection of buffer zones, if applicable these can be integrated in the Management Plan.

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.

Verifiers: Forest produce export permit (Ministry of Trade and Industry); forest produce import permit.

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

Verifiers: CITES species harvesting permits; CITES certification documentation and correspondence; interviews with workers

Guidance Note: Sierra Leone is signatory to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), with accession on 26/01/1995. The import, export and use for commercial gain of any CITES species (timber or non-timber) requires a CITES permit. More information about CITES species can be found at: https://checklist.cites.org/#/en/search/country_ids%5B%5D=131&output_layout=alphabetical&level_of_listing=0&show_synonyms=1&show_author=1&show_english=1&show_spanish=1&show_french=1&scientific_name=&page=1&per_page=20.

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.

Verifiers: Publicly available dispute resolution procedure; evidence of *culturally appropriate** engagement with affected stakeholders; interviews with affected stakeholders and relevant workers.

For SLIMF: verbal account that can be verified by stakeholders; records of meetings held to deal with substantial issues; community members in customary land work through the traditional authorities.

- 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.

Verifiers: Records and correspondence of disputes received related to issues of national and customary laws; evidence of timely responses; accurate, up to date progress records of disputes in the resolution process; affected stakeholder consultation.

- 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 and correspondence of disputes and outcomes.

- 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: Documentation and records of any substantial and significant disputes; evidence of halted operations where substantial disputes exist; affected stakeholder consultation.

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.

Verifiers: Documented policy training records; implementation records; interviews with workers.

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.

Verifiers: Documented policy and/ or records of communication to affected stakeholders including suppliers and customers; training records; interviews with neighbours, managers and staff.

- 1.7.2 The policy (or declaration in case of SLIMF) meets or exceeds related legislation.

Verifiers: Evidence of legal compliance of the policy/declaration.

- 1.7.3 The policy (or declaration in case of SLIMF) is publicly available at no cost.

Verifiers: Evidence of free public availability.

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

Verifiers: Interviews with workers; no evidence of bribery, coercion or corruption.

- 1.7.5 Corrective measures are implemented if corruption does occur.

Verifiers: Interviews with management and workers; no evidence of bribery, coercion or 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.

Verifiers: Documented and endorsed statement of commitment.

1.8.2 The policy is publicly available at no cost.

Verifiers: Interviews with staff and workers; evidence of free public availability; interviews with stakeholders; dissemination of the requirements of this certification standard to workers, licensees and leaseholders; public statement of policy.

PRINCIPLE* 2: WORKERS* RIGHTS AND EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS

The Organization* shall maintain or enhance the social and economic wellbeing 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, as stated in The Employment Act 2023, except as specified in 2.1.1.2.

Verifiers: Employee register; interviews with managers and staff; site visits.

Guidance Note: Compulsory primary education ends at age fifteen, which is also the *minimum age** for the engagement of a *child** in full-time employment.

2.1.1.1 .1 The Organisation shall keep an up-to-date register of all workers under the age of 18, including their dates of birth.

Verifiers: Employee register including birth dates.

2.1.1.2 Where persons between the ages of 13 to 15 years are employed in *light work**, such employment shall not interfere with schooling, nor be harmful to their health or development. Notably, where children are subject to compulsory education laws, they shall work only outside of school hours during normal day-time working hours.

Verifiers: Employee register; training records; interviews with managers and staff; accessible copies of relevant legislation; site visits.

2.1.1.3 No person under the age of 18 is employed in hazardous or heavy work*, night work, overtime work or work that will be harmful to their health or wellbeing, except for the purpose of training within approved national laws and regulations.

Verifiers: Training records; employment records; grievance records; incident records; interviews with managers and staff.

2.1.1.4 The Organization shall prohibit *worst forms of child labour**.

Verifiers: Policy for employment of young workers; recruitment procedures; register of employees including their birth dates; records of worker Identity Cards.

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.

Verifiers: Employment contracts; payroll records; interviews with managers, workers and worker representatives or trade unions.

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: Employment contracts; payroll records; interviews with managers, workers and worker representatives/trade unions; grievance records.

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: Non-discrimination Policy; payroll records; interviews with managers, workers and worker representatives or trade unions.

2.1.3.2 First consideration is given to citizens with the required qualifications and/or training for employment in any project executed by The Organization or any contractor.

Verifiers: Training & qualification records for all employees, Local Content Agency reporting, recruitment policy, recruitment notifications & adverts, site visits; interviews with workers and trade unions.

Guidance Note: Quotas for community and citizen opportunities are included in the Local Content Agency Act; Organizations provide annual reports to the Agency.

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 worker organizations of their own choosing.

Verifiers: Interviews with managers, workers and worker representatives or trade unions; Freedom of Association Policy.

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, as detailed in the Employment Act 2023 and Trade Unions Act 2023.

Verifiers: Interviews with managers, workers and worker representatives or trade unions; Freedom of Association Policy.

Guidance Note: Where Workers Organizations are newly established and lack experience, The Organization may consider facilitating independent support from relevant organisations.

2.1.4.2.1 Workers elected as the workers organization personnel are allocated a quantity of time during normal working hours to fully execute their roles and responsibilities as representatives of the worker organization, without receiving less pay.

Verifiers: Interviews with managers, workers and worker representatives or trade unions; *workers' organization** operating procedures; salary slips.

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.

Verifiers: Documented policies; *Collective bargaining** Agreements; interviews with workers, Trade Union or worker organisation representatives and officials; grievance records.

Guidance Note: Workers Organizations can be lawfully established without being part of the national level workers organisation, if an internal company-level organisation is preferred by its members.

2.1.4.4 *Collective bargaining** agreements are implemented where they exist.

Verifiers: Documented policies; signed *Collective bargaining** Agreements; interviews with workers, Trade Union or worker organisation representatives and officials.

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: Organisation policy on gender equality and *discrimination**; evidence of implementation of policy and confirmation of no *discrimination** against women; training records; employment and contract records; wage records; gender action plan.

2.2.1.1 At least 30% of workers are women, as prescribed by Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment Act 2022.

Verifiers: evidence of implementation of gender equality and *discrimination** policy; employment and contract records; wage records; gender action plan.

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

Verifiers: Recruitment policy; content of job advertisements; statistics on representation of women per job grade; employment contracts; interviews with women

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 & safety programs 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: Organigram; payroll wage band consistency; payslips; employment contracts; interviews with women

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.

Verifiers: Meeting minutes or records of any agreed payment method for women; payroll records; Collective Bargain Agreement; interviews with women.

2.2.6 Maternity leave is no less than a fourteen (14)-week period after *child**birth, upon presentation of a medical certificate certifying the expected date of delivery.

Verifiers: Employment contracts; *Collective bargaining** Agreement; interviews with HR Manager, women workers, Trade Union or worker organisation representatives.

2.2.6.1 All benefits and entitlements continue uninterrupted during Maternity Leave.

Verifiers: Employment contracts; payroll records; interviews with HR Manager, women workers, Trade Union or worker organisation representatives.

2.2.6.2 Employment contracts are not terminated during pregnancy or maternity leave.

Verifiers: Employment contracts; payroll records; interviews with HR Manager, women workers, Trade Union or worker organisation representatives.

2.2.7 Paternity leave of a two (2)- week period upon the birth of a *child** is available once a year and there is no penalty for taking it.

Guidance Note: In accordance with the Employment Act 2023, clause 77, male workers are required to give one week written notice to their employer upon the birth of his *child** if they intend to proceed on paternity leave.

Verifiers: Employment contracts; *Collective bargaining** Agreement; interviews with men.

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.

Verifiers: Gender equality policy; minutes of meetings; training records; interviews with women who attend such committees and forums

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: Gender equality policy; human resources policy; employment contracts; interviews with HR Manager, women and men workers, Trade Union or worker organisation representatives and officials.

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.

Verifiers: Health and Safety Policy; risk assessments for each site and operation; procedures including safe working criteria for each operation; interviews with managers and workers; field activity observation of safety practices, including first aid training and equipment

Guidance Note: Health and Safety for employees is covered in the Employment Act 2023, Factories Act 1974, and are frequently covered in *Collective bargaining** Agreements, albeit with limited reference to forestry and associated work.

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

Verifiers: Interviews and verbal accounts from workers, site observations.

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

Verifiers: Risk assessments; site visits; field inspections; worker interviews; protective equipment records.

2.3.3 Use of personal protective equipment is enforced.

Verifiers: Site visits; field inspections; worker and supervisor interviews; training records.

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

Verifiers: Accident book; records of accidents and lost time due to injuries; accident and incident investigation records; accident and incident trend information.

SLIMF 2.3.4 The use of health and safety measures by workers is checked and known.

Verifiers: Interviews with Managers and workers, accident book; records of accidents and lost time due to injuries.

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

Verifiers: Accident records; assessment against industry averages where these are available; historical accident and incident trend information.

SLIMF 2.3.5 Accident level is low compared to national forest industry averages.

Verifiers: Comparison assessment against forest industry averages; evidence of measures taken to reduce accidents when higher than forest industry averages.

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

Verifiers: Evidence of revised health and safety practices integrating post-accident learnings; accident and incident investigation records.

For SLIMF: interviews with the owner/manager describing the measures taken to improve safety performance based on previous incidents; evidence of measures taken implemented.

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, as prescribed in Employment Act 2023 and Industrial Relations and Trade Union Act 2023.

Verifiers: Policy including updated legal requirements; employment contracts; wage slips; interviews with workers.

Guidance Note: A Joint National Negotiating Board for workers established in 2023 publishes national minimum wages annually through Gazette publications, available at: <https://sierralii.gov.sl/gazettes>

2.4.2 Wages paid meet or exceed:

- 1) Recognized forest industry wage agreements; or
- 2) Living wages that are higher than legal minimum wages.

Guidance Note: There are no forest industry standards currently available in Sierra Leone. The Commercial Agricultural Producers and Processors Association (CAPPA), conducts annual salary benchmarking by evaluating land-based salaries in relation to job positions, qualifications, and engaging in stakeholder consultations for a comprehensive assessment. The CAPPA benchmarking initiative can be utilised to inform Living Wage rate setting, but is not a Living Wage benchmark in itself. For Living Wage rate setting, the Anker methodology is recommended (<https://www.ankerresearchinstitute.org/anker-methodology>), which can be implemented through *culturally appropriate** engagement with workers and/or *formal and informal workers organizations** (see *Indicator* 2.4.3* below).

Verifiers: Contracts; wage slips; interviews with workers and labour union representatives; interviews with relevant associations.

2.4.3 Wages are established through *culturally appropriate** engagement with workers and/or *formal and informal workers organizations**.

Verifiers: Engagement records or meeting minutes with organisations; interviews with workers.

2.4.4 Wages, salaries and contracts are paid on time.

Verifiers: Payroll records; interviews with workers; grievance records.

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.

Verifiers: Training needs assessments; Training records for all employees; certificates of competence; site visits; interview with workers.

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

Verifiers: Training records; interviews with training providers; interviews with workers.

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: Dispute resolution mechanism; evidence of *culturally appropriate** engagement in the development and communication of the mechanism; HR policies and procedures; interviews with staff and workers.

2.6.1.1 The dispute resolution procedure guarantees the safety and anonymity of the complainant.

Guidance Note: It is recommended that the location of the complaints box is hidden from the view of other workers, or specific times & places are established when complaints may be communicated verbally to the disputes manager for addressing with management.

Verifiers: Dispute resolution procedure; inspection of location of complaints boxes; HR policies and procedures; interviews with staff and workers.

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

Verifiers: Grievance records including information on resolving process and closure; interviews with staff and workers.

2.6.3 Up-to-date records of workers grievances related to workers loss or damage of 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: Grievance records including information on resolving process and closure; interviews with staff and workers.

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

Verifiers: Records of payments made for work related loss and damage; interviews with workers; interview with worker representatives or Trade Unions.

Guidance Note: *Collective bargaining** Agreements often include additional detail on fair compensation. Supplementary information is held in the Labour laws and Employment Act 2023.

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 Note: No ethnic group in Sierra Leone currently self-identifies as Indigenous Peoples. The Government of Sierra Leone does not identify any specific group as Indigenous. There are no UN Special Rapporteur reports on Indigenous Peoples in Sierra Leone, neither are any UNHCR reports about Indigenous People in Sierra Leone (<https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-Indigenous-peoples/country-visits>).

Stakeholders consulted across all 3 chambers and several local communities of different ethnicities were unanimous that references to Traditional Peoples in Principle 4 is sufficient to ensure that legal & customary rights are respected and upheld in FSC-certified forest management units, which has been considerably adapted with contents of the 2022 Customary Land Act.

However, Principle 3 has been maintained in the standard to ensure proactive recognition and protection of Indigenous Peoples' rights. As part of this precautionary inclusion, all organizations are required to comply with Criterion 3.1 (*Indicator** 3.1.1), which focuses on identifying Indigenous Peoples who may have been overlooked in the analysis or who may self-identify in the future. If no Indigenous Peoples are identified, then the rest of Principle 3 shall not apply.

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

Verifiers: Stakeholder mapping; report verifying likely presence or absence of IP in or around the MU; Interviews with relevant workers, local communities, representatives of IP Organisations and researchers.

Guidance Note: Whilst the Constitution of Sierra Leone makes no provision for the protection of Indigenous Peoples' rights, there may be groups that need to be assisted in identifying as Indigenous People. To support this process, FSC promotes the following list of characteristics set by the United Nations:

- Self-identification as Indigenous at the individual level and acceptance by the community as their member;
- Historical continuity with pre-colonial/pre-settler societies;
- Strong link to territories and surrounding natural resources;
- Distinct social, economic, or political systems;
- Distinct language, culture, and beliefs;
- Non-dominant groups of society;

- Resolve to maintain and reproduce their ancestral environments and systems as distinctive peoples and communities.

It is also recommended to consult with national & international Indigenous peoples' organizations or non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

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) Their goals, aspirations and objectives for the areas they hold the legal and/or customary rights to;
- 6) Areas where rights are contested between Indigenous Peoples, governments and/or others;
- 7) Summary of the means by which the legal and customary rights and contested rights, are addressed by The Organization; and
- 8) Their level of understanding related to FPIC, FSC, the Organization's intended forest management activities, and *Indigenous Cultural Landscapes**.

Verifiers: Documentation review of 1) - 7) above; interviews with Managers, local communities, authorities, local organisations and researchers (social and environmental).

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 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.

Verifiers: Review of Documentation (policies for stakeholder engagement, SOPs, management plans, minutes of engagement meetings, stakeholders' engagement & communication plans, websites); Interviews with Organisation, local communities, District Council authorities, representatives of IP, IP Organisations and researchers.

3.2.2 The legal and customary rights of Indigenous Peoples are not violated by The Organization.

Verifiers: Review of documentation (complaints register, incident reports); Field observations; Interviews with Organisation, local communities, District Council authorities, representatives of IP, IP Organisations and researchers.

- 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: Review of documentation (disputes/complaints register; minutes of disputes resolution' meetings, agreements signed); Interviews with Organisation, local communities, District Council authorities, representatives of IP, IP Organisations and researchers.

- 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;
 - 4) Informing the Indigenous Peoples of the current and future planned forest management activities; and
 - 5) Ensuring that the location of sites with special cultural, ecological, economic, religious, or spiritual importance is never disclosed without the prior consent from the Indigenous Peoples.

Verifiers: Review of documentation (FPIC process and records, consultations' minutes, agreements signed, evidence of notices sent/shared with communities); Interviews with affected Indigenous people.

- 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.

Verifiers: Review of documentation (FPIC process and records, consultations' minutes, agreements signed,). Interviews with affected Indigenous people.

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 at least:
- 1) the duration of the current agreement
 - 2) the conditions upon which consent is granted;
 - 3) provisions for suspension, termination, renegotiation & renewal;

- 4) the conditions upon which the mutually agreed, proactive dispute resolution process is triggered;
- 5) the economic conditions of consent; and
- 6) evidence of consent from at least 60 % of the male and female adult members of the *affected rights holders**.

Verifiers: Binding agreements specifying duration, provisions for renegotiation, renewal, termination, economic conditions and other terms and conditions.

Guidance Note: An *affected rights holder** may not want to enter a legally binding agreement with The Organization, as it may be perceived to have repercussions for any legal position or negotiation status with the state. In these situations, parties may decide to utilize a different form of agreement (e.g., Memorandum of Understanding or Protocol Agreement) with explicitly stated objectives to respect the right to grant, withhold or withdraw FPIC. It is helpful to discuss this scenario early in the development of the Process Agreement.

3.3.2 Records of *culturally appropriate** binding agreements are maintained including, where applicable, written accounts and audio or film records, and made available to the parties of the agreement in their preferred language and media formats.

Verifiers: Review of documentation (Binding Agreements, FPIC process and records, consultations' minutes, signed agreements); interviews with managers, local communities and authorities.

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

Verifiers: Binding agreements, monitoring protocols, interviews with affected stakeholders.

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: No reports or evidence of rights violations, interviews with affected stakeholders.

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: Established process/es for IPs to report cases of rights violations based on *culturally appropriate** engagement, Evidence of The Organization's response & handling of the reports, reparation measures where violation was identified, interviews with affected stakeholders.

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.

Verifiers: Review of documentation (maps, list of Sites of Social and Cultural Interest - SSCIs, SOPs, minutes of meetings and reports of the processes for identification of SSCIs, management plans); Field observation, interviews with managers and local stakeholders.

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: Review of documentation (management plans, agreements signed with communities on the management of SSCIs, maps, reports of activities implemented, Annual Plans of Operations - APOs & budgets, management plans); field observations; interviews with managers and Indigenous Peoples.

Guidance Note: Sites with special cultural, ecological, economic, religious, or spiritual importance may be regarded as confidential. Accordingly, these sites should never be disclosed publicly, such as on maps or signage, or in the publicly available summary of the management plan (See 7.5.1 & 7.5.2) without the clear Free, Prior, Informed Consent (FPIC) of the communities in question, maintaining the autonomy and authority to safeguard and utilize these areas. See also 3.2.4.e.

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: Review of documentation (minutes of management meetings, maps, management instructions to field staff, reports on identified new sites); interviews with Indigenous Peoples and managers; field observations.

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: Review of documentation of use of traditional knowledge (minutes of meetings; agreements signed with Indigenous Peoples); interviews with Indigenous Peoples.

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: Review of documentation of use of traditional knowledge (evidence of compensation to Indigenous Peoples: financial records like pay slips, signed receipts of compensations received); interviews with Indigenous Peoples and managers.

PRINCIPLE* 4: COMMUNITY RELATIONS

The Organization* shall contribute to maintaining or enhancing the social and economic wellbeing 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.

Verifiers: List of identified local communities, interviews with communities and local organisations.

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) Their goals, aspirations, objectives and Land Use Plans for the areas they hold the legal and/or customary rights to;
- 6) Areas where rights are contested between local communities, governments and/or others;
- 7) Summary of the means by which the legal and customary rights, and contested rights are addressed by The Organization; and
- 8) Their level of understanding related to FPIC, FSC and The Organization's intended forest management activities.

Guidance Note: Technical support may need to be provided depending on the capacity of the community and current understanding of the above items.

Verifiers: Minutes of meetings with rights holders; all rights documented and/or mapped; Land Use Plans, Interviews with local communities, community organisations and representatives.

4.1.2.1 Procedures to identify and map the local communities' rights and resources in 4.1.2 guarantee the confidentiality of information and data, uphold community sovereignty of that information and data and specifically state that information and data will only be shared with the Free, Prior and Informed Consent of the rights holders.

Verifiers: Documented community rights identification and mapping procedures, interview with workers and communities.

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 people* 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.

Verifiers: Interviews with local community members, minutes of meetings.

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

Verifiers: Interviews with local community members and/or their representatives.

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: Records of corrective measures, grievance records, interviews with local community members.

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;
- 4) Informing the traditional peoples of the current and future planned forest management activities; and
- 5) Binding agreement concluded through free, prior and informed consent from at least 60% of the male and 60% of the female adult members of the *affected rights holders**.

Guidance Note 1: “Traditional peoples” refers to 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 (2009).

Guidance Note 2: Supplementary wording in 5) is taken from Customary Land Rights Act, 2022, clause 11.

Verifiers: Interviews with local community members, communication and engagement records.

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.

Verifiers: Review of documentation (FPIC process and records, consultations' minutes, agreements signed,); interviews with managers, local communities and authorities.

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) The acquisition of materials, goods, products and other services.

Verifiers: Interviews with workers, organisations, local community members and representatives; reports and records of services and opportunities provided; local content agency reporting.

Guidance Note: Quotas for community and citizen opportunities are included in the Local Content Agency Act. Organizations are required to provide annual reports to the Local Content Agency.

SLIMF 4.3.1 Preference is given to local people and services.

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.**

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

Verifiers: Records of community engagement meetings; interviews with local community members, leaders and local development agencies.

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

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.

Verifiers: Records of community meetings, interviews with local community members, leaders and local development agencies.

SLIMF 4.4.2 Local products and services are used.

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.

Verifiers: Socio-economic impact assessment reports, Community engagement policy and strategy; Records of meetings held with local communities to identify impacts and develop mitigation measures; Evidence of communication channels and/or structures established for *culturally appropriate** engagement, Community and staff interviews.

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

Verifiers: evidence of measures implemented; interviews with local community members, records of meetings held with local communities and leaders to identify and address impacts

SLIMF 4.5.2 Upon request, these measures are communicated to neighbours and adjacent landowners.

Verifiers: Interviews with neighbours and adjacent land owners.

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*.

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

Verifiers: Dispute resolution process; dispute resolution records; interviews with local communities, relevant organisations and government agencies.

For SLIMF: Interviews with the owner/manager and local communities

4.6.1.1 The dispute resolution procedure guarantees the safety and anonymity of the complainant.

Verifiers: Dispute resolution process; interviews with local communities.

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.

Verifiers: Dispute resolution record; interviews with local communities, relevant organisations and government agencies.

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: Grievance registers and other records of grievances and steps taken to resolve them.

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.

Verifiers: Evidence of operations halted where such disputes exist; interviews with communities and management.

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.

Verifiers: Engagement procedure, Sites mapped and/or documented; Records of engagement with local communities and workers.

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: Maps; Management Plan; Monitoring Plan; Monitoring records; Records of engagement with *affected rights holders**; Records of consultation with interested stakeholders; Interviews with workers & *affected rights holders**.

4.7.2.1 Sites with special cultural, ecological, economic, religious, or spiritual significance regarded as confidential are never disclosed publicly, such as on maps or signage, or in the publicly available summary of the management plan (See 7.5.1 & 7.5.2) without the clear Free, Prior, Informed Consent (FPIC) of the communities in question, maintaining the autonomy and authority to safeguard and utilize these areas.

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.

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.

Verifiers: Evidence of investigating use of traditional knowledge and intellectual property and if any examples found, of FPIC process followed; interviews with communities.

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.

Verifiers: Records of compensation agreements and payments; interviews with communities.

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.

Verifiers: Inventory of existing and potential resources and services, assessments of contribution to local economy, staff and community interviews; local content policy reporting

SLIMF 5.1.1 The Organization is aware of the range of resources and ecosystem services that could strengthen and diversify the local economy.

Verifiers: Interview with owner/manager.

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

Verifiers: Reports and other documented evidence of use of services and products; staff and community interviews; local content policy reporting

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

Verifiers: Evidence of compliance with 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.

5.2.1 *Timber harvesting levels** are based on an inventory of the forest; mortality rates; maintenance of ecosystem functions and analysis of current Best Available Information on growth and yield including:

- 1) other FSC-certified companies' data; and
- 2) Regional Code of Practice for Reduced-Impact Forest Harvesting in Tropical Moist Forests of West and Central Africa. FAO, 2004.

Verifiers: Inventory; harvesting management plan; annual production plan; mortality records

5.2.2 Based on the *timber harvesting level** analysis, 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.

Verifiers: Inventory; harvesting management plan; annual production plan

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: Compartment records; growth and yield estimates; production records or appropriate standing sale volume assessments and reconciliation with estimates; interviews with planning team and workers; field observation.

5.2.4 For extraction of commercially harvested services and non-timber forest products under The Organization's control, a sustainable harvest level is calculated and adhered to. Sustainable harvest levels are based on Best Available Information.

Verifiers: Growth rate assessments; sustainable harvest level calculations; interviews with planning team and workers; no evidence of adverse environmental impacts.

For SLIMF: Interviews with owner/manager; 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.

Verifiers: Forest management plan, annual budget; interviews with staff.

5.3.2 Benefits related to positive social and environment impacts of management activities are identified and included in the management plan.

Verifiers: Socio-economic impact assessment records, forest management plans; community needs assessments.

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: Evidence of use of local economy, local markets and services analysis; evidence of local employment and suppliers; interviews with staff and local service providers; local service expenditure records.

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 involvement with industry bodies promoting training and development; training records; initiatives and subsidies for training courses or development activities; interviews with staff and relevant support agencies.

For SLIMF: Evidence of attempts to establish and encourage local capacity; interviews with the owner/manager and local service providers.

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 meet this standard, implement the management plan and to ensure long-term economic viability consistent with the impacts of the operations.

Verifiers: Annual budget; budget forecasting including potential sources of funding; interviews with workers; forest management planning documentation; financial records; evidence in the Management Plan of climate adaptability forecast and resilience regarding species selection and chosen management methodology.

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: Annual budget; budget forecasting including potential sources of funding; interviews with workers; forest management planning documentation; financial records; evidence in the Management Plan of climate adaptability forecast and resilience regarding species selection and chosen management methodology.

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 Environmental values within, and, where potentially affected by management activities, outside of the Management Unit are identified using Best Available Information such as:

- 1) Representative Sample Areas showing environmental values in their natural state.
- 2) Field surveys.
- 3) Databases relevant to the environmental values, for example, National Land Cover Map, local forestry archive, pertinent research institutions, academia and natural reservation strategic information of state or above level;
- 4) Consultation with local, regional and international experts, including academia
- 5) *Culturally appropriate** engagement with Indigenous Peoples, traditional peoples, local communities, affected stakeholders and interested and/or concerned stakeholders.

Verifiers: Documented procedure; identified environmental values; maps; interviews with The Organisation and relevant specialists.

For SLIMF, identified environmental values; maps; interviews with owner/manager to assess knowledge of procedure; interviews with community.

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: Documented procedures with level of detail and frequency to address 1-4, results of environmental values assessment; maps; interviews with workers and relevant specialists.

For SLIMF, identified environmental values; maps; interviews with owner/manager to assess knowledge of procedure and level of detail and frequency to address 1-4; interviews with community.

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*.**

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.

Guidance Note: Organisations and Auditors will need to ensure that legally required EIA licenses issued by the Environmental Protection Agency, meet all of the FSC requirements as well if they are to be submitted as evidence of compliance of this *indicator**.

Verifiers: EIA procedure; EIA results; management planning documentation and procedures; interviews with workers, contractors and stakeholders; field observations.

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

Verifiers: results of assessment of possible adverse impacts from planned management activities.

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

Verifiers: EIA Report;

For SLIMF, results of assessment of possible adverse impacts of planned management activities prior to site-disturbing activities.

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: Management plan; operational procedures; records of training on environmental protection; work instructions; monitoring programmes and results; field observation

6.3.2 Management activities prevent negative impacts to environmental values.

Verifiers: Evidence of implementation of activities to address impacts of management activities on environmental values, field observations, interviews with workers.

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: Damage mitigation protocol; damage remediation protocol; reports and evidence of implemented measures.

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*.*

6.4.1 Best Available Information is used to identify rare and threatened species, and their habitats, including CITES species and those listed on national, regional and local lists of rare and threatened species that are present or likely to be present within and adjacent to the Management Unit.

Guidance Note: See also Annex D & Annex J of this Interim Forest Stewardship Standard.

Verifiers: List of species identified; maps; consultation with interested and affected stakeholders, relevant authorities and bodies; EIAs

For SLIMF, records of rare and threatened species and their habitats; interviews to explain how best available information is used to identify RT species, e.g., advice from relevant stakeholders.

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: Activity records; interviews with stakeholders; field observations to verify modified management activity.

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

Verifiers: Interviews, direct observation.

6.4.3 The 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 programs.

Verifiers: Activity records; maps showing conservation zones, protection areas and connectivity; Progress/monitoring reports on restoration of habitats.

For SLIMF: Interviews, direct observation.

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

Guidance Note: Alternative food supplies may need to be established to protect rare or threatened species from over-consumption or use of fire by local communities in order to safeguard their food security and customary rights. See also 4.5.1 and SLIMF 4.5.1.

Verifiers: Assessment of hunting, fishing, trapping and collection risks and implemented measures to prevent these; interviews with workers.

SLIMF 6.4.4 A system is in place to prevent hunting, fishing, trapping and collection of rare or threatened species.

Verifiers for SLIMF: Interviews with staff of The Organization; interviews with communities; field observations

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 the *scale, intensity and risk** of management activities.

6.5.1 Native ecosystems that exist, or would exist under natural conditions, within the Management Unit are identified using Best Available Information, such as:

- 1) Inventories and assessments of environmental values in their natural state;
- 2) Field surveys;
- 3) Databases relevant to the environmental values, for example, National Land Cover Map, local forestry archive, pertinent research institutions, academia and natural reservation strategic information of state or above level;
- 4) Consultation with local, regional and international experts, including academia; and
- 5) *Culturally appropriate** engagement with Indigenous Peoples, traditional peoples, local communities, affected stakeholders and interested and /or concerned stakeholders.

Verifiers: Documented procedures; list of ecosystems identified; maps.

For SLIMF: Interviews; maps.

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

Verifiers: Management plan; maps; field observation.

For SLIMF: Interviews; management plan; maps; field observation.

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: Site visits; Management plan; restoration budget; interviews with workers.

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 Plan; Maps showing the RSAs.

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

Verifiers: Management Plan; Maps showing the RSAs.

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: Fire management Plan, Fire incident records and trends, field observation of silvicultural practices, interviews with workers and stakeholders.

6.6.1.1 Management activities are defined in *culturally appropriate** engagement with local communities respecting their by-laws and the Customary Land Act 2022, and include:

- 1) integrated fire management plan;
- 2) control of invasive species from conservation areas; and
- 3) restoration of *wetlands** and riparian zones.

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

Verifiers: Management plan, re-establishment plans, maps and records; budget and expenditure to re-establish habitats; site visits.

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: Species monitoring records.

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 respecting the Wildlife Conservation Act of 1972.

Guidance Note: The Wildlife Conservation Act of 1972, outlines the regulations and provisions related to the conservation and protection of wildlife in the country, including rules regarding hunting. The Act prohibits hunting without a valid permit.

Verifiers: Activity records, evidence of compliance with national and/or international regulations and guidelines; monitoring plans and results; interviews with workers and relevant authorities.

6.6.5 Mechanisms for wildlife protection are in place: Applicable national and/or international regulations on protection, hunting and trade in animal species or parts (trophies) are known and complied with.

Verifiers: Wildlife protection policy and plans, evidence of compliance with national and/or international regulations.

6.6.6 An internal regulation is in place and is implemented, banning and punishing the transportation of and trade in bush meat and firearms in the facilities and vehicles of The Organization.

Verifiers: Internal regulation document; evidence of implementation and enforcement; interviews with workers.

6.6.7 A system of regular and punctual controls to ensure hunting policies are respected is implemented.

Verifiers: Patrol system; patrol reports; evidence of implementation.

6.6.8 Effective mitigation measures are in place to ensure that workers do not increase hunting trapping or collecting of bush meat or wild fish.

Verifiers: Evidence of measures taken to ensure compliance, interviews with workers and stakeholders.

6.7 The Organization* shall protect* or restore* natural water courses, 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 maintaining buffer zones along watercourses and around water bodies, both seasonal and permanent as prescribed by Environmental Agency Licence requirements (Environmental Protection Agency Act 2022). Measures protect both water quantity and 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 prioritised.

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

Verifiers: Management plan; watercourse and resources status assessments; evidence of restoration activities implemented; maps.

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

Verifiers: Management plan; watercourse and resources status assessments; evidence of restoration activities implemented; maps.

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: Management plan; watercourse and resources status assessments; evidence of restoration activities implemented; maps.

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: Forest management plan with appropriate maps; plantation design with appropriate maps; environmental management plan; direct observation in the field.

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.

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.

Verifiers: field observation; discussion with the owner/manager; management planning documentation.

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: Records on conversion including evidence of when conversion took place; Interviews with workers and stakeholders; Direct observations in the field.

6.10.2 Areas converted from natural forest to plantation 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 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: Historical reports on the Management Unit including maps and area statements, forest management plans, evidence for compliance with one or more of 1) to 4) above; direct observations in the field; interviews with stakeholders.

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.

Verifiers: Records on conversion including evidence of when conversion took place; interviews with workers and stakeholders; direct observations in the field.

For SLIMF: Interviews; management plans.

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: Historical reports on the Management Unit including maps and area statements, forest management plans, evidence for compliance with one or more of 1) to 3) above; direct observations in the field; interviews with stakeholders.

PRINCIPLE* 7: MANAGEMENT PLANNING

The Organization* shall have a *management plan** consistent with its policies and *objectives** and proportionate to *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 *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; management plans; management plan change logs; interviews with workers.

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

Verifiers: Documented policies; management plans; management plan change logs; interviews with management and workers.

For SLIMF: Interviews on management objectives to assess alignment to sustainable forestry; management plans.

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

Verifiers: Documented policies; management plans; evidence of publicising; interviews with workers and stakeholders; records of communication.

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 *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: Management plan; interviews with workers.

For SLIMF: Interviews on management actions and how these align to objectives; management plan

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

Verifiers: Management plan; interviews with workers.

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 that they are assessed, are established for monitoring the progress towards each management objective.

Verifiers: Management plan; interviews with workers.

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: Activity records; evidence of revision and update; interviews with workers; management planning documentation; appropriate maps and records; meeting records.

For SLIMF: Examination of management plans for evidence of updating; interviews with owner/manager.

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 and any information determined confidential in *Indicator** 4.7.2 is made publicly available at no cost.

Verifiers: Clear and accessible summary of management plan, evidence that it has been made freely available.

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.

Verifiers: Clear and accessible summary of management plan, evidence that it has been made freely available; interviews with stakeholders.

7.6 The Organization* shall, proportionate to 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 and respect of customary land rights (Criterion 3.1 and Criterion 4.1), *Indigenous Cultural Landscapes** (Criterion 3.1), sites (Criterion 4.7) and impacts (Criterion 4.5);
- 4) Local communities' socio-economic development activities (Criterion 4.4); and
- 5) High Conservation Values assessment, management and monitoring (Criterion 9.1, Criterion 9.2, Criterion 9.4).

Verifiers: Organisational policies and procedures; records of stakeholder engagement for items 1-5; stakeholder engagement plan; HCV assessment report; social responsibility programme; *Collective bargaining** Agreement; interviews with workers, trade unions, stakeholders.

For SLIMF: Interviews with owner/manager, communities, review of stakeholder engagement activities and consultation reports.

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: Stakeholder engagement plan and procedures; engagement records for items 1-6

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, including but not limited to changes to The Organization's ownership or management, information on environmental and social impacts and ongoing monitoring that affect their interests as prescribed in Customary Land Rights Act 2022.

Verifiers: Communication plan, including timeline and language, community motoring plan; assessment of consultation responses; management plan; Interviews with workers and stakeholders; documented engagement protocol.

SLIMF 7.6.3 *Culturally appropriate** engagement is completed with affected stakeholders and Indigenous Peoples to ensure that their concerns are addressed in the development and implementation of management and monitoring activities.

Verifiers: Interview with owner/manager, interviews with stakeholders.

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: Interviews with stakeholders

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 monitoring procedure; evidence of a consistent approach to recording site visits; monitoring records; staff interviews.

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 and impact assessment report, monitoring plan; monitoring records; direct observation in the field; interviews with stakeholders

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

Verifiers: Environmental and social and impact assessment reports; monitoring plan; monitoring records

For SLIMF: Evidence of monitoring observable changes in environmental conditions, and those for which there is information available from existing sources

8.3 **The Organization*** shall analyze 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: Adaptive management procedures; monitoring results records; evidence that monitoring results are incorporated into management plan per procedures.

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: Adaptive management procedures; monitoring results records; evidence that monitoring results are incorporated into management plan per procedures.

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: Monitoring summary publicly available; engagement records

8.5 *The Organization shall have and implement a tracking and tracing system proportionate to 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.

Verifiers: Harvesting records; transport and storage records; sales contracts; sales invoices.

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.

Verifiers: Harvesting records; transport and storage records; sales contracts; sales invoices.

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: Harvesting records; transport and storage records; sales contracts; sales invoices.

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 that records the location and status of High Conservation Values Categories 1-6, as defined in Criterion 9.1; the High Conservation Value Areas they rely upon, and their condition.

Verifiers: HCV assessment report; forest management plan; maps; direct observation in the field; interviews with management.

- 9.1.2 This assessment includes identification of *Intact Forest Landscapes**, as of January 1, 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: HCV report; maps; summary report of stakeholder consultation on HCV; interview with rights holders, affected and interested stakeholders.

- 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: HCV assessment report; threat assessment in HCV report; maps; direct observation in the field.

Guidance Note: Best Available Information includes:

- Representative Sample Areas showing HCV values in their natural state.
- Field surveys
- Databases relevant to HCVs, for example, local forestry and social archive, pertinent research institutions, academia and natural reservation strategic information of state or above level;
- Consultation with local, regional and international experts,
- *Culturally appropriate** engagement with Indigenous peoples, traditional communities and affected stakeholders and interested and /or concerned stakeholders.

9.2.2 Management strategies and actions 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: HCV report, HCV management and monitoring strategies accounts for identified threats.

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: HCV assessment report; interview with rights holders, affected and interested stakeholders.

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 core area.

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

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.

Guidance Note: Not applicable in Sierra Leone.

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 report; HCV management and monitoring strategies; HCV monitoring plan; records of HCV monitoring.

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 report; HCV management and monitoring strategies; HCV monitoring plan; records of HCV monitoring. Evidence of application of the Precautionary approach.

9.3.3 Core areas are protected consistent with Criterion 9.2.

Guidance Note: Not applicable in Sierra Leone

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

Guidance Note: Not applicable in Sierra Leone

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

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 program of periodic monitoring assesses:

- 1) 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 report; HCV management and monitoring strategies; HCV monitoring plan; records of HCV monitoring; interview with stakeholders; direct observation in the field.

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

Verifiers: HCV report; HCV management and monitoring strategies; evidence of engagement with rights holders, affected and interested stakeholders and experts in the monitoring.

SLIMF 9.4.2 The monitoring program includes engagement with affected and interested stakeholders and experts.

9.4.3 The monitoring program 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: HCV assessment report; HCV management and monitoring strategies; HCV monitoring plan; HCV monitoring records; evidence of evaluation of HCV status from monitoring results.

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 management and monitoring strategies; Evidence of adapted management strategies based on monitoring results; Evidence of application of the precautionary approach where applicable.

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: Harvesting and planting records (plantations); management plans including sustainable harvest limits and regeneration plans (natural forests); site visits; operational instructions; interviews with employees.

10.1.2 Regeneration activities are implemented in a manner that:

- 1) For harvest of existing plantations, regenerate to 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: Harvesting and planting records; site visits; operational instructions; interviews with employees.

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 **For Natural Forests:** Species chosen for regeneration, restoration or enrichment planting 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 alien species.

For Plantations: There is a clear and convincing justification for the choice of species and genotypes chosen for plantations, taking into account the objectives of the plantation, invasive potential, the climate, geology and soils at the planting sites.

Verifiers: Evidence that the key factors governing species choice have been considered; management plans; research and development trial data.

10.2.2 Species chosen for regeneration are consistent with the regeneration objectives, the management objectives and customary land objectives and plans identified in *Indicator** 4.1.2.

Verifiers: Evidence that the key factors governing species choice have been considered; management plans; research and development trial data; interviews with communities.

- 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 international scientific research demonstrate that invasive impacts can be controlled.
- Verifiers:** Review of research.
- 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:** Mitigation prescriptions; risk assessments; field observations; interviews with employees.
- 10.3.3 The spread of invasive species introduced by The Organization is controlled, including buffer zones of 10m around houses or areas commonly used by local communities and 30m around natural forest that are kept clear of invasive species.
- Verifiers:** Mitigation prescriptions; risk assessments; field observations; interviews with employees.
- 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:** Mitigation prescriptions; risk assessments; field observations; interviews with employees.
- 10.4 The Organization* shall not use genetically modified organisms* in the Management Unit*.**
- 10.4.1 Genetically modified organisms are not used.
- Verifiers:** Nursery and procurement records.
- 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:** Forest management plan; interviews with staff; field observations; *environmental impact assessments**
- 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 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:** Technical justification for fertilizers use; research and development trial records; records of fertiliser use; interviews with staff; field observation.
- 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:** Research and development trial records; records of fertiliser use; interviews with staff; field observation.
- 10.6.3 When fertilizers are used, their types, rates, frequencies and site of application are documented.
- Verifiers:** Application records

10.6.4 When fertilizers are used, environmental values are protected, including through implementation of measures to prevent damage.

Verifiers: Fertilizer risk assessment; application prescriptions;

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

Verifiers: Incident reports; corrective actions; interviews with employees; field observation.

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: Integrated Pest Management Strategy; Operational Instructions; interviews with staff; field observation.

For SLIMF: Interview with owner/manager on practices in use, field observations.

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

Verifiers: ESRAs completed; Chemical pesticide reduction strategy; chemical pesticide damage repair policy; monitoring records for compliance with FSC-POL-30-001 V3.

For SLIMF: Interview with owner/manager to assess understanding of FSC principles of chemical pesticide use and national guidelines.

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: Engagement records; records of pesticide usage.

10.7.4 The *Environmental and social risk assessment** is reviewed and, if necessary, revised within the certificate cycle.

Verifiers: Work instructions; training requirements and records; chemical storage area, transport and application equipment; interviews with workers; site visits.

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: Risk assessments; impact assessments; chemical pesticide reduction strategy; chemical pesticide damage repair policy; monitoring records.

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: Inspection of chemical related documentation; interviews with workers; inspections of chemical store and records; work instructions; site visits; procurement records; no evidence of prohibited pesticides.

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: Pesticide policy or position statement; interviews with workers; inspections of chemical store; work instructions; site visits; procurement records; no evidence of prohibited pesticides.

For SLIMF: Interview with owner/manager on chemical use and handling, field observations.

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

Verifiers: Work prescriptions; equipment inspection; interviews with workers.

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

Verifiers: Work prescriptions; corrective actions; interviews with workers; field observations.

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 local (where possible or reasonably practical) and international evidence demonstrates that the pesticide is the only effective, practical and cost-effective way to control the pest.

Verifiers: ESRA’s; research and development records; work prescriptions; corrective actions; interviews with workers; field observations.

For SLIMF: Interview with owner/manager on pesticide use and handling, field observations.

Guidance Note: The Timber Industry Pesticide Working Group (TIPWG) of Forestry South Africa (FSA) collaborates with Sierra Leone companies and provides updated information.

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, guidelines and protocols for use of biological control agents.

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

Verifiers: Records, guidelines and protocols for use of biological control agents.

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

Verifiers: Records, guidelines and protocols for use of biological control agents.

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, guidelines and protocols for use of biological control agents; corrective actions; interviews with workers; field observations.

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 (including risk of uncontrolled fires and charcoal burning, pests and diseases, damage-causing animals, lightning, storms) are assessed.

Verifiers: Documented identification and assessment of risks.

For SLIMF: Interviews with owner/manager to assess knowledge of risks.

10.9.2 Management activities mitigate these impacts.

Verifiers: Hazard management policy and procedures; records of implementation and monitoring; interviews with workers; field observations.

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 government or relevant local organizations about mitigation capacity and possibilities.

Verifiers: interview with owner/manager, interview with identified organizations, field observations.

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: Assessment of impact of management activities on natural hazards.

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

Verifiers: Hazard management policy and procedures; records of implementation and monitoring.

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.

Verifiers: Work prescriptions; operational instructions; guidelines; inspection of roads and river crossings; corrective action records.

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

Verifiers: Management Plan; operational instructions; water resource protection procedures; maps; site visits; interviews with staff.

10.10.3 Disturbance or damages to water courses, 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, aligned with prescriptions from The Organization's environmental licences granted by the Environmental Protection Agency under the Environmental Protection Agency Act 2008.

Verifiers: Environmental permit and prescription; Environmental Protection Agency reporting; management plan; work prescriptions; site inspections; interviews with workers; incident reports; corrective action records

10.10.3.1 Damage to soil is minimised through implementation of responsible site preparation, silvicultural practice and responsible management of harvesting residues.

Verifiers: Risk assessments; work prescriptions; operational instructions; interviews with workers; incident reports; corrective action records; engagement records.

10.10.3.2 If disturbance or damage to soil occurs it is mitigated in a timely manner, alongside neighbouring landowners where applicable.

Verifiers: Risk assessments; work prescriptions; operational instructions; interviews with workers; incident reports; corrective action records; engagement records.

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: Management plan; Operational guidelines; Harvesting plans; site visits; interviews with workers.

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

Verifiers: Operational guidelines; field inspections of current and previous years harvesting sites; interviews with workers.

10.11.3 Dead and decaying biomass and forest structure are retained to conserve environmental values.

Verifiers: Operational guidelines; field inspections of current and previous years harvesting sites; interviews with workers.

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 current and previous years 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: Waste management documentation; site inspections; interviews with employees.

NON-SLIMF 10.12.1.1 Where regional or national recycling facilities are not available, a life cycle analysis of main waste products is conducted, a risk assessment on disposal and recycle options is conducted, and a corresponding waste management system implemented, which is approved by the Environmental Protection Agency as per Environmental Protection Agency Act 2008.

Verifiers: Risk assessments; waste management documentation; EPA reporting and permits; site inspections; interviews with employees.

F 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, CHs shall also comply with it.

Category	Law/ regulation
1. Legal rights to harvest	
1.1 Land tenure and management rights	<p>Legislation covering land tenure rights, including customary rights as well as management rights, that includes the use of legal methods to obtain tenure rights and management rights. It also covers legal business registration and tax registration, including relevant legally required licenses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Land tenure in Sierra Leone operates under a dual legal structure which incorporates both elements of traditional or customary law and current National laws based on English common law. The majority of Sierra Leone falls under the jurisdiction of customary law. Two land tenure systems are in place i.e. land held under a freehold system with transferable titles and land under the custodianship of the chiefs. Two sets of legislation govern the varying elements of these structures: The Customary Land Rights Act, 2022 and the National Land Commission Act 2022.Under the National Land Commission Act 2022 title to land must be registered with the Commission.Companies are required to register under the Companies Act of 2009, this includes tax registration.The Income Tax Act 2000 and the Finance Act of 2024 have provisions relating to company's tax obligations.The Forestry Act of 1988 establishes the legal framework for the sustainable management and conservation of forest resources, including tenure of forest reserves.Further information is provided in LEGAL STUDY ON FORESTS IN SIERRA LEONEhttps://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/cffcc60f-36f3-4418-91c3-ce2ef695a818/contentForestry (Amendment) Act, 2022.Forestry Regulations 1989.

Category	Law/ regulation
1.2 Concession licenses	<p>Legislation regulating procedures for issuing forest concession licenses, including the use of legal methods to obtain concession licenses. Bribery, corruption and nepotism are particularly well-known issues that are connected with concession licenses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Forestry Act of 1988 establishes the legal framework for the sustainable management and conservation of forest resources, including tenure of forest reserves. ○ The Forestry Act, Wildlife Act and Protected Areas Act were under formal review during the time of writing of this standard, it is expected these will be published in 2025.
1.3 Management and harvesting planning	<p>Any national or sub-national legal requirements for Management Planning, including conducting forest inventories, having a forest management plan and related planning and monitoring, impact assessments, consultation with other entities, as well as approval of these by legally competent authorities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Forestry Act of 1988 includes provisions related to the sustainable management and utilization of registered forest resources in Sierra Leone. ○ National Reforestation and Timber Governance Agency Act of 2021 aims to regulate the forest industry, improve transparency, and empower local communities in forest management.
1.4 Harvesting permits	<p>National or sub-national laws and regulations regulating procedures for issuing harvesting permits, licenses or other legal documents required for specific harvesting operations. This includes the use of legal methods to obtain the permits. Corruption is a well-known issue that is connected with the issuing of harvesting permits.</p> <p><i>There is no legislation regulating harvesting permits.</i></p>
2. Taxes and fees	
2.1 Payment of royalties and harvesting fees	<p>Legislation covering payment of all legally required forest harvesting specific fees such as royalties, stumpage fees and other volume-based fees. This includes payments of the fees based on the correct classification of quantities, qualities and species. Incorrect classification of forest products is a well-known issue that is often combined with bribery of officials in charge of controlling the classification.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Finance Act 2024 details amendments to the Forestry Tax Act of 1988, including rates of tax for timber royalties. This is agreed directly with the Ministry of Finance. ○ For registered forest reserves the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security in Sierra Leone administers royalties under the National Forest Act 1988.

Category	Law/ regulation
2.2 Value added taxes and other sales taxes	<p>Legislation covering different types of sales taxes which apply to the material being sold, including the sale of material as growing forest (standing stock sales).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Value Added Tax (VAT) in Sierra Leone is controlled by the National Revenue Authority (NRA) under the National Revenue Authority Act of 2002. Tax agreements and rates are agreed directly with the NRA and Ministry of Finance.
2.3 Income and profit taxes	<p>Legislation covering income and profit taxes related to profit derived from the sale of forest products and harvesting activities. This category is also related to income from the sale of timber and does not include other taxes generally applicable for companies and is not related to salary payments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income tax is governed by the Income Tax Act of 2000, which outlines the taxation of individuals, companies, and other entities on their income generated within the country. The Act prescribes different tax rates based on the type of income and taxpayer.
3. Timber harvesting activities	
3.1 Timber harvesting regulations	<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, <i>minimum age*</i> 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> <p><i>No specific requirements for harvesting regulations.</i></p>
3.2 Protected sites and species	<p>International, national, and sub national treaties, laws, and regulations related to protected areas, allowable forest uses and activities, and/or rare, threatened, or endangered species, including their habitats and potential habitats.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sierra Leone is signatory to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), with accession on 26/01/1995. CITES recorded species The Wildlife Conservation Act of 1972 is the principal legislation guiding the management and regulation of wildlife and protected areas, a supplement was updated in 2022 changing responsibilities. Overall responsibility for the policy falls with the Forestry Division in the Ministry of Environment and Director of Forestry. The Act prohibits hunting and defines the protocol for establishing protected areas.

Category	Law/ regulation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Environmental Protection Agency Act 2022, establishes the Environmental Protection Agency to oversee environmental protection in Sierra Leone, included protected sites.
3.3 Environmental requirements	<p>National and sub national laws and regulations related to the identification and/or protection of environmental values including but not limited to those relating to or affected by harvesting, acceptable levels for soil damage, establishment of buffer zones (e.g., along water courses, open areas and breeding sites), maintenance of retention trees on the felling site, seasonal limitations of harvesting time, environmental requirements for forest machineries, use of pesticides and other chemicals, biodiversity conservation, air quality, protection and restoration of water quality, operation of recreational equipment, development of non-forestry <i>infrastructure*</i>, mineral exploration and extraction, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Environmental Protection Agency Act 2022 establishes the Environmental Protection Agency to oversee all environmental protection and management in Sierra Leone. The Agency operates as an independent regulatory body. ○ The National Fertiliser Regulation Authority (NaFRA) controls import and use of fertilizers in accordance with ECOWAS regulation. ○ National Protected Area Authority and Conservation Trust ○ Fund Act 2012 promotes biodiversity conservation.
3.4 Health and safety	<p>Legally required personal protection equipment for persons involved in harvesting activities, implementation of safe felling and transport practices, establishment of protection zones around harvesting sites, safety requirements for machinery used, and legally required safety requirements in relation to chemical usage. The health and safety requirements that shall be considered relevant to operations in the forest (not office work, or other activities less related to actual forest operations).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Constitution of Sierra Leone (1991) guarantees every citizen's right to "just and favourable" working conditions. The Factories Act (Cap 131) provides the primary framework for health and safety in factories and other industrial settings, addressing elements such as cleanliness, overcrowding prevention, machinery safety, and fire prevention. The National Social Security and Insurance Trust (NASSIT) Act (2001) establishes a workers' compensation system, compensation can be further detailed in legally recognised <i>Collective bargaining*</i> Agreements as per the Trade Union Act 2023. The Employment Act 2023 regulates treatment of employees. ○ The Ministry of Labour and Social Security oversees occupational health and safety matters, however reporting on this is also required under the EPA regulations.

Category	Law/ regulation
3.5 Legal employment	<p>Legal requirements for employment of personnel involved in harvesting activities including requirements for contracts and working permits, requirements for obligatory insurance, requirements for competence certificates and other training requirements, and payment of social and income taxes withheld by the employer. Also covered are the observance of minimum working age and <i>minimum age</i>* for personnel involved in <i>hazardous work</i>*, legislation against forced and compulsory labour, and <i>discrimination</i>* and freedom of association.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Employment Act 2023 enshrines core labour rights. ○ Sierra Leone is a signatory to the International Labour Organization (ILO) core labour conventions. ○ The Local Content Agency Act 2016 makes provisions for training of Sierra Leonean citizens, as does the ○ The Work permit Act of 2023. ○ The Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Act 2022 specifies treatment of women in employment. ○ Minimum wage is determined by the government and implemented through the National Minimum Wage Board. The Board sets and reviews the minimum wage periodically as prescribed under the Employment Act 2023. ○ The Overseas Employment and Migrant Workers Act 2023 provides regulation on overseas employment, to provide for the protection of the rights and welfare of migrant workers and their families.
4. Third parties' rights	
4.1 Customary rights	<p>Legislation covering customary rights relevant to forest harvesting activities, including requirements covering the sharing of benefits and Indigenous rights.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Customary Land Rights Act 2022 covers all customary rights, including prescriptions for reserve areas.
4.2 Free Prior and Informed Consent	<p>Legislation covering "free prior and informed consent" in connection with the transfer of forest management rights and customary rights to The Organization in charge of the harvesting operation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Customary Land Rights Act 2022
4.3 Indigenous Peoples' rights	<p>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 practice traditional activities, which may involve forest lands.</p> <p><i>No legislation referring to Indigenous Peoples.</i></p>

Category	Law/ regulation
5. Trade and transport NOTE: This section covers requirements for forest management operations as well as processing and trade.	
5.1 Classification of species, quantities, qualities	<p>Legislation regulating how harvested material is classified in terms of species, volumes and qualities in connection with trade and transport. Incorrect classification of harvested material is a well-known method to reduce or avoid payment of legally prescribed taxes and fees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Customs Act of 2011 is the primary legislation governing trade and transport in Sierra Leone. Currently the classification of species, quantities, qualities is done directly with the Ministry of Trade directly.
5.2 Trade and transport	<p>All required trading and transport permits shall exist as well as legally required transport documents which accompany the transport of wood from forest operations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Customs Act of 2011 is the primary legislation governing trade and transport in Sierra Leone. Currently the classification of species, quantities, qualities is done directly with the Ministry of Trade directly.
5.3 Offshore trading and transfer pricing	<p>Legislation regulating offshore trading. Offshore trading with related companies placed in tax havens, combined with artificial transfer prices is a well-known way to avoid payment of legally prescribed taxes and fees to the country of harvest and is considered to be an important source of funds that can be used for payment of bribery to the forest operations and personnel involved in the harvesting operation. Many countries have established legislation covering transfer pricing and offshore trading. It should be noted that only transfer pricing and offshore trading, as far as it is legally prohibited in the country, can be included here.</p> <p><i>No specific legislation.</i></p>
5.4 Custom regulations	<p>Custom legislation covering areas such as export/import licenses and product classification (codes, quantities, qualities and species).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Customs Act of 2011 is the primary legislation governing trade and transport in Sierra Leone. Currently the classification of species, quantities, qualities is done directly with the Ministry of Trade directly.
5.5 CITES	<p>CITES permits (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, also known as the Washington Convention).</p> <p><i>No specific legislation</i></p>

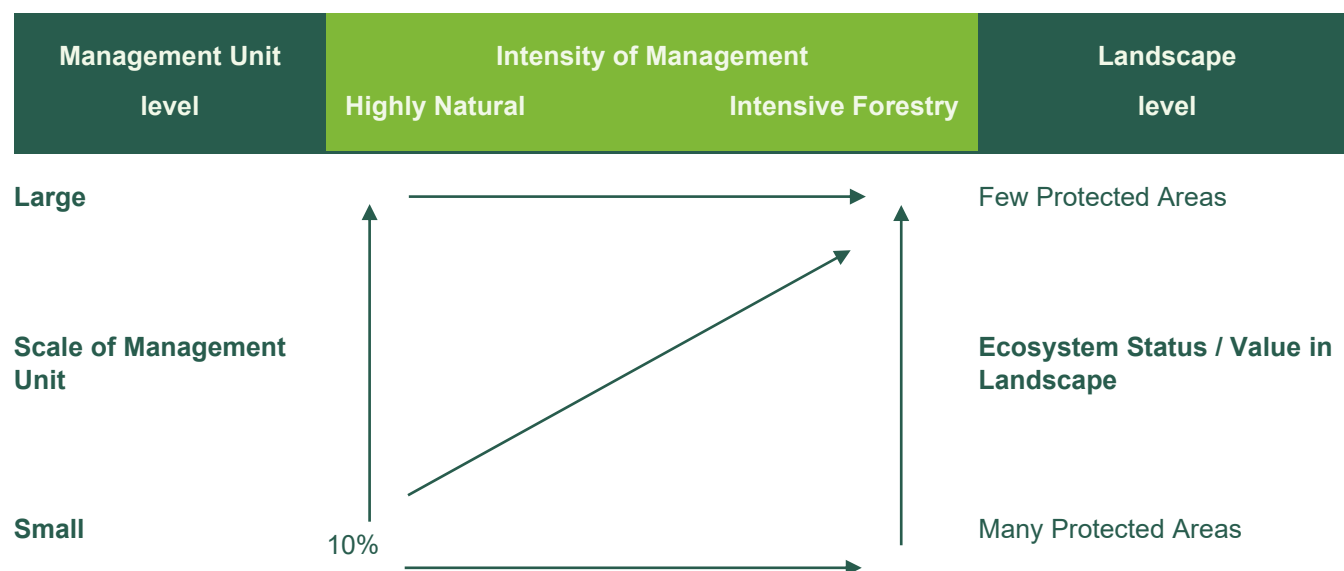
Category	Law/ regulation
6. Due diligence / due care	
6.1 Due diligence / due care procedures	<p>Legislation requiring due diligence/due care procedures, including, e.g., due diligence/due care systems, declaration obligations, and/or the keeping of trade related documents, etc.</p> <p><i>No specific legislation</i></p>
7. Ecosystem Services	
	<p>Legislation covering ecosystem services rights, including customary rights as well as management rights that include the use of legal methods to make claims and obtain benefits and management rights related to ecosystem services. National and subnational laws and regulations related to the identification, protection and payment for ecosystem services. Also includes legal business registration and tax registration, including relevant legal required licenses for the exploitation, payment, and claims related to ecosystem services (including tourism).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Environmental Protection Agency Act 2022 ○ National Protected Area Authority and Conservation Trust ○ Fund Act 2012 provides for the sale of ecosystem services in national protected areas.

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, traditional peoples and local communities have legal and customary rights related 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, Traditional Peoples and local communities 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 all chemicals including pesticides, herbicides & fertilizers (Criterion 10.6 and Criterion, 10.7) with specific focus on mitigating risks to human health and environmental values; 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 Sierra Leone (Principle 6)

Scientific name		Common name	Status CR: Critically Endangered EN: Endangered VU: Vulnerable
A. FLORA			
1	<i>Eriocaulon sulanum</i>	Eriocaulon sulanum	CR
2	<i>Pterocarpus erinaceus</i>	Rosewood	EN
3	<i>Berlinia occidentalis</i>	Berlinia occidentalis	VU
4	<i>Berlinia occidentalis</i> Keay	Berlinia occidentalis Keay	VU
5	<i>Coffea stenophylla</i>	Sierra Leone or Highland coffee	VU
6	<i>Azelaia Africana</i>	African Mahogany	VU
7	<i>Cola attiensis</i>	Trefle	EN
8	<i>Ansellia Africana</i>	Leopard orchid	VU
9	<i>Copaifera salikounda</i>	African Etimo	VU
10	<i>Drypetes afzelii</i>	English white kotowuli	VU
11	<i>Entandrophragma cylindricum</i>	Sapele	VU
12	<i>Garcinia kola</i>	Bitter kola	VU
13	<i>Nauclea diderrichii</i>	Bilinga	VU
14	<i>Terminalia ivorensis</i>	Black Afara	VU
15	<i>Turraeanthus africana</i>	African white mahogany	VU
16	<i>Anopyxis klaineana</i>	English White Oak	VU
17	<i>Berlinia occidentalis</i>	English Red Oak	VU
18	<i>Copaifera salikounda</i>	African Etimoe	VU
19	<i>Entandrophragma candollei</i>	Cedar Kokoti	VU

Scientific name		Common name	Status CR: Critically Endangered EN: Endangered VU: Vulnerable
20	<i>Heritiera utilis</i>	Red Cedar	VU
21	<i>Khaya ivorensis</i>	African Mahogany	VU
22	<i>Khaya senegalensis</i>	Dry Zone Mahogany	VU
23	<i>Lophira alata</i>	Azobe	VU
24	<i>Millettia warneckei</i>	Koranko firapur	VU
25	<i>Nesogordonia papaverifera</i>	Kotibé	VU
26	<i>Omphalocarpum ahia</i>	Navel Fruit	EN
27	<i>Milicia regia</i>	Iroko	VU
28	<i>Tieghemella heckelii</i>	Cherry Mahogany	VU
B. FAUNA (MAMMALS)			
1	<i>Pan troglodytes</i>	versus Western chimpanzee	CR
2	<i>Cephalophus silvicultor/jentinki</i>	Jentink's Duiker	EN
3	<i>Choeropsis liberiensis</i>	Pygmy hippopotamus	EN
4	<i>Boocercus eryceros</i>	Bongo	EN
5	<i>Pan troglodytes</i>	Common chimpanzee	EN
6	<i>Ptilio badius</i>	Western Red Colobus	EN
7	<i>Hylomyscus baeri</i>	Baer's Wood Mouse	EN
8	<i>Rhinolophus ziama</i>	Ziama Horseshoe Bat	EN
9	<i>Panthera pardus</i>	Leopard	VU
10	<i>Hippopotamus amphibius</i>	Common Hippo	VU
11	<i>Smutsia gigantea</i>	Giant Pangolin	VU

Scientific name		Common name	Status CR: Critically Endangered EN: Endangered VU: Vulnerable
12	<i>Cercocebus atys</i>	Sooty Mangabey	VU
13	<i>Caracal aurata</i>	African Golden Cat	VU
14	<i>Phataginus tricuspis</i>	Tree Pangolin	VU
15	<i>Cercopithecus diana</i>	Diana monkey	VU
16	<i>Phataginus tetradactyla</i>	Long-tailed Pangolin	VU
17	<i>Cephalophus zebra</i>	Zebra Duiker	VU
18	<i>Genetta bourloni</i>	Bourlon's Genet	VU
19	<i>Colobus polykomos</i>	King Colobus/ Western Pied Colobus	VU
20	<i>Procolobus verus</i>	Olive Colobus	VU
21	<i>Cephalophus brookei</i>	Brooke's Duiker	VU
22	<i>Hipposideros marisae</i>	Aellen's Roundleaf Bat	VU
23	<i>Cercopithecus campbelli</i>	Campbell's Monkey	VU
24	<i>Cercopithecus petaurista</i>	Lesser spot-nosed monkey	VU
C. FAUNA (AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES)			
1	<i>Mecistops cataphractus</i>	Wes African Slender-snouted Crocodile	CR
2	<i>Sclerophrys taiensis</i>	Sclerophrys taiensis	EN
3	<i>Bitis gabonica</i>	Gabon Viper	VU
4	<i>Osteolaemus tetraspis</i>	Dwarf Crocodile	VU
5	<i>Cynisca degrysi</i>	Sierra Leone Worm Lizard	DD
D. FAUNA (BIRDS)			

			Status CR: Critically Endangered EN: Endangered VU: Vulnerable
Scientific name	Common name		
1 <i>Gyps africanus</i>	African White-backed vulture		CR
2 <i>Necrosyrtes monachus</i>	Hooded Vulture		CR
3 <i>Schistolais leontica</i>	Sierra Leone prinia		EN
4 <i>Polemaetus bellicosus</i>	Martial Eagle		EN
5 <i>Ciconia episcops</i>	Wooly necked stork		VU
6 <i>Balearica pavonina</i>	Black Crowned Crane		VU
7 <i>Bucorvus abyssinicus</i>	Abyssinian Ground Hornbill		VU
8 <i>Streptopelia turtur</i>	European Turtle Dove		VU
9 <i>Picathartes gymnocephalus</i>	White-necked Rockfowl		VU
10 <i>Agelastes meleagrides</i>	White-breasted Guinea fowl		VU
11 <i>Bubo shelleyi</i>	Shelley's Eagle- Owl		VU
12 <i>Scotopelia ussheri</i>	Rufous Fishing Owl		VU
13 <i>Ceratogymna elata</i>	Yellow-Casqued Hornbill		VU
14 <i>Bycanistes cylindricus</i>	Brown-cheeked Hornbill		VU
15 <i>Lobotos lobatus</i>	Western Wattled Cuckooshrike		VU
16 <i>Criniger olivaceus</i>	Yellow-bearded Greenbul		VU
17 <i>Melaenornis annamarulae</i>	Nimba Flycatcher		VU
18 <i>Malimbus ballmanni</i>	Gola Malimbe		EN
19 <i>Terathopius ecaudatus</i>	Bateleur		EN
20 <i>Psittacus timneh</i>	Timneh Parrot		EN
21 <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	Grey Plover		VU
22 <i>Phyllanthus atripennis</i>	Grey-hooded Babbler		VU

Scientific name		Common name	Status CR: Critically Endangered EN: Endangered VU: Vulnerable
23	<i>Bleda eximius</i>	Green-tailed Bristlebill	VU
E. FAUNA (FISH)			
1	<i>Scriptaphyosemion etzeli</i>	scriptaphyosemion etzeli	CR
2	<i>Epiplatys fasciolatus</i>	Epiplatys fasciolatus	CR
3	<i>Chiloglanis polyodon</i>	Upside down catfish	CR
4	<i>Coelotilapia joka</i>	Coelotilapia joka	EN
F. FAUNA (INVERTEBRATES)			
1	<i>Sierraia outambensis</i>	Sierraia outambensis	CR
2	<i>Pseudagrion mascagnii</i>	Pseudagrion mascagnii	CR

Sources:

- Earths Endangered: <http://www.earthsendangered.com/continent.asp?view=all&ID=1&gr=M>
- World Rain Forests: https://worldrainforests.com/biodiversity/en/sierra_leone/CR.html
- CITES: <https://cites.org/eng/partis/country-profiles/sl/domestic-measures#block-nationallegislationlink>
- EPA: <https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&opi=89978449&url=https://healtheducationlibrary.dhse.gov.sl/index.php/files/473/MINISTORY-OF-HEALTH/210/EPA-Compendium-Threatened-and-Rare-Forest-Fauna-in-Sierra-LeoneFinal-Report1.pdf&ved=2ahUKEwit752zwcGPaxVbSEEAHQMzBqYQFnoECBcQAQ&usg=AOvVaw09T1mAltMbhJCy5NpvdxdG>
- EPA: The Compendium of Rare and Threatened Forest Flora in Sierra Leone <https://epa.gov.sl/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/The-Compendium-of-Rare-and-Threatened-Forest-Flora-in-Sierra-Leone-Preparation.pdf>
- IUCN: <https://www.iucnredlist.org/search/list?query=Sierra%20leone&searchType=species>
- Animalia: <https://animalia.bio/sierra-leone-animals>
- The birds of Gola Forest and Tiwai Island, Sierra Leone: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228365406>
- <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228365406> The birds of Gola Forest and Tiwai Island and Sierra Leone

- RSPB Gola survey: <https://www.academia.edu/figures/22091409/table-4-birds-of-conservation-concern-recorded-in-gola>
- Restor: <https://restor.eco/platform/countries/SL/biodiversity/trees/>
- Birdlife Datazone: <https://datazone.birdlife.org/country/factsheet/sierra-leone>

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 & 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) Programs and activities regarding:
 - i. Workers' rights, occupational health and safety, gender equality, as identified in Principle 2;
 - ii. Indigenous Peoples, traditional peoples and local 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.
 - vi. Fire management activities and procedures, as identified in Principle 10
- 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 program, 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
Site Plan (Harvest Plan)	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	
Budgeting	Annual	Expenditures	Annually	Chief Financial Officer	P5
		Contribution to local economy	Quarterly	General Manager	P5
Engagement Plan	Annual	Employment statistics	Annually	General Manager	P3, P4
		Social Agreements	Annually, or as agreed in Engagement Plan	Social Coordinator	P3, P4
		Grievances	Ongoing	Human Resources Manager	P2, P3, P4

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
5-Year management plan	5 years	Wildlife populations	To be determined	Ministry of Environment	P6
		Coarse Woody Debris	Annually	Ministry of Forests	P10
		Free growing / regeneration	Annually, sample		
Sustainable Forestry management plan	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
Ecosystem Services Certification Document	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. The need to review pesticide and fertilizer use in the *Environmental and social risk assessment** (Criterion 10.7)
 - ix. Adverse impacts from the use of biological control agents (Criterion 10.8);
 - x. The impacts from natural hazards (Criterion 10.9);
 - xi. The impacts of infrastructural development, transport activities and silviculture to rare and threatened species, habitats, ecosystems, landscape values, water and soils (Criterion 10.10);
 - xii. 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
 - xiii. 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, Criterion 4.6);
 - iv. Programs and activities regarding workers' rights (Criterion 2.1);
 - v. Gender equality, sexual harassment and gender *discrimination** (Criterion 2.2);
 - vi. Programs 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, traditional 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, traditional 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, traditional 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, 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, 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. Water courses, 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 Standards 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 January 1, 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**; and
 - 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** (Criterion 3.1 and 4.1);
 - b) Ensure 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 the shape of core areas is designed to maximize their interior habitats.
 - e) Ensure that core areas contain habitat 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)

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 SLIMF. 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.

<i>Best Available Information</i> * for Identifying and Assessing National or Regional HCV Interpretations		SLIMF
All HCV Categories, All Elements	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; <i>culturally appropriate</i> * engagement with Indigenous Peoples, traditional peoples, <i>affected rights holders</i> *, 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
HCV 2, Element 1, IFLs	Not applicable.	N
HCV 5, Element 1, and HCV 6, Element 2, Values fundamental to local communities	<i>Culturally appropriate</i> * engagement with local communities is the primary BAI for these elements.	Y
HCV 5, Element 2, and HCV 6, Element 3, Values fundamental to Indigenous Peoples	<i>Culturally appropriate</i> * engagement with Indigenous Peoples is the primary BAI for these elements.	Y

Best Available Information* for Developing Management Strategies for National or Regional HCV Interpretations		SLIMF
All HCV Categories, All Elements	<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, traditional peoples, local communities, <i>affected rights holders</i>*, affected and interested stakeholders, and experts.</p>	Y
HCV 5, Element 1, and HCV 6, Element 2, Values fundamental to local communities	<i>Culturally appropriate</i> * 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
HCV 5, Element 2, and HCV 6, Element 3, Values fundamental to Indigenous Peoples	<i>Culturally appropriate</i> * 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
Best Available Information* for Monitoring National or Regional HCV Interpretations		SLIMF
All HCV Categories, All Elements	BAI includes: Engagement with rights-holders, consistent with Criteria 3.5, 4.5 and 4.7; <i>culturally appropriate</i> * engagement with Indigenous Peoples and affected and interested stakeholders; information on engaging with representatives of the Indigenous Peoples and/or traditional peoples and/or local communities; monitoring conducted by the Indigenous Peoples and/or traditional peoples and/or local communities; and 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 Interpretations of HCV 1, for HCV Identification

National Interpretations of HCV 1:	<i>Best Available Information*</i> (BAI) for identifying occurrences of the Interpretations:	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
Element 1: Concentrations of biological diversity that are significant at global, regional, or national levels:		
<p>Protected areas, including: National Parks, Forest Reserves for protection, Strict Nature Reserves, Game Reserves, Non-Hunting Forest Reserves, Game Sanctuary / Non-hunting Forest Reserves, and possibly Marine Protected Areas (e.g., for coastal forests/mangroves). (Per: EPA SL, 2020b; others)</p> <p>(Note the Gola Rainforest National Park, Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary, and Western Area Peninsula National Park are also proposed World Heritage sites.)</p>	For lists and maps, see Protected Areas (in References below). See also the National Protected Areas Authority. For proposed World Heritage sites, see World Heritage (in References).	Y
<p>Forests proposed as conservation areas.</p>	For some examples of proposed areas, see the maps at pages 7 and 24 in Smith (2015). See also the National Protected Areas Authority. See also the Overarching BAI.	Y
<p>Forests in proximity to protected areas and proposed protected areas, including: 1 - 4 km buffers; forests that provide habitats for the same biodiversity; and forest that provide habitat connectivity or other supporting values. (Per: NHG, 2017; others)</p>	For examples of species in Gola Rainforest National Park that also utilize surrounding areas, see Proforest (2016). See also the Overarching BAI.	N
<p>Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) and Important Bird Areas (IBAs), i.e.,: Gola Forests; Kambui Hills Forest Reserve; Lake Sonfon and environs; Loma Mountains Non-hunting Forest Reserve; Outamba-Kilimi National Park; Sierra Leone River Estuary; Tingi Hills Non-hunting Forest Reserve Western Area Peninsula Forest National Park; Yawri Bay, Tiwai Island, Sherbro River Estuary. (Note</p>	For maps and more information, see Key Biodiversity Areas and Important Bird Areas (in References).	N

National Interpretations of HCV 1:	Best Available Information* (BAI) for identifying occurrences of the Interpretations:	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
while many KBAs/IBAs overlap protected areas, their boundaries and scope may be different.)		
Per the precautionary approach and pending further assessment, natural forest sites in the Guinean Forests of West Africa Biodiversity Hotspot.	See Biodiversity Hotspots (in References).	Y
Critical temporal concentrations of biodiversity, e.g.: Hills and mountains with special vegetation that are important migration and wintering sites for Palearctic migrant birds; mangrove swamps and <i>wetlands</i> * that are nesting grounds for migratory birds in dry season; watering holes in dry season; high elevation areas during floods; flowering and fruit bearing trees important to nectivorous birds and mammals and insects. (Per: Proforest et al, 2012; EPA Liberia, 2017)	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
Element 2: Concentrations of endemic species that are significant at global, regional, or national levels:		
Per the precautionary approach and pending further assessment, natural forest sites in the Upper Guinea Forests Endemic Bird Area and the Guinean Forests of Western Africa Biodiversity Hotspot. (Per: Proforest et al, 2012; Birdlife International, 2018; CEPF, 2015).	See Endemic Bird Areas and Biodiversity Hotspots (in References).	Y
Other known hotspots for endemic flora or fauna. Per the precautionary approach and pending further assessment, examples may include: protected areas, KBAs, IBAs, sacred groves/sites, and community forests and reserves. (Per: EPA SL, 2020b; Proforest et al, 2012; Birdlife International, 2018; CEPF, 2015).	See the BAI for Element 1. See also the Overarching BAI.	Y
Other significant concentrations of endemic plants or animals, e.g.: Breeding pairs of national or locally endemic species; viable populations of regionally endemic species; or species endemic to Africa, if IUCN listed as Critically Endangered (CR), their survival	For lists of endemic animal species, see IUCN Red List and applicable regional and national species lists, e.g., EPA SL (2015a), EPA SL (2015b), and IUCN (2021). See also the Overarching BAI.	Y

National Interpretations of HCV 1:	Best Available Information* (BAI) for identifying occurrences of the Interpretations:	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
<p>in Africa depends on Sierra Leone populations, or populations elsewhere in Africa are not protected or are declining. (Per: Proforest et al, 2012; others)</p>		
<p>Element 3: Concentrations of rare, threatened, or endangered species that are significant at global, regional, or national levels:</p>		
<p>Known hotspots for endemic flora or fauna. Per the precautionary approach and pending further assessment, examples may include: protected areas, KBAs, IBAs, sacred groves, and community forests and reserves. (Per: EPA SL, 2020b; Proforest et al, 2012; Birdlife International, 2018; others)</p>	<p>See the BAI for Element 1. See also the Overarching BAI</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p>Significant occurrences of terrestrial and freshwater plant or animal species listed by CITES or by the IUCN Red List or national species lists as Vulnerable, Endangered, Critically Endangered, or Near Threatened or the equivalent. Including occurrences of: Any breeding pair of species of exceptional local or national conservation significance, per stakeholder consensus (e.g., Western chimpanzee); any occurrence of a species listed as Critically Endangered (CR) by the IUCN, including individual animals or plants; or viable populations of RTE species that are listed as CR or Endangered (EN) by IUCN, listed per CITES Appendix I or II, or nationally listed as fully protected. (Per: Proforest et al, 2012; EPA SL, 2020b; others)</p>	<p>For lists of rare, threatened, and endangered species, see the IUCN Red List and CITES (see References), and any applicable regional and national species lists e.g., EPA SL (2015a), EPA SL (2015b), and IUCN (2021). See also the Overarching BAI.</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p>Alliance for Zero Extinction (AZE) sites, if any are listed in the future. (No sites are currently listed.)</p>	<p>Alliance for Zero Extinction (see References).</p>	<p>N</p>

B. Assessments for HCV 1

National or Regional methodologies for assessing occurrences of the HCV 1 Interpretations:	<i>Best Available Information*</i> (BAI) for assessing occurrences:	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
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.	See the BAI in Section A and the Overarching BAI, including re. engagement with Indigenous Peoples, traditional peoples, local communities, rights-holders, and stakeholders interested in HCV conservation.	Y
For all HCV 1: Other assessment elements include identifying HCV Areas, the condition of the HCVs, and threats to the HCVs. Potential threats include both forest management operations (e.g., road building, logging, etc.) and external factors (e.g., climate change, poaching, bushmeat hunting, fuelwood harvest, mining, etc.). (Per: EPA SL, 2020b)	See the BAI in Section A and the Overarching BAI, including re. engagement.	Y
For protected areas.	CEPF (2015) highlights biodiversity values of some protected areas, e.g., Gola Forest National Park, Kambui Hills Forest Reserve, Tiwai Island Game Sanctuary, and Western Area Peninsula Non-Hunting Reserve. See also Key Biodiversity Areas and Important Bird Areas (in References) for basic descriptions of protected areas that are KBAs and IBAs.	N
For protected areas: Confirm whether policies and practices effectively protect the forest and its HCVs from illegal logging, mining, agricultural encroachment, and other threats.	See the Overarching BAI.	N
For the Guinean Forests of Western Africa Biodiversity Hotspot.	For a basic description of the Hotspot and its values, including some priority sub-areas, see CEPF (2015).	N
For the Gola Forest and information on biodiversity potentially present in surrounding areas.	See Birdlife International (2018), Anadu (2008), Hillers (2009), Klop et al (2008), Hillers et al (2011).	N

National or Regional methodologies for assessing occurrences of the HCV 1 Interpretations:	Best Available Information* (BAI) for assessing occurrences:	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
For KBAs and IBAs.	For summary descriptions of their values, see the IBA factsheets at Key Biodiversity Areas and Important Bird Areas (in References). Some KBAs are also discussed in CEPF (2015). For the Lake Sonfon IBA, see also Sesay et al (2017).	N
For Endemic Bird Areas.	For summary descriptions of the EBA's values, see Endemic Bird Areas (in References).	Y
For additional guidance in identifying and assessing HCV 1 that may exist in the management unit, see: FSC (2020) and HCVRN (2017) (Chapter 2, Best Practice Considerations for HCV Assessments, and Chapter 3.1, Identification of HCV 1).		

C. Strategies for Maintaining and Enhancing HCV 1

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?
For all HCV 1 Interpretations: 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.	See the Overarching BAI, including re. engagement with, Indigenous Peoples, traditional peoples, local communities, rights-holders, stakeholders, and experts. Also consider relevant conservation plans, species recovery plans, and other published information.	Y
For all HCV 1: Where enhancement is identified as the objective, measures to develop, expand, and/or restore habitats for such species.	See the Overarching BAI, including re. engagement with Indigenous Peoples, traditional peoples, local communities, rights-holders, stakeholders, and experts.	Y
For protected areas: Boundary demarcations; non-issuance of concessions for resource extraction; prohibitions on mining, commercial logging, fuelwood harvest, intensive agriculture, and bushmeat hunting; measures to prevent illegal logging	For the Western Area Peninsula Protected Area, consider also Hempel (2013).	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?
and mining; regulation of NTFP harvest, hunting, and shifting agriculture to sustainable levels; cooperative community-based management, e.g., use of Community Management Committees (CMCs); use of community-based monitoring; promoting education and ecotourism based local economies. (Per: EPA SL, 2020b; Proforest et al, 2012; Birdlife International, 2018; EPA SL, 2014; Sesay et al, 2017; WWF, 2018)		
For sites adjacent to protected areas: Provide buffer zones, with no harvest or other activity in the first 500m and careful RIL logging at most in the next 500m. Provide buffers zones of 1-4 km against conversion and intensive agriculture. (Per: NHG, 2017; others)	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
For threatened or endangered tree species, including CITES, IUCN, or nationally listed species: Mark and protect trees from harvest, and control for illegal harvest. Consider the recommendations of the conference on illegal rosewood trade held by the Economic Community of Western African States (ECOWAS). (Per: Mongabay, 2016b)	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
For endemic and rare, threatened, or endangered (RTE) wildlife: Prohibit intensive logging, mining, agriculture, and other sources of habitat conversion, deforestation, and <i>degradation</i> *; restrict slash and burn agriculture; implement no hunting policies, except for sustainable levels of traditional harvest by local communities and Indigenous Peoples; prevent poaching, illegal harvest, and overharvest, including in cooperation with authorities; provide support for alternative protein sources; help educate local communities about wildlife values; utilize community based enforcement. (Per: Proforest et al, 2012; EPA SL, 2014; SGS, 2016a; NHG, 2017; Proforest, 2016)	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
For pangolins: Also prohibit hunting and capture for the export market; regulate traditional medicinal harvest to sustainable levels; prevent deforestation. (Per: Mongabay, 2016a)	See the Overarching BAI.	Y

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?
For Western chimpanzee: Also adopt plans to protect chimpanzees outside of protected areas.	See the Tacugama Community Outreach Program. Consider also the Action Plan for Western Chimpanzee, and consultation with experts at Njala University.	N
For species threatened by bushmeat hunting, including Western chimpanzee and many other monkey species: Also prohibit commercial bushmeat hunting; require logging and other resource management companies to provide workers with alternate protein sources; support programs to provide alternative protein sources for local communities; adopt measures to prevent capture for the pet trade; block road access; employ forest guards; monitor species' populations. (Per: Mongabay, 2017a; Mongabay, 2017b); EPA SL, 2014; NHG, 2017; WWF, 2018)	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
Where fuelwood harvest and charcoal production are a threat: Adopt measures to prevent commercial harvest, to ensure local community harvest uses low impact practices, and to support use of more efficient stoves and energy sources. (Per: WWF, 2018; EPA SL, 2014; Katta, 2017)	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
Where mining is a threat: Adopt measures to prevent intensive mining and to ensure any artisanal mining uses low impact practices. (Per: WWF, 2018; EPA SL, 2014).	See the National Action Plan for reducing mercury use in small scale mining (EPA SL (2020)). See also the Overarching BAI.	Y
For additional guidance, consider: FSC (2020), including re. engaging Indigenous Peoples and communities, and HCVRN (2018) (e.g., Part 2), including re. the overall process for developing strategies.		

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 <i>Indicators*</i> . 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 <i>indicators*</i> should be used, e.g., field surveys of flora and fauna, or surveillance with drones. For others, indirect <i>indicators*</i> 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 impacts and of potential illegal or unauthorized activities in the forest. Information management systems like SMART may be helpful (https://smartconservationtools.org/).	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
For protected areas.	For use of community-based “eco-guards,” see the Conservation Society of Sierra Leone and the National Protected Areas Authority.	N
For additional guidance on monitoring programs, consider: FSC (2020) and HCVRN (2018) (e.g., Part 3, the resources in Annex 1, and the example monitoring techniques in Annex 2).		

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 Interpretations of HCV 2, for HCV Identification

National Interpretations of HCV 2:	Best Available Information* (BAI) for identifying occurrences of the Interpretations:	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
Element 1: <i>Intact Forest Landscapes</i>*:		
Not applicable. <i>Intact Forest Landscapes</i> * (IFLs) as defined in the FSC International Generic <i>Indicators</i> * and by Global Forest Watch are not present in Sierra Leone.	See GFW – IFL (in References).	N
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:		
Important <i>wetlands</i> *, e.g. the Sierra Leone River Estuary RAMSAR site, including its mangrove forests. Yawri Bay and Sherbro River Estuary undergoing process to become RAMSAR sites.	See RAMSAR (in References).	N
<i>Wetlands</i> *, rivers, riparian zones, and mangrove forests that provide important habitats for fish, other aquatic species, and RTE wildlife. (Per: NHG, 2017; EPA SL, 2014)	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
Native forests that, in the context of Sierra Leone are relatively large, relatively unaffected by industrial management, and have successional stages, forest structure, and species composition similar in distribution to native forests that have experienced minimal human disturbance (traditional Indigenous management regimes notwithstanding). Not all species need be present for areas to	Mapping and other data on forest cover, age, succession, structure, species composition, anthropogenic disturbance, etc. See also the Overarching BAI for potentially relevant information sources.	N

National Interpretations of HCV 2:	<i>Best Available Information*</i> (BAI) for identifying occurrences of the Interpretations:	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
qualify. “Large” may be understood on the order of 5,000 to 10,000 ha.		
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:		
Connectivity corridors that are proposed between protected areas and/or other HCV 1, HCV 2, or HCV 3 occurrences, including but not limited to the Sierra Leone Coastal Corridor and the Lofa-Gola-Mano Complex. (Per: CEPF, 2015).	For examples of proposed corridors, see pages 7 and 24 in Smith (2015) and Figure 4.2 and pages 58, 59, 63, and especially 79 in CEPF (2015). See also the Overarching BAI.	N
Other areas important as biological connectivity corridors, e.g., riparian zones and palisade and fringing forests on water bodies that provide dispersal routes for RTE wildlife. (Per: NHG, 2017; EPA SL, 2014)	Mapping, e.g., use of spatial data, remote sensing information, etc. Local experts and stakeholders. See also the Overarching BAI.	N

B. Assessments for HCV 2

National or Regional methodologies for assessing occurrences of the HCV 2 Interpretations:	<i>Best Available Information*</i> (BAI) for assessing occurrences:	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
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.	See the BAI in Section A and the Overarching BAI, including re. engagement with Indigenous Peoples, traditional peoples, local communities, rights-holders and stakeholders interested in HCV conservation. Also consider HCV assessors with local experience.	Y
For all HCV 2: Other assessment elements include identifying HCV Areas, the condition of the HCVs, and threats to the HCVs. Potential threats include both forest management operations (e.g., road building, logging, etc.) and external factors (e.g., climate change, poaching, fuelwood	See the BAI in Section A and the Overarching BAI, including re. engagement.	Y

National or Regional methodologies for assessing occurrences of the HCV 2 Interpretations:	<i>Best Available Information*</i> (BAI) for assessing occurrences:	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
harvest, mining, etc.). (Per: EPA SL, 2020b)		
For additional guidance in identifying and assessing HCV 2 that may exist in the management unit, see: FSC (2020) and HCVRN (2017) (Chapter 2, Best Practice Considerations for HCV Assessments, and Chapter 3.2, Identification of HCV 2).		

C. Strategies for Maintaining and Enhancing HCV 2

National or Regional strategies for maintaining and/or enhancing the HCV 2 Interpretations:	<i>Best Available Information*</i> (BAI) for management strategies:	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
For all HCV 2 Interpretations: Strategies that fully maintain the extent and intactness of the forest ecosystems and the viability of their biodiversity concentrations, including plant and animal <i>indicator*</i> 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.	See the Overarching BAI, including re. engagement with Indigenous Peoples, traditional peoples, local communities, rights-holders, stakeholders, and experts.	Y
For all HCV 2: 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.	See the Overarching BAI, including re. engagement with Indigenous Peoples, traditional peoples, local communities, rights-holders, stakeholders, and experts.	Y
For mangrove forests: Strategies include measures to prevent vegetation clearing for unsustainable and non-traditional forms of salt, rice, or sand production. (Per: RSIS, 2018; EPA SL, 2014)	See the Overarching BAI. See also WABiCC (in References).	Y
For palisade and fringing forests along rivers and lakes: Strategies include measures to: maintain forest cover, maintain the forests' function in	See 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?
regulating microclimate and reducing water evaporation, allow for free passage of wildlife and to allow for sheltering by wildlife, prevent mining that degrades habitats and water quality, and prevent dams that inundate or dewater water bodies and bordering forests. (Per: EPA SL, 2014)		
Where fuelwood harvest is a threat: See the strategies for HCV 1.	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
Where mining is a threat: See the strategies for HCV 1.	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
For additional guidance, consider: FSC (2020), including re. engaging Indigenous Peoples and communities, and HCVRN (2018) (e.g., Part 2), including with regard to the overall process for developing strategies.		

D. Monitoring for HCV 2

National or Regional methodologies for monitoring occurrences of the HCV 2 Interpretations:	<i>Best Available Information*</i> (BAI) for monitoring occurrences:	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
For all HCV 2 Interpretations: Monitoring that addresses Criterion 9.4 and its <i>Indicators*</i> . 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, including for monitoring of potential impacts and of potential illegal or unauthorized activities in the forest.	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
For additional guidance on monitoring programs, consider: FSC (2020) and HCVRN (2018) (e.g., Part 3, the resources in Annex 1, and the example monitoring techniques in Annex 2).		

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 Interpretations of HCV 3, for HCV Identification

National Interpretations of HCV 3:	Best Available Information* (BAI) for identifying occurrences of the Interpretations:	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
Element 1: Rare, threatened, or endangered ecosystems:		
Montane forests and cloud forests; savannah woodland, including sites characterized by <i>Pterocarpus erinaceus</i> ; and closed primary forest stands in all forest types. (Per: EPA SL, 2020b; Proforest et al, 2012)	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
Per the precautionary approach and pending further assessment: Dwarf forest and other vegetation on rock outcrops, mesic forest, overdrained forest, gallery forest, and ravine forest. (Per: Senterre, et al, 2020; Fauna & Flora et al, 2012)	See the Overarching BAI. For discussion of where rare ecosystems occur in many KBAs, see Senterre, et al (2020), including Table 3.	Y
Per the precautionary approach and pending further assessment, natural forest sites in WWF Global 200 Ecoregions, i.e., the Guinea Moist Forest Ecoregion. (Per: Proforest et al, 2012)	WWF Global 200 Ecoregions (see References). Some priority conservation areas are also referenced in Figure 3 in Proforest et al (2012).	Y
Freshwater ecosystems, including rivers, wetlands*, riparian forests, and seasonally inundated areas. Also some lakes, e.g., Mape and Mebesi. (Per: EPA SL, 2020b; SGS, 2016a; Proforest et al, 2012; EPA SL, 2014; NGH, 2017)	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
Mangrove forests and coastal wetlands*. (Per: EPA SL, 2020b; Smith, 2015; EPA SL, 2014; Proforest et al, 2012).	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
UNESCO Biosphere Reserves or Ecosystems on the IUCN Red List, if any are designated in the future. (None currently designated.)	IUCN Red List Ecosystems and UNESCO Biosphere Reserves (see References).	N

National Interpretations of HCV 3:	Best Available Information* (BAI) for identifying occurrences of the Interpretations:	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
Element 2: Rare, threatened, or endangered habitats:		
Forest types and habitats now very limited in extent, e.g., all remnants of relatively intact native forest (which are rare and fragmented outside of protected areas in much of Sierra Leone, but often important to endemic and RTE species, and may contain red list tree species). (Per: NGH, 2017; Proforest, 2016; others)	See 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.)	See Element 1 above.	Y
Element 3: Refugia:		
Sacred groves, ancestral groves, and secret society groves. (Per: SGS, 2016b; Martin Martin et al, 2011) (Note they are also likely examples of relatively intact native forest remnants, per Element 2 above.) (See also HCV 6)	Engagement with local communities, Indigenous Peoples, and traditional peoples (see HCV 6).	Y
Mountainous areas that provide glacial refugia for lowland species. (Per: Proforest et al, 2012)	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
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.	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
(Note that protected areas listed at HCV 1 may also be refugia)	See HCV 1 above.	N

B. Assessments for HCV 3

National or Regional methodologies for assessing occurrences of the HCV 3 Interpretations:	<i>Best Available Information*</i> (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, traditional peoples, local communities, rights-holders, and stakeholders interested in HCV conservation. Also consider HCV assessors with local experience.	Y
For all HCV 3: Other assessment elements include identifying HCV Areas, the condition of the HCVs, and threats to the HCVs. Potential threats include both forest management operations (e.g., road building, logging, etc.) and external factors (e.g., climate change, fuelwood harvest, mining, etc.). (Per: EPA SL, 2020b)	See the BAI in Section A and the Overarching BAI, including re. engagement.	Y
For additional guidance in identifying and assessing HCV 3 that may exist in the management unit, see: FSC (2020) and HCVRN (2017) (Chapter 2, Best Practice Considerations for HCV Assessments, and Chapter 3.3, Identification of HCV 3).		

C. Strategies for Maintaining and Enhancing HCV 3

National or Regional strategies for maintaining and/or enhancing the HCV 3 Interpretations:	<i>Best Available Information*</i> (BAI) for management strategies:	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
For all HCV 3 Interpretations: Strategies that fully maintain the extent and integrity of rare or threatened ecosystems, habitats, or refugia.	See the Overarching BAI, including re. engagement with Indigenous Peoples, traditional peoples, local communities, rights-holders, stakeholders, and experts.	Y
For all HCV 3: Where enhancement is identified as the objective, measures to restore and/or develop rare or threatened ecosystems, habitats, or refugia are in place.	See the Overarching BAI, including re. engagement with Indigenous Peoples, traditional peoples, local communities, rights-holders, stakeholders, and experts.	Y

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?
For native forest remnants: Provide strict protection for all occurrences. Where relevant, work with local communities to demarcate and protect the sites, and to identify/provide alternative sources of building materials, fuelwood, etc., e.g., secondary forest sites, plots of fast-growing plantations on non-forest sites, etc. (Per: NHG, 2017)	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
For <i>wetlands*</i> , rivers, and riparian areas: Establish buffers of 30 meters (<i>wetlands*</i>) and 50 meters per side (rivers and riparian areas). Prohibit conversion to agriculture, mining, and other intensive activity within buffers. (Per: NHG, 2017; Proforest, 2016; EPA SL, 2014). See also the strategies at HCV 2 for palisade and fringing forests along rivers and lakes.	See the Overarching BAI. For <i>wetlands*</i> , see also the Sierra Leone <i>Wetland*</i> Conservation Project (SLWCP).	Y
For mangroves: See the strategies at HCV 2	See the BAI at HCV 2.	Y
Where fuelwood harvest is a threat: See the strategies at HCV 1.	See the BAI at HCV 1.	Y
Where mining is a threat: See the strategies at HCV 1.	See the BAI at HCV 1.	Y
For additional guidance, consider: FSC (2020), including re. engaging Indigenous Peoples and communities, and HCVRN (2018) (e.g., Part 2), including re. the overall process for developing strategies.		

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 <i>Indicators*</i> . 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 <i>indicators*</i> should be used, e.g., field surveys of the extent and condition of ecosystems and habitat. For others, indirect <i>indicators*</i> may be sufficient and more efficient, e.g., monitoring of <i>indicator*</i> species.	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
If satellite imagery is used, it should be of sufficient resolution to detect below-the-canopy conditions and forest <i>degradation*</i> .	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
For additional guidance on monitoring programs, consider: FSC (2020) and HCVRN (2018) (e.g., Part 3, the resources in Annex 1 and the example monitoring techniques in Annex 2).		

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 Interpretations of HCV 4, for HCV Identification

National Interpretations of HCV 4:	Best Available Information* (BAI) for identifying occurrences of the Interpretations:	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
Element 1: Water catchments in critical situations:		
Forests that comprise more than 50% of a major watershed, and forests that comprise more than 25% of a watershed critical for collection of potable water and/or regulating water flow to urban areas or RAMSAR sites.	See the Overarching BAI for potentially relevant types of information sources.	Y
Watersheds, streams, rivers, and other water sources relied upon by Indigenous Peoples and other communities for drinking water, irrigation, or other daily uses, including <i>wetlands</i> * and riparian and catchment vegetation that help to maintain water flows and water quality, and to reduce evaporation. (Per: Proforest et al, 2012; Proforest, 2016; EPA SL, 2014; NHG, 2017; Mongabay, 2016b) (Note some riparian vegetation is also proposed as HCV 3)	See the BAI for HCV 5 and the Overarching BAI.	Y
Important <i>wetlands</i> *, e.g., Lake Idrissa and RAMSAR sites, i.e. the Sierra Leone River Estuary. (Per: EPA SL, 2020b; Proforest et al, 2012; others) (Note RAMSAR sites are also covered at HCV 2.)	See RAMSAR (in References).	N
Riparian vegetation. (Per: Proforest et al, 2012)	See the Overarching BAI.	Y

National Interpretations of HCV 4:	Best Available Information* (BAI) for identifying occurrences of the Interpretations:	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
Element 2: Control of erosion of vulnerable soils and slopes in critical situations:		
Forests in landslide and flood prone areas, including those with runouts likely to affect populated areas.	Maps of steep and/or, unstable soils, flood risk maps. Field observations/surveys of steep slopes, vulnerable soils etc. Consultation with geologists or other local experts, authorities, and communities	Y
Forests and other vegetation on fragile or erosion prone soils, including slopes where vegetation has burned, and slopes over 20-35° (depending on soil types and rainfall). (Per: SGS, 2016b; Proforest et al, 2012)	Soil maps, maps of erodible soils. Field observations/surveys of steep slopes, vulnerable soils etc. Consultation with geologists or local experts, authorities, and communities.	Y
Slopes above streams and rivers that provide water sources or fisheries for local communities. (Per: Proforest, 2016; Proforest et al, 2012)	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
Trees and vegetation that buffer settlements from wind and dust. (Per: Proforest et al, 2012)	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
Element 3: Other ecosystem services in critical situations:		
Provision of food, water, and shelter to local communities and Indigenous Peoples. (See HCV 5)	Engagement with local communities, Indigenous Peoples, and traditional peoples (see HCV 5)	Y
Recreational opportunities in parks and other public forests near urban centers.	See the Overarching BAI.	N
Tourism in public forests where communities, Indigenous Peoples, and/or traditional peoples have few other opportunities for ecologically sustainable revenue generation, including bird-watching sites, fishing sites, and parks. (Per: EPA SL, 2014; others)	See the Overarching BAI.	N

National Interpretations of HCV 4:	<i>Best Available Information*</i> (BAI) for identifying occurrences of the Interpretations:	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
Per the precautionary approach and pending further assessment: Significant <i>peatlands*</i> , including for their role in regulating carbon. (Per: GFW, 2023)	See the Overarching BAI. For coarse-scale maps of global <i>peatlands*</i> , see GFW – Peatlands (in References).	Y

B. Assessments for HCV 4

National or Regional methodologies for assessing occurrences of the HCV 4 Interpretations:	<i>Best Available Information*</i> (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, traditional peoples, local communities, 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 include both forest management operations (e.g., road building, logging, etc.) and external factors (e.g., climate change, mining, artisanal mining, etc.). (Per: EPA SL, 2020b)	See the BAI in Section A and the Overarching BAI, including re. engagement.	Y
For water catchments 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 (FSC, 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 (2020) and HCVRN (2017) (Chapter 2, Best Practice Considerations for HCV Assessments, and Chapter 3.4, Identification of HCV 4).		

C. Strategies for Maintaining and Enhancing HCV 4

National or Regional strategies for maintaining and/or enhancing the HCV 4 Interpretations:	<i>Best Available Information*</i> (BAI) for management strategies:	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
For 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: 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.	See the Overarching BAI, including re. engagement with Indigenous Peoples, traditional peoples, local communities, rights-holders, stakeholders, and experts. For additional considerations, see: FSC (2020) and HCVRN (2018) (e.g., Part 2, including section 2.3.4).	Y
For climate regulation: Strategies to maintain or enhance carbon sequestration and storage are in place.	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
For <i>wetlands*</i> , rivers, and riparian areas: Map the water bodies and their usage. Establish buffers of 30 meters (<i>wetlands*</i>) and 50 meters per side (rivers and riparian areas). Prohibit conversion to agriculture, mining, and other intensive activity within buffers. (Per: NHG, 2017; EPA SL, 2014; Proforest, 2016). See also the strategies at HCV 2 for palisade and fringing forests along rivers and lakes.	See the Overarching BAI. For <i>wetlands*</i> , see also the Sierra Leone <i>Wetland*</i> Conservation Project (SLWCP).	Y
For erodible or fragile soils and slopes, landslide prone slopes, and other vulnerable soils and slopes, restrict operations on slopes over 20-35° (depending on soil types and rainfall), retain sufficient trees and other vegetation to prevent erosion, and exclude activities that result in deforestation and increased slide risk. (Per: Proforest et al, 2012; Proforest, 2016; Birdlife International, 2017)	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
For additional guidance, consider: FSC (2020), including re. engaging Indigenous Peoples and communities, and HCVRN (2018) (e.g., Part 2), including re. the overall process for developing strategies.		

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 <i>Indicators</i> *. 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 (2021b) for basic factors to consider monitoring.		
For additional guidance on monitoring programs, consider: FSC (2020) and HCVRN (2018) (e.g., Part 3, the resources in Annex 1, and the example monitoring techniques in Annex 2).		

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 Interpretations of HCV 5, for HCV Identification

National Interpretations of HCV 5:	Best Available Information* (BAI) for identifying occurrences of the Interpretations:	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
Element 1: Sites and resources fundamental for satisfying the basic necessities of local communities (for livelihoods, health, nutrition, water, etc.):		
Watersheds, rivers, streams, and other sources of water for drinking, other daily use, or irrigation. (Per: Proforest 2016; NHG, 2017)	<i>Culturally appropriate*</i> engagement with the local communities.	Y
Hunting grounds and fisheries for subsistence in local communities. (Not inclusive of poaching, wildlife hunting for non-local trade, bushmeat hunting of RTE wildlife, or unsustainable harvest levels.) (Per: Proforest et al, 2012; Proforest, 2016; NHG, 2017)	<i>Culturally appropriate*</i> engagement with the local communities.	Y
Growing areas and plants and wildlife used for subsistence or traditional medicinal by local communities. Examples include: plantings of cassava, corn, rice, maize, beans, chili peppers, other vegetables, cocoa, coffee; sacred groves/sites utilized as sources of traditional medicinal plants; other sites for the harvest of wild and cultivated medicinal plants. (Not inclusive of deforestation, conversion of forest to agriculture, commercial capture or harvest of pangolin, or unsustainable traditional harvest of pangolin.) These areas are often set aside for customary use rights. (Per : SGS, 2016b; Lebbie et al, 1995; EPA SL, 2014; Boakye et al, 2014).	<i>Culturally appropriate*</i> engagement with the local communities.	Y
Other sites and resources from which local communities satisfy basic needs, including but not limited to: sources for sustainable levels and methods of harvest of fuelwood,	<i>Culturally appropriate*</i> engagement with the local communities.	Y

National Interpretations of HCV 5:	Best Available Information* (BAI) for identifying occurrences of the Interpretations:	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
rattan and building materials. (Per: SGS, 2016b; Proforest, 2016)		
Sites and resources for sustainable levels of NTFP cultivation, harvest, and related revenue generation by local communities, e.g.: sustainable harvest of fish; harvest of craft materials; propagation and harvest of plants used as natural pest repellents; eco-tourism (e.g., bird-watching sites, fishing sites, and parks, including at Lake Sonfon). Sites set aside for use by community by-laws (Per: EPA SL, 2014; Proforest, 2016; Sesay et al, 2017) (See also HCV 4 above)	<i>Culturally appropriate*</i> engagement with the local communities.	Y
For all HCV Interpretations.	Supplemental BAI may include: databases and maps; community development organizations and professionals; and sociologists and other experts. See also the Overarching BAI.	N
Element 2: Sites and resources fundamental for satisfying the basic necessities of Indigenous Peoples (for livelihoods, health, nutrition, water, etc.):		
Watersheds, rivers, streams, and other sources of water for drinking, other daily use, or irrigation.	<i>Culturally appropriate*</i> engagement with the Indigenous Peoples.	Y
Hunting grounds and wildlife, and fisheries and fish, for subsistence. (Not inclusive of poaching, wildlife hunting for non-local trade, bushmeat hunting of RTE wildlife, or unsustainable harvest levels.)	<i>Culturally appropriate*</i> engagement with the Indigenous Peoples.	Y
Growing areas and plants and wildlife used for subsistence or traditional medicinal use. (Not inclusive of deforestation, conversion of forest to agriculture, commercial capture or harvest of pangolin, or unsustainable traditional harvest of pangolin.)	<i>Culturally appropriate*</i> engagement with the Indigenous Peoples.	Y
Other sites and resources from which Indigenous People satisfy basic needs, including but not limited to: sources for sustainable levels of harvest of fuelwood and building materials.	<i>Culturally appropriate*</i> engagement with the Indigenous Peoples.	Y

National Interpretations of HCV 5:	<i>Best Available Information*</i> (BAI) for identifying occurrences of the Interpretations:	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
Sites and resources for sustainable levels of NTFP cultivation, harvest, and related revenue generation by Indigenous Peoples.	<i>Culturally appropriate*</i> engagement with the Indigenous Peoples.	Y
For all HCV Interpretations.	Supplemental 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:	<i>Best Available Information*</i> (BAI) for assessing occurrences:	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
For all HCV 5 Interpretations: Identifying occurrences of the HCV 5 Interpretations listed above, along with any other HCV 5 occurrences, is the first, essential part of assessments.	<i>Culturally appropriate*</i> engagement with local communities, traditional peoples and Indigenous Peoples is the primary BAI. For supplemental BAI, see Section A and the Overarching BAI.	Y
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 threats to the HCVs. Potential threats include both forest management operations (e.g., road building, logging, etc.) and external factors (e.g., climate change, mining, development elsewhere in the watershed, etc.). (Per: EPA SL, 2020b)	<i>Culturally appropriate*</i> engagement with local communities, traditional peoples and Indigenous Peoples is the primary BAI. For supplemental BAI, see Section A and the Overarching BAI.	Y
For all HCV 5: Consider conducting participatory mapping with the local communities or Indigenous Peoples. Consider doing the mapping early in the overall HCV and management planning process, to avoid disturbing culturally sensitive sites. Also consider initiating	The local communities, traditional peoples and Indigenous Peoples.	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?
FPIC conversations before the mapping and assessment process.		
For Element 2, HCVs important to Indigenous People: Assessments should not assume that existing laws or practices in Sierra Leone recognize or respect Indigenous Peoples or their rights.	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
Assessments also consider whether specific patterns of shifting agriculture, hunting, fuelwood harvest, pangolin harvest, and other forest utilization are sustaining the resource, and avoiding harm to biodiversity and other HCVs, including remnants of relatively intact native forest. (Per: NHG, 2017; others)	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
For additional guidance in identifying and assessing HCV 5, see: FSC (2020) and HCVRN (2017) (Chapter 2, Best Practice Considerations for HCV Assessments, and Chapter 3.5, Identification of HCV 5).		

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: 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.	<i>Culturally appropriate</i> * engagement with local communities, traditional peoples and Indigenous Peoples is the primary BAI; see the Overarching BAI for more detail. For supplemental BAI, see Section A and the Overarching BAI.	Y
For additional guidance, consider: FSC (2020), including re. engaging Indigenous Peoples and communities, and HCVRN (2018) (e.g., Part 2).		

D. Monitoring for HCV 5

National or Regional methodologies for monitoring occurrences of the HCV 5 Interpretations:	<i>Best Available Information*</i> (BAI) for monitoring occurrences:	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
For all HCV 5 Interpretations: Monitoring that addresses Criterion 9.4 and its <i>Indicators*</i> . Also consider monitoring for changes in internal and external threats to the HCVs.	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
For all HCV 5: Monitoring conducted by or with the local communities or Indigenous Peoples, or using methodologies developed in cooperation with them through <i>culturally appropriate*</i> 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: 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 (2020) and HCVRN (2018) (e.g., Part 3 and the resources in Annex 1).		

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, identified through engagement with these local communities.

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 Interpretations of HCV 6, for HCV Identification

National Interpretations of HCV 6:	<i>Best Available Information*</i> for identifying occurrences of the Interpretations:	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
Element 1: Sites, resources, habitats and landscapes of global or national cultural, archaeological or historical significance:		
Proposed and designated World Heritage sites. (No sites currently designated.)	See World Heritage (in References).	N
Other internationally or nationally important cultural, archaeological, or historical sites, resources, habitats, or landscapes.	Databases and expert organizations, e.g., Historic Monuments and Relics Commission, museums, archaeologists, anthropologists. See also the Overarching BAI.	Y
Element 2: Sites, resources, habitats and landscapes of critical cultural, ecological, economic or religious/sacred importance for the traditional cultures of local communities:		
Sacred groves/sites ('Pa Roke'), ancestral groves, and secret society groves/sites, Poro Society grounds (Kono). (Per : SGS, 2016b; Martin Martin et al, 2011; Lebbie et al, 1995)	<i>Culturally appropriate*</i> engagement with the local communities and Paramount Chief with the consideration that sites are often private.	Y
Lake Sonfon (as a site of traditional beliefs and ceremonies). (Per: Sesay et al, 2017)	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
Other sites, resources, habitats, or landscapes of cultural, ecological, economic, or religious/sacred importance to local communities. Possibilities may include but are not limited to shrines, gravesites (including mass gravesites), sacred bushes, traditional hunting grounds (ojei), herbalists gathering areas, river deities, mountains, waterfalls, other features	<i>Culturally appropriate*</i> engagement with the local communities and Paramount Chief with the consideration that sites are often private.	Y

National Interpretations of HCV 6:	Best Available Information* for identifying occurrences of the Interpretations:	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
considered deities, areas used for rituals, forest products used for rituals (Kono). (Per: Proforest et al, 2012; NHG, 2017).		
For all Interpretations.	Supplemental BAI may include: databases and maps; community development organizations and other experts. See also the Overarching BAI.	Y
Element 3: Sites, resources, habitats and landscapes of critical cultural, ecological, economic or religious/sacred importance for the traditional cultures of Indigenous Peoples:		
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.	Culturally appropriate* engagement with the Indigenous Peoples.	Y
(Note the Element 2 Interpretations may also be relevant for Indigenous Peoples.)	See the BAI for Element 2.	Y
For all Interpretations.	Supplemental BAI may include: databases; organizations that represent or provide services for Indigenous Peoples; and archaeologists, anthropologists, and other experts. See also the Overarching BAI.	N

B. Assessments for HCV 6

National or Regional methodologies for assessing occurrences of the HCV 6 Interpretations:	<i>Best Available Information*</i> for assessing occurrences:	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
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.	For Elements 2 and 3, HCVs important to local communities, traditional peoples and Indigenous Peoples, <i>culturally appropriate*</i> engagement with the communities and Indigenous Peoples is the primary BAI. For Element 1 and supplemental BAI for Elements 2 and 3, see Section A and the Overarching BAI.	Y
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. Potential threats include both forest management operations (e.g., road building, logging, etc.) and external factors (e.g., climate change, illegal logging, mining, etc.). (Per: EPA SL, 2020b)	The BAI in Section A and the Overarching BAI.	Y
For Elements 2 and 3, HCVs important to communities and Indigenous Peoples: Consider interactive mapping with the local communities and the Indigenous Peoples. Consider doing the mapping early in the overall HCV and management planning process, to avoid disturbing culturally sensitive sites. Also consider initiating FPIC conversations before the mapping and assessment process.	The communities and Indigenous Peoples, including elders or other members who may have knowledge of sites whose secrecy is to be guarded, e.g., sacred groves, etc.	Y
For Element 3: Assessments should not assume that existing laws or practices in Sierra Leone recognize or respect Indigenous Peoples or their rights.		
For secret society groves: Assessments may need to engage both male and female community members, as secret societies are often	<i>Culturally appropriate*</i> engagement.	Y

National or Regional methodologies for assessing occurrences of the HCV 6 Interpretations:	Best Available Information* for assessing occurrences:	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
gender-specific. (Per: Martin Martin et al, 2011)		
For some secret society features (e.g., bushes used for traditional cultural rites), mapping of specific locations may not be possible due to secrecy concerns, and alternative methods of demarking the sites may be required. (Per: Proforest, 2016)	Culturally appropriate* engagement.	Y
For additional guidance in identifying and assessing HCV 6, see: FSC (2020) and HCVRN (2017) (Chapter 2, Best Practice Considerations for HCV Assessments, and Chapter 3.6, Identification of HCV 6).		

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 HCV occurrences related to Indigenous Peoples and/or local communities: Strategies to protect the cultural values are developed in cooperation with representatives and members of the local communities and the Indigenous Peoples.	Culturally appropriate* engagement with local communities, traditional peoples and Indigenous Peoples is the primary BAI; see the Overarching BAI for more detail. For supplemental BAI, see Section A and the Overarching BAI.	Y
For sacred groves.	Consider also the recommendations of Lebbie et al (1995).	Y
For other HCV occurrences identified primarily due to historical or archaeological significance: Strategies are based on <i>Best Available Information*</i> , and considered effective for maintaining and/or enhancing the HCV.	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
For additional guidance, consider: FSC (2020), including re. engaging Indigenous Peoples and communities, and HCVRN (2018) (e.g., Part 2).		

D. Monitoring for HCV 6

National or Regional methodologies for monitoring occurrences of the HCV 6 Interpretations:	<i>Best Available Information*</i> for monitoring occurrences:	BAI also applies to SLIMF?
For all HCV 6 Interpretations: Monitoring that addresses Criterion 9.4 and its <i>Indicators*</i> . Also consider monitoring for changes in internal and external threats to the HCVs.	See the Overarching BAI.	Y
For HCV occurrences related 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 <i>culturally appropriate*</i> 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: 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 (2020) and HCVRN (2018) (e.g., Part 3), and the resources in Annex 1).		

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 standards developers. Where additional stakeholders and experts are relevant to specific management units, they should also be identified and considered by managers.

Environmental Stakeholders:

- Conservation International
- Environmental Foundation for Africa
- Fauna & Flora International
- Royal Society for Protection of Birds (RSPB)
- *Wetlands** International

Social Stakeholders and Community Development Organizations:

- Beautification, Rehabilitation and Conservation Organization (BRACO)
- Community Action for Rural Development (CARD – SL)
- Council for Human Ecology, Sierra Leone
- Environmental Foundation for Africa
- Green Scenery
- Human Rights and Development Centre
- Network Movement for Justice and Development (NMJD)

Other Expert Organizations – Environmental:

- Centre for Biodiversity Research
- Reptiles and Amphibians Programme – SL
- Green Scenery
- Conservation Society of Sierra Leone
- Department of Biological Sciences, Njala University, Freetown
- Faculty of Pure and Applied Sciences, Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone
- Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone, Biological Services Department
- Gola Rainforest National Park, scientific staff
- Njala University, Biological Services Department
- Proforest, Ghana
- Climate Change, Environment and Forest Conservation
- Research Center of the Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary
- Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute (SLARI)
- Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary

Other Expert Organizations – Social:

- Monuments and Relics Commission, Sierra Leone
- National Museum, Sierra Leone

Government Agencies:

- Director of Forestry, Forestry Division, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change
- Environmental Protection Agency, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change
- Ministry of Agriculture, and Food Security (MAFS)
- Ministry of Water Resources
- National Protected Area Authority (NPAA)
- Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs
- Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources
- Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs

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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- FSC. 2020. High Conservation Value Guidance for Forest Managers. FSC-GUI-30-009 V1-0 EN. <https://fsc.org/en/document-centre/documents/resource/422>.
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To see IFLs as of 2017, look at both the green areas labelled as “*Intact Forest Landscapes*” (as of 2020) *and* the dark brown areas labelled “reduction in extent 2016-2020”.
For downloadable data layers for 2016/2017, see: <http://intactforests.org/data.ifl.html> and http://data.globalforestwatch.org/datasets/7dc2af9bf4e2404393f673e603aa9351_4
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Annex K International Generic Indicators* for the use and risk management of highly hazardous pesticides

- 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 regionally available 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 prioritise 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 and Annex B, point 12) for the use of highly hazardous pesticides include informing workers and local communities 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. Quality of manufacturers' MSDS sheets are verified against TIPWG or Best Available Information resources for accuracy and reliability.
- 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:

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 Program

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

Annex L 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 World Conservation Union (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 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 program 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. World Conservation Union (IUCN)).

Best Available Information: Data, facts, documents, expert opinions, existing private sector industry research, 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. See also Guidance Note in Criterion 6.1.1.

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 World Conservation Union (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, 632pp).

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 numbers 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, 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 International Generic *Indicators**, 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. http://wwf.panda.org/about_our_earth/ecoregions/about/what_is_an_ecoregion/).

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 DC; 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 DC).

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, Article1.3).

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,-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: 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, Informed Consent (FPIC) with the *affected rights holders** of the nature, quality, and quantity of all social harms as well as the on-going future benefits these would have provided. Equivalence shall entail provision of the best means possible to ensure future community wellbeing. (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, P₂O₅ and K₂O, 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 himself/ herself 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 hazard *child** labour referred to under (Article 3(d) of the 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& 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. 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): is 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.

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, 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 km² (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;
- Labor (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 World Conservation Union (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 World Conservation Union (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 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 license 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 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 her or his 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 time-scale 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 & WHO, Rome).

Minimum age (of employment): is 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 favor 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: 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 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 the definition for 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 imperiled 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 form 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 for '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: World Conservation Union (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 meters 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, licenses 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 January 1, 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 water courses): 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 meters 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 DC: 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 laborers, administrators,

supervisors, executives, contractor employees as well as seasonal and/or casual workers, 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)



FSC International – Policy and Performance Unit

Adenauerallee 134

53113 Bonn

Germany

Phone: +49 -(0)228 -36766 -0

Fax: +49 -(0)228 -36766 -65

Email : country_requirements@fsc.org