# Template Ecosystem Services Certification Document

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| The Ecosystem Services Certification Document (ESCD) is the primary piece of evidence used by the certification body to assess compliance with the procedure. It will also contain all the information required for third parties to understand the impacts that have been demonstrated and the context of the forest management unit. Following the forest management evaluation, it will include a list of impacts that were validated or verified by the certification body. The ESCD will be uploaded by the certification body to the FSC certification database and will be available for download alongside certification report public summaries.  The ESCD is therefore a primary tool for providing transparency to the process and supporting communication to other parties about the impact that has been demonstrated. In some cases, it will be used to support promotion of FSC-certified forests with verified ecosystem services impacts; in other cases, the ESCD may be all that is required to secure a benefit, such as a grant, an investment, or a payment from a beneficiary, such as a downstream water user. |

## Results of the evaluation (this page to be completed by the lead auditor)

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| **Name of the certification body** |  | |
| **Name of the lead auditor** |  | |
| **Date of the evaluation of this document** |  | |
| **List of ecosystem services claims with ES impact code from**  **Annex B**  **(based on verified ecosystem services impacts)** |  | |
| **List of validated ecosystem services impacts**  (*when clause 11.2 applies*) |  | |
| **Date of verification or validation of the impact** | **Approved on [dd.mm.yyyy]** | **Valid until [dd.mm.yyyy]** |

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| **Signature of the lead auditor and seal** | **Place of approval** |
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## Part I: Information regarding steps to demonstrating impact

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| **Step 1: Declaration of the ecosystem service(s)** |
| * 1. **The organization shall declare the ecosystem service(s) for which an impact is proposed**   *The organization shall choose one or more from among five ecosystem services: carbon sequestration and storage, biodiversity conservation, watershed services, soil conservation, and/or recreational services. The organization should develop an ESCD for each declared ecosystem service.*   * + - Biodiversity conservation (ES1)     - Carbon sequestration and storage (ES2)     - Watershed services (ES3)     - Soil conservation (ES4)     - Recreational services (ES5) |
| **4.2 The organization shall briefly describe the legal tenure to manage, use, and/or receive payments for the declared**  **ecosystem service**  *Describe relevant legislation relevant to the declared ecosystem service. This is particularly relevant in countries where forest managers have the right to harvest timber, but other services such as water and biodiversity are not included in their management rights. It is expected that the organization will provide a reference to the applicable law(s).*  *A law may not exist in the relevant jurisdiction. In this case, the organization is required to describe this situation.* |
| **4.3 The organization shall list any management objectives related to the declared ecosystem service, including any relevant objectives from the management plan** |

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| **Step 2: Description of the ecosystem service**  **(it is recommended that you describe this step in approximately 1,000 words for all the clauses)** |
| **5.1.1 The current condition of the ecosystem service** |
| **5.1.2 The past condition of the ecosystem service, based on best available information (small and low-intensity managed forests are not required to comply with this clause unless required by the methodology used according to Step 5)**  *This description should focus on describing the need and/or opportunity for current management activities to either restore or maintain the ecosystem services.* |
| **5.1.3 Areas within and outside of the management unit that contribute to the declared ecosystem service (small and low-intensity managed forests are not required to describe areas outside the management unit unless required by the methodology used according to Step 5)**  *Some examples of areas outside of the management unit are:*   * *Watershed services: upstream and/or downstream areas in a river, headwaters areas, wetlands, or water sources* * *Recreational services: areas outside the management unit that are key tourist attractions or protected areas and/or features adjacent to the management unit that can enhance its tourist value, such as a beautiful mountain or lake that can be seen from the management unit.* |
| **5.1.4 Beneficiaries of the ecosystem service**  *The organization should describe only direct beneficiaries of the declared ecosystem service, such as communities whose drinking water is provided by the watershed service, human settlements that can benefit from a more stable soil, or local people working in the recreational services sector. Existing information from stakeholder consultations may be used to fulfil this clause.*  *End-users such as consumers or global beneficiaries of carbon mitigation should not be listed.* |

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| **5.1.5 Threats to the ecosystem service, both human-induced and of natural origin, within and outside of the management unit (small and low-intensity managed forests need describe only threats within the management unit)**  *For example:*   * *Slash and burn activities outside may cause uncontrolled forest fires affecting carbon stocks, biodiversity, or recreational services* * *Deforestation or forest degradation in the area could affect wildlife populations* * *Development activities could affect water quality or hydrological systems* * *Land conversion outside the management in mountainous areas may significantly affect soil conservation.* |
| **5.1.6 A summary of culturally appropriate engagement with Indigenous Peoples and local communities, related to the declared ecosystem service including ecosystem services access and use, and benefit sharing**  *This description may include stakeholder consultation; free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) processes; engagement with communities and other organizations involved in activities related to the declared ecosystem service; disputes and dispute-resolution processes. In addition, this section may include how the organization plans to share benefits from the declared ecosystem service with Indigenous Peoples and local communities; how you plan to grant access and basic use of the ecosystem service to Indigenous Peoples and local communities.* |

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| **Step 3: Theory of change: Linking management activities to impacts** |
| **6.1 For each declared ecosystem service, the organization shall propose one or more of the impacts from Annex B**  *The impacts that can be demonstrated are listed in the five tables of Annex B.*  *Under each ecosystem service, there are several impacts to choose from. The choice of the impact is of great importance, as it influences the required information in terms of outcome indicators and the necessary comparisons to show evidence of impact.*  *For example, ES1.1 Restoration of natural forest cover or ES3.1 Maintenance of water quality.* |
| **6.2 For each proposed impact, the organization shall develop a theory of change to describe the link between management activities and the impacts, using Annex A as a template**  *Follow the template below to develop a theory of change (Clause 6.2)* |

**Management activities (Clause 6.3.1)**

**Outputs**

**(Clause 6.3.2, SLIMF are not required to include the outputs in their theory of change)**

**Outcomes (Clause 6.3.3)**

**Impact**

**(Clause 6.1)**

**Example 1**

*Outcome 2 (linked to Output 2)*

*Output 2*

*(linked to Activities 3 and 4)*

*Activity 3*

*Outcome 1 (linked to Output 1)*

*Output 1*

*(linked to Activities 1 and 2)*

*Impact selected from Annex B*

*Activity 1*

*Activity 2*

**Example 2 (SLIMF)**

*Activity 4*

*Outcome 1 (linked to Activities 1 and 2)*

*Outcome 2 (linked to Activity 3)*

*Impact selected from Annex B*

*Activity 1*

*Activity 2*

*Activity 3*

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| **6.5 The organization shall identify and briefly describe any contextual factors that may influence the outcomes,**  **e.g. the introduction of new legislation, or the presence of other water users (SLIMF may focus on local contextual factors)**  *Some examples:*   * *Political change or introduction of new legislation* * *Safety and other events such as wars or violent conflicts* * *Occurrence of natural disaster or change in climate* * *Overlapping tenure of the management unit by other users* * *Land rights in the country* * *Other users of the ecosystem services in the area.* |

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| **Step 4: Selection of outcome indicators** | | |
| **Impact (Clause 6.1)** | ***For each proposed impact, the organization shall select one or more outcome indicators according to Clauses 7.1, 7.2, and 7.3)*** | ***7.4 For each outcome indicator selected, the organization shall specify a verifiable target(s) that represents a desired future value for the outcome indicator (SLIMF are not required to comply with Clause 7.4)***  *The verifiable target may come from the forest management plan* |
| *Impact 1* | *Outcome indicator for Outcome 1 (selected from Annex B or an alternative outcome indicator)*  *Link to the outcomes presented in the theory of change* | *Verifiable target for the outcome indicator*  *Link to the outcomes presented in the theory of change* |
| *Impact 2* | *Outcome indicator (selected from Annex B or an alternative outcome indicator)*  *Link to the outcomes presented in the theory of change* | *Verifiable target for outcome indicator*  *Link to the outcomes presented in the theory of change* |

**Step 5: Methods (it is recommended that you describe this step in approximately 500 words for all the clauses)**

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| * 1. **To measure the values of the selected outcome indicator(s), the organization shall either:**      1. **Choose an applicable methodology from FSC-GUI-30-006 *Guidance for Demonstrating Ecosystem Services Impacts*; or**      2. **Use another methodology that conforms to the following eligibility criteria.** | |
| **8.1.2.1 The methodology is suitable for the local context and the outcome indicator to be measured** | *Brief justification:*  *The organization is not required to fill out this section if it has chosen a methodology from FSC-GUI-30-006.* |
| **8.1.2.2 The methodology is credible, based on best available information (e.g. there are publications that support the use of the methodology; it has been validated through**  **previous use; it has been endorsed by experts)** | *Brief justification:*  *The organization is not required to fill out this section if it has chosen a methodology from FSC-GUI-30-006.* |
| **8.1.2.3 The methodology is objective and replicable,**  **i.e. it yields similar results when applied by different observers in the same site under similar conditions** | *Brief justification:*  *The organization is not required to fill out this section if it has chosen a methodology from FSC-GUI–30–006.* |

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| **Step 5: Methods (it is recommended that you describe this step in approximately 1,000 words)** | |
| **8.2 The organization shall describe the methodology used to measure the values of the selected outcome indicator(s), in terms that are clear enough to facilitate evaluation**  *The organization should refer to FSC-GUI-30-006 for recommended methodologies and could also refer to external methodologies, books, or articles. Provide a brief description below.* | |
| **8.3 The organization shall describe the collection and analysis of data, including:** | |
| **8.3.1 The data sources that were used (literature, interviews, field measurements, modelling, etc.)** | *Brief description:* |
| **8.3.2 Sampling methods, including frequency and/or**  **intensity** | *Brief description:* |
| **8.3.3 Any equipment used to measure the outcome indicator** | *Brief description:* |
| **8.3.4 A summary of any data analysis performed** | *Brief description:* |

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| **Step 6: Measurement and comparison of the value of the selected outcome indicator(s)** | |
| **9.1 The organization shall measure the present value of each selected outcome indicator**  *Write down the specific measure you are using of the present value,*  *e.g. tonnes of above-ground forest carbon stocks across the forest management unit as measured in 2016 (within the last two years).* | **9.2 The organization shall, according to the specifications in the ‘Comparison’ column of Annex B, compare the present value of each outcome indicator with the specified value**  *Write down the comparison value chosen from Annex B. Be specific, e.g. previous measurement of above-ground carbon stocks across the management unit in 2005; or allowable turbidity, as set out in the Environmental Protection Agency water quality standards.* |

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| **Step 7: Statement of results (it is recommended that you describe this step in approximately 500 words for all the clauses)** | | | | | |
| **Impact**  **(Clause 6.1)** | **Outcome indicator (Clause 7.1)** | **Present value of the outcome indicator (Clause 9.1)** | **Value of the comparison (Clause 9.2)** | **Required result (Annex B)** | **Results (Clause 10.1)** |
| *Impact 1* | *List the selected outcome indicator(s)* | *Record the present value of the outcome indicator(s)* | *Record the value of the comparison* | *Re-state the required result from Annex B* | *Describe the evidence that shows the required result has been met.*  *Provide detailed evidence summarizing reports or the results for each outcome indicator.*  *The organization may provide additional evidence as an attachment.* |
| **10.2 For each proposed impact, the organization shall describe how the results from Clause 10.1 contribute to the likelihood of achieving the proposed verifiable targets in the future** | | | | | |
| **Verifiable target 1**  **Verifiable target 2** | | | | *Describe how the result for each outcome indicator is consistent with achieving the verifiable target in the future.* | |
| *Describe how the result contributes to achieving the verifiable target in the future for impact 2.* | |

## Part II: Management information

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| **Name of the forest management organization** |
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| **Location of the management unit** |
| *If there is more than one management unit, please indicate the location of all management units to which this ESCD applies.*  Coordinates of the management unit: |

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| **Type of certification** |
| *Please tick all the options that apply to the management unit*  Tenure management:   * Community  Public/state  Private * Concession  Indigenous  Low intensity  Small producer   Tenure ownership:   * Community  Public/state  Private  Indigenous Type of certificate: * Individual  Management group |

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| **Characteristics of the certificate** |
| *Please give the following information:* Management units (name and numbers): [ ]  Management unit area (in hectares): [ ]  Number of members (if applicable): [ ]  FSC certificate code (if applicable): [ ]  First issue date (if applicable): [ ]  Last issue date (if applicable): [ ]  Expiry date (if applicable): [ ] |

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| **Organization contact information** |
| *Please provide relevant contact information:*  Email: [ ]  Postal address: [ ]  Telephone number: [ ]  Contact name: [ ] |