

Independent Assessments

FSC Remedy Framework

Introduction

The FSC Remedy Framework is a set of permanent and effective measures required for remedying past social and environmental harms caused by:

- **Unacceptable activities** as stipulated by the [Policy for Association \(PfA\)](#).
- **Conversion** of natural forest between 1 December 1994 and 31 December 2020, also known as the cut-off date, as defined in the [Policy to Address Conversion \(PAC\)](#).

Both types of remedy processes include a phase of independent assessments.

The definition of independent assessor as defined in the Remedy Framework:

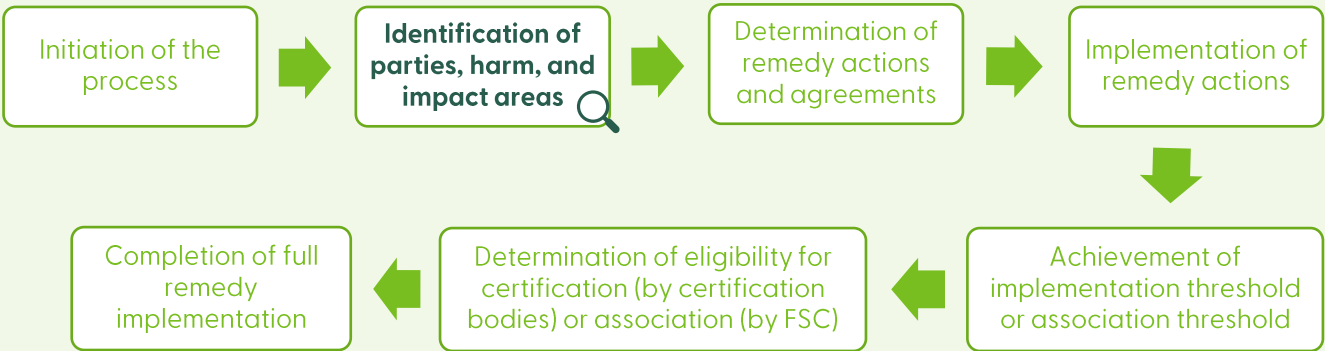
Independent assessor: An expert entity without conflict of interest who is not subject to The Organization’s or the corporate group’s authority, influence, or control, and whose qualifications are verified by FSC International.

Scope of work

Main tasks:	PfA remedy	Certification remedy
1. Stakeholder identification	●	●
2. Social baseline assessment	●	◐
3. Environmental baseline assessment	●	○
4. Social harm prioritization	●	●

Remedy process steps

🔍 Phase for independent assessments



Selection and requirements for independent assessors

- Independent assessors are selected by the company remedying past harm from **FSC's list of independent assessors**.
- The **expertise and qualifications** are evaluated by FSC before adding an assessor to the list.
 - List is expanded over time upon need and reviewed periodically by FSC.
 - The list will be available upon signing the remedy process agreement with FSC.
- **Independence of assessments** is evaluated on a case-by-case basis and sustained through contracts between parties.
 - Conflict of interest is reviewed before contracting independent assessments, and in case of any changes during the assessment process.
 - The same party cannot act as an independent assessor and a third-party verifier for the same remedy process.
 - The same party cannot concurrently perform independent assessments and act as a certification body for the organization.
- The organization in the remedy process is responsible for **funding** any costs related to independent assessments.
- For the first cases of implementing the FSC Remedy Framework, FSC may opt to contract the independent assessment directly, with reimbursement by the organization, to review the process to ensure expertise and independence of assessments.

Required expertise

- **General requirements** include:
 - Stakeholder mapping and consultation, participatory processes, and human and customary rights.
- **Case specific** expertise required include for example:
 - Relevant regional and cultural expertise in the region(s) the assessment is to be carried out.
 - Land-tenure rights, Free, Prior, and Informed Consent rights, forest management, High Conservation Value assessment, worker's rights, Geographic Information System mapping and analysis, and genetic engineering technology in forestry.
- Independent assessors are not required to possess all expertise, they may team up with other individuals or team of individuals to strengthen their expertise.

Controls during the assessments

- **The contracts in place** between parties require ongoing attention to maintaining independence and expertise
- **Third party verification (see summary)** takes place at several phases during the independent assessment, and at the very end.
- **Grievance mechanism** is required to be established by the organization going through the remedy process. Third party verification extends to the grievances received and their processing.