



Procedure

DEVELOPMENT OF INDICATORS FOR THE PROTECTION OF INTACT FOREST LANDSCAPES CONSIDERING THE LANDSCAPE LEVEL

FSC-PRO-60-004 V1-0 EN Draft 1-1



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INTRODUCTION

At the 9th FSC General Assembly in October 2022, Motion 23/2022 Use landscape-wide approaches adapted to local conditions and strengthen Standard Development Groups (SDGs) to improve protection of Intact Forest Landscapes (General Assembly, 2020) and the associated Implementation Note was passed by the membership. This motion asks FSC to review and revise the current approach to achieving effective Intact Forest Landscape (IFL) protection and enable and guide Standard Development Groups (SDGs) to identify and recommend improvements to FSC's normative framework, to strengthen approaches for identification, protection, maintenance and/or enhancement of High Conservation Value 2 (HCV2), including IFL conservation at landscape level in Forest Stewardship Standards.

This procedure enables SDGs to develop indicators for the protection of HCV2 and IFLs within the management unit (MU) considering the status of IFLs in the wider landscape.

The objective of this procedure is to strengthen the SDGs to develop, in engagement with social, environmental and economic stakeholders, mechanisms to protect the vast majority of HCV2 and IFLs at the landscape level. This endeavour aims to strengthen the commitment to protect IFL's as outlined in Motion 65/2014 High Conservation Value 2 (HCV2) – Intact forest landscape (IFL) protection but on a broader scale to have substantial and genuine impact on the conservation of these crucial forests worldwide.

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SCOPE

This procedure specifies the requirements for Standard Development Groups for applying a landscape approach for the use of the IFL-related International Generic Indicators (IGIs) for the Forest Stewardship Standards (FSS).

NOTE 1: The various process steps laid down in this procedure are further guided by [<FSC-GUI-60-004a Landscape Approach to Intact Forest Landscapes>](#).

NOTE 2: While the Standard Development Groups are ultimately accountable and responsible for the outcomes of this procedure, some tasks may need to be outsourced or delegated to consultants.

All aspects of this procedure are considered normative, including the scope, effective and validity dates, terms and definitions, unless otherwise stated. References and the content of information boxes, examples and notes are not normative.

As part of the FSC normative framework, this procedure is subject to the review and revision requirements of [<FSC-PRO-01-001 V4-0 The Development and Revision of FSC Requirements>](#).

REFERENCES

The following documents are indispensable for the application of this document.

For references without a version number, the latest version of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies:

FSC-STD-60-004	International Generic Indicators
FSC-STD-60-006	Process requirements for the development and maintenance of National Forest Stewardship Standards
FSC-GUI-60-004	Guideline for Standard Developers to Develop a National Threshold for the Core Area of Intact Forest Landscapes (IFL) within the Management Unit
FSC-GUI-60-004a	Landscape Approach to Intact Forest Landscapes

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions included in [<FSC-STD-01-002 FSC Glossary of Terms>](#), and the following apply:

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). (Source FSC-STD-60-004 V2-1)

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). Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-3. (Source FSC-STD-60-004 V2-1)

Verbal forms for the expression of provisions:

[Adapted from *ISO/IEC Directives Part 2 Principles and Rules for the structure and drafting of ISO and IEC documents*]

- “shall”: indicates requirements strictly to be followed in order to conform with the standard.
- “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 required. A ‘should requirement’ can be met in an equivalent way provided this can be demonstrated and justified.
- “may”: indicates a course of action permissible within the limits of the document.
- “can”: is used for statements of possibility and capability, whether material, physical or causal.

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ABBREVIATIONS

FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
FSS	Forest Stewardship Standard
HCV	High Conservation Value(s)
IFL	Intact Forest Landscape
MU	Management Unit
SDG	Standard Development Group
PSU	Performance and Standards Unit

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1. Identification of Intact Forest Landscapes (IFLs)

- 1.1. The Standard Development Group (SDG) shall identify the Intact Forest Landscapes (IFLs) that are located within the proposed geographical scope of the Forest Stewardship Standard (FSS) on the basis of the IFL maps published at www.globalforestwatch.org as of January 1, 2017.
- 1.2. The SDG may update the location or boundaries of the identified IFL to exclude areas which do not meet the IFL definition by using best available information, including:
 - a) Expert knowledge and peer review (e.g. HCV Network¹; Tropenbos²; WWF³; FORLAND⁴; STARLING⁵; WRI⁶; Global Forest Watch (GFW)⁷);
 - b) On-the-ground (below-the-canopy) truthing.

NOTE: According to GFW methodology, areas with evidence of certain types of human influence are considered disturbed and consequently not eligible for inclusion in an IFL, including:

- Timber production areas, agricultural lands and human settlements with a buffer zone of 1 km;
- Primary and secondary forest roads and skid trails, with a buffer zone of 1 km on either side;
- Areas, where industrial activities occurred during the last 30-70 years, such as logging, mining, oil and gas exploration and extraction, peat extraction, etc.

For any areas excluded from the IFL maps published at GFW as of January 1, 2017 specific evidence for each exclusion is provided as justification.

Areas with evidence of low-intensity and old disturbances are treated as subject to "background" influence and are eligible for inclusion in an IFL. Sources of background influence include local shifting cultivation activities, diffuse grazing by domestic animals, low-intensity selective logging for non-commercial purposes, and hunting (for guidance see: Chapter 3.2 in <[FSC-GUI-30-010 Intact Forest Landscape Guidance for Forest Managers](#)>).

2. Identification of the Landscape(s)

- 2.1. The SDG shall identify the landscape(s) within which the identified IFLs (as per section 1) are located (for guidance see Part:1 Landscape identification and analysis in <[FSC-GUI-60-004a Landscape Approach to Intact Forest Landscapes](#)>).

NOTE: A landscape is primarily defined by landforms, hydrological, ecological other biophysical or cultural characteristics. A landscape may be identical with the proposed geographical scope of the FSS if it has ecological and cultural coherence.

- 2.2. The SDG may identify only one landscape, or several landscapes within the geographical scope of the FSS, for developing landscape-specific indicators for the management and protection of IFLs.
- 2.3. The SDG shall define the boundaries of the identified landscape(s), taking into consideration social, ecological and environmental aspects (for guidance see Part:1.1 Defining the landscape boundaries in <[FSC-GUI-60-004a Landscape Approach to Intact Forest Landscapes](#)>).

¹ See HCV Network: <https://www.hcvnetwork.org/>

² See Tropenbos International: <https://www.tropenbos.org/>

³ See WWF: <https://wwf.panda.org/>

⁴ See Forland: <https://forland.io/>

⁵ See Starling <https://www.starling-verification.com/>

⁶ See World Resources Institute: <https://www.wri.org/>

⁷ See Global Forest Watch (GFW): <https://www.globalforestwatch.org/>

3. Description and analysis of the IFLs in the Landscape(s)
 - 3.1. The SDG shall develop a description of the landscape, including presence of IFLs, their protection levels, loss of IFLs over time, recent trends, etc. (for guidance see Part 1.2 Landscape Description in <FSC-GUI-60-004a Landscape Approach to Intact Forest Landscapes>).
 - 3.2. The SDG shall conduct a risk analysis to assess the future of IFLs in the landscape in the scenarios (i) where the current FSC rules are applied in the certified Management Unit (MU) and (ii) where the adopted landscape approach is applied. This risk analysis shall consider:
 - a) Influences from the land-use in the wider landscape, as well as existing land-use trends and anticipated future ones, and
 - b) Risks, benefits, threats, and opportunities related to biodiversity, protected areas, forest carbon stocks, Indigenous Peoples, traditional peoples and local communities, the FSC brand, certified operations, and other HCV2 and IFL related values.
 - 3.3. Based on the risk analysis, the SDG shall develop a scenario that outlines the expected changes of IFLs in the future on which the new requirements will be based (for guidance see Part 1.3 Developing a Scenario for the future of IFLs <FSC-GUI-60-004a Landscape Approach to Intact Forest Landscapes>). The SDG may develop multiple scenarios, taking into account different assumptions. These scenarios shall include:
 - a) Forecast the long-term change in IFLs without a landscape approach in FSC certification;
 - b) Forecast the long-term change in IFLs with the implementation of a landscape approach in FSC certification;
 - c) Identify the specific risks that the landscape approach in FSC certification will address, such as illegal logging, encroachment and deforestation, and what mitigation strategies could be employed to address these risks;
 - d) Identify the specific opportunities to improve the protection of IFLs at a landscape level;
 - e) Evaluate identified risks caused by natural disturbances, such as forest fires, storms, floods, pests, and diseases to the condition of the IFL, and
 - f) Evaluate identified long-term risks caused by other human intervention, particularly climate change, on the condition of the IFL.
4. Development of draft IFL-related indicators
 - 4.1. The SDG shall develop draft IFL-related indicators for the FSS considering the current protection status of IFLs in the landscape and how it is expected to change in the future (for guidance see Part 2 Development of IFL Related Indicators in <FSC-GUI-60-004a Landscape Approach to Intact Forest Landscapes>).
 - 4.2. The SDG may take into consideration the results of the regional assessments of Motion 34/2017 *Regional assessments of the short and long term impacts -positive and negative -of the management and protection measures associated with the implementation of the motion 65/2014 and the International Generic Indicators (IGI): Russia, Congo Basin, Brazil, Canada and summary report*.
 - 4.3. IGIs together with the Instructions for Standards Developers, definitions, and the Annexes in <FSC-STD-60-004 V2-1 International Generic Indicators> developed for addressing IFLs, shall be used as the starting point for the development of FSS indicators for the protection of IFLs considering the landscape level, including:
 - a) IGI 3.1.2 7), 7.6.1 3), 7.6.3, 9.1.2, 9.1.3, 9.2.3, 9.2.4, 9.2.5, 9.2.7, 9.3.3, 9.3.4, 9.4.2, 10.11.1;

- b) Definitions: Affected Rights Holder, Core area, Eco-regional, Fragmentation, Industrial activity, Vast majority, Very limited portion of the core area;
- c) Annex E, sub-sections 1)iii, 1)iv, 4)iii, 4)iv, 5)viii, 5)ix, and 5)x;
- d) Annex G, sub-section 2)xiv, and
- e) Annex H.

4.4. The draft IFL-related indicators shall specify protection thresholds for IFLs (there may be more than one) within certified MUs (IGI 9.2.4 and 9.2.5) with the aim of addressing effective protection of the vast majority of HCV2 and IFLs at the landscape level. There shall either be one common threshold in a Forest Stewardship Standard that applies in all circumstances, or the standard may provide different thresholds for different situations, based on:

- a) The level (%) of permanent and effective protection of the IFL within the landscape (the greater the % protection then possibility of a lower % requirement for the MU);
- b) Instructions for standard developers provided in Annex H of <FSC-STD-60-004 V2-1 International Generic Indicators>, in particular those for the protection of the ecologically most valuable habitats and most intact portions within the cores of IFLs; maximizing the interior habitats of the protected IFL core areas; and securing that the size of the protected core areas of IFLs does not go below the 50,000-hectare threshold;
- c) The risk for fragmentation of the IFLs;

And, if applicable taking into account:

- d) Provisions of government-supported landscape plans;
- e) The type of certificate holder (local community, SLIMF, large scale operation, state forest, etc.);
- f) Provisions of the FPIC agreements;
- g) The presence of Indigenous cultural landscapes, and Indigenous communities' development projects, including low-intensity logging for financing basic needs, such as health, nutrition and schools;
- h) Presence of specific flora and fauna essential for Indigenous People's livelihoods and wellbeing;
- i) Restoration activities of IFLs and Indigenous cultural landscapes;
- j) Site-specific characteristics of the MU, including the level of overlap between the MU and the IFL;
- k) The extent of exploitation and degradation of the forest within the MU;
- l) An assessment at the landscape level of the ecological distinctiveness of the IFL;
- m) Management activities for maintaining HCV2 status in non-core IFL areas (see Annex 1: Management of IFL Non-Core Area in <FSC-GUI-30-010 Intact Forest Landscapes Guidance for Forest Managers>) (IGI 9.2.2);

NOTE: SDGs operating in tropical countries are expected to use Annex 1 of the <FSC-GUI-30-010 Intact Forest Landscapes Guidance for Forest Managers> unless a justification is provided.

- n) Management strategies indicated in the HCV Framework to enhance IFL protection and to address anticipated changes over time within the Organization's sphere of influence;
- o) Historical efforts to protect IFLs in the landscape in relation to the establishment of the boundaries of the MU, recognizing that such efforts may, at the time, not have been characterized as protection of IFLs, and
- p) Other aspects as agreed in consensus by the SDG.

Information box 1.

The sphere of influence by The Organization usually refers to areas outside the MU*, where decisions and actions of The Organization interact with those of other stakeholders to shape the landscape. The sphere of influence also refers to decisions and actions by stakeholders that influence what happens in the landscape. The influence can be over ecological processes (migration corridors, gene flows, watershed alteration), social processes (delivery of critical civil services, land tenure clarification) or economic processes (job creation, benefit sharing schemes, infrastructure development). Each of these processes will play at different scales so the boundaries of the sphere of influence are diverse and cannot be clearly defined.

*In some countries it is possible to have overlapping concessions within a same area, awarded to different organizations (e.g. timber and mining). In these situations, the Sphere of Influence will also include the MU.

- 4.5. While developing of FSS indicators for the protection of IFLs considering the landscape level, the requirements listed above (Clause 4.2) shall be considered by using one of the following options: Adopting, Adapting, Dropping, or Adding a new indicator, according to <FSC-PRO-60-006 V2-0 Development and Transfer of National Forest Stewardship Standards to the FSC Principles and Criteria Version 5-1>.
- 4.6. The SDG shall identify strategies at the landscape level in the HCV framework to enhance long-term protection of IFLs, taking into consideration scale, intensity and risk.
- 4.7. Before incorporating the draft IFL-related indicators into the FSS the SDG shall conduct a stakeholder engagement process according to Sections 5 and 6 below.
5. Stakeholder identification and engagement in a landscape engagement process
 - 5.1. The SDG shall identify the presence of Indigenous Peoples and traditional peoples in the landscape and respect their right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent, according to the criteria established in <FSC-GUI-30-003 FSC Guidelines for the Implementation of the Right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC)> (for guidance see Part 3.2 Considering Indigenous Peoples and their right to FPIC in <FSC-GUI-60-004a Landscape Approach to Intact Forest Landscapes>).
 - 5.2. The SDG shall identify stakeholders for the landscape engagement process, ensuring a diversity of interests that reflects the landscape and gender balance (for guidance see Part 3.3. Identifying stakeholders and selecting participants for the landscape pilot in <FSC-GUI-60-004a Landscape Approach to Intact Forest Landscapes>).
 - 5.3. The SDG may identify existing landscape engagement processes that could be used or coordinated with and may establish a subgroup to plan the landscape engagement process.

Information box 2.

A landscape engagement process is a consultation process which may be applying multi-stakeholder in-person meetings (also referred to as 'landscape dialogue'), online meetings, one to one interviews, focus groups, or online co-creation processes with the stakeholders in the landscape ecological processes (migration corridors, gene flows, watershed alteration), social processes (delivery of critical civil services, land tenure clarification) or economic processes (job creation, benefit sharing schemes, infrastructure development). Each of these processes will play at different scales so the boundaries of the sphere of influence are diverse and cannot be clearly defined.

- 5.4. The SDG shall conduct a survey to find stakeholders who are interested to participate in the landscape engagement process and identify any interest groups which may be missing. If necessary, additional stakeholders shall be selected and engaged to ensure that a diverse range of interests is represented in the process.
 - 5.5. The SDG shall identify stakeholder categories according to the stakeholders' power and exposure to forest related issues. These categories may include beneficiaries, subjects, context setters, and bystanders (for guidance see Part 3.3. Identifying stakeholders and selecting participants for the landscape pilot in <FSC-GUI-60-004a Landscape Approach to Intact Forest Landscapes> for clarification on these categories).
 - 5.6. The SDG shall define the method for the landscape engagement process to be employed, which can include in-person or virtual meetings, interviews, focus groups, and other methods.
 - 5.7. The process defined by the SDG for the landscape engagement process shall be:
 - a) Legitimate;
 - b) Accessible;
 - c) Inclusive;
 - d) Predictable;
 - e) Equitable (including access to information);
 - f) Transparent;
 - g) Compatible with rights;
 - h) A source of continuous learning, and
 - i) Based on dialogue.
 - 5.8. The SDG shall define rules for the landscape engagement process such as confidentiality, decision-making, and financial aspects (for guidance see Part 4.4 Dialogue Preparation in the Guidance: Landscape approach to IFLs in <FSC-GUI-60-004a Landscape Approach to Intact Forest Landscapes>).
 - 5.9. The SDG shall conduct an initial engagement with each selected stakeholder. This engagement aims to clarify the concepts and goals of the landscape engagement process, gather preliminary feedback, and assess the stakeholders' willingness and requirements for participating in the process.
 6. Landscape engagement process and stakeholder feedback
 - 6.1. The SDG shall organize a landscape engagement process to consult the identified stakeholders on:
 - a) The boundaries of the proposed landscape and the risk analysis;
 - b) The current status of IFLs in this landscape and the expected scenario for their future;
 - c) The SDG's proposals for protection thresholds and management rules for IFLs in certified MUs;
 - d) The draft IFL related indicators, including agreements and points of dissent, and
 - e) The SDG's proposals for actions that The Organization should take within their sphere of influence to improve the protection of IFLs in the wider landscape.
 - 6.2. When multi-stakeholder in person meetings is the chosen method for the landscape engagement process, they should be conducted in conformity with chapters 4.2; 4.3; 4.4; 4.5; 4.6 and 4.7 in <FSC-GUI-60-004a Landscape Approach to Intact Forest Landscapes>.
 - 6.3. The SDG shall determine the type and scope of facilitation required for the selected engagement method.
- NOTE: For guidance see Part 4.2. Facilitation in <FSC-GUI-60-004a Landscape Approach to Intact Forest Landscapes>.

- 6.4. The SDG should prepare materials for the landscape engagement process, according to the stakeholders' level of information participating in the process.
- 6.5. The SDG shall develop a report of the landscape engagement process (for guidance see Part 5.2. Documentation in <FSC-GUI-60-004a Landscape Approach to Intact Forest Landscapes> to identify the elements to be included in the report).
- 6.6. The report shall include an evaluation of the suitability of the chosen methods for the landscape engagement process and indicate potential areas of improvement.
- 6.7. The SDG shall communicate the outcomes of the landscape engagement process to all stakeholders, e.g. by sharing the report in full or in parts.

7. Development of the final draft IFL-related indicators

- 7.1. The SDG shall assess the feedback collected from the landscape engagement process and prepare the final draft of the IFL-related indicators for submission to FSC.
- 7.2. The SDG shall use the <FSC-PRO-10-606 Transfer Matrix> for the development or revision of the IFL-related indicators.
- 7.3. The SDG shall justify when certain elements of the feedback collected from the landscape engagement process have not been considered.
- 7.4. Following the incorporation of the feedback from the landscape engagement process, the SDG shall submit the draft IFL-related indicators to public consultation according to the consultation requirements in <FSC-STD-60-006 Process requirements for the development and maintenance of National Forest Stewardship Standards>.
- 7.5. The SDG shall document the feedback from the stakeholder engagement process and how it was used in finalizing the draft IFL-related indicators and provide the documentation to the decision-making body (see Clause 8.1.1).

8. Submission of the final draft IFL-related indicators

- 8.1. When submitting the FSS including the final draft IFL-related indicators to FSC for decision making the SDG shall include content described under Annex 1.

9. Monitoring and Learning

- 9.1. The SDG shall develop a monitoring plan to assess the effectiveness of the proposed IFL-related indicators in the FSS (for guidance see Part 5.2. Documentation in <FSC-GUI-60-004a Landscape Approach to Intact Forest Landscapes> to identify the elements to be included in the monitoring plan).
- 9.2. The SDG shall develop and implement an intervention plan in case the intended protection of the vast majority of HCV2 and IFLs at the landscape level is not reached. It shall include an analysis on why the intended protection of the vast majority of HCV2 and IFLs at the landscape level has not been reached, and based on that:
 - a) A revised protection strategy for the vast majority of HCV2 and IFLs at the individual landscape level (see Annex 1, section xi), and
 - b) Revised strategies at the landscape level in the HCV framework to enhance long-term protection of IFLs (see Annex 1, section xii).

ANNEX 1. CONTENT FOR SUBMISSION PACKAGE

The submission package to the Performance and Standards Unit (PSU) shall include:

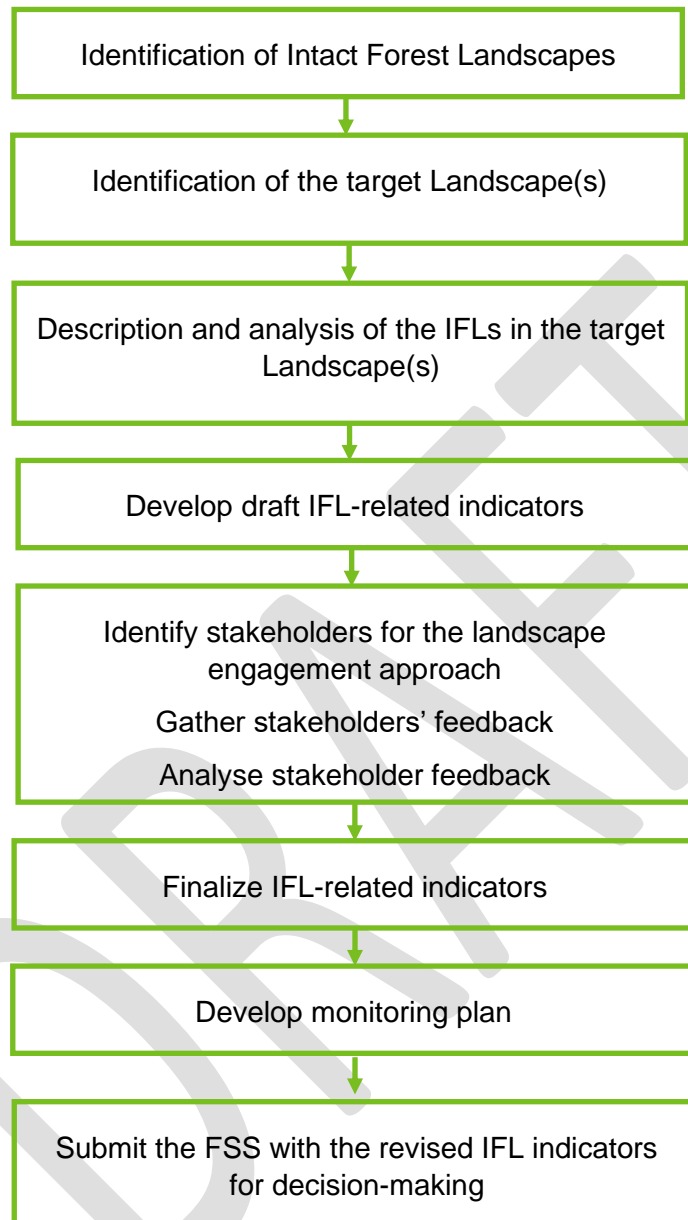
Process and content

- i. landscape engagement process report;
- ii. consultation report on the draft IFL indicators;
- iii. list of social, environmental, and economic stakeholders for each of the landscapes relevant to the country/region that were invited to participate;
- iv. copies of all correspondence and/or comments received from stakeholders;
- v. minutes of stakeholder meetings;
- vi. a description of the landscape, including presence of IFLs, their protection levels, loss of IFLs over time, recent trends, etc. (for guidance see Part 1.2 Landscape Description in <FSC-GUI-60-004a Landscape Approach to Intact Forest Landscapes>);
- vii. proposed IFL-related indicators, protection thresholds and management strategies for the HCV Framework;
- viii. indicators for management activities in non-core IFL areas (see Annex 1: Management of IFL non-core area in <FSC-GUI-30-010 Intact Forest Landscapes Guidance for Forest Managers>) (IGI 9.2.2);
- ix. management strategies indicated in the HCV Framework to enhance IFL protection and to address anticipated changes over time within the Organization's sphere of influence;
- x. transfer Matrix, including new/adapted/dropped IFL-related indicators and respective justifications that the IFL-related indicators will result in the best possible contribution to the protection of the vast majority of HCV2 and IFLs at the level of the landscape.

Monitoring and learning

- xi. protection strategy for the vast majority of HCV2 and IFLs at the individual landscape level;
- xii. strategies at the landscape level in the HCV framework to enhance long-term protection of IFLs;
- xiii. monitoring and learning material as specified in the section 9 of <FSC-PRO-60-004 V1-0 Development of indicators for the protection of IFLs considering the landscape level>;
- xiv. monitoring plan to assess the effectiveness of the proposed IFL-related indicators in the FSS;
- xv. an intervention plan in case the intended protection of the vast majority of HCV2 and IFLs at the landscape level is not reached, with timelines;
- xvi. risk analysis to assess the future of IFLs in the landscape, in a scenario where the current FSC rules applied. The risk analysis shall consider:
 - influences from the wider landscape, as well as existing trends and anticipated future ones.
 - risks, benefits, threats, and opportunities related to biodiversity, protected areas forest carbon stocks, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, the FSC brand, certified operations, and other HCV2 and IFL related values.

ANNEX 2. PROCESS FLOW FOR A REGISTERED STANDARD DEVELOPMENT GROUP TO IMPLEMENT THE PROCEDURE





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