TERMS OF REFERENCE

Desk test of
FSC-PRO-60-006 V3-0 D1-0 The Development and
Revision of FSC Country Requirements, and
FSC-PRO-60-006a V2-0 D1-0 Structure and Content of
Forest Stewardship Standard

19/08/2024

FSC

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1. OBJECTIVE

The objective of the desk testing exercise for the <FSC-PRO-60-006 The Development and Revision of FSC Country Requirements> and its addendum <FSC-PRO-60-006a The Content and Structure of Forest Stewardship Standard> is to evaluate the functionality, effectiveness and feasibility of the draft requirements. This desk testing aims to assess the potential outcomes of implementing the procedure and its addendum. Specifically, the testing will focus on the clarity, feasibility, effectiveness and opportunities for improvement of the draft requirements (see Table 1 below).

Table 1. Description of testing aspects

Testing aspect	Description
A. Assessment of clarity	1. Evaluate the clarity and comprehensibility of the procedure and addendum. 2. Identify ambiguities, inconsistencies, or gaps in the draft requirements. 3. Review terminology, definitions, and instructions applicable on the working group (formerly called 'standard developers') to ensure clarity in understanding requirements.
B. Feasibility analysis	1. Examine practicality and feasibility of implementing the draft requirements specified in the procedure and addendum and the guidance document. 2. Consider possible challenges & limitations, like, resource constraints, technical limitations, and operational constraints that may impact the implementation. 3. Evaluate the compatibility of the draft requirements with other existing normative requirements followed by working groups.
C. Effectiveness evaluation	1. Assess effectiveness of the procedure and addendum in drafting outcome-oriented requirements. 2. Analyse potential impact of draft requirements on resulting FSS that are complete, clear, transparent, and relevant to the given geographical and socio-economic conditions.
D. Identification of improvement opportunities	1. Identify areas for improvement in the procedure and addendum.

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2. TESTING SCOPE

The scope of this desk test encompasses a comprehensive evaluation of the <FSC-PRO-60-006 The Development and Revision of FSC Country Requirements>, its addendum <FSC-PRO-60-006a The Content and Structure of Forest Stewardship Standard> and <FSC-GUI-60-006 Guidance to Develop Outcome Oriented Forest Stewardship Standards>. The guidance is intended to be used by working group and experts in defining requirements for outcome monitoring during development of Forest Stewardship Standards).

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3. METHODOLOGY

> **Hypothesis:** *The implementation of the draft requirements introduced by FSC-PRO-60-006 and FSC-PRO-60-006a will lead to more efficient and effective processes for the development and revision of FSC country requirements.*

The methodology for desk testing of FSC-PRO-60-006 and FSC-PRO-60-006a is designed to ensure a systematic evaluation of the draft requirements. Throughout this testing process, participants are expected to thoroughly review the draft requirements in the procedure, addendum and the guidance, and carefully assess their clarity, feasibility and effectiveness. This will facilitate a comprehensive evaluation and subsequent improvements of the draft requirements.

The methodology encompasses the following steps:

3.1. Preparation phase

1. Conduct a thorough review of the procedure and addendum documents to become familiar with the draft requirements, and new concepts like key intended outcomes, conceptual phase, types of consultations, developing indicators for stalled process, etc.
2. Review guidance to develop outcome-oriented Forest Stewardship Standard.
3. Review intended outcome of the revision process (refer Annex 2) to evaluate if the draft requirements are efficient and effective.
4. Use a feasibility analysis checklist (to be provided to selected desk testing participants) aligned with the desk testing objective, focusing on assessing clarity, feasibility, effectiveness and areas for improvements in the procedure and addendum.

3.2. Selection of key areas

1. Identify specific sections of procedure that need special focus during the desk testing to make FSC country requirement process efficient, such as phases in each process type, qualification of involved parties - working group members and process lead, identifying crucial sustainability values for developing outcome oriented FSS, conceptual phase, consultation types and number of consultations, requirements for stalled process, etc.
2. Similarly, identify important sections in the addendum that need special focus during desk testing and shape FSS in future, this may include requirements on developing indicators of the FSS, additional considerations to be deliberated upon for developing variation of indicators, concept of adopt, adapt or drop IGI or add new indicator, requirements for outcome monitoring, etc.

3.3. Activities to be undertaken by the participants.

1. Participants should use feasibility analysis checklist (shared with selected participants) to submit the responses to testing questions for each section of the procedure, its addendum and guidance document to develop outcome oriented FSS and develop desk testing report (Refer Annex 1 for template of Desk testing report).
2. Develop prototypes that reflect theoretical implementation of requirements in the procedure and its addendum. This includes:
    i. Project plan including timelines. Each participant will be allocated a process type for revising a FSC country requirements process (FSS or RA). The participant should develop a project plan comparing the plan with the existing requirements. The purpose of this exercise is to identify the time efficiencies in the draft FSC-PRO-60-006. When developing

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a project plan, the participant should evaluate whether the draft requirements in the FSC-PRO-60-006 are practical, timesaving, and user-friendly. Any gaps and feasibility challenges identified are detailed in the report.

ii. Develop a mock FSS by developing indicators under at least two Principles from International Generic Indicators FSC-STD-60-004 V2-1 using requirements in 60-006a V2-0 D1-0.

The mock FSS should be developed using, at least, the following scope:

    a. The geographical scope: Country;
    b. The forest type: Natural Forest and Plantations;
    c. The ownership type: Public and community;
    d. The type of management units: includes i) SLIMF, and (ii) MUs with 'high' intensity management operations;
    e. The forest products: Roundwood and NTFPs (Honey and Mushroom); and
    f. At least two outcome-oriented indicators using the FSC-GUI-60-006 Guidance to develop outcome-oriented Forest Stewardship Standard.

The participant should develop indicators using the draft requirements (including rules for developing indicators using concept of adopt, adapt, and drop IGI or add a new indicator, numbering indicators, guidance document for developing outcome oriented FSS, and additional considerations as per relevant FSC normative documents). Developing Annex for respective Principle is not mandatory. Any gaps or feasibility challenges identified is detailed in the report for informed analysis and subsequent improvements in the addendum.

4. DESK TESTING PARTICIPANTS

4.1. Selection of desk testing participants and Eligibility Criteria

The foundation for identifying desk testing participants is the revision process's engagement plan. This plan identified several groups of stakeholders relevant to the revision process (See Figure 1 below).

Among these stakeholders, the **developers of Forest Stewardship Standards (FSS) and Risk Assessments (RA)** stands out as primary users of the draft requirements. Apart from this, members of Advisory Committee can also perform the desk testing with diverse perspectives on the practial implementation of the procedure and its addendum from multiple vantage points. The eligible participants to take part in desk test are:

1. Members of Forest Management Communities.
2. Individuals or organizations with experience of developing Interim Forest Stewardship Standards and/or Risk Assessments.
3. Members of Advisory Committee.

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Figure 1. Types of stakeholders relevant to the revision process
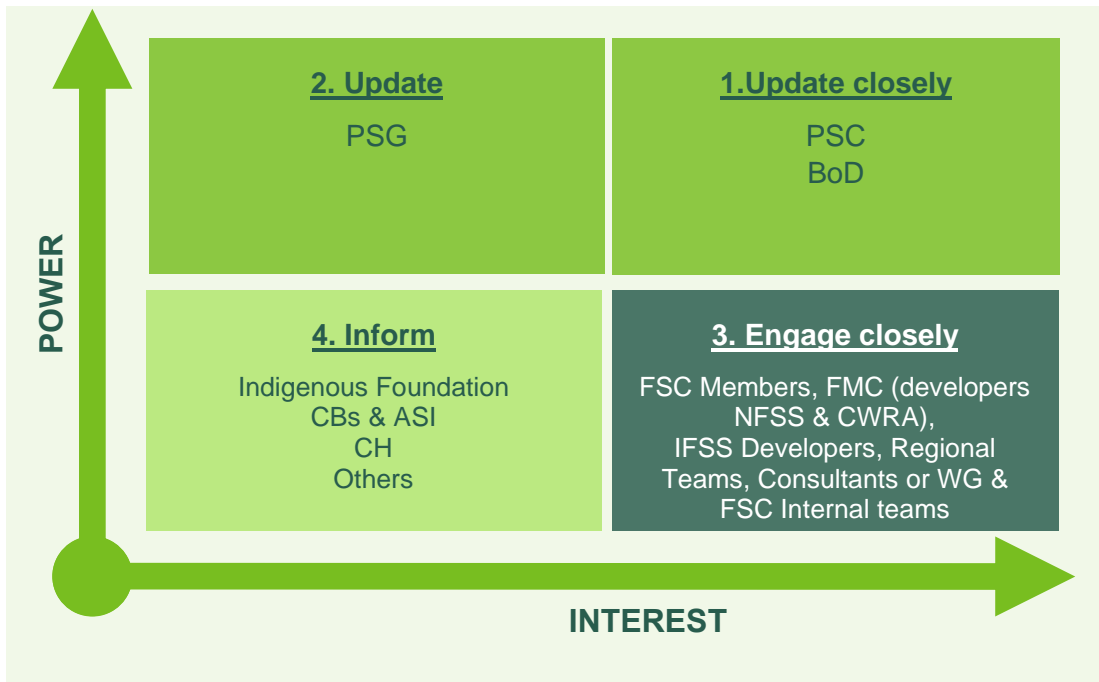
5. EXPECTED OUTPUTS

The expected outputs of the desk testing include:

1. A desk testing report, summarizing the key findings and recommendations for improving the procedure and addendum (refer Annex1 for the report template).
2. Prototypes (Project plan and mock FSS).
3. Completed feasibility analysis checklist (to be provided to the selected participants).

The desk testing participants should submit the

6. EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Interested participants are encouraged to submit their Expression of Interest to the following email address: country_requirements@fsc.org. The title of the email should be 'EoI to participate in desk test of draft FSC-PRO-60-006 and its addendum FSC-PRO-60-006a'.

To apply for participation in the desk test, interested individuals must submit a completed application form using the template provided by FSC. The selection of participants will occur on an ongoing basis until **12th September 2024**.

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7. TIMELINES

The planned timeline for the desk testing is as follows:

Until 12th Sept 2024	**16th Sept to 30th Sept 2024**	**1st Oct to 17th Nov 2024**	**18th Nov 2024**
EoI invited from targeted stakeholders to participate in the Desk testing.	Preparation phase by selected participants. Any clarification or additional information needed.	Conducting Desk testing	Submission of desk testing report along with prototypes and filled feasibility analysis checklist to PSU

8. EXPENSES & REMUNERATION

FSC is an international not-for-profit membership organisation with limited funding. Participation in the desk tests takes place on a voluntary, non-paid basis. For the avoidance of doubt, any expenses incurred by the participants in the desk test will not be reimbursed and shall be borne by the participants.

9. CONFIDENTIALITY AND THE USE OF THE RESULTS

FSC will use the data collected from the participants for internal purposes, to achieve the objective set out in Section 1 of this Terms of Reference. Such data will only be retained by FSC for a period that is necessary to fulfill the stated purposes. All personal data will be anonymised when shared with third parties. For more information about the use of personal data and the participant's rights, please refer to the Privacy Statement available here on the FSC website for the revision of FSC-PRO-60-006.

10. LANGUAGE

FSC will submit communications and materials in English and may provide translations to Spanish and French for communication and information purposes only. The English version of such communications and materials (including this Terms of Reference) shall prevail. Participants may submit the Desk test report in English, Spanish or French.

11. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

Participants warrant that information provided to FSC in the desk test is not subject to the rights of third parties, and in particular, does not infringe copyrights or other intellectual property rights. All rights in any materials which might be provided by or obtained from FSC belong exclusively to their respective

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owner(s), and no right, title or interest in or to any of the same is granted, transferred or assigned to the participants.

FSC shall be the sole and original owner of, and shall have sole and exclusive right, title and interest in and to, any work product of the desk test and related proprietary rights (including any materials produced and/or developed based on the information collected in the desk test).

12. TERMINATION OF THE PARTICIPATION

Participants taking part in the Desk test may be terminated or withdrawn at any time by written notice of termination to the other Party (FSC International Center or the Participant) with immediate effect. If participation is terminated or withdrawal, whether by FSC International Center or the participant, data provided by the participant in the desk test prior to the termination or withdrawal will not be used by FSC International Center in the desk test and will not be retained.

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ANNEX 1: DESK TESTING REPORT TEMPLATE

1. Scope of testing

Desk Testing Participant	ABC
FSC country requirement and process type used for desk testing	E.g., FSS (major process), presently termed as NFSS
Development or revision	E.g., Revision of existing RA (major process), presently termed as NRA
In case of FSS, specify the scope of FSS used to desk test PRO-60-006a	Geographical scope: Country Forest Type: E.g., Natural Forest, plantations, ….
Any other important information	

2. Summary of Desk testing

The desk testing participant should review the draft FSC-PRO-60-006, FSC-PRO-60-006a and FSC-GUI-60-006. The participants are required to provide summarised feedback on overall efficiency or effectiveness of the requirements on crucial topics, as presented below:

a) FSC-PRO-60-006 V3-0 D1-0

Section or Topic	Issues/unclear aspects	Rationale (The requirement will make process inefficient? Is hard to implement for XX region?)	Relevant source, if any, to support feedback
E.g., Section AA	E.g., The draft requirements are time-consuming.	E.g., The current requirement is more efficient and provide working groups ………	E.g., Refer section XX of FSC-PRO-60-YYY
E.g., Consultations	E.g., Number of rounds of consultation in case of major RA process is….	E.g., Major processes are more intensive and involves chamber balanced approach. The proposed number of consultations are enough/not enough to obtain feedback………	
E.g., Monitoring and review	E.g., The clause x.y contradicts or is not aligned with….	E.g., The requirement will not processes inefficient as contradicts intended outcome of the revision process (as indicated in Annex 2 of ToR)	

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b) FSC-PRO-60-006a V2-0 D1-0

Section or Topic	Issue and/or unclear aspects	Rationale	Relevant source, if any, to support feedback
E.g., Section AA	E.g., The draft requirements are not efficient and time-consuming.	E.g., It is not clear how will working group or responsible body will deal with……	E.g., Refer section XX of FSC-PRO-60-YYY

c) FSC-GUI-60-006 V1-0 D1-0

Section or Topic	Issue and/or unclear aspects	Rationale	Relevant source, if any, to support feedback
E.g., Section AA	E.g., The draft requirements are not efficient and time-consuming.		

3. Recommendations

Based on the inputs summarized above and feedback provided in the feasibility analysis matrix, the desk participants provide recommendations on the sections/topics which, as per the theoretical implementation, unclear, not aligned with relevant normative documents or incomplete.

Draft	Section/ Topic	Recommendation, if any
FSC-PRO-60-006 V3-0 D1-0	E.g., Monitoring and review	E.g., The period of transition to be modified to……for better alignment with FSC normative documents.
FSC-PRO-60-006a V2-0 D1-0		
..		
FSC-GUI-60-006 V1-0 D1-0		

ANNEX 2: KEY INTENDED OUTCOME OF THE REVISION

The revision of the <FSC-PRO-60-006 The Development and Revision of FSC Country Requirements> and the <FSC-PRO-60-006a Content and Structure of Forest Stewardship Standard> envisages the implementation of a monitoring process against the key intended outcome. This process will evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the changes proposed in the FSS-related normative documents. To monitor the impacts of the revised procedure, a set of indicators have been developed to assess the intended outcome of the changes. See below information on the intended outcomes and monitoring indicators.

Intended outcomes		Indicator	Verifier	Baseline	Assumption
Efficiency <definition[1]>	FSC-PRO-60-006 Development, revision, and maintenance processes are implemented with high quality and efficient use of time and resources.	Number of extension requests Note: this does not include extension requests that occurred beyond the control of developers.	Reduction in the number of extension requests.	Number of extension requests received during processes in 2025.	The more extension requests a process has, the less efficient the process is.
	FSC-PRO-60-006a Content of FSS is assessed and approved using less time and resources.	Number of final drafts presenting issues resulting in PSC/PSG approval conditions which are related to structure and content.	Reduction the number of approval conditions given by the decision-making bodies PSC/PSG.	Number of final drafts presenting issues which result in PSC/PSG approval conditions relating to structure and content, per region issued in 2025.	The greater number of final drafts with issues resulting in conditions for approval, the less efficient the assessment process is.
Effectiveness	60-006 Development, revision, and maintenance processes of FSS are resulting in approved FSS that are supported by stakeholders.	Number of participants in FSS draft consultations.	Increase in the number of responses of stakeholders by x% (active participation/involvement).	Number of participants in FSS draft consultations by 2025.	A greater number of participants in consultations means greater engagement with stakeholders.
	60-006a FSS have requirements that are complete, clear, transparent, and relevant in the given geographical and socio-economic conditions.	Number of registered urgent revisions under accelerated (non-motion-related) processes per year.	Reduction in the number of accelerated processes per year. Note: Scheduled revisions or revisions initiated based on GA motions are not considered.	Number of accelerated processes registered by FSC in 2025.	The more accelerated processes there are, the less relevant the FSS is.

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[1] All definitions are from the Oxford Dictionary unless otherwise specified.

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60-006a FSS implementation progress towards key sustainability outcomes are thoroughly monitored. FSS development and implementation are guided by key intended outcomes.	Number of FSS for which monitoring requirements have been developed and approved by independent topical experts. Number of FSS for which data on key intended outcomes are reported to FSC.	**Increase** in the number of FSS with monitoring requirements.	Number of FSS with monitoring requirements in **2025.**	A growth in the number of Forest Stewardship Standards (FSS) that require monitoring means that an outcome-oriented approach to achieving FSC objectives is deployed at a broader scale.
60-006 & 60-006a The procedure and its addendum are user friendly.	**Number of FSS interpretations** approved by FSC.	**Reduction** in average of number of FSS interpretations approved by FSC per region per year.	Average of number of FSS interpretations annually approved by FSC per region **in 2025.**	The clearer the FSS is, the less need there is to provide clarification of FSS requirements.
	Number of stakeholders describing the draft consulted as 'clear and understandable'.	**Increase** in number of stakeholders describing the draft consulted as "clear and understandable" per region.	Number of stakeholders describing the draft consulted as 'clear and understandable' in **2025.**	More user-friendly the procedures will lead to more positive comments from stakeholders.

Regular monitoring and analysis of these indicators will provide real-time insights into the impact of implemented solutions. More broadly, monitoring the processes to ensure improvements in efficiency aligns with the overall organizational goals aimed at continuous improvement on existing successes. By closely tracking key performance indicators, we will not only be able to assess the immediate outcomes of the implemented solutions, but also create a feedback loop for ongoing improvement of the FSS processes.

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