



**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR
REVISION OF 'REQUIREMENTS FOR
DEVELOPMENT AND
MAINTENANCE OF FSC COUNTRY
REQUIREMENTS' (FSC-PRO-60-
006 AND FSC-PRO-60-006A)**

Terms of Reference and Operating Rules V1-3



Title:	Terms of Reference for Revision of 'Requirements for development and maintenance of FSC Country Requirements'
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Working Group Summary

Type of Working Group:	Working Group + chamber-balanced subgroup
Number of Working Group members:	4 + 3
Process lead:	Cynthia Penalosa, Policy Manager, Country Requirements General Functions Yan Li, Policy Manager, Country Requirements General Functions Taruna, Senior Process Lead, Country Requirements General Functions Nicolas Mesia, Policy Manager, Country Requirements General Functions
Working language:	English

Process Summary

Process title:	Revision of 'Requirements for development and maintenance of FSC Country Requirements'
Scope:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) FSC-STD-60-006 V1-2 Process Requirements for the development and maintenance of National Forest Stewardship Standards, b) FSC STD-60-002 V1-0 Structure and Content of National Forest Stewardship Standards, c) FSC-PRO-60-006 V2-0 Development and Transfer of National Forest Stewardship Standards to the FSC Principles and Criteria Version 5-1, d) FSC-PRO-60-007 V1-2 Structure, Content and Development of Interim National Standards, e) FSC-PRO-60-002 V3-0 EN The Development and Approval of FSC® National Risk Assessments, and f) General process requirements for FSC Risk Assessments resulting from the alignment with European Deforestation Regulation (EUDR).

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A. PROCESS INFORMATION

1. Background of the Process

At its 91st meeting in March 2022, the FSC Board of Directors (BoD) approved the revision of FSC's four standards and procedures regulating the content and process requirements for the development and maintenance of the FSC Forest Stewardship Standards (FSS). These are:

- a. FSC-STD-60-006 V1-2 *Process Requirements for the development and maintenance of National Forest Stewardship Standards*,
- b. FSC-STD-60-002 V1-0 *Structure and Content of National Forest Stewardship Standards*,
- c. FSC-PRO-60-006 V2-0 *Development and Transfer of National Forest Stewardship Standards to the FSC Principles and Criteria Version 5-1*, and
- d. FSC-PRO-60-007 V1-2 *Structure, Content and Development of Interim National Standards*.

These four documents are referred as 'Requirements for development and maintenance of FSS' (also referred as 'FSS requirements' for purpose of this Terms of Reference (TOR)).

Rationale of the revision: to a significant extent, the aforementioned documents are outdated, incomplete and inconsistent. The structure of the documents results in the overlap of some of the contents and hinders effective use and maintenance of FSS. Their status and content do not contribute to the streamlining of policies and standards towards outcome orientation.

The period of validity for all four documents has expired¹. Several factors and processes drive the revision of these requirements, including FSC Global Strategy and the current general rules for the revision of normative documents.

The FSC Global Strategy requires outcome orientation, streamlining² and data driven approach to be incorporated in the requirements for FSS development. In addition, regular review process conducted by the Policy and Performance Unit (P&P, formerly Performance and Standards Unit (PSU)), the Forest Management Community (FMC) and other stakeholders have found 53 specific issues to be addressed. The content of documents is not fully consistent with what a standard (STD) or a procedure (PRO) shall contain, following the PSU-PRO-10-207 V1-0 EN *Document Control Procedure*. Additionally, the requirements are not aligned with at least 12 other FSC Normative Documents, 2 interpretations and 6 Advice Notes.

In December 2021, the Policy and Standards Committee (PSC) recommended the revision based on the Review Report³ and agreed that these four documents should be merged into one or maximum two normative documents.

During preparation for the revision process, P&P team has further identified the opportunity to merge process requirements for the development and maintenance of FSS (FSS process) with process requirements for the development and maintenance of CW risk assessments (currently in FSC-PRO-60-002 that were subject to a separate revision process). P&P continued to explore the feasibility of this merger. The results of feasibility exercise proved that merging requirements for development and maintenance of FSC Forest Stewardship Standards (FSS) and FSC Risk Assessment (FSC RA) is possible and pragmatic solution for the users. In late 2022, P&P presented the concept and results of

¹ In 2009 the FSC-STD-60-006 was amended with a period of validity ending in April 2014. Periods of validity of FSC-STD-60-002 and FSC-PRO-60-006 ended in January 2015 and June 2020, respectively. In 2020, the FSC-PRO-60-007 was amended with a period of validity ending in October 2021.

² Goal 1.2 of the Global Strategic Plan 2021-2026, and more in specific, to the streamlining of policies and standards towards outcome orientation aiming at making the requirements more efficient, effective, outcome-oriented and risk based.

³ The P&P Review Report was developed according to FSC-PRO-01-001 V3-1.

feasibility to Policy Steering Group (PSG), which supported merger of process requirements for developing and maintaining FSC FSS with FSC-PRO-60-002 V3-0 EN *The Development and Approval of FSC® National Risk Assessments*, considering both detailed process requirements for development and maintenance of FSC country requirements (which includes both FSS and FSC RA). As a result, since 2023, the WG is supporting the revision of requirements in FSC-PRO-60-002 in the ongoing revision process.

Furthermore, in the process of working on the revision of requirements for development and maintenance of FSC country requirements, a new version of the procedure governing the development and revision of FSC requirements (FSC-PRO-01-001) was published. The new requirements are significantly different than the requirements used to draft the original version of the ToR. As such, some changes have been made to partially align with the new requirements (e.g. adding conceptual consultation in the initial phase of the process).

FSC is currently aligning FSC requirements with the new European Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) and has identified this alignment as a key step in shaping the future FSC risk assessments. The general process requirements resulting from this alignment are considered under the revision process for which this ToR.

In their 101th meeting in March 2025, the BoD has provided the mandate to FSC Secretariat to explore as part of the revision process, the inclusion of risk-based approaches as per FSC-PRO-60-010 and the use of FSC Risk Assessments to streamline Forest Stewardship Standards (FSS) towards outcome orientation. Taking into consideration the potential impacts that the above mandate can have on FM certification and its strategic implications, the BoD decided the following deviations from the ongoing revision:

- a. the Working Group will be expanded to add a chamber-balanced sub-group formed by 3 FSC members with the mandate limited to providing inputs and achieving consensus on streamlining towards outcome orientation; and
- b. the BoD will be the decision-making body for the procedures FSC-PRO-60-006 and FSC-PRO-60-006a.

2. Objective of the process

The objectives of the revision of the 'Requirements for development and maintenance of FSC Country Requirements' are to:

- improve the quality of the FSC country requirements, their relevance, understandability, completeness, simplicity, user-friendliness and consistency with other applicable requirements within the FSC Normative Framework;
- incorporate outcome orientation (including monitoring and evaluation as well as data requirements) in the FSC country requirements process;
- increase the efficiency, quality, and reliability of the processes for the development and maintenance of FSC country requirements.

3. Working bodies

P&P establishes a Working Group (WG) to conduct the revision according to these Terms of Reference (ToR).

The FSC bodies involved in the process⁴ are listed below:

Working bodies*	Name
Working Group	4 technical experts selected according to this ToR. Note: 3 FSC members (one from each chamber) will join as WG subgroup.
Process Lead	Cynthia Penalosa, Policy Manager, Country Requirements General Functions Yan Li, Policy Manager, Country Requirements General Functions Taruna, Senior Process Lead, Country Requirements General Functions Nicolas Mesia, Policy Manager, Country Requirements General Functions
Process Supervisor	Udit Khare, Programme Manager, Country Requirements General Functions
FSC Policy Director	Joanna Nowakowska, Policy and Performance Director
Policy Steering Group (PSG)	FSC Director General, representatives of senior management team and selected regional directors.
PSC Liaison Person	Kevin Jones
BoD Liaison Persons	Lincoln Quevedo
Decision-making body	FSC Board of Directors

⁴ Established in line with FSC-PRO-01-001 V4-0. Given the current transition period with the previous version (V3-1) of the PRO-01-001, this amended version of the Terms of Reference and Operating Rules includes specific key updates to conform with the V4-0 of FSC-PRO-01-001. Refer to FSC-PRO-01-001 V4 for more information on role of above positions.

B. WORKING GROUP INFORMATION

4. Tasks and deliverables of the Working Group

4.1. Tasks

The task of the WG is to provide comments on and the recommendations to the contents of the revised requirements, including the following:

NOTE: The WG is not responsible for drafting the requirements.

- a. Provide comments on the adequacy, feasibility, implement-ability, clarity, etc., of presented draft requirements.
- b. Propose innovative ideas and provide suggestions to improve and standardize the FSC country requirements' development process to ensure relevance, effectiveness, speed, user friendliness, and enabling outcome orientation.
- c. Provide recommendation on specific issues related to FSS content related aspects, including but not limited to:
 - incorporating new and revised IGLs into the existing FSS and dropping a Principle and Criteria during the FSS development;
 - how stakeholder comments received during the revision should be addressed.
- d. Subject to all above, address shortcomings of the current requirements, including but not limited to:
 - inconsistencies, gaps, and redundancy within and between the documents;
 - the lack of clear roles, responsibilities and decision making across documents.
- e. Assess and provide recommendation on P&P's proposed merged structure of the revised requirements' normative documents, with an aim to develop a well-defined and user-friendly structure of normative documents.
- f. Adhere to collaboration rules and process set up determined by the process leads and defined in this ToR.
- g. Familiarize themselves with material provided by and within timeframes specified by the process lead. (E.g., *WG members are required to examine the issues identified by P&P and those received during public consultation of P&P review report before the onset of the WG meetings*).
- h. Collaborate throughout the process by the means of exchange with each other both during and outside the WG meetings.

WG's inputs to the revised requirements shall consider the Secretariat's other work on delivery of the FSC Global Strategy and other normative requirements.

NOTE: Examples of the above include data and technology, monitoring and evaluation, other normative revisions and documents⁵ (e.g., *FSC-PRO-01-001 Development and revision of FSC*

⁵ FSC normative documents to be considered for ensuring alignment:

- FSC-PRO-60-010 Incorporating a risk-based approach in National Forest Stewardship Standards
- FSC-STD-01-003 SLIMF Eligibility
- FSC-STD-20-007 Forest Management evaluations.
- FSC-PRO-30-011 Continuous Improvement Procedure.
- FSC-PRO-01-001 The development and revision of FSC Normative Documents.
- FSC-STD-30-005 FSC standard for group entities in forest management groups

requirements FSC-PRO-30-006 Ecosystem Services Procedure, FSC-STD-20-007 Forest Management Evaluations, etc.).

4.2. Deliverables

- a. Provide comments on the material prepared to take to consultation as part of the conceptual phase and the agreement or objection to the launch of the consultation.
- b. Provide support in analysis of comments received during conceptual phase consultation.
- c. Provide support to process lead in analysis of comments received during the consultation.
- d. Provide comments on the drafts of the 1) revised process requirements for development and maintenance of FSC country requirements and 2) revised content requirements for development and maintenance of FSS, and the agreement or objection to the content of the draft.
- e. Addressing comments received from PSC or BoD or both, relevant to the requirements for the process and content of FSC country requirements.

5. Required Skills

5.1. Technical Skills

- a. Knowledge and experience in FSC's Forest Stewardship Standard or FSC risk assessment development processes (e.g., through involvement in processes to develop or revise these requirements at national and/or regional level), or both;
- b. Holistic knowledge about sustainability standards and certification systems, with expertise in at least one of following: standard-setting, assurances and integrity system, monitoring & evaluation, developing/implementing sustainability code of conducts or theory of change.
- c. Up-to-date knowledge on FSC's strategy and priority areas.
- d. Knowledge and experience in standard setting processes of other voluntary certification standards like MSC, ISO standards, ISEAL, etc.
- e. Understanding of the implement-ability and potential impact of the revised requirements on forests, and affected stakeholders, e.g., standard developers.
- f. Good spoken and written English language skills.

5.2. Soft Skills

- a. Ability to work together in a diverse group of people with different background, multicultural environment.
- b. Clarity in expression (verbal/written).
- c. Constructive approach and demonstrated willingness to resolving disagreements.
- d. Resilience to setbacks.
- e. High level of motivation to complete the tasks.

5.3. Contribution

- 5.3.1. Commitment and capacity to deliver high quality of agreed deliverables.
 - a. Timely provision of required contribution (in minimum 90% of agreed cases).
 - b. Solution-oriented mindset and responsiveness to requests raised by process lead.
 - c. "Out of the box" thinking, to bring ideas from outside of the FSC and the certification world.

• FSC Monitoring and Evaluation strategy

- d. Consideration of and unbiased presentation of views of various groups of interests.

5.4. Engagement

- a. Regular attendance (minimum 90%) to meetings and webinars conducted in the revision process.
- b. Overall conduct, respecting rules of engagement and operations with other WG members and P&P and adhering to confidentiality specifications.

6. Structure and Accountabilities

Appointed WG members are expected to adhere to the specifications of this ToR and operate in accordance with the timelines indicated in the estimated work plan (Annex 2).

Appointed WG members are expected to work in close collaboration with process leads and other WG members to submit quality deliverables. They are also required to engage constructively to support resolution of disagreements and overcome obstacles in the process.

The process leads strives to select meeting dates and venues that allow for full participation of all WG members. Process leads monitor and regularly report on WG performance to the PSG.

7. Work Plan and Time Commitment

The WG was established in September 2022. The expected start date of WG engagement was 1st September 2022, with a targeted completion by the end of December 2026. An updated estimated work plan is provided in Annex 2. The process will attempt to accommodate new requirements in the FSC-PRO-01-001 V4-0 from the conceptual phase (e.g., consultation) in the current revision process which was originally initiated conforming with FSC-PRO-01-001 V3-1. The timetable and the work plan may be adapted depending on how revision process advances.

P&P and WG conducts most of the work via meetings (face to face or via zoom or MS Team). The estimated number of meetings for 2023 as per work plan in Annex 2, is as follows:

- a. 5 WG meetings (face to face or virtual).
- b. 18 catch-up calls;
- 7.1. Additional virtual meetings may be scheduled as necessary.
- c. One-on-one calls with the WG members as per needs.

Additionally, WG members are expected to participate and engage in public consultation webinars and other relevant events (e.g., discussions during General Assembly).

A similar proportion of number of meetings per quarter (considering catch-up calls every 2 weeks, 2-4 hours each) is expected to happen between 2024 and 2026.

8. Expenses and Remuneration

The WG is expected to work on a voluntary non-paid basis. FSC will cover justifiable and documented travel and accommodation expenses related to the work plan, upon submission of the respective invoices and receipts, and if expenses are agreed upon in advance. In order to be reimbursed, the WG Members shall adhere to all applicable administrative procedures of FSC International.

If required, a stipend can be granted by FSC on a case-by-case basis and upon approval from responsible director.

9. Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest

WG members signed a confidentiality and non-disclosure agreement with FSC by 1st October 2022.

Per default, all content of discussions prepared by or presented to the WG are considered confidential, unless otherwise specified by FSC IC. WG members are expected to declare any conflicts of interest, where they arise. This will cause the person(s) to be excused from the discussion and to abstain from participating in decision-making.

10. Language

The working language is English. All drafts for consultation and the approved documents will be translated into Spanish and French.

C. OPERATING RULES

11. Deliberations and Decision Making

Formal decision-making responsibility of the WG is to recommend, object to or abstain from the draft which is submitted for consultation or for its approval. Fulfillment of tasks specified in section 4 is a prerequisite to the decision making.

All WG members must actively participate in the fulfillment of tasks and exercise their decision-making responsibility. If any of the member(s) is absent during decision making, then a provisional decision may be made by remaining members of the WG. If the absentee member fails to respond or object to the provisional decision within a timeline, as agreed with any of the process leads, then provisional decision taken will be deemed final.

Quorum is required for any provisional decisions, and full member participation is preferred. The WG shall strive and make every effort possible to take decisions by consensus (see Annex 1: Glossary). In case of outstanding concerns or lack of consensus on any of the recommendations, the process lead will submit the concerns to PSG for advice on how to proceed. The process leads will also approach the Policy and Standards Committee as a decision making body according to the needs e.g., if recommendations made by WG members have serious operational implications and/or are not aligned with the ongoing work on delivery of the FSC Global Strategy and/or its priority areas. Such concerns together with the final draft will be documented and presented to the BoD at the time of decision to approve.

The process leads, WG members, FSC Staff, PSG members and any other observers have no decision making authority on the final draft. However, the inputs from P&P and WG shall be duly considered.

WG members may be asked to leave the group if they do not fulfill their duties as outlined in the section B and C of this ToR.

The term of WG members ends with the approval of the final draft(s) of the deliverables by the BoD.

ANNEX 1 GLOSSARY

For the purpose of this document, the terms and definitions given in FSC-STD-01-002 *FSC Glossary of Terms* and the following apply:

Consensus: general agreement, characterized by the absence of sustained opposition to substantial issues by any important part of the concerned interests (particularly by those directly affected) and by a process that involves taking into account the views of all parties concerned and to reconcile any conflicting arguments. Consensus need not imply unanimity (ISO/IEC)⁶ (Source: *FSC-PRO-01-001 V4-0*).

FSC Normative Framework: comprises all the requirements to ensure the development, functioning, maintenance and integrity of the FSC certification and accreditation system (Source: *FSC-PRO-01-001 V4-0*).

Review: activity of analysing a set of FSC requirements to determine whether it is to be reaffirmed, revised or withdrawn (Source: *FSC-PRO-01-001 V4-0*).

Revision: introduction of changes to a set of FSC requirements (Source: *FSC-PRO-01-001 V4-0*).

Technical Working Group: a group of selected experts with professional experience in the field of question, to advise and provide content related input to the development or revision of a FSC normative document (Source: *FSC-STD-01-002*).

For any additional term, kindly refer to *FSC-PRO-01-001 V4-0 EN*.

⁶ ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1 Procedures for the technical work. Consolidated ISO Supplement – Procedures specific to ISO. https://www.iso.org/sites/directives/current/consolidated/index.xhtml#_idTextAnchor167

ANNEX 2: ESTIMATED WORK PLAN

Note: The number inside the coloured cell refers to the number of meetings/catch ups.

“TBD” means: “to be determined”.

Additionally, this work plan has not been approved by PSG and it is subject to change during the revision process.

				
Conceptual Consultation	Public consultation	P&P development of drafts	WG recommendation	Submission to BoD for decision making

Activity carried out	2022				2023			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1. Approval of ToR by PSG.								
2. Call for WG applicants.								
3. Appointment of WG members.								
4. Developing process requirements draft by P&P.								
5. WG meetings (to revise general concepts, 2.5 working days).								
6. Bi-weekly WG catch-ups (to revise general concepts, 2-4hr).								
7. WG meetings and bi-weekly catch-ups (to finalize general concepts).								
8. Consultation (conceptual phase of process and content requirements).								
9. WG meetings and bi-weekly catch-ups (revise key process and content requirements).								
10. Developing process and content requirements draft by P&P.								

Proposed activity	2024				2025				2026			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
11. WG meetings and bi-weekly catch-ups (revise key process and content requirements).	~5	~7	~3									
12. Developing process and content requirements draft by P&P.												
13. Consultation of process and content requirements drafts.												
14. Finalization and WG's recommendation of final drafts for BoD approval.												
15. BoD decision making.												



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