

Addendum

STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF FOREST STEWARDSHIP STANDARDS

FSC-PRO-60-006a V2-0 EN D1-0



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INTRODUCTION

<[FSC-STD-01-001 FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship](#)> provides an internationally recognized standard for responsible forest management. To reflect the diverse legal, social, and geographical conditions of forests in different parts of the world, this international standard for forest stewardship needs to be adapted at the local level. The <[FSC-STD-60-004 International Generic Indicators](#)> have been developed to allow the adaptation of indicators to regional, national, or sub-national conditions, which may include adopting or adapting existing indicators or introducing new ones, to ensure effective implementation at the management unit (MU) level. The FSC Principles and Criteria, together with the set of locally adapted indicators approved by FSC, constitute a Forest Stewardship Standard (FSS).

This addendum includes the structure and content requirements for working groups that are registered in accordance with <[FSC-PRO-60-006 The Development and Revision of FSC Country Requirements](#)> to develop or revise FSS.

In addition, this version of the addendum as well as procedure <[FSC-PRO-60-006 The Development and Revision of FSC Country Requirements](#)> also include requirements for working groups to make the FSS streamlined towards outcomes. This is through including key intended outcomes, indicators, and associated monitoring requirements into the FSS in accordance with <[FSC-GUI-60-006 Guidance to develop outcome-oriented Forest Stewardship Standards](#)>, and through the application of the risk-based approach to assess the risks of non-conformity with FSS indicators.

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SCOPE

This addendum is applicable to working groups, process leads and experts to develop indicators, annexes, and other normative requirements in the development or revision of Forest Stewardship Standards (FSS).

This document shall be used in conjunction with the requirements of <FSC-PRO-60-006 The Development and Revision of FSC Country Requirements>, which contains the process requirements for the development and revision of FSC Risk Assessments (RA) and FSC Forest Stewardship Standards (FSS).

All aspects of this document are considered normative, including the scope, effective date, transition end date, period of validity, references, terms and definitions, tables, and annexes, unless indicated as informative and/or marked as example. Informative guidance boxes, notes and examples are not considered normative.

REFERENCES

The following documents are referenced 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-01-001	FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship
FSC-STD-60-004	FSC International Generic Indicators
FSC-STD-01-003	SLIMF and Community Forest Eligibility Criteria
FSC-POL-30-001	FSC Pesticides Policy
FSC-POL-01-007	Policy to Address Conversion
FSC-POL-20-003	Policy for Excision of areas from the scope of certification
FSC-PRO-30-006	Ecosystem Services Procedure: Impact Demonstration and Market Tools
FSC-PRO-30-001	Continuous Improvement Procedure
FSC-DIR-20-007	FSC Directive on Forest Management Evaluation
FSC-GUI-60-006	Guidance to develop outcome-oriented Forest Stewardship Standards
FSC-GUI-60-009	Guidance for Standard Development Groups: Developing National High Conservation Value Frameworks
FSC-GUI-60-004	Guidance for Standard Developers to Develop a National Threshold for the Core Area of Intact Forest Landscapes (IFL) within the Management Unit
<p>NOTE: After the completion of the pilots for implementing the Motion 23/2020 '<u>Use landscape-wide approaches adapted to local conditions and strengthen Standard Development Groups (SDGs) to improve protection of Intact Forest Landscapes</u>' (General Assembly, 2020), this addendum will be aligned to include new requirements from the approved version of <FSC-PRO-60-004 Development of Indicators for the Protection of Intact Forest Landscapes Considering the Landscape Level> and <FSC-GUI-60-004 Landscape Approach to Intact Forest Landscapes>.</p>	
FSC-GUI-60-005	Promoting Gender Equality in National Forest Stewardship Standards
FSC-GUI-60-008	Guidelines for Standard Developers on the generic criteria and indicators based on ILO Core Conventions principles

ABBREVIATIONS

AADA	Adopt, Adapt, Drop or Add Indicators
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
FSS	Forest Stewardship Standard
HCV	High Conservation Value
IFL	Intact Forest Landscape
IGI	International Generic Indicator
ILO	International Labour Organisation
NTFP	Non-timber Forest Product
SLIMF	Small or Low Intensity Managed Forest

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PART I: GENERAL

Informative guidance

There are three types of processes for the development and revision of FSC Forest Stewardship Standards (FSS): “major,” “regular,” and “accelerated”.

Part I outlines general requirements such as the elements of an FSS, and the use of mandatory normative documents and templates for development and revision of the FSS.

The Figure 1 below illustrates the elements required in the FSS.



Figure 1. Structure of a Forest Stewardship Standard.

1. General aspects

1.1 The working group shall structure the FSS by defining and including the following elements:

- a) Introduction, including general information about FSC, the FSC Principles and Criteria and the development of Forest Stewardship Standards;
- b) Table of contents;
- c) Scope;
- d) Dates and timeframes associated with the implementation of the FSS: approval date, publication date, effective date, transition period and period of validity;
NOTE: The publication date, effective date, transition period and period of validity are specified in the document by FSC.
- e) Preamble, including objective, responsibility for conformity, application of FSS, note on the use of normative and non-normative elements, and information regarding interpretations and disputes;
- f) Context, including a general description of the forestry sector in the geographical scope of the FSS and background information on the FSS development and its importance within the relevant geographic context (see Box 1);
- g) List of references;
- h) Information on indicators developed for different user groups, scale and intensity of forest management operation or situations according to its scope;
- i) List of abbreviations;
- j) The FSC Principles and Criteria in the same order, structure and wording as specified in <FSC-STD-60-004 International Generic Indicators>;
- k) Indicators developed for each applicable Criterion in accordance with this addendum;
- l) Annexes; and
- m) Terms and definitions.

NOTE: The FSS template includes a predefined structure of the required elements.

1.2 The working group shall, at a minimum, include the following annexes into the FSS:

- a) Annexes as listed in <FSC-STD-60-004 International Generic Indicators>; and
- b) Monitoring requirements as defined per Clause 4.4.

1.3 The process lead shall use the templates provided by FSC for the development and revision of the FSS.

NOTE 1: The following templates are available (list not comprehensive):

- a) FSS template;
- b) The Adopt, Adapt, Drop and Add (AADA) matrix; and
- c) High Conservation Value (HCV) Framework template.

NOTE 2: FSC will inform the process lead of any changes to FSC normative documents and templates that might affect the development or revision process of the FSS.

Box 1: Description of the forestry sector.

The description of the forestry sector should provide objective information on forestry in the country, including forest resources, trade, and other relevant topics including, but not limited to:

- land tenure and forest ownership;
- natural conditions, including terrain, geography, biome, or forest type existing in the country and relevant climatic conditions;
- historical conversion of natural forests to other land uses, including current trends;
- protected areas and existing protection schemes;
- presence of Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous cultural landscapes;
- gender equality;
- workers' rights, health and safety;
- permitted chemicals used in forest;
- presence of Intact Forest Landscapes; and/or
- trade involving CITES species or poaching.

- 1.4 In cases where there is an overlap of geographical scope between the FSS and the FSC Risk Assessment, the working group shall ensure consistency in terms of the information included and interpretation of FSC terms to country conditions such as HCV, degradation, etc.

NOTE 1: Refer to <FSC-PRO-60-006b Risk Assessment Framework> for more information on the development of FSC Risk Assessments.

NOTE 2: Alignment of information includes context, assessment of the indicators, mitigation measures, and annexes of the FSC Risk Assessment.

- 1.5 The legal ownership of all FSS rests with FSC IC. This shall be expressed in a disclaimer included in each official FSS that is approved and published.

NOTE: A default disclaimer is included in the FSS template provided by FSC.

PART II: CONTENT OF AN FSS

2. Determining the scope

- 2.1 The working group shall determine the scope to which the FSS applies by specifying:
- The geographical scope: the administrative division (region, country, state, or province), or an ecologically delimited area (eco-region);
 - The forest types: natural forest, plantation and/or other (non-forest) vegetation types;
 - The ownership types: private, public, community, or other;
 - The categories of Management Units (MUs) with regards to scale and intensity; and
 - The forest products (see Box 2 for an example).
- 2.2 The working group shall obtain approval from FSC for the addition of other (non-forest) vegetation types to the scope.
- NOTE: Non-forest vegetation types may include, but are not limited to: silvo-pastoral production systems, agroforestry, medium to long rotation coppice systems, oil palm plantations, as well as to cacao, coffee, tea and olives.
- 2.3 The working group shall apply the requirements specified in <FSC-STD-01-003 SLIMF and Community Forest Eligibility Criteria>, whenever SLIMF and/or community forest is added to the scope of the FSS.
- 2.4 The working group shall classify the forest products in accordance with <FSC-STD-40-004a FSC Product Classification> to Level 1 for Wood Products and to the most appropriate level for Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP) by specifying either Level 1 or Level 2.
- 2.5 The working group shall only include forest products originating from primary or low intensity processing activities in the forest product scope.
- 2.6 The working group shall mark as 'Not assessed' the FSS indicators that are excluded from the scope of the risk-based approach.
- 2.7 The working group shall provide a justification for any deviation in the scope of the FSS and obtain approval by FSC.

Box 2. Example of Scope of the FSS.	
Scope	Category
Geographic region	Republic of Newland
Forest types	Natural Forests and Plantations
Ownership types	Public and Private
Scale and intensity category	All types of management units, including small or low intensity managed forests (SLIMF)
Forest products	<u>Wood products</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Rough wood (W1) <u>NTFPs</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Natural Bamboo (N5.1) ii. Cork (N3) iii. Mushrooms (N9.4) iv. Honey (N9.8)

3. Developing indicators, definitions and verifiers

General requirements

- 3.1 When developing indicators for a new FSS, the working group shall use the IGI included in the latest approved version of the <FSC-STD-60-004 International Generic Indicators> (at the time of registration) as the starting point.
- 3.2 When developing indicators in the revision of an FSS, the working group shall use the following as the starting point:
 - a) All existing indicators in the previously approved FSS;
 - b) All new and revised IGI in the latest approved version <FSC-STD-60-004 FSC International Generic Indicators> (at the time of registration) that are not included in the previously approved FSS;
 - c) Review report results; and
 - d) Advice notes, interpretations and guidance in relation to FSC country requirements, as applicable.
- 3.3 For FSS which are in development or revision at the time of the publication of a new version of <FSC-STD-60-004 FSC International Generic Indicators> and have not yet been launched for the first consultation, the working group shall include the changes to the IGI within the ongoing development or revision process.
- 3.4 For FSS which have passed the launch of the first consultation in an ongoing process at the time of the publication of a new version of <FSC-STD-60-004 FSC International Generic Indicators>, the working group shall include the changes to the IGI no later than in the next scheduled regular review and revision of those standards.

NOTE: In case the process includes a second consultation, the working group may include the changes to the IGI within the ongoing development or revision process.

- 3.5 The working group shall provide a justification if it considers a Criterion to be inapplicable in the relevant geographic context, supported by objective and verifiable evidence.
- NOTE: Example of inapplicable Criteria include all Criteria under Principle 3 when it is justified and confirmed beyond reasonable doubt that there are no Indigenous Peoples with forest-related rights located in the geographical area that is part of the scope of the FSS.
- 3.6 The working group shall adopt the terms and definitions originating from <FSC-STD-01-001 FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship>.
- NOTE: The working group may add examples to explain how the definitions relate to the relevant geographic context.
- 3.7 The working group may adopt, adapt or drop additional terms and definitions originating only from <FSC-STD-60-004 FSC International Generic Indicators>, or add new terms and definitions as applicable to the local context.
- 3.8 The working group shall provide justification for any adaptation, dropping or adding of terms and definitions to their FSS.
- NOTE: The justifications are to be included in the AADA matrix.

Requirements to Adopt, Adapt, Drop or Add indicators (AADA)

- 3.9 The working group shall develop indicators using one of the followings options (see Table 1 for a summary of the options):
- a) **Adopting** an indicator, which includes:
 - i) copying an IGI into the FSS as it is written in the <FSC-STD-60-004 International Generic Indicators Standard>; or
 - ii) replicating an indicator as it is written in the previously approved FSS.
 - b) **Adapting** an indicator, which includes:
 - i) revision of the wording and/or structure of an IGI or indicator from the previously approved FSS to include terminology and language appropriate to the relevant geographic context, while maintaining the intended scope and outcome of the indicator;
 - ii) adding scope specific relevant thresholds, other national/regional norms, or best practices to improve the outcomes and consistency in measuring the conformity with a Criterion; or

NOTE: Adding a note, guidance or a verifier is not considered an adaptation.

 - iii) using an existing indicator from an approved FSS of a country with similar forest context instead of an IGI where it corresponds directly with the elements of the IGI and the relevant Criterion.
 - c) **Dropping** an indicator: This includes leaving out an IGI or an indicator from the previously approved FSS where it is determined to be inapplicable or does not contribute to achieving conformity with a Criterion, or where it is merged with another indicator that covers the relevant normative requirement.

NOTE: An indicator may be considered inapplicable where it addresses a non-existent or improbable condition within the relevant geographic context for the expected validity period of the FSS. An indicator may be considered as non-contributing when does not add to the overall performance of the FSS and does not compromise conformity with any Criterion.

d) **Adding** a new indicator: This includes the addition of indicators to the FSS to establish conformity with a Criterion in the relevant geographic context.

NOTE 1: The working group may include notes and examples to an indicator to provide further information, but they do not contain requirements or normative expressions.

NOTE 2: The working group may include footnotes to give additional contextual information to a specific item in the text.

3.10 The working group shall not drop an IGI during the development or revision of the FSS under a regular or accelerated process type.

3.11 The working group shall provide justifications when adapting, dropping, or adding indicators.

NOTE: The justifications are to be included in the AADA matrix.

3.12 The existence of national legislation that meets or exceeds the requirements of an indicator shall not be used by the working group as the only justification for dropping an indicator.

3.13 When the working group adapts an IGI or indicator from the previously approved FSS or adds new indicators that exceed the requirements and thresholds for the excision of areas from the scope of evaluation, the working group shall provide a justification.

Table 1. Starting point for the development of indicators when developing or revising an FSS.

Process		Development of FSS		Revision of FSS		
		Major	Regular	Major	Regular	Accelerat.
Starting point		1. <FSC-STD-60-004 International Generic Indicator>		1. Indicators in the previously approved FSS 2. Latest IGI version in <FSC-STD-60-004 International Generic Indicator>		
Process type		Major	Regular	Major	Regular	Accelerat.
Development of FSS indicators	Adopt an IGI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Adapt an IGI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Drop an IGI	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗
	Adopt an indicator of the previously approved FSS	N/A	N/A	✓	✓	✓
	Adapt an indicator of the previously approved FSS	N/A	N/A	✓	✓	✓
	Drop an indicator of the previously approved FSS	N/A	N/A	✓	✓	✓
	Add an indicator	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Legend: ✓ Allowed ✗ Not Permitted N/A Not applicable						
NOTE: In the case of development, minimal adaptation of IGI approach can be applied through accelerated process in accordance with Clauses 5.9 and 5.10.						

- 3.14 When NTFPs are included in the scope of the FSS, the working group shall develop NTFP-specific indicators if the base indicator is not suitable to be implementable considering the management system used in the country for producing and commercializing those NTFPs.
- NOTE 1: Base indicator refers to the indicators that are part of the FSS under development or revision.
- NOTE 2: Box 7 contains an example for an indicator developed according to the forest product.
- 3.15 When game and/or honey are added to the forest product scope, the working group shall develop specific indicators for the tracking and tracing of these products in Criterion 8.5 as per <FSC-STD-01-001 FSC Principles and Criteria of Forest Stewardship>.
- 3.16 When adapting or adding an indicator, the working group shall ensure that the indicator is formulated and written as SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Tangible).
- 3.16.1 **Specific:** Each indicator shall refer to a single aspect of performance to be evaluated. An indicator which includes more than one aspect to be evaluated shall list these aspects separately as sub-divisions of the indicator.
- 3.16.2 **Measurable:** Indicators shall specify outcomes or levels (i.e. thresholds) of performance that are measurable during an evaluation at a reasonable cost. The level of performance required to conform with the indicators should be clear to the user of the FSS.
- 3.16.3 **Achievable:** Indicators shall be able to be accomplished by the designated user(s) of the FSS and shall not favour a particular technology or patented item.
- 3.16.4 **Relevant:** Indicators shall only include elements that contribute to the achievement of the objective of the applicable FSC Criterion.
- 3.16.5 **Tangible:** Indicators shall be written using a clear and consistent vocabulary, free from subjective elements.
- 3.17 The working group should include verifiers for all indicators.
- NOTE: Verifiers are not normative. They do not define thresholds for conformity, but indicate potential sources of information or evidence that an auditor may find useful in evaluating conformity (see Box 3 for an example).
- 3.18 Prior to submitting the FSS drafts to FSC, the process lead shall conduct a quality check to ensure that:
- a) The draft FSS is of high editorial quality, consistent formatting and free of language mistakes;
 - b) The indicators cover all the normative elements of the Criteria unless considered inapplicable in the relevant geographic context;
 - c) The FSS is developed in accordance with requirements in this procedure and the instructions outlined in the FSS templates;
 - d) The indicators are coherent, without redundancies, and consistent in language and terminology;
 - e) The latest terms and definitions as specified in the relevant FSC normative documents are used;
 - f) Any new term defined in the drafts is included in the terms and definition;
 - g) The required annexes are included;
 - h) Justifications are included in the AADA matrix as required;
 - i) The references are included and checked, and with no editorial inconsistencies; and

- j) Any detected non-conformities with applicable requirements in this procedure are resolved.

Box 3: Examples of verifiers for an indicator.

Indicator 8.5.4 Sales invoices or similar documentation are kept for a minimum of five years for all products sold with an FSC claim, which identify at a minimum, the following information:

- 1) Name and address of purchaser;
- 2) The date of sale;
- 3) Common and scientific species name;
- 4) Product description;
- 5) The volume (or quantity) sold;
- 6) Certificate code; and
- 7) The FSC Claim "FSC 100%" identifying products sold as FSC certified

Verifiers: Documents to check include: contract documents; sale invoices, dispatch or delivery notes; hauliers' invoices.

Additional requirements when developing indicators in a FSS stalled process

3.19 If a process was stalled prior to the submission of the submission package¹ to FSC, the working group of the restarted process shall apply the AADA concept in the FSS draft originating from the stalled process as follows:

- a) Adoption or adaptation of the indicators in accordance with the rules specified in Clause 3.9 a) and b) respectively.
- b) Dropping of indicators under the following conditions:
 - i) if these indicators were added by the working group of the stalled process;
 - ii) to address the stakeholder concerns raised in the previous round of consultation or in a new consultation under the restarted process.
- c) Adding new indicators under the following conditions:
 - i) to reintroduce indicators that were dropped by the working group of the stalled process;
 - ii) to address the stakeholder concerns raised in the previous round of consultation or new consultation under the restarted process.

3.20 If the process was stalled after submission of the submission package to FSC, the working group of the restarted process shall develop indicators as follows:

- a) If the indicator adapted by the working group of the stalled process is not considered consistent with the respective criterion, the corresponding IGI may be adopted without further consultation.
- b) if an adaptation of the IGI is considered necessary, a corresponding indicator may be replicated from an approved FSS of a country with similar social, economic, and environmental conditions, without further consultation.
- c) if the above options are not feasible, the working group should adapt the indicator(s). A consultation of the final draft is then required.

¹ The submission package includes the assessment draft. Refer to Clause 6.9 of <FSC-PRO-60-006 The Development and Revision of FSC Country Requirements> for list of documents submitted as part of submission package.

NOTE: An independent expert(s) with an understanding of the relevant geographic context may be engaged to adapt the indicator(s).

3.21 In cases where a stalled process is restarted using the minimal adaptation of IGI approach, the working group of the restarted process shall apply the requirements specified in Clause 5.10.

4. Streamlining towards outcomes

Outcome orientation

Informative guidance

This section outlines requirements for developing outcome-oriented Forest Stewardship Standards (FSS). The working group is responsible for defining a few key intended outcomes, while the experts can define monitoring requirements. See Figure 2 for an overview of the steps required for applying outcome orientation in an FSS.

The implementation of outcome-oriented Forest Stewardship Standards (FSS) will contribute to collecting data and quantifying the sustainability outcomes achieved on the ground or progress made towards them. This will allow for reflecting on the effects of management activities and creating the basis for learning and insight-driven improvement both at the individual and cumulative level of The Organization in the geographic scope of application of the FSS.

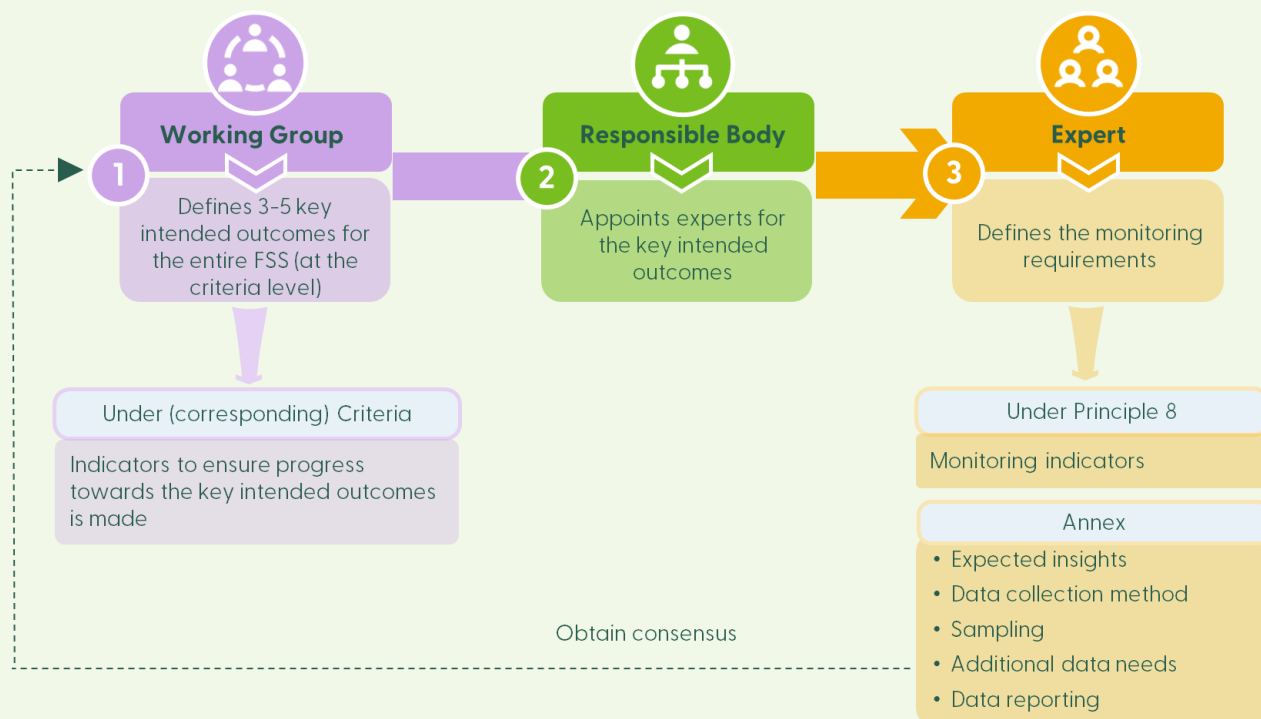


Figure 2. Steps required for developing outcome-oriented FSS.

4.1 The working group shall select a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 5 key intended outcomes for the entire FSS from the list provided in <FSC-STD-01-001 FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship>.

NOTE 1: The key intended outcomes are defined at the level of the Criteria.

NOTE 2: The selected key intended outcomes may include up to 2 new key intended outcomes proposed by the working group that are relevant for the geographical context.

NOTE 3: Refer to <[FSC-GUI-60-006 Guidance to develop outcome oriented FSS](#)> for more information on the definition of key intended outcomes. Annex A of this guidance also contains the list of key intended outcomes.

- 4.2 The working group shall place the key intended outcomes after the specified Criteria (see example provided in Box 4).
- 4.3 The working group shall adopt, adapt, or drop the IGI or the indicators of the previously approved FSS, or add new indicators to contribute towards each of the key intended outcomes, in accordance with the AADA requirements specified in Clause 3.9.

Box 4: Example of one key intended outcome and its presentation in the FSS.

Each key intended outcome is integrated under its corresponding Criterion.

Criterion 6.4 The Organization shall protect rare species and threatened species and their habitats in the Management Unit through conservation zones, protection areas, connectivity and/or (where necessary) other direct measures for their survival and viability. These measures shall be proportionate to the scale, intensity and risk of management activities and to the conservation status and ecological requirements of the rare and threatened species. The Organization shall take into account the geographic range and ecological requirements of rare and threatened species beyond the boundary of the Management Unit, when determining the measures to be taken inside the Management Unit.

Key intended outcome: The presence of rare and threatened species in the Management Unit is maintained over time.

- 6.4.1** Best Available Information is used to identify rare and threatened species, and their habitats, including CITES species (where applicable) and those listed on national, regional and local lists of rare and threatened species that are present or likely to be present within and adjacent to the Management Unit.
- 6.4.2** Potential impacts of management activities on rare and threatened species and their conservation status and habitats are identified and management activities are modified to avoid negative impacts.
- 6.4.3** The rare and threatened species and their habitats are protected, including through the provision of conservation zones, protection areas, connectivity, and other direct means for their survival and viability, such as species' recovery programs.

- 4.4 The appointed expert(s), in coordination with the working group, shall define monitoring requirements for each of the key intended outcomes, which include the following:
 - a) expected insights;
 - b) monitoring indicators;
 - c) metrics for monitoring indicators;
 - d) data collection methods;
 - e) sampling;
 - f) additional data needs and
 - g) data reporting.

NOTE 1: The requirements for appointing experts for the key intended outcomes are specified in Clause 2.19 of <[FSC-PRO-60-006 The Development and Revision of FSC Country Requirements](#)>.

NOTE 2: Refer to <[FSC-GUI-60-006 Guidance to develop outcome oriented FSS](#)> for more information on defining the elements a) to f) and examples.

NOTE 3: Where applicable, the responsible body can take the responsibility of monitoring the key intended outcome. For example, when technology such as remote sensing permits effective centralized monitoring of the relevant indicators.

- 4.5 The working group shall place under Principle 8 the monitoring indicators for each key intended outcome, in accordance with Clause 4.4 b) (see example provided in Box 5).
- 4.6 The working group shall place in the Annexes the monitoring requirements, in accordance with Clause 4.4.

Box 5: Example of monitoring indicators and its presentation in the FSS.

In this example, the monitoring indicator (8.2.3) is integrated in the Principle 8 under Criterion 8.2.

Criterion 8.2 The Organization shall monitor and evaluate the environmental and social impacts of the activities carried out in the Management Unit, and changes in its environmental condition.

- 8.2.1** The social and environmental impacts of management activities are monitored consistent with Annex G.
- 8.2.2** Changes in environmental conditions are monitored consistent with Annex G.
- 8.2.3** The Organization monitors the boundaries of the Management Unit and the Representative Sample Areas of Native Ecosystems consistent with Annex H, as per key intended outcome under Criterion 6.4.

Risk-based approach

Informative guidance

This section outlines the requirements for applying risk-based approaches in the development and revision of FSS. This allows for determining and specifying the risk of non-conformity with the requirements of an FSS in the relevant geographic context.

The risk-based approach enables matching assurance efforts to risks, focusing on the issues of greater risk and opportunity, and decreasing efforts on issues with negligible risk of non-conformity.

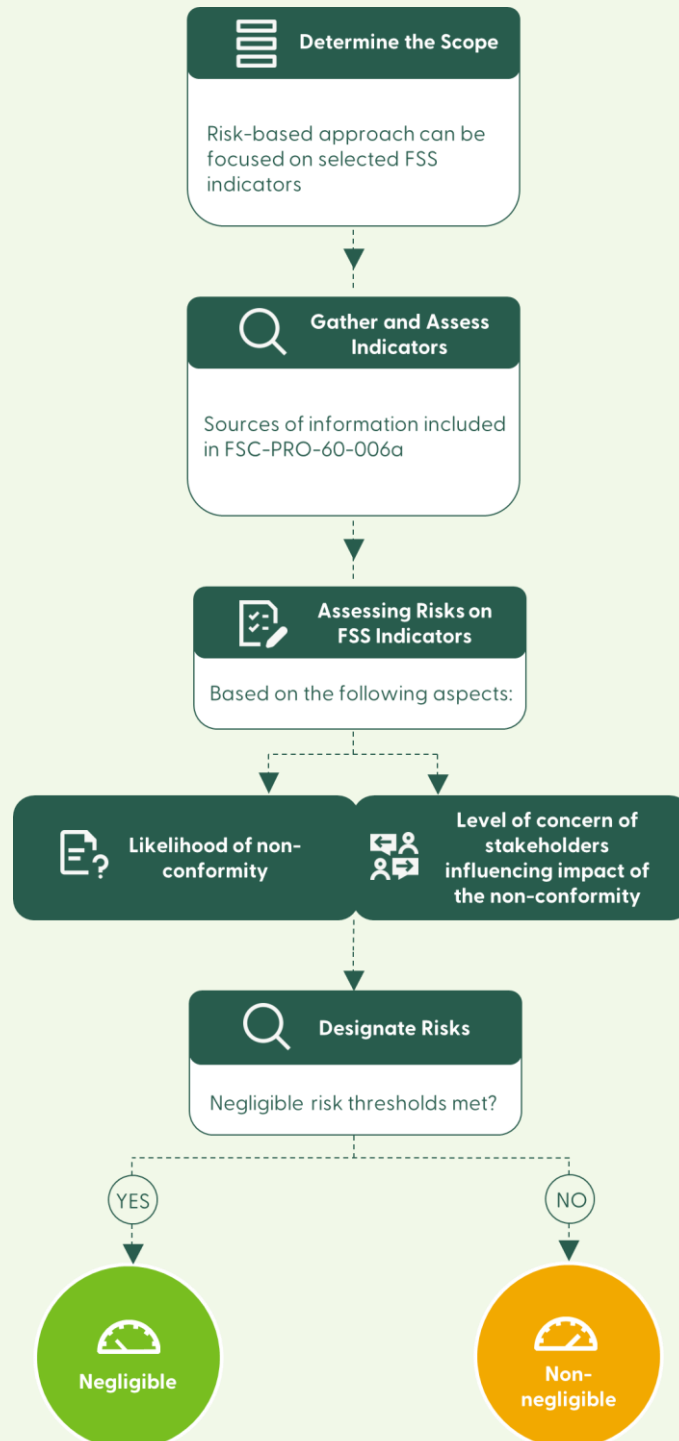


Figure 3. Steps required when applying the risk-based approach.

- 4.7 When assessing risks of non-conformity for FSS indicators, the working group shall focus on:
- a) The likelihood of the non-conformity; and
 - b) The level of concern of stakeholders as a key factor influencing the potential impact of the non-conformity.
- 4.8 The working group shall gather sufficient information to assess the FSS indicators and respective risk threshold to justify the risk designation reached.
- 4.9 The working group shall use the following sources of information:
- a) FSC Risk Assessment of the geographical area that is part of the scope of the FSS, or internationally and nationally recognized indices and legislation gap analysis in case the FSC Risk Assessment does not exist;
 - b) FSC Risk Assessment from countries in the same region or similar context, as applicable;
 - c) Assessment of risks of non-conformity of FSS indicators from countries in the same region or with similar context;
 - d) Analysis of smallholders, communities and other specific land tenure;
 - e) Non-conformities;
 - f) Stakeholders' complaints; and
 - g) Others as relevant.
- 4.10 The working group shall assess each FSS indicator based on a combination of public sources of information and consultations with experts and stakeholders during the FSS process. However, information obtained on-site may be included.
- 4.11 The working group shall select the sources of information based on objective criteria and use sources of information that are reliable and well recognized.
- NOTE: Examples of objective criteria to evaluate information sources include publication indices,² credibility of data providers,³ dates of publication, methodology used for data gathering, etc.
- 4.12 The working group shall avoid using information sources older than five (5) years unless their continued relevance and reliability can be confirmed.
- 4.13 The working group shall provide a reference for the information used in the assessment of risks of non-conformity, including information gathered via experts, to ensure that sources of information are verifiable by third parties (e.g., reference to fsc.org, Google search results, or similar is not specific enough for the purposes of data validation).

NOTE: Names of experts are anonymized by default (unless explicit permission is given), but the names of experts consulted is recorded and kept on file by FSC with other methodological materials.

² For example, Impact Factor (IF) (<https://researchguides.uic.edu/if/impact>), Science Citation Index (SCI) (<https://clarivate.com/webofsciencelgroup/solutions/webofscience-scie/>), etc.

³ Preferred data providers may include: scientific entities based on their international ranks and publication in high-ranked journals, International Agencies, Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), governmental agencies, etc.

4.14 The factors that can influence risk at The Organization level in the relevant geographic context shall be identified.

NOTE: These factors might include scale of the Management Unit and/or the intensity of management.

4.15 The working group shall determine the risk designation at the level of indicators.

4.16 The working group shall determine the risk designation by evaluating the information in identified sources against the 'negligible' risk thresholds specified in Table 2.

NOTE: A 'negligible' risk designation can only be reached when all the risk thresholds are met.

4.17 Each indicator under assessment shall be determined as either:

- a) 'Negligible risk', in the event that evidence indicates that the 'negligible' risk threshold(s) are met, and that there is no other information that would lead to a 'non-negligible risk' designation; OR
- b) 'Non-negligible risk', in the event that available means of verification do not show evidence that the negligible risk category is applicable, and that one or more 'negligible' risk threshold(s) are exceeded.

NOTE: Negligible risk indicators are not subject to evaluations.

Table 2. 'Negligible' risk thresholds for the assessment of risks of non-conformity with FSS indicators.

FSS	'Negligible' risk thresholds
FSS indicator under assessment of risks of non-conformity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The FSC Risk Assessment related indicators have concluded a 'negligible' risk designation; and 2. Applicable legislation for the area under assessment covers the requirements under this indicator and there is no evidence indicating that identified laws are ignored, not consistently upheld by all entities, or not enforced by relevant authorities; and 3. Major non-conformities with the requirement covered by the indicator under assessment affecting a wide area, causing significant damage, and/or continuing over a long period of time have not been reported within the last five (5) years in the area that is part of the scope of the FSS; and 4. There are no major concerns from stakeholders about the potential adverse impacts of non-conformities with the indicator under assessment.

5. Additional requirements for FSS

Informative guidance

This section specifies additional requirements that are essential for working groups during the development or revision of an FSS. Refer the Figure 4 below for an overview of areas requiring attention and deliberation during development of indicators and related normative parts.

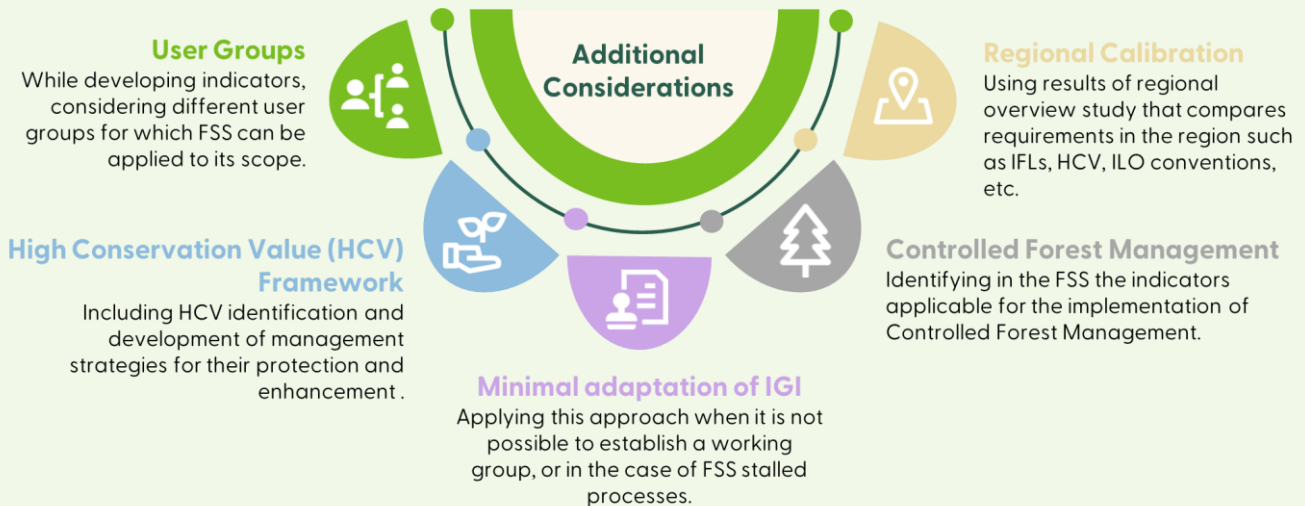


Figure 4. Additional requirements during the development of an FSS.

High Conservation Value Framework

- 5.1 The working group shall develop an HCV Framework for the FSS, which includes the identification of HCVs within the geographic scope of the FSS and how to assess their potential presence in a given Management Unit, and development of management strategies to protect or enhance these HCVs.
- 5.2 When developing the HCV Framework, the working group shall include requirements that are also relevant for the FSC Risk Assessment of the same geographical scope of the FSS so it can be applicable for all FSC country requirements.
- 5.3 The working group should use the <FSC-GUI-60-009 Guidance for Standard Development Groups: Developing National High Conservation Value Frameworks> to develop the HCV Framework.

Controlled Forest Management (CFM)

- 5.4 The working group shall identify in the FSS the indicators applicable for the implementation of <FSC-STD-30-010 Controlled Forest Management>, if there are or are likely to be Controlled Forest Management certified organizations in the geographical scope of the FSS.

NOTE: This identification of indicators is to be included in the AADA matrix, through a crosswalk providing comparability of each indicator in the FSS with the indicators presented in Part 2 of <FSC-STD-30-010 Controlled Forest Management>.

User Groups

- 5.5 The working group may develop scope-specific indicators for different user or use scenarios based on the FSS scope (e.g., for SLIMF, plantations, NTFPs, community forests, etc.).
- 5.6 Scope-specific indicators shall be defined as either being:
- Additional to other indicators under the respective criterion, indicated by a new numbering at the same hierarchical level, or
 - Supplementary to one indicator, indicated by a numbering at a level below that indicator, or
 - Substituting one indicator, indicated by maintaining the number of that main indicator and adding a scope-specific letter or acronym.

NOTE: Boxes 6 and 7 contain examples of indicators developed according to different user groups.

- 5.7 The working group shall include the SLIMF and/or community forests thresholds in accordance with <FSC-STD-01-003 SLIMF and Community Forest Eligibility Criteria>, when dedicated alternative indicators for SLIMF and/or community forests are included in the FSS.

Regional Calibration

- 5.8 The working group shall consider outcomes of the regional comparison of FSC country requirements where it exists, when developing the indicators.

NOTE: A regional comparison focuses on requirements from the region pertaining to the most crucial, or controversial topics in respective geographical region (e.g., identification and involvement of Indigenous Peoples, living wages, Conservation Area Networks, use of pesticides, HCVs, etc.) and possible requirements that can contribute to resolving the identified issues. Requirements for the regional comparison are specified in <FSC-PRO-60-006 Development and Revision of FSC Country Requirements>.

Minimal adaptation of IGI

- 5.9 The approach of 'minimal adaptation of IGI' can be applied by the responsible body under the following conditions:

- Inability to conduct a major or regular process in a country despite all efforts or the development or revision of an FSS is of high importance to ensure FSC certification; or

NOTE: The following instances are considered to be of high importance for FSC certification: transfer of an FSS to a new version of FSC Principles and Criteria, or certificate holders are using CFM in the area under assessment, or there is confirmed interest for FM certification.

- The process is stalled.

- 5.10 When using the minimal adaptation approach, the following requirements shall apply:

- IGI 5.2.1, 5.2.4, 6.4.1, 10.6.4, 10.12.1 and Annex I according to <FSC-STD-60-004 FSC International Generic Indicators> shall be adapted;
- IGI 2.1.1.2, 5.2.3, 7.6.1, Annex A and Annex D according to <FSC-STD-60-004 FSC International Generic Indicators> may be adapted;
- All other IGI and annexes shall be adopted.

Box 6: Example – Identification of indicators developed according to the different user groups for which the FSS can be applied according to its scope.

Example 1 (with added letter ‘L’ identifying alternative indicators for low intensity managed forests):

Criterion 4.3. The Organization shall provide reasonable opportunities for employment, training, and other services to local communities, contractors and suppliers proportionate to scale and intensity of its management activities.

4.3.1 Reasonable opportunities are communicated and provided to local communities, local contractors, and local suppliers for:

- 1) Employment,
- 2) Training, and
- 3) Other services.

4.3.1-L Preference is given to local people and services in employment and training.

Example 2 (with added letter ‘S’ identifying alternative indicators for SLIMF):

Criterion 5.1. The Organization shall efficiently manage the range of multiple products and services of the Management Unit to maintain or enhance long-term economic viability and the range of social and environmental benefits.

5.1.1 The range of resources, and ecosystem services that could strengthen and diversify the local economy are identified.

5.1.1-S The Organization is aware of the range of resources and ecosystem services that could strengthen and diversify the local economy.

PART III: TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

6. Numbering of indicators

- 6.1 The working group shall number indicators within the FSS as follows:
- a) All indicators shall be numbered in numerical level.
 - b) Each indicator shall be numbered in the format x.y.z, within its respective Criterion, where x is the number of Principle, y is number of the Criterion and z is the sequential number of the indicator (see examples 1 and 2 in Box 7).
 - c) Scope-specific indicators developed for specific forest products, forest type or user group shall be numbered in accordance with Clause 5.6 and suffixed with an hyphen and the identifier defined for the specific adaptations. More specifically:
 - i) A SLIMF or community forest indicator shall be suffixed with the identifier 'S' or 'C' respectively (see example 1 in Box 7).
 - ii) An indicator for different scale and intensity shall be suffixed with the identifier that was defined for that user group (see example 1 in Box 6).
 - iii) An NTFP(s) indicator shall be suffixed with the identifier 'N' (see example 2 in Box 7).
- 6.2 For each indicator in the FSS, the working group shall specify in the ADDA matrix the number of the corresponding IGI and the IGI version used.

NOTE: This clause does not apply in the case of new added indicators.

7. Language of the FSS

- 7.1 The working group may develop the FSS in one or several languages of the geographical area to which they apply.
- 7.2 The process lead shall submit the FSS drafts to FSC in one of the official languages of FSC (i.e. English, Spanish, or French) for review and decision-making, considering:
- a) The meaning of English words should follow those given in the Oxford English Dictionary or the Concise Oxford Dictionary, unless the intended meaning is provided in a glossary;
 - b) The meaning of Spanish words should follow those given in the Diccionario de la Lengua Española (Real Academia Española), unless the intended meaning is provided in a glossary; and
 - c) The meaning of French words should follow those given in the Le Petit Larousse or the Le Petit Robert unless the intended meaning is provided in a glossary.
- 7.3 The approved version of the FSS in one of the FSC official languages shall prevail.

NOTE: In case the FSS is translated to other FSC official languages, the language used in the approved FSS is considered the official version.

- 7.4 The translated version of the FSS to an unofficial language of FSC shall include a disclaimer clarifying that the English or French or Spanish version (depending on the language of the approved FSS) is the prevailing version.

Box 7: Examples of numbering indicators.

Example 1:

Principle 4: The Organization shall contribute to maintaining or enhancing the social and economic wellbeing of local communities.

Criterion 4.4 The Organization shall implement additional activities, through engagement with local communities, that contribute to their social and economic development, proportionate to the scale, intensity and socio-economic impact of its management activities.

4.4.1 Opportunities for local social and economic development are identified through culturally appropriate engagement with local communities and other relevant organizations.

4.4.1-S Opportunities for local social and economic development are identified and implemented.

4.4.1-C Opportunities for local social and economic development are identified through culturally appropriate engagement with local communities and implemented.

Example 2:

Criterion 8.5 The Organization shall have and implement a tracking and tracing system proportionate to scale, intensity and risk of its management activities, for demonstrating the source and volume in proportion to projected output for each year, of all products from the Management Unit* that are marketed as FSC certified.

8.5.1 A system is implemented to track and trace all products that are marketed as FSC certified. As part of that:

- 1) Transaction verification is supported by providing FSC transaction data, as requested by the certification body;
- 2) Fibre testing is supported by surrendering samples and specimens of materials and information about species composition for verification, as requested by the certification body.

8.5.1.1-N It is demonstrated based on best available information or pollen analysis that the majority of the collected nectar originates from within the FSC certified MU before the honey can be sold with FSC claim: FSC 100%.

8. Coding of an FSS

8.1 Before publication FSC will assign a document code to each approved FSS before publication consisting of the following elements:

- a) Publisher, i.e., FSC;
- b) Document type, i.e., FSS;
- c) Document class, i.e. 60;
- d) Document identifier: XXX, a three-digit code for the forest type and non-forest vegetation types. These are:

Document identifier	Forest type
010	All forest types (or multiple forest types)
020	Only Natural Forest
030	Only Plantation
040	Only non-forest vegetation types

- e) Geographical scope: YYY is a three letter ISO 3166 Alpha-3 code for the country concerned;
 NOTE: For regional country requirements, the regional code for the region concerned are named as: “RAP” for Asia Pacific, “RNA” for North America, “REU” for Europe, “RCA” for Central America, “RSA” for South America and “RCB” for Congo Basin. Other regional codes may be defined as applicable.
- f) Effective year: ##### is the year when the FSS becomes effective;
- g) Version number: ## is the version number of the approved standard;
- h) Language: The two-letter code for macrolanguage ISO 639-1; and
- i) The version number of the draft (if applicable, this is added during consultation phase of the process).

NOTE: See Box 8 for an example on assigning a document code to the FSS.

- 8.2 The version numbers of an FSS shall be in the format of “Vx-y”.
- 8.3 The initial version of an FSS shall start with V1-0.
- 8.4 In the case of a revision following a major or regular process type, the revised document shall be given a new first number (x), e.g. V2-0, V3-0, etc.
- 8.5 In the case of a revision following an accelerated process type, the revised document shall be given a new second number (y), e.g. V1-1, V1-2, etc.
- 8.6 Drafts of an FSS shall be identifiable in the text of the document and through the file name as follows:
- Indication in the document: The term “DRAFT x-y” shall be added in a prominent place on the front and/or second page of the document. It should be written in bold red capital letters about twice the size as the regular font size (min. 18pt). In addition, the watermark “DRAFT” shall be inserted across every page of the document.
 - Identification in the file name: the extension “Dx-y” shall be added to the filename following the version number.
 - The first number (x) shall identify the draft version for public consultation, and the second number (y) shall identify the drafts for internal consultation.
 - Following the approval of the final draft, all references to the draft as described above shall be removed from the document code and file name before the document is published.

Box 8: Example of FSS coding system.

For country-level FSS:

FSC-FSS-60-010-DEU-2023 V1-0 EN

A first English version of FSS covering general scope for Germany, effective from the year 2023, where:

- a) “FSC” is the publisher;
- b) “FSS” is the document type;
- c) “60” is the document class;
- d) “010” indicates an FSS with the scope of all forest types;
- e) “DEU” is the Alpha-three code ISO 3166-1 (e.g. DEU is the three-letter country code for Germany);
- f) “2023” is the year the FSS becomes effective;
- g) “V1-0” is the version number of the FSS; and
- h) “EN” is the two-letter code for English.

For regional FSS

FSC-FSS-60-030-RCA-2023 V1-0 ES

The first Spanish version of an FSS for plantations for Central America Region, in Spanish, effective from 2023, where:

- a) “030” indicates a regional FSS with the scope of plantation;
- b) “RCA” is the regional code for the Central America Region (see NOTE under Clause 8.1 e)); and
- c) “ES” is the two-letter code for Spanish.

9. Layout and structure of an FSS

- 9.1 The responsible body may modify the layout or structure of a published FSS to facilitate its implementation, provided the requirements are not changed or omitted.

NOTE: The modifications done to the layout or structure of a published FSS may include adding guidance throughout the document and visuals so that it is easier to be used and understood by Organizations. For example, to Organizations managing SLIMF or community forests.

- 9.2 When the layout or structure of a published FSS is modified, the responsible body shall include a disclaimer in the modified version of the FSS stating that the FSS version approved by FSC International always takes precedence.

EXAMPLE: Disclaimer: The restructured FSS is produced by the FSC [*country*] or [*name of the responsible body*] and is not an official version of the FSS approved by FSC International. In case of conflict or inconsistency between the published FSS version and the restructured FSS version, the approved English version of the FSS shall prevail.

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions included in [<FSC-STD-01-002 FSC Glossary of Terms>](#), [<FSC-PRO-60-006 The development and revision of FSC country requirements>](#) and the following apply:

AADA Matrix: A document developed for the purposes of systematically recording every adoption, adaptation, dropping or adding of indicators undertaken in accordance with the FSC International Generic Indicators during the FSS development and revision process. It serves as a comprehensive record of iterative edits, together with the justifications, to the FSS, ensuring thorough documentation of each action (adopting, adapting, dropping IGI or adding new indicator) made to the IGI.

Data collection methods: A precise description of the methodologies and tools required to collect data.

Data reporting: A description of the data to be reported, standardization needs for metrics and units, tools, and frequency of reporting, to ensure data compilation is consistent and data are comparable for their analysis.

Expected insights: A description of the learnings or information expected to be gained from the analysis of data collected from outcome-oriented indicators and other existing reporting activities (e.g. Forest Management Evaluation).

Forest Stewardship Standard (FSS): The FSC normative document which specifies the requirements with which The Organization must conform in order to obtain FSC certification. Such a standard must include the exact language of the FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship, together with the additional indicators necessary to permit implementation at the level of the forest management unit.

Homogeneous risk designation: A homogeneous risk designation involves categorizing similar risks within the most basic common area that shares common characteristics. This is determined primarily by the availability of information on the risk in question (Source: [<FSC-PRO-60-006b Risk Assessment Framework>](#)).

Intensity: A measure of the force, severity or strength of a management activity or other occurrence affecting the nature of the activity's impacts (Source: [<FSC-STD-01-001 FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship>](#)).

International Generic Indicators (IGI): The IGI are a set of indicators that address each normative element of each Criterion in the FSC Principles & Criteria. They are designed to be adaptable at the regional or national level (Adapted from: [<FSC-STD-60-004 International Generic Indicators>](#)).

Key intended outcome: Selected outcomes for which the implementation of normative requirements and progress monitoring is prioritized.

Monitoring indicator: A quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure the performance against the key intended outcomes, including positive or negative trends. An indicator can be measured through one or multiple metrics (Adapted from Nature Positive, 2024).

Negligible risk: A conclusion, following a risk assessment, that there is no cause for concern of non-conformity with a specific indicator of an FSS in such a way that would not allow the level of risk to be confirmed as negligible (Adapted from: [<FSC-PRO-60-006b Risk Assessment Framework>](#)).

Non-negligible risk: A conclusion, following a risk assessment, that there is cause for concern that non-conformity with specific FSS indicators may be found in the geographical area that is part of the scope of the FSS (Adapted from: [<FSC-PRO-60-006b Risk Assessment Framework>](#)).

Outcome: The likely or achieved short-term and medium-term results from the implementation of a normative document (Adapted from: OECD Glossary, 2002).

Precautionary approach: An approach requiring that when the available information indicates management activities pose a threat of severe or irreversible damage to the environment or a threat to human welfare, explicit and effective measures to prevent the damage and avoid the risks to welfare are required, even when the available information is incomplete or inconclusive, and when the vulnerability and sensitivity of environmental values are uncertain (Source: Based on Principle 15 of Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, 1992, and Wingspread Statement on the Precautionary Principle of the Wingspread Conference, 23–25 January 1998).

Process lead(s): Person(s) assigned by FSC to lead the development or revision process of FSC requirements (Source: <FSC-PRO-01-001 Development and Revision of FSC Requirements>).

Revision: Introduction of changes to a set of FSC requirements (Source: <FSC-PRO-01-001 Development and Revision of FSC Requirements>).

Risk: The probability of an unacceptable negative impact arising from any activity in the Management Unit combined with its seriousness in terms of consequences (Source: <FSC-STD-01-001 FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship>).

Sampling: A description of the location, time and frequency of the collection of data using a data collection method.

Scale: A measure of the extent to which a management activity or event affects an environmental value or a management unit, in time or space. An activity with a small or low spatial scale affects only a small proportion of the forest each year, an activity with a small or low temporal scale occurs only at long intervals (Source: <FSC-STD-01-001 FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship>).

SLIMF (Small or low intensity managed forest): A forest management unit which meets specific FSC requirements related to size and/or intensity (Source: <FSC-STD-01-002 FSC Glossary of Terms>).

The SLIMF management unit shall conform with the eligibility criteria specified in relevant clauses of PART -1 SLIMF & Community Forest Eligibility Criteria or PART -II Regional Or National Adaptation of <FSC-01-003 SLIMF and Community Eligibility Criteria>.

Stalled process: A FSC country requirements process where the involved parties:

- a) fail to adhere to the timelines as per the registration request or the approved extended timelines;
- b) fail to adhere to the timelines to close the FSC comments or the conditions issued by decision-making body;
- c) fail to reach consensus on the draft FSC country requirements; and
- d) does not respect the process ToR.

User group: A collective or composite defined based on similar characteristics. These characteristics can be based on:

- a) The different size classifications (e.g. 'applicable to MUs more than 10000 ha' or 'applicable to SLIMF MUs');
- b) The intensity of management operations (e.g. 'applicable to MUs operations harvesting less than X cubic meters per year'); or
- c) The type of ownership (e.g. 'applicable to community forest').

Verifier: A potential source of information that allows an auditor to evaluate conformity with an indicator. Means of verification are not normative, and the certification body may justifiably use alternatives to those listed (Source: Adapted from <FSC-STD-60-002 Structure and Content of National Forest Stewardship Standards>).

Working Group (formerly Standard Developer): A group of individuals with relevant knowledge or professional experience in the field in question, temporarily established by FSC to develop or revise FSC country requirements for a specific geographical area. This inclusive term refers to both chamber-balanced working groups and technical working groups defined below:

- a) **Chamber balanced working group (for major processes):** A group convened for the purposes of undertaking a major process which consists of individuals who equally represent the perspectives of the social, environmental, and economic chambers of the FSC membership. The chamber-balanced working group for the development or revision of an FSS was earlier called “Standard Development Group” (SDG) (Adapted from: <[FSC-PRO-01-001 Development and Revision of FSC Requirements](#)>).
- b) **Technical working group (TWG) (for regular or accelerated processes):** A group of individuals with relevant knowledge or professional experience in the field of question. A regular process comprises of experts from more than one stakeholder group (Source: <[FSC-PRO-01-001 Development and Revision of FSC Requirements](#)>).

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 which are 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.

DRAFT



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