CLARIFICATION NOTE ON OUTCOME ORIENTATION

Clarification note on the deployment of outcome orientation and its concrete implications in FSC normative framework

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INTRODUCTION

This document aims to create a shared understanding of what outcome orientation means – and what it does not mean – to avoid misinterpretations. This will be essential to facilitate communication about the deployment of outcome orientation and its implications for the FSC normative framework, particularly for the revision of the FSC-STD-01-001 and FSC-STD-60-004 (the Principles, Criteria and IGI – PCI) and the development of Forest Stewardship Standards (which is governed by FSC-PRO-60-006/a).

In a nutshell, how outcome orientation will be deployed in the FSC normative framework?

Outcome orientation is going to be deployed through two main areas of the FSC normative framework: the PCI and FSC-PRO-60-006/a (Figure 1). These two areas have been considered together so that the proposals presented below remain aligned and mutually coherent across the framework.

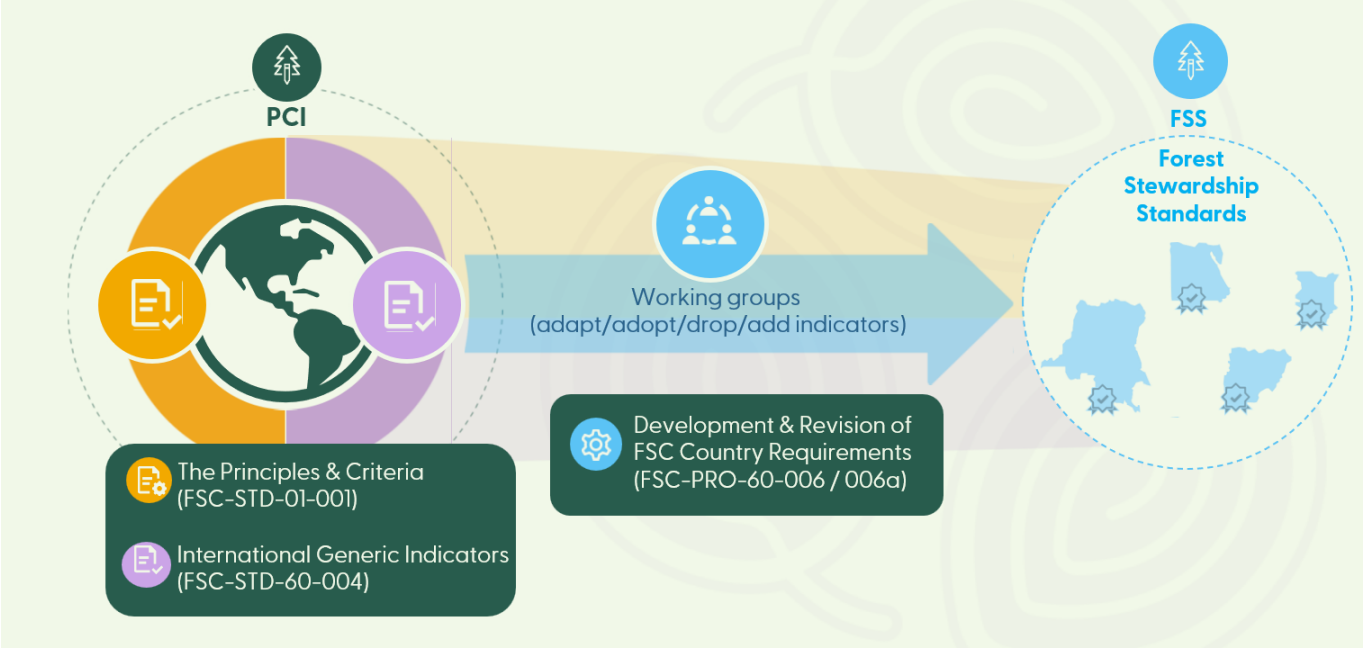


Figure 1. Illustration of the relevant normative documents for forest management certification (PCI and FSC-PRO-60-006/a) and where outcome orientation is being deployed.

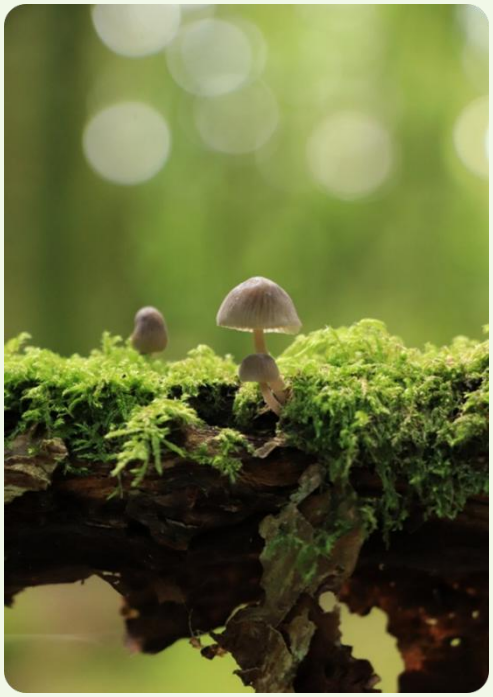
Outcome orientation in the Principle, Criteria and International Generic Indicators

Problem statement

1. The PCI does not include explicit and consistent formulation of desired sustainability outcomes. Not having clarity on the exact intended outcomes of forest stewardship prevents implementing management activities directly relevant to contribute to such outcomes and monitoring progress against them.
2. The International Generic Indicators are inconsistently designed and often too distant from the result they are intended to contribute to. They sometimes require documentation and paperwork that is burdensome for both certificate holders and certification bodies and yet do not clearly contribute to or inform about the achievement of results on the ground (outcomes).

Proposals in a nutshell

Concretely, making the PCI outcome-oriented means:



1. Defining a clear and agreed list of intended outcomes of forest stewardship.
   - Such a list should ideally become the actual Principles and Criteria of forest stewardship. This would ensure that a consistent, simple and clear language is used to define the Principles and Criteria and prevent confusion around what sustainability results responsible forest management should strive towards.
   - An initial list of Principle- and Criterion-level intended outcomes is available in the PCI Hub (Causal Pathway of Forest Stewardship) and presented as part of a causal chain diagram.
2. Developing IGI as field verifiable indicators of good forest management activities that clearly contribute to the intended outcomes as defined per 1. IGI could also reflect practical and quantifiable results from the implementation of management activities, as long as these results remain within the Organization's control, so that performance can be fairly assessed.

Having a global set of such intended outcomes does not imply that these outcomes shall be achieved for certification. Outcome orientation is mainly about learning and understanding what is working on the ground, so the insights from this process can inform FSC standards to improve in the future.

Outcome orientation in the Forest Stewardship Standards

Problem statement

Even if all the forest management certification requirements are correctly implemented, no credible evidence and quantification of the sustainability results are produced.

Solution in a nutshell

Concretely, making the FSS outcome-oriented means:

1. Selecting 3-5 key intended outcomes for an entire FSS, based on the list provided by the P&C.
2. Defining a monitoring framework for each key intended outcome to allow tracking progress against them in a standardized and consistent way. This will allow the compilation of data to learn about the effectiveness of forest management practices.

What outcome orientation is and is not?

What Outcome Orientation is	What Outcome Orientation is NOT
Outcome orientation	
Aims to: • make clear and explicit what intended outcomes of forest stewardship are, and • quantify progress against them.	Does not aim to raise the bar of certification. The performances to be achieved by certificate holders for certification should not increase because of outcome orientation.
Draws focus on a few key intended outcomes.	Does not imply that monitoring and data collection should be done on every aspect of forest management.
Aims to generate insights about the effectiveness of forest management requirements to progress towards intended outcomes.	Is not data centric. It does not aim to collect data for the sake of collecting data without clarity on what we want to learn from them.
Aims to benefit: • all FSC stakeholders to better demonstrate positive outcomes of FSC certification. • certificate holders and standard developers to better understand the effects of forest management requirements / activities on sustainability outcomes.	Is not FSC-centric. It does not aim to only serve FSC International for communication purposes at a global scale.
Aims to foster improvements in forest management standards over time and will generate benefits for the FSC system gradually.	Is not a one-off solution that will ensure all positive impacts of FSC are generated and demonstrated on the short-term.
Is part of a broader monitoring and evaluation system that will continue to collect data and evaluate the impact of FSC centrally, build on and complement the insights gained.	Is not an attempt to transfer all monitoring activities and associated burden to FSC stakeholders.

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