

FSC INTERNATIONAL STANDARD

Structure and Content of National Forest Stewardship Standards

FSC-STD-60-002 (V1-0) EN



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STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF NATIONAL FOREST STEWARDSHIP STANDARDS

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FINAL VERSION

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is an independent, not for profit, non-government organization established to support environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests.

FSC's vision is where the world's forests meet the social, ecological, and economic rights and needs of the present generation without compromising those of future generations.

Foreword

The *FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship* provide an internationally recognised standard for responsible forest management. However, any international standard for forest management needs to be adapted at the national or sub-national level in order to reflect the diverse legal, social and geographical conditions of forests in different parts of the world. The FSC Principles and Criteria therefore require the addition of indicators that are adapted to national or sub-national conditions in order to be implemented at the forest management unit (FMU) level. The FSC Principles and Criteria together with a set of such indicators approved by FSC constitute an FSC Forest Stewardship Standard.

This standard may be used by Standards Development Groups that are registered in accordance with FSC-STD-60-006 to develop regional, national or sub-national forest stewardship standards. For a standard to be approved by FSC the process for development must comply with the requirements of *FSC-STD-60-006 'Process for developing FSC Forest Stewardship Standards'* in addition to the requirements of this standard. Guidance on the development of forest certification standards is available from FSC on request. A Guidance Document *FSC-GUI-60-004 'Structure, content and suggested indicators'* is designed to be used as a template for the submission of Forest Stewardship Standards to meet these requirements. It also contains a set of suggested indicators which may form a starting point for the development of regional and national Forest Stewardship Standards.

This standard defines a hierarchical framework which ensures that all FSC Forest Stewardship Standards can be audited in a consistent manner, providing replicable results.

The FSC certification system is designed to be accessible in all countries of the world and to avoid discrimination against forest managers in countries that have not yet developed an FSC-approved Forest Stewardship Standard.

Consistency with *FSC-STD-01-001 FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship* is ensured through compliance with this standard.

Note on use of this standard

All aspects of this standard are considered to be normative, including the scope, standard effective date, references, terms and definitions, notes, tables and annexes, unless otherwise stated (e.g. examples).

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A Scope

This International Standard shall be used as a normative document for FSC approval of regional, national or sub-national Forest Stewardship Standards.

B Standard effective date

This standard becomes effective on **01 January 2010**.

FSC regional, national and sub-national standards submitted prior to 1st January 2010 shall be brought into compliance with this standard no later than 5 years after the date of last approval.

C References

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For references without a version number, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO/IEC Guide 59:1994. Code of good practice for standardization
WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Annex 3: Code of good practice for the preparation, adoption and application of standards.
ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards; P005 - Public Version 4 - January, 2006
FSC-STD-01-001 FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship
FSC-STD-01-002 FSC glossary of terms (under development)
FSC-STD-01-003 SLIMFS
FSC-STD-60-006 Process for developing National Forest Stewardship Standards
FSC-GUI-60-004 FSC Forest Stewardship Standards: structure, content and suggested indicators.
FSC-GUI-60-100 Guidance on interpretation of the FSC Principles and Criteria taking account of the scale and intensity of forest management.

FSC normative documents replaced by this version of the standard:

FSC-STD-20-002 V3-0 for application by NIs and Standard Development Groups

D Terms and definitions

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

FSC Principles and Criteria of Forest Stewardship (P&C)

The 10 Principles and associated Criteria specified in the FSC document 'FSC Principles and Criteria of Forest Stewardship' (*FSC-STD-01-001*).

Forest Stewardship Standard (referred to as 'standard' in this document)

The normative document which specifies the requirements with which a forest management enterprise 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.

Principle

An essential rule or element; in FSC's case, of forest stewardship.

Criterion (pl. criteria)

A means of judging whether or not a Principle (of Forest Management) has been fulfilled.

Indicator

A quantitative or qualitative variable which can be measured or described, and which provides a means of judging whether a forest management unit complies with the requirements of an FSC Criterion. Indicators and the associated thresholds thereby define the requirements for responsible forest management at the level of the forest management unit and are the primary basis of forest evaluation.

Means of verification

A potential source of information that allows an auditor to evaluate compliance with an indicator. Means of verification are not normative and the certification body may justifiably use alternatives to those listed.

1 Specification of scope

- 1.1 The Forest Stewardship Standard (referred to as ‘the standard’ in this document) shall specify the geographical scope to which it applies. This may be a political designation (e.g. a country or a region (i.e. a number of countries), a province/state (i.e. a sub-national area)), or a combination of political and ecological designations (e.g. a specified forest type or an ecologically-delimited area (eco-region) within a political designation).

NOTE: See Annex 1 for the document coding system used by FSC to identify approved national and regional forest stewardship standards.

2 FSC Hierarchical Framework

- 2.1 The standard shall be structured as a hierarchy of Principles, Criteria and associated Indicators. As content, structure and numbering of the hierarchical levels of Principles and Criteria is already provided by FSC, national Standard Development Groups are responsible for developing the indicators and verifiers. *FSC-GUI-60-004* should be used as a template for development of the standard to facilitate compliance with this requirement for a hierarchical framework.

3 Content

- 3.1 The standard shall include the wording of each FSC Principle and each FSC Criterion, in the same order as they occur in the current version of *FSC-STD-01-001 FSC Principles and Criteria of Forest Stewardship*.

NOTE: The standard should be developed using a technically accurate translation of the FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship in a national language applicable in the area for which it is being developed. However, the official English or Spanish version of the FSC Principles and Criteria shall be referred to in case of uncertainty regarding interpretation.

- 3.2 The may include additional criteria which are not part of *FSC-STD-01-001 FSC Principles and Criteria of Forest Stewardship* may be added to the standard.

NOTE: The necessity for any such additional criteria shall be clearly justified by the body responsible for development of the standard, and in the case of standards developed in accordance with *FSC-STD-60-006 Process for developing FSC Forest Stewardship Standards*, shall be approved by a formal consensus of the body responsible for national development of the standard.

- 3.3 An explanation shall be provided in the standard if any FSC Criterion is considered to be inapplicable in a given situation. Explanations shall not conflict with FSC policy, standards, advice notes or other such documents related to the criterion.
- 3.4 The standard shall comply with the latest versions of all approved FSC policies, standards, directives, guidelines and advice notes that apply to the interpretation of the FSC Principles and Criteria, as published on the official FSC International website.
- 3.5 The standard shall include as annexes:
- a) a list of the national and local forest laws and administrative requirements which apply in the country or region in which the standard is to be used,

- b) a list of the multilateral environmental agreements and conventions that the country has ratified and the ILO Conventions listed in FSC-POL-30-401 FSC and the ILO Conventions which must be complied with in all FSC certified forests,
 - c) a list of, or reference to official lists of, endangered species in the country or region in which the standard is to be used.
- 3.6 The standard shall include definitions to identify any categories of users to whom special provisions are applicable, e.g. 'small-scale', 'low intensity', 'community' or plantation forest management units.
- 3.7 The standard may include guidance notes to help auditors, forest managers or others in using the standard. Such guidance notes or applicability notes may be included as annexes to the standard, or be published as separate documents. In all cases the standard shall state that guidance or applicability notes shall not be normative.
- 3.8 The standard may include references to supplementary standards or documents (e.g. best practice guidelines) developed by third parties that provide additional guidance on implementation. Such references shall specify clearly whether compliance with any additional requirements is normative.

4 Development of indicators

- 4.1 The standard shall specify indicators for each element of every criterion in accordance to the requirements of this standard.

NOTE: The proposed generic indicators listed in *FSC-GUI-60-004* should be used as the starting point for the development of national indicators.

- 4.2 Each indicator shall specify one aspect of compliance rather than multiple aspects of compliance.
- 4.3 When an FSC Criterion includes several requirements (e.g. FSC Criterion 6.5; FSC Criterion 7.1 a), b), c), etc.), associated indicators shall be developed for each requirement.
- 4.4 Each indicator shall be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Tangible).
- 4.4.1 *Specific*: Each indicator should 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.
 - 4.4.2 *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 comply with the indicators should be clear to the reader.

NOTE: An indicator may specify as a requirement that a particular procedure has been defined and documented, but such a requirement shall then be accompanied by the further requirement for evidence of implementation and an indication of the expected outcome in the forest management unit.

4.4.3 *Achievable*: Indicators shall not be defined in terms of design or descriptive characteristics, and shall not favour a particular technology or patented item.

4.4.4 *Relevant*: Indicators shall only include elements that contribute to the achievement of the objective of the applicable FSC Criterion.

4.4.5 *Tangible*: Indicators shall be written using a clear and consistent vocabulary, free from subjective elements. The use of such phrases as “ordinarily”, “substantial”, “proactive”, “appropriate to”, “minimize”, “wherever possible”, “thorough” or “best available” should be avoided.

4.5 Every indicator should include examples of means of verification.

NOTE: Means of verification are not normative. They do not define thresholds for compliance, but indicate potential sources of information or evidence that an auditor may find useful in evaluating compliance, such as records, documents, maps, field observations or interviews (see Box 1).

Box 1

Indicator: Timber sales documentation shall enable all timber sold to be traced back to the forest of origin.

Means of verification: contract documents; despatch or delivery notes; hauliers' invoices

4.6 Indicators shall apply to all forests covered by the scope of the standard, including smaller or lower intensity managed forests, unless otherwise specified.

5 Numbering

5.1 The numbering of Principles and Criteria within the standard shall be the same as in *FSC-STD-01-001 FSC Principles and Criteria of Forest Stewardship*.

5.2 Indicators shall be numbered with the initial numbers of the relevant FSC Criterion, followed by numbering for each indicator within the criterion. Indicators may be sub-divided when this is considered useful, with the sub-divisions listed, etc. (see Box 2).

Box 2

Criterion 7.4

Indicator 7.4.1

There shall be a publicly available document which provides a summary of the enterprise's:

- 7.4.1.1 Management objectives;
- 7.4.1.2 Forest resources (including their environmental limitations, land use and ownership status, socio-economic conditions, and a profile of adjacent lands);
- 7.4.1.3 Silvicultural and/or other management system;
- 7.4.1.4 Rationale for rate of annual harvest and species selection;
- 7.4.1.5 Provisions for monitoring of forest growth and dynamics;
- 7.4.1.6 Environmental safeguards based on environmental assessments;
- 7.4.1.7 Plans for the identification and protection of rare, threatened and endangered species;
- 7.4.1.8 Justification of harvesting techniques and equipment to be used.

6 Taking account of scale and intensity of forest management¹

- 6.1 The standard shall be cost effective and practical for use in small-scale and low intensity forest management units.
- 6.2 Small and/or low intensity managed forests may be made exempt from some indicators which are applicable to other forests, and/or alternative indicators may be developed for application to small and/or low intensity managed forests. In such cases this shall be clearly indicated in the standard. Development of indicators specific to large and high intensity managed forests may also be developed.

NOTE: Producing one standard which applies to all forest types rather than multiple standards for the various types will prove to be more efficient and consistent. This also gives the opportunity to clearly exempt certain types of forest from certain indicators.

- 6.3 Alternative indicators and associated means of verification may be developed for any criterion, but should be developed for at least the following FSC Criteria which require special provision when applied to scale, intensity and uniqueness of the effected resource: FSC Criteria 6.1, 6.2, 6.4, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5, 9.1, 10.5 and 10.8.
- 6.4 The standard shall include clear guidance as to the category of forest management units to which any exemptions or alternative indicators apply.

NOTE: Standards may identify the forest management units that are eligible for modified indicators or means of verification by simple size classifications (e.g. 'applicable to FMUs less than 200 ha') or by proxies for size or intensity (e.g. 'applicable to woodlot licensees', 'applicable to operations harvesting less than x cubic meters per year) (see Box 3).

NOTE: the defined categories of small and/or low intensity managed forests to which special indicators apply may be different to the categories of SLIMFS that are eligible for streamlined certification procedures (see *FSC-STD-01-003 SLIMF Eligibility Criteria*).

Box 3:

Criterion

Indicator 4.1.1a (applicable to FMUs more than 200ha in area):

Means of verification:

Indicator 4.1.1b (applicable to FMUs less than 200ha in area):

Means of verification:

¹ Additional guidance is being prepared by the FSC International Center to facilitate the development of standards applicable to small and low intensity managed forests.

7 Translation

- 7.1 Standards may be developed in one or more of the languages of the country to which they apply. However, for approval by FSC the standard shall be submitted in one of the official languages of FSC (i.e. in English or in Spanish). The version in the official language of FSC, as evaluated and approved by FSC, shall be considered definitive in the case of any dispute.
- 7.2 The meaning of English words should follow those given in the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary or the Concise Oxford Dictionary, unless the intended meaning is provided in a glossary.
- 7.3 The meaning of Spanish words should follow those given in the Diccionario de la Lengua Española (Real Academia Española) or the Diccionario de uso del español (María Moliner), unless the intended meaning is provided in a glossary.

8 FSC approval date and standard effective date

- 8.1 Each FSC approved regional, national or sub-national Forest Stewardship Standards shall state clearly:
- a) the date on which it is approved by FSC,
 - b) the 'standard effective' date,
 - c) the version number.
- 8.2 The approved standard shall be used by certification bodies for all evaluations within the scope of the standard and as of the date indicated in the standard's 'effective date' section.

9 Re-structuring of standards

- 9.1 FSC-approved standards may be re-organised in order to facilitate implementation in the forest, or to make a standard easier for stakeholders to understand as long as requirements are not changed or omitted.
- 9.2 Restructuring shall have no effect on the requirements for compliance or decision making, and in the event of a complaint or appeal the complete standard, as approved by the FSC, shall be considered definitive.

NOTE: the FSC-approved version of a regional, national or sub-national Forest Stewardship Standards is the formal basis for auditing and decision making. In cases of dispute, the FSC-approved version will be definitive.

Annex 1: Document coding system for approved FSC national and sub-national forest stewardship standards

All standards will be assigned a document code when approved by FSC, following this format:

<FSC-STD-XXX-## ####*description* LA>

Where:

XXX: is a three letter ISO 3166 Alpha -3 code for the country concerned (e.g. BRA for Brazil, USA for the United States of America)

##: is the version number of the approved standard, e.g. 01 = Version 1

####: is the year of approval

Description: is a short description of the scope of the standard (e.g. Brazil plantations) if the scope is different from the usual generic scope

LA: is the ISO 639-1 Alpha-2 code for languages, e.g. EN for English or ES for Spanish.

So, for example:

<FSC-STD-BRA-01-2005 Brazil plantations ES> would be the reference code and name for the first approved version of the Brazilian plantation standard in Spanish, approved in 2005.