



## FSC MONITORING & EVALUATION SYSTEM

January 2015

**Gaining insight into the impacts of the FSC® scheme** is crucial for learning and for improving our work. FSC reports publicly about the status and improvements of each certified forest operation. In addition, FSC invests in a monitoring & evaluation (M&E) program. This M&E program serves two main purposes.

- 1. Organizational learning:** to provide information to better understand the effectiveness of the organization and its strategies, and to identify issues, trends and areas for improvement
  - FSC senior management and the Board of Directors can use this information for impact-oriented management
  - FSC staff, FSC members and FSC expert panels (e.g. standard development working groups) can integrate lessons learned from M&E into the development of FSC standards, policies and strategies.
- 2. Communication of outcomes and impacts:** to provide information about FSC-related research findings
  - FSC offers a platform for researchers and other partners for communicating research findings on the outcomes and impacts of the FSC system, and for networking on impact-related research topics and methodologies
  - The impact-related stories can incentivize other FSC stakeholders to actively engage in the FSC system and to promote responsible forest management.

**To systematically monitor and evaluate ‘changes’** triggered by FSC, the M&E program established an M&E system. With this M&E system FSC aims to continuously capture the most important changes, i.e. developments of the management of the certified forests and of conditions for supply chain actors. In compliance with the requirements of the ISEAL ‘Impacts Code’,<sup>1</sup> the full M&E System Report spells out in detail the scope of the FSC M&E framework – for example, which indicators will be used to measure the change and improvements in forest management facilitated by FSC, and who in the FSC systems collects which type of data. Indicators are derived from FSC’s M&E framework: **FSC’s Theory of Change, Intended Impacts and related indicators.**

**Many actors** contribute information for the evaluation of FSC’s impacts. Public forest management certification reports are full of relevant information, and various FSC units, national offices and independent researchers (among others) collect pertinent information for impact evaluations. The M&E program in FSC’s quality assurance unit compiles and evaluates the information for regular reporting. FSC stakeholders have been and will be consulted in the process of building and using the M&E system.<sup>2</sup>

**The other side of this document** gives examples from the FSC M&E System Indicators with parameters, frequency of reporting and sources of data, related to FSC’s intended impacts. Some reporting can start with the introduction of an aligned, electronic reporting format for forest management certificates. For the full version please see the **M&E System Report**. FSC will report the first evaluation results in the second quarter of 2015.

FSC M&E System Indicators – Examples from the M&E System Report of intended impacts, parameters for evaluation, and frequency of reporting

PROMOTION OF RESPONSIBLE FOREST MANAGEMENT: HIGH PERFORMANCE AND INNOVATION – SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS ON THE GROUND			
ECONOMIC	SOCIAL	ENVIRONMENTAL	GENERAL
<p><b>1. Forest management (FM) operations gain market advantages through certification.</b></p> <p>1a. Number (no.) and area of certified operations is growing in all climate zones and regions, for natural and plantation forests, for all ownership structures and sizes of operations. No. of re-certified operations increases.</p> <p>→ <b>Data, frequency and sample:</b> No. and area of certified and re-certified operations. Trends from previous years compared to current. For all FM certificates, annual reports.</p>	<p><b>4. FM operations have good and fair relations with indigenous and other local communities, and maintain or enhance fair access to resources and economic benefits.</b></p> <p>4c. Aspirational: No. and quality of additional social services delivered by FSC-certified management. Access to forest resources and mechanisms for sharing benefits are perceived locally to be fair.</p> <p>→ E.g. No. and area of certified operations with solved CARs related to legal issues. Reports on case studies.</p>	<p><b>7. Minimized degradation of natural forests, no conversion of forests to other land use in certified areas.</b></p> <p>7a. Area of certified FM operations managing natural forests increasing.</p> <p>→ Minimized degradation of forests, no conversion of natural forests to plantations and other land uses: Area of natural forests in certified natural, plantation and mixed forests operations increases.</p> <p>→ Aspirational: Sample sites show evidence that after five years defined priority areas are not significantly degraded.</p>	<p><b>10. FM operations develop strategies to diversify their portfolio of forest products, and manage a broad portfolio to increase environmental and economic resilience.</b></p> <p>10a. Aspirational: Portfolio of products incl. lesser known timber species, non-timber forest products and ESS offered as certified is maintained or growing.</p> <p>→ No. of such products offered per certified operation. Trends of product range over time per region and operation type. Annual reports.</p>
<p><b>2. Harvesting activities are based on the principle of sustained yields: there is a balance of growth and yields of specific species.</b></p> <p>2a. Aspirational<sup>1</sup>: The actual harvest of each species does not exceed allowable harvesting rates over defined timeframes.</p> <p>→ Relations between annual allowable and actual harvest rates; for selected sites with counterfactuals.</p>	<p><b>5. Forest-dependent, forest-managing certified communities improve their livelihoods as well as their forest management and marketing skills.</b></p> <p>5b. Aspirational: No. of people obtaining an income through FSC is increasing.</p> <p>→ Regular interviews of members of the smallholder support and of the modular approach (MAP) programs.</p>	<p><b>8. FM operations maintain or enhance biodiversity. High conservation values (HCV) of forests are identified with stakeholder input and maintained or enhanced through appropriate management.</b></p> <p>8b. Area of HCV classes, set asides, representative samples compared to entire certified area is maintained or growing.</p> <p>→ Annual reports about such areas.</p>	<p><b>11. Legal compliance by FM operations and exclusion of illegal activities within the forest management units.</b></p> <p>11c. No. and quality of CARs issued and implemented in relation to criteria addressing legal compliance, illegal activities.</p> <p>→ E.g. Analysis of CARs related to human rights, protected areas, rare species within and in relation to the certified operation. Annual reports.</p>
<p><b>3. FM operations gain increased competence, e.g. in planning, impact assessment &amp; evaluation, silviculture, health &amp; safety, marketing.</b></p> <p>3c. E.g. Corrective action request (CAR) analyses over economic, social, environmental criteria show lessons learned.</p> <p>→ For all FM certificate holders annually.</p>	<p><b>6. FM operations improve workers' living and working conditions, especially with respect to occupational health and safety.</b></p> <p>6a. Aspirational: No. of male / female forest workers (incl. contractors) trained in safe working techniques increases.</p> <p>→ For all MAP candidates: qualitative case studies for some large-scale operations.</p>	<p><b>9. FM operations identify and maintain the forests' manifold ecosystem services from forest soil, water, biodiversity.</b></p> <p>9b. Aspirational: Areas certified as managed for ecosystem service (ESS) provision are maintained or increasing.</p> <p>→ E.g. No. and areas of forests offering certified ESS. Trends, annually.</p>	<p><b>12. FSC brings together diverse groups of people to craft policy; with local and international consistency; empower marginalized stakeholder groups.</b></p> <p>12c. E.g. No. of FSC members per chamber and level of FSC awareness growing.</p> <p>→ No. and structure of membership; statistics about prompted recognition of "FSC," users of FSC websites. Annual reporting.</p>

1 ISEAL Alliance's Code of Good Practice for Assessing the Impacts of Social and Environmental Standards.

2 Stakeholder engagement in the process of developing FSC's "Theory of Change" (in 2013) and identifying intended and unintended effects of FSC (at the FSC General Assembly in 2014).

3 Indicators we are aiming toward, but are not yet available.