



Forest Stewardship Council®



PSU Review Report

of

FSC-STD-01-003 V1-0

SLIMF Eligibility Criteria



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

FSC's vision is that the true value of forests is recognized and fully incorporated into society worldwide. FSC is the leading catalyst and defining force for improved forest management and market transformation, shifting the global forest trend toward sustainable use, conservation, restoration, and respect for all.

Summary and recommendation

Reviewed Document

Document code	FSC-STD-01-003 V1-0
Document title	SLIMF Eligibility Criteria
Objective	This standard has been developed to provide consistent definitions of 'small' and 'low intensity' managed forests for the purpose of implementing streamlined certification procedures.
Last approval date	15 September 2004
Review triggered by	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regular review as scheduled
	<input type="checkbox"/> GA Motion or Board decision
	<input type="checkbox"/> New or changed FSC policies or legislation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Change Requests
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):
Reviewer	Name: Joachim Meier-Dörnberg
	e-mail: j.meier-doernberg@fsc.org
Draft Review Report	x
Public consultation	For public consultation
Final Review Report	

Recommendation

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Full revision
<input type="checkbox"/>	Minor revision ¹
<input type="checkbox"/>	Editorial revision
<input type="checkbox"/>	No revision
<input type="checkbox"/>	Withdrawal

¹ According to FSC-PRO-01-001 V3-1 Annex 4

I. Introduction

This report has been developed according to FSC-PRO-01-001 V3-1 Clause 9.6 to review (assess) the continued relevance and effectiveness of a normative document. This is a mandatory step before a normative document can be taken to a revision process.

II. Proposed recommendation and justification

FSC-STD-01-003 V1-0, *SLIMF Eligibility Criteria* was released in 2004 and has since never been revised. It made and still makes certification for specific user groups more accessible and feasible through various mechanisms. For instance, group certification for small forest owners, but also in community forestry where low intensity management is applied to allow Certification Bodies to apply streamlined audit procedures, such as waiving annual audits or auditing requirements across management units.

The two parameters to define SLIMF are size of a management unit and intensity of annual harvesting. Distinct nationally adapted thresholds are listed in the FSC-STD-01-003a, *SLIMF Eligibility Criteria- Addendum*.

The SLIMF concept is also used outside of the defined scope of FSC-STD-01-003 and has become widely known and accepted. Some examples:

- One prominent use of the SLIMF concept is within National Forest Stewardship Standards where forest managers operating on small and low intensity managed management units can demonstrate their conformance to FSC Principles and Criteria based on alternative 'SLIMF indicators.'
- The SLIMF concept is further used in Controlled Wood, FSC-STD-30-010 V2.0, *FSC Controlled Wood Standard for Forest Management Enterprises*, in FSC-STD-40-005 V3-1, *Requirements for Sourcing FSC Controlled Wood* and in National Risk Assessments.
- Being registered under the category of SLIMF also means 'free of charge' in the Policy FSC-POL-20-005 V2-8, *Annual Administration Fee (AAF)*.

After 17 years of implementation, it is now recommended to conduct a full revision of the FSC-STD-01-003 V1-0, *SLIMF Eligibility Criteria* in order to:

1. Expand the scope of the standard to cover and include all uses of the SLIMF concept within the FSC system to improve consistency and transparency.
2. Introduce an improved mechanism to develop and approve nationally adapted thresholds for 'small' and 'low intensity' when a deviation from the default categories is deemed necessary.

III. Proposed implementation of the recommendation

A full revision of FSC-STD-01-003 V1-0, *SLIMF Eligibility Criteria* is seen as the most efficient way to overcome the challenges connected to the SLIMF concept and its various applications described above.

An alternative would be to withdraw the SLIMF standard and use the SLIMF concept individually within each normative document where the concept is used. This is less

favorable as it could lead to the 'SLIMF' term being applied inconsistently as a concept.

Process and resource proposal:

- Staff (approximately overall 0,8 FTE)
 - 1 Supervisor (New Approaches Team, 0,05 FTE)
 - 1 Project Coordinator (New Approaches Team/ Social Policy Manager, 0,3 FTE)
 - 2 Technical Experts (New Approaches Team, 0,2 FTE each)
 - 1 Communications expert (PSU internal, 0,025 FTE)
 - PSU Administrative support (PSU internal, 0,025 FTE)
 - Support from Legal and Finance Department (FSC GD, 0,025 FTE)
- Working Group:
 - 3 TWG members: *on pro bono/ on stipend*
 - 1 representative for Global North, 1 for Global South (preferably certificate holders, being at least 1 Smallholder representative) *on pro bono/ on stipend*
 - 1 expert CB: 1 FTE; *on pro bono*
- Support functions:
 - 1 Technical Writer (internally assigned)
 - 1 Facilitator (internally assigned)
- Peer function:
 - 1 ASI representative
- Overall estimated expenses for 2021/22: 85.000 Euros

IV. Impact analysis

Internal

The revision will primarily focus on the SLIMF standard FSC-STD-01-003 V1-0, *SLIMF Eligibility Criteria* and follow our standard process for revisions. Other normative documents using the SLIMF concept, such as the standards and procedures regulating the development of national forest stewardship standards would have to be aligned or updated to adequately link to the revised SLIMF standard. As these documents are also up for revision, this alignment could be incorporated without extra efforts. Other normative documents simply referencing the SLIMF standard remain unaffected.

External

As outlined in section II, the main purpose for revising FSC-STD-01-003 V1-0, *SLIMF Eligibility Criteria* is to expand the scope of the standard according to its range of applications throughout the system and to improve consistency and transparency as well as to establish a robust mechanism to develop and approve nationally adapted thresholds for 'small' and 'low intensity'.

This leads to the possibility for stakeholders to apply a more coherent and better defined SLIMF definition.

National standard development groups will receive guidance on how the SLIMF definition can be used in the NFSS development and additionally be allowed to adapt

the default threshold to better fit the national needs and context (e.g. for the inclusion of communities under the same definition).

V. Stakeholder consultation and feedback

Methodology

Stakeholders were invited to provide comments and feedback on the draft review report from 12 March until 11 April 2021 via the FSC consultation platform.

Results

Feedback from public consultation outlined the following points to consider:

1. Out of 42 stakeholders responding, 40 are supporting the revision of the SLIMF Eligibility Criteria.
2. While most stakeholders are in favour of keeping the standard as an independent normative framework document, there are arguments, both in favour and against this support, which request further exploration of alternative options. This includes the withdraw of the SLIMF standard and the reallocation of SLIMF elements for application into the respective standards and would hereby follow FSC's streamlining efforts.
3. A major objective should be to develop a mechanism to define thresholds for both, scale and intensity, for use in National Forest Stewardship Standards. Here the establishment of a category for very small Management Units should be considered.
4. Beyond scale and intensity, further parameters to define SLIMF should be tested, such as forest types, community forestry or the economic viability in a national context.
5. Clear objectives and intended outcomes of SLIMF should be included in the preamble of the standard.
6. Regarding the process, equal representation and engagement with affected stakeholders in the revision process should be ensured.