



Forest Stewardship Council®



Forest Management Evaluations

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Approval body: FSC Board of Directors

Contact for comments: FSC International Center gGmbH
Performance and Standards Unit
Adenauerallee 134,
53113 Bonn, Germany

 +49-(0)228-36766-0

 +49-(0)228-36766-65

 psu@fsc.org

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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.

Introduction

FSC is revising its Forest Management Evaluations Standard as part of streamlining the FSC Normative Framework.

This draft of the revised version aims for the increased transparency and efficiency of outcome-orientated and risk-based forest management evaluations. For example, it introduces different evaluation techniques for certification bodies to use in their evaluation of The Organization's conformity with the requirements of the applicable FSC normative documents.

The standard was last revised in 2009 and has now been updated to ensure consistency in the normative framework. Such consistency includes reflecting changes in FSC-STD-01-001 *FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship* and incorporating newly developed concepts related to forest management evaluations.

This alignment includes incorporating the concept of active and inactive management units for selecting management units and sites for evaluation which was introduced in FSC-STD-30-005 *Forest Management Groups*. It also introduces requirements for risk-based evaluations and provides links with FSC-PRO-60-010 *Incorporating a risk-based approach in National Forest Stewardship Standards* to allow the risk-based approach concept to be implemented across the FSC system.

Additionally, the structure of forest management evaluations has been revised to facilitate the implementation of this standard. In particular, former addenda have been incorporated directly into the main standard. Relevant advice notes and interpretations have also been incorporated and redundancies with requirements in FSC-STD-20-001 *General requirements for FSC accredited certification bodies* have been removed to avoid duplications.

Moreover, [FSC Global Strategy 2021-2026](#) requires that the social, environmental and economic impacts of FSC are monitored, evaluated, reported on, widely communicated, and used to inform decision making (e.g. Strategy 1). For that purpose, the content of forest management audit reports are being revised and new tools have been incorporated for digitization to ensure standardization and relevance of data gathered during certification process.

Finally, this revision aims to increase consistency of evaluations by different auditors.

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A Objective

The objective of this standard is to provide the requirements for FSC-accredited certification bodies to assess conformity of The Organization against all applicable requirements of the FSC normative framework, as well as reporting and integrating the observations to come to reliable certification decisions.

B Scope

This standard applies to certification bodies assessing conformity with the applicable requirements during all forest management evaluations including pre-, main, surveillance and re-evaluations of single management units (MUs), forest management groups, and single legal entities managing multiple MUs.

This international standard shall also be used as a normative document for FSC accreditation.

NOTE: All aspects of this standard are considered normative, including the scope, effective and validity dates, references, terms and definitions, notes, footnotes tables and annexes, unless otherwise stated (e.g., as examples). The content of the information boxes is not normative.

C Effective and validity date

Approval date:	xx
Publication date:	xx
Effective date:	xx
Transition period:	xx – xx
Period of validity:	Until replaced or withdrawn

Version history

- V1-0** Initial version of the Standard, approved by the FSC Board of Directors on 5th March 2004.
- V2-0** Minor revision, this version was submitted to the FSC Board of Directors for approval on 12th November 2004, at its 35th meeting.
- V2-1** Version approved by the FSC Board of Directors on 30th November 2004, at its 35th meeting.
- V2-2** Minor revision, effective from 1st January 2005. This version includes additional requirements for evaluation against the FSC Principles and Criteria of Forest Management companies in a stepwise program included in the FSC Modular Approach Program.
- V3-0** Major revision, approved by the FSC Board of Directors on 31st August 2009, and effective from 1st January 2010. This version clarifies the principles to be followed by certification bodies when sampling MUs and sites.
- V4-0** Draft 1-0 of V4-0 is presented for consultation introducing new requirements on evaluation techniques and information sharing, aligning with the results of the Risk Based Approaches Technical Working Group for forest management certification and with the revised FSC-STD-30-005 V2-0, among others.

D 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.

FSC-POL-20-003	The excision of Areas from the Scope of Certification
FSC-POL-30-001	FSC Pesticides Policy
FSC-PRO-30-006	Ecosystem Services Procedure: Impact Demonstration and Market Tools
FSC-PRO-60-007	Structure, Content and Development of Interim National Standards
FSC-PRO-60-010	Incorporating a risk-based approach in National Forest Stewardship Standards
FSC-STD-01-001	FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship
FSC-STD-01-002	FSC Glossary of Terms
FSC-STD-01-003	SLIMF eligibility criteria
FSC-STD-20-001	General requirements for FSC accredited certification bodies
FSC-STD-20-006	Stakeholder consultation for forest evaluations
FSC-STD-20-011	Chain of Custody Evaluations
FSC-STD-30-005	Forest Management Groups
PSU-PRO-10-201	PSU Enquiry Procedure

FSC normative documents replaced by this version of the standard:

FSC-STD-20-007a	Forest Management Evaluations Addendum – Forest Certification Reports
FSC-STD-20-007b	Forest Management Evaluations Addendum – Forest Certification Public Summary Reports

Note for stakeholders for the consultation of the draft:

In parallel to this revision process, FSC is also revising [FSC-PRO-60-010 *Incorporating a risk-based approach in National Forest Stewardship Standards and its Guideline*](#) which provide the process steps for incorporating a risk-based approach (RBA) in National Forest Stewardship Standards. You can participate in this public consultation at the [FSC consultation platform](#). The Risk Based Approaches Technical Working Group has been also mandated with the development of requirements of this standard for a risk-based assurance system. Supporting consultation materials have been included at [FSC consultation platform](#) to provide further context on the RBA requirements. These include: a draft questionnaire for Organizations to determine the risk profile, and an overview document on how these RBA-TWG outputs work together.

Throughout the draft, you will find mark-ups 'RBA' in the left-hand side margin which point out specific requirements that have been developed to provide a link between the FSC-STD-20-007 and the FSC-PRO-60-010. Both TWGs; 20-007 and RBA, will continue working towards full integration of their work and outputs after this first public consultation.

E Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this standard, the terms and definitions given in FSC-STD-01-002 *FSC Glossary of Terms* and other applicable normative documents included in the scope of the evaluation apply.

Active management unit: A management unit (MU) where site-disturbing activities have taken place since the last evaluation implemented by certification bodies, or in the previous 12 months if there was no previous evaluation.
(Source: FSC-STD-30-005 V2-0)

NOTE 1: The concept of active and inactive management units is applicable for forest management groups and multiple MU certificates. The information about active/inactive MUs is provided by The Organization to the certification body.

NOTE 2: If information about active/inactive MUs is not provided by The Organization to the certification body, all MUs are by default treated as 'active'.

Box 1. Examples of active management unit

Examples of active management:

Timber, energy wood and non-timber forest products harvesting (all commercial logging/extraction methods); soil preparation; planting or seeding; seedling stand management; fertilization; thinning; ditching; post-harvest remediation activities; infrastructure development (e.g. forestry road construction); road decommission (closure); fuel management (e.g. manual clearing); quarrying; chemical pesticides use; prescribed burning; pruning; harvest layout activities (e.g. tree marking, riparian buffer demarcation, identification of environmentally sensitive areas and cultural values).

Examples of inactive management:

Forest protection monitoring activities (e.g. fire patrols, surveillance for unauthorized activities); permanent sample plots establishment and/or monitoring; fire break maintenance; road side mowing; road grading (shaping); boundary line demarcation and maintenance; forest resource surveys/inventory; non-chemical invasive species management; developing/updating forest management plan; passive operational planning of a forest management activity (e.g. GIS activities, boundary demarcation, stand level reconnaissance).

Organization Risk Profile: Risk profile compiled by the certification body to identify risks of non-conformity with requirements of a National Forest Stewardship Standard at The Organization level. Compiled based on input from information provided by The Organization, National Forest Stewardship Standard Risk Assessment (when available) and certification body's knowledge and information gathering. The Organization Risk Profile will be used to inform the evaluation planning process and determination of appropriate evaluation techniques.

Box 2. Inputs to Organization Risk Profile		
Information provided by The Organization	National Forest Stewardship Standard Risk Assessment (when available)	Certification body knowledge and information gathering
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of The Organization's management system • The Organization's risk mitigation measures • Description of local context (e.g., availability of up-to-date inventory data, satellite imagery, Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) data). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criteria and/or indicator level assessment and designation • Designation as low risk (LR), Specified risk (SR) and Undesignated risk. • Detailed rationale for the designation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certification body in-house expertise and investigations • Information about The Organization's prior certification periods, transfers and suspensions • Results from stakeholder consultations • Results from pre-evaluation and all subsequent evaluations
Information used to evaluate The Organization's management practices and performance and availability of information systems for remote evaluations.	Informs the certification body about risks of non-conformity related to criteria and/or indicators of the applicable National Forest Stewardship Standard (or Regional Forest Stewardship Standard).	Certification body's experience and observations related to The Organization's performance and local context.

NOTE: Below you can find further information related to the Organization Risk Profile:

Box 3. Organization Risk Profile
<p>The certification body is required to develop an Organization Risk Profile as based on information it has received from The Organization and it has produced itself. The risk profile will be used to inform the evaluation planning process and determination of appropriate evaluation techniques.</p> <p>Additionally, when a Forest Stewardship Standard Risk Assessment is available, it will be included into the Organization Risk Profile to inform the certification body on risk designations related to the Forest Stewardship Standard requirements.</p>

Remote evaluation: Evaluation conducted by the auditor or audit team through off-site evaluation covering audit planning, auditing of The Organization, its personnel,

records, documentation and processes, conducting a consultation with interested and affected stakeholders, and report writing, reviewing and decision-making.

RBA

Risk: The probability of an unacceptable negative impact arising from any activity in the MU combined with its seriousness in terms of consequences. Source: FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2)

NOTE (option 1): In the context of this document, the term “risk” refers to a risk of non-conformity with an indicator or criterion of a National Forest Stewardship Standard, defined as a combination of the likelihood of non-conformity with the potential negative impact of non-conformity with this indicator or criterion.

RBA

Low risk: A conclusion, following a risk assessment, that there is a low risk of non-conformity with a specific indicator or criterion of a National Forest Stewardship Standard. (Adapted from FSC-PRO-60-002a V1-0.)

Box 4. Examples of characteristics associated with a low-risk designation (informative guidance)

The following characteristics can be associated either with the low likelihood of non-conformity or with the low potential impact of non-conformity or with a combination of both. Several characteristics may apply to a specific indicator or criterion:

- a) Low likelihood that the value represented by the indicator occurs in the forest under evaluation;
- b) The value represented by the indicator is well addressed, evaluated and controlled by regulatory authorities and instruments;
- c) The value represented by the indicator is common and not affected by forest management;
- d) Negative effects carry little repercussion;
- e) There is low concern by stakeholders;
- f) The requirement represented by the indicator is common practice for Organizations;
- g) No incidents of negative impact on the value represented by the indicator by forest management have been reported in the country within the last 5 years (either through a corrective action request (CAR) issued by a certification body in an FSC audit, or through a formal complaint by a stakeholder).

RBA

Specified risk: A conclusion, following a risk assessment, that there is a specified risk of non-conformity with a defined indicator or criterion of a National Forest Stewardship Standard. The nature and extent of this risk is specified for the purpose of supporting National Forest Stewardship Standard implementation by Organizations and assurance planning by certification bodies. (Adapted from FSC-PRO-60-002a V1-0.)

Box 5. Examples of characteristics associated with a specified risk designation (informative guidance)

The following characteristics can be associated either with likelihood of non-conformity, with potential impact or with a combination of both. Several characteristics may apply to a specific indicator or criterion:

- a) The value represented by the indicator is known to be affected by forest management;
- b) The value represented by the indicator is of considerable social, environmental, or economic significance;
- c) The value represented by the indicator is of high concern to one or more stakeholder groups;
- d) The value represented by the indicator is the subject of legal proceedings;
- e) The value represented by the indicator is declining in abundance / prevalence;
- f) There is a history of poor management of the value represented by the indicator;
- g) There is a history of contention regarding the value's status represented by the indicator;
- h) The value represented by the indicator is a challenge for forest management in the national context.

RBA

Undesignated risk: A conclusion, following a risk assessment, which is reached either because the criterion or indicator was not included in the scope of the risk assessment (default designation), or no conclusion on risk designation was reached, or the different indicators of a criterion have been assessed and designated with different levels of risk.

PART I GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1 General requirements for certification bodies

- 1.1 Forest management certification awarded by an FSC-accredited certification body provides a credible assurance that there is no major failure in the conformity with the applicable FSC normative requirements in any MU within the scope of the certificate. In order to provide such an assurance, the certification body shall:
- a) Analyse and describe the forest area to be evaluated in terms of one or more MUs;
 - b) Confirm that there is a management system in place that is capable of ensuring that all the requirements of the specified FSC normative requirements are implemented within every MU within the scope of the evaluation;
 - c) Carry out sampling of sites, documents, management records, interviews, consultation with stakeholders and direct factual observations sufficient to verify that there are no major non-conformities with the performance thresholds specified in the applicable FSC normative requirements within any MU within the scope of the evaluation.
- 1.2 In the case of forest management groups, certification bodies shall assess conformity with the applicable Forest Stewardship Standard according to FSC-STD-30-005.
- 1.3 If a regional, national or sub-national Forest Stewardship Standard has received formal FSC approval since the certification was awarded, then the certification body shall use this standard for evaluation according to the effective date and transition period as specified in the approved standard.
- 1.4 Primary or secondary processing facilities associated with the MU shall be inspected for conformity with the applicable Chain of Custody (CoC) standards. The certification body shall exclude these facilities from the FM/CoC certification scope, award separate CoC certification and evaluate them according to the requirements of FSC-STD-20-011 *Chain of Custody Evaluations*, unless all of the following conditions apply:
- a) The facilities are owned or managed by The Organization holding the FM/CoC certificate;
 - b) The facilities procure all their supplies from a certified MU within the scope of the certificate, i.e., it does not procure inputs from other sources;
 - c) A separate CoC report is prepared meeting CoC reporting requirements;
 - d) The AAF is calculated separately for the forest area and the processing plant.

NOTE: Log cutting or de-barking units, woodchippers, portable charcoal kilns and small portable sawmills associated with the MU can be evaluated as part of the scope of the FM/CoC certification.

1.5 The certification body shall allow sufficient time in an evaluation for the auditors to fully implement the requirements as specified in the certification body's procedures taking the following aspects into consideration:

- a) Interfacing with The Organization and its personnel;
- b) Culturally appropriate stakeholder consultation;
- c) Review of documents, processes and records;
- d) MU(s) accessibility;
- e) Travel time between MUs;
- f) Number of open non-conformities;
- g) Open complaints for evaluation;
- h) Evaluation of sites;
- i) Reporting and review of certification report;
- j) Decision making.

NOTE: The evaluation time includes the time spent by an auditor or audit team in planning (including off-site document review, if appropriate) and physically or remotely auditing The Organization, personnel, records, documentation and processes, conducting a consultation with interested and affected stakeholders, and report writing, reviewing and decision-making.

1.6 The certification body shall provide the evaluation time determination and the justification to The Organization and make it available to FSC and Assurance Services International upon request.

2 Preparation and evaluation techniques for evaluations

2.1 Information sharing

2.1.1 The certification body may share their checklist with Organizations prior to the evaluation asking them to pre-fill information which will then be reviewed by the certification body as part of the evaluation process.

2.1.2 The certification body shall be provided access to key documents or records that may be used in preparation for the main evaluation, such as management plans, inventory results, management system documentation, maps, satellite images, legal documents, etc.

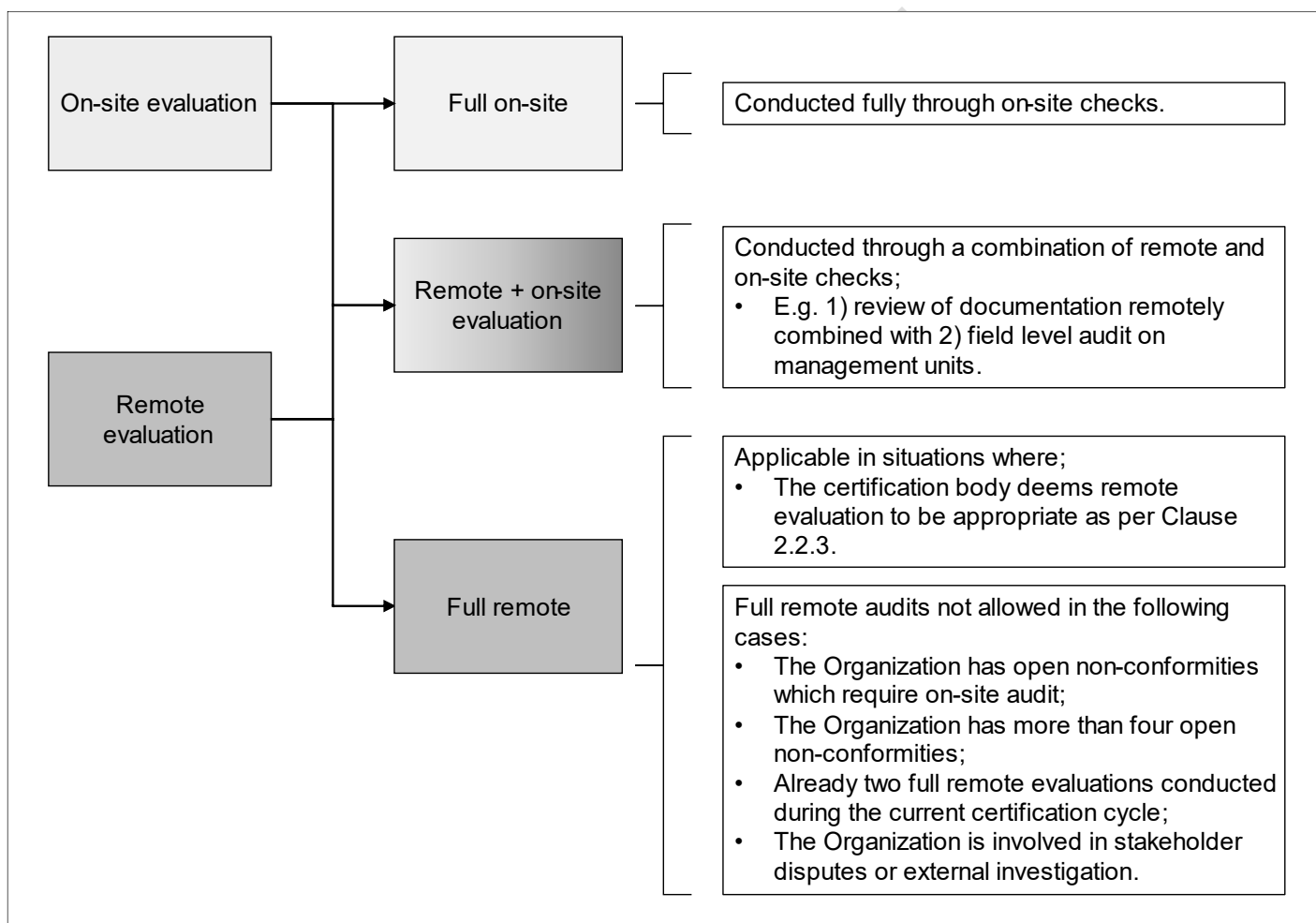
2.1.3 The certification body shall request the following documentation and records from group Organizations prior to the audit:

- a) The group management system;
- b) The updated list of group members;
- c) The rate of membership change within the group in relation to the specified increase and maximum group size;
- d) Formal communication/written documents sent to group members by the group entity since the previous certification body surveillance;
- e) Records of monitoring carried out by the group entity;
- f) Records of any corrective actions issued by the group entity.

2.2 Determining the appropriate evaluation technique

- 2.2.1 The certification body shall use appropriate evaluation techniques as defined in Table 1 in its evaluation of The Organization's conformity with the requirements of the applicable FSC normative requirements.
- 2.2.2 Evaluation techniques may vary between evaluations, and they may be used to complement each other or as stand-alone techniques. The evaluation techniques the certification body may use include on-site evaluation and remote evaluation.

Table 1. Examples of evaluation techniques



- 2.2.3 The following information shall be evaluated by the certification body when determining appropriate/needed evaluation techniques:
- Organization Risk Profile
 - The Organization's past evaluation results
 - Availability of credible information to verify conformity (FSC's Geographic Information System Portal, up-to-date satellite imagery, LiDAR data, inventory data, other certification scheme's evaluation reports or regulatory compliance checks)
 - Absence of stakeholder complaints
 - Maturity of management systems / longevity of the certificate

- f) Increase or decrease in certificate size and The Organization's capacities
- g) Type of non-conformities
- h) Possibility of organizing remote stakeholder consultations in a culturally appropriate manner

Table 2. Certification cycle and applicable evaluations and techniques

	N.A.	Year 0	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Type of evaluation	Pre-evaluation	Main evaluation	Surveillance evaluation				Re-evaluation
Evaluation technique	On-site evaluation	On-site evaluation	On-site evaluation	On-site evaluation	On-site evaluation	On-site evaluation	On-site evaluation
	Remote evaluation	N.A.	Remote evaluation	Remote evaluation	Remote evaluation	Remote evaluation	N.A.

- 2.2.4 In the case of a demonstrated security risk for the life or health of auditors, the certification body may apply for a derogation from the FSC Performance and Standards Unit to replace an on-site audit by a remote audit even if an on-site evaluation would be required. The application shall be submitted according to PSU-PRO-10-201 *PSU Enquiry Procedure* and include:
- a) Certificate code of The Organization;
 - b) Copy of open non-conformities to be checked in the audit;
 - c) Evidence of security risks confirmed through verifiable public sources (e.g., an official travel warning);
 - d) Other additional information, as required by FSC.

NOTE: Derogation applications will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

2.3 Pre-evaluation

- 2.3.1 The certification body shall complete a pre-evaluation in accordance with the requirements in Section 4 of this standard prior to the main evaluation of any MU of the following categories:
- a) Plantations larger than 10,000 ha;
 - b) All non-plantation forest types larger than 50,000 hectares, unless the whole area meets the requirements for classification as a "low intensity managed forest" (see FSC-STD-01-003 *SLIMF eligibility criteria*).

NOTE 1: the thresholds in a) and b) refer to the total area included in the scope of evaluation (either as a single MU or as multiple or group MUs).

NOTE 2: at the discretion of the certification body, the pre-evaluation may be waived for an Organization that is already certified under the FSC-STD-30-010.

- 2.3.2 **OPTION 1 for Clause 2.3.2:** If MUs contain High Conservation Values or if it is unknown if they are present, a pre-evaluation of Principle 9 shall be completed. A targeted evaluation of Principle 9 shall be accompanied with a targeted stakeholder consultation.

OPTION 2 for Clause 2.3.2: If MUs contain High Conservation Values or if it is unknown if they are present, a remote or on-site pre-evaluation shall be completed.

NOTE: Certification bodies shall take a precautionary approach to the likelihood that an MU may include High Conservation Values. Certification bodies should request this information from the applicant forest manager in the application phase and check for the presence of High Conservation Values in the MU on FSC's Geographic Information System Portal or other High Conservation Value maps (e.g. www.globalforestwatch.org for Intact Forest Landscapes).

- 2.3.3 Pre-evaluations may be conducted for any MUs not meeting the above specifications, at the discretion of the certification body, prior to any main evaluation.
- 2.3.4 Pre-evaluations are not required in the case of re-evaluations.
- 2.3.5 The results of the pre-evaluation are valid for a period of 24 months from the date of its on-site audit conclusion. After this period, a new pre-evaluation is required if the main evaluation is not carried out.

NOTE: Pre-evaluations may be conducted by one certification body, and the main evaluation by another certification body as long as the second certification body has access to the results of the pre-evaluation, and these results are still valid.

2.4 Main evaluation and re-evaluation

- 2.4.1 The certification body shall use the results of any pre-evaluations in the preparation of a subsequent main evaluation.
- 2.4.2 As part of the planning for the main evaluation, the certification body shall develop the Organization Risk Profile, identifying applicable National Forest Stewardship Standard requirements that have specified risk or low risk of non-conformity. To that end, the certification body shall use as input:
- Information provided by The Organization (for example through an application questionnaire);
 - Its own knowledge of The Organization, the national and the local context, including information gathered during the preparation for the main evaluation and through stakeholder consultations (both the consultation conducted for a pre-evaluation according to clause 2.3.1 when applicable and/or the general stakeholder consultation according to clause 2.4.6 b);

- c) When existing, a National Forest Stewardship Standard Risk Assessment developed according to FSC-PRO-60-010.

NOTE: The same requirements apply in the case of a risk assessment developed on a Regional Forest Stewardship Standard (RFSS) according to FSC-PRO-60-010.

RBA

- 2.4.3 The applicable National Forest Stewardship Standard requirements which are not designated as specified or low risk in the Organization Risk Profile shall be considered as undesignated risk.

RBA

- 2.4.4 The certification body shall adjust its audit planning to reflect the Organization Risk Profile, to ensure that audit duration and audit techniques are adapted to requirements with specified or low risk of non-conformity.

RBA

- 2.4.5 When preparing for a re-evaluation, the certification body shall perform an evaluation of changes in the Organization Risk Profile over the past certification cycle. Based on this evaluation, the certification body shall ensure in the audit planning that effort allocation (time, audit team members, etc.) is adapted to requirements with specified or low risk of non-conformity.

- 2.4.6 Preparation for main and re-evaluation shall include:

- a) Development of the Interim National Standard (INS) or Interim Regional Standard (IRS) in accordance with the requirements of FSC-PRO-60-007 *Structure, Content and Development of Interim National Standards* if the country in which the evaluation is to take place does not yet have an FSC-approved regional, national or sub-national Forest Stewardship Standard or INS;
- b) Initiation of stakeholder consultation in accordance with the requirements of FSC-STD-20-006 *Stakeholder Consultation for Forest Evaluations*.
- c) An explicit analysis of the overall responsibility for full conformance with the applicable FSC normative requirements (e.g. by The Organization, group entity, landowner, resource manager) as well as analysis of the delegated responsibilities for the implementation of selected requirements (e.g. by contractors).

2.5 Surveillance evaluation

- 2.5.1 Surveillance evaluations shall follow clear, documented procedures and shall include the elements specified in Section 6 of this standard.

- 2.5.2 The certification body shall conduct stakeholder consultations during surveillance evaluations as per FSC-STD-20-006.

RBA

- 2.5.3 Before any surveillance evaluation, the certification body shall update the Organization Risk Profile as needed, in particular if a National Forest Stewardship Standard Risk Assessment developed according to FSC-PRO-

60-010 has been approved or updated since the last surveillance evaluation.

3 Selecting management units and sites for evaluation

3.1 Main evaluation and re-evaluation

Analysis of management units

- 3.1.1 The certification body shall complete an explicit analysis of the area included in the scope of the evaluation in terms of discrete MUs, and the structures and systems in place for their management.

NOTE: The results of this analysis are required as the basis for subsequent evaluation of the management structure and for sampling of the population of MUs included in the scope of the evaluation.

3.2 Surveillance

- 3.2.1 The certification body shall select the appropriate evaluation technique annually as per Section 2.2 and define the applicable sample size based on Section 3.4 for all Organizations except in the case of those managing small or low intensity management forest (SLIMF) operations (see Clauses 3.2.2-3.2.3).
- 3.2.2 In the case of a single SLIMF, the certification body shall carry out at least one MU level site audit during the period of validity of the certificate. If there are no outstanding corrective actions to be evaluated which may require site verification and no complaints requiring evaluation, the remaining surveillance evaluations may be based on review of the documentation and records specified in Paragraphs 6.2 and 2.1 of this standard and do not require MU level site audits.
- 3.2.3 In the case of groups or sub-groups of SLIMFs the certification body shall carry out at least one MU level site audit at the end of the first year in which the certification was awarded, and at least one additional MU level site audit during the period of validity of the certificate. If there are no outstanding corrective actions to be evaluated and no unresolved complaints requiring evaluation the remaining surveillance evaluations may be based on review of documentation and records specified in Paragraphs 6.2 and 2.1 and do not require MU level site audits.

NOTE: When determining the appropriate evaluation technique and MU level site audit intensity, the certification body should take account the rate of change of membership within the group; changes to the group management structure and the type and variety of forest activities being implemented within the group before making the decision to waive an annual MU level site audit in addition to Clause 2.2.3.

Note for stakeholders for the consultation of the draft:

In parallel to the public consultation of this draft, FSC is organizing a public consultation on the proposed FSC-PRO-30-011 *Continuous Improvement Procedure*. Stakeholders are advised to participate in the public consultation of the Continuous Improvement Procedure and reflect on its requirements for certification bodies in relation to the proposed changes included in the draft FSC-STD-20-007, especially related to the implementation of surveillance evaluations.

You can find further information about development process for the Continuous Improvement Procedure [here](#). The consultation on the procedure will run until 23 August 2021.

3.3 Determining the number of management units and sites for evaluations

Multiple management units and groups

3.3.1 The certification body shall classify the MUs included in the scope of the evaluation as sets of 'like' MUs for the purpose of sampling. The sets shall be selected to minimize variability within each set in terms of:

- a) Forest types (natural/ semi-natural vs. plantation);
- b) Size of the MU (see Section 3.4);
- c) Those defined by the National Forest Stewardship Standard and Interim National Standards;
- d) Whether the MU has been classified as active or inactive.

NOTE 1: A group or multiple MU evaluation may consist of one or more sets of 'like' MUs.

NOTE 2: In the case of forest management groups comprised of SLIMF and non-SLIMF operations the certification body may apply SLIMF streamlined procedures as applicable to sets of 'like' MUs that only comprise of SLIMF operations.

NOTE 3: The certification body can decide to group MUs to another higher size class provided the total sample is not reduced.

Number of management units for evaluation

3.3.2 For each set of 'like' MUs thus identified, the certification body shall select a minimum number of units for evaluation (x) as specified in Paragraph 3.4 of this standard in the case of forest management groups, and by applying the formula $X = 0.8 * \sqrt{y}$ in the case of multiple MUs ($y =$ all MUs within the set of 'like' MUs in the scope of certification).

3.3.3 For sets of 'like' MUs where all MUs have been defined as inactive since the last evaluation, the certification body shall apply the formula $X = 0.1 * \sqrt{y}$ in the case of multiple MUs ($y =$ all MUs within the set of 'like' MUs in the scope of certification).

NOTE: If inactive MUs are not specifically defined by the certification body, all MUs are treated as 'active'.

3.3.4 The certification body shall then select specific MUs for evaluation within each set to achieve the required calculated sample number. The certification body should include a random element in the selection process and ensure that the sample selected is representative of the whole forest area under evaluation in terms of:

- a) Geographical distribution, and
- b) The personnel responsible for operational management of the selected MUs.

3.3.5 The number of MUs to be audited in a surveillance evaluation of forest management groups shall be determined according to Paragraph 3.4. If new MUs (e.g. group members or newly acquired MUs) have been added to the scope of the certificate since the main evaluation, the new MUs shall be sampled at the rate of a main evaluation until the next evaluation.

NOTE: New MUs added to the scope of an existing group certificate that have been previously certified (within the last 6 months) may be sampled at the rate as for annual surveillance, instead of the rate of the main evaluation.

3.3.6 The number of MUs to be audited in a surveillance evaluation of multiple MUs shall be at least half the number of MUs audited during the main evaluation. If new MUs (e.g., newly acquired MUs) have been added to the scope of the certificate since the last evaluation, the new MUs shall be sampled at the rate of a main evaluation.

3.4 Sampling for group certification

3.4.1 The group entity shall be assessed in each evaluation in addition to the sampled MUs according to the requirements specified in FSC-STD-30-005.

3.4.2 Depending on risk factors, stakeholder complaints or non-conformities, the number of units to be evaluated shall be increased in relation to the calculated minimum.

3.4.3 For sets of 'like' MUs where all MUs have been defined as inactive since the last evaluation, the certification body shall apply the formula $X = 0.1 * \sqrt{y}$ (y= all MUs within the set of 'like' MUs in the scope of certification).

NOTE: If inactive MUs are not specifically defined by the certification body, all MUs are treated as 'active'.

Sampling process for active large and medium size management units

Table 3. Number of MUs to be evaluated (x) within each set of 'like' MUs

Size class	Main evaluation	Surveillance and re-evaluation
> 10,000 ha	$X = y$	$X = 0.8 * y$
1,000 – 10,000 ha	$X = 0.3 * y$	$X = 0.2 * y$

NOTE: the number of units calculated (x) must be rounded to the *upper* whole number to determine the number of units to be sampled

- 3.4.4 All sets of 'like' MUs shall be audited in the main evaluation.
- 3.4.5 50% of the sets of 'like' MUs shall be audited in surveillance and re-evaluations for MUs in size class 1,000-10,000 ha, and all sets of 'like' MUs must be audited in surveillance and re-evaluations for MUs > 10,000 ha.
- 3.4.6 For each set of 'like' MUs to be sampled, the certification body shall select a *minimum* number of units for evaluation (x) by applying the applicable formula in Table 3 (y= total number of MUs within a set of 'like' MUs).
- 3.4.7 Each MU within the group shall have been audited on-site by the certification body at least once in a 5-year certificate cycle.

Sampling process for active small size management units

Table 4. Number of MUs to be evaluated (x) within each set of 'like' MUs

Size class	Main evaluation	Surveillance and re-evaluation
100 -1,000 ha	$X = 0.8 * \sqrt{y}$	$X = 0.6 * \sqrt{y}$
SLIMF ¹	$X = 0.6 * \sqrt{y}$	$X = 0.3 * \sqrt{y}$

NOTE 1: the number of units calculated (x) must be rounded to the *upper* whole number to determine the number of units to be sampled

NOTE 2: Clause 3.2.3 may be used for groups or sub-groups of SLIMF and may replace the above requirements for defining minimum sample size.

- 3.4.8 Sampling for MUs \leq 1,000 ha shall be conducted in a two-step approach.
- 3.4.9 Step 1 defines the minimum number of sets of 'like' MUs to be sampled in each evaluation. This number (x) shall be calculated by entering the total number of sets of 'like' MUs (y) into the applicable formula in Table 4.
- 3.4.10 Step 2 defines the minimum number of units to be sampled within each set of 'like' MUs. For this purpose, MUs managed by the same managerial body (e.g., the same resource manager) may be combined into a single 'resource management unit' (RMU). The number of units to be sampled (x) shall be calculated by entering the total number of units (y= number of MUs directly managed by the forest owner + number of RMUs) within the set of 'like' MUs (y) into the applicable formula in Table 4.

¹ For countries or regions with an FSC-approved SLIMF size limit above 100 ha this may be used as the threshold for this size class.

- 3.4.11 For the purposes of sampling, the SLIMF MUs within an RMU may be considered to equal one MU.

NOTE: Non-SLIMF MUs within an RMU shall be sampled in accordance with Tables 3 and 4 (above).

- 3.4.12 Depending on risk factors, stakeholder complaints or non-conformities the number of units to be evaluated shall be increased in relation to the calculated minimum.
- 3.4.13 The certification body shall select a sample of MUs for evaluation which shall include MUs that have been part of the internal monitoring sample of The Organization since the last evaluation and other MUs selected at the discretion of the certification body.

Mega groups of small size MUs \leq 1,000 ha

- 3.4.14 For mega groups or sets of small size MUs (i.e. more than 5,000 members per group or set) the certification body may sub-stratify the group or sets of small size MUs according to the level of risk in relation to presence of High Conservation Values, land tenure or land use disputes, and long harvesting cycles.
- 3.4.15 The certification body may reduce the sampling size as specified in Table 4 for units within a set of 'like' MUs by a maximum of 50%, in the demonstrated absence of:
- a) High Conservation Values; and
 - b) Land use or tenure disputes.

PART II FOREST MANAGEMENT EVALUATIONS

4 Pre-evaluation

4.1 Pre-evaluation of management system(s)

4.1.1 Pre-evaluations shall include the following elements:

- a) Review and discussion with forest managers of the requested scope of evaluation to determine the full range of applicable normative requirements such as group certification, FSC Pesticides Policy, FSC Trademark requirements, etc.
- b) Review and discussion with forest managers of the requirements of the standard(s) to be used for the evaluation, including procedural requirements such as stakeholder consultation (see FSC-STD-20-006).

4.1.2 In the case of group or multiple site evaluations, the certification body shall:

- a) Carry out an analysis and description of the MUs proposed for inclusion within the scope of the evaluation, in conformity with the requirements of Paragraphs 3.1 and 5.2;
- b) Define the certification body's approach to sampling of MUs within the scope of the evaluation;
- c) Carry out an initial analysis of the supplier's management systems and capacity to administer the requirements of those systems including in the case of evaluation;
- d) In the case of group certification applicants, carry out an explicit review of conformity with the requirements for group entities (see FSC-STD-30-005).

4.1.3 Identify, on the basis of information provided by the applicant, major gaps or likely problem areas in respect of the applicant's conformity with any of the requirements of the standard(s).

4.1.4 The certification body shall prepare a written report on the pre-evaluation, which should be made available to the applicant. A summary of the main results shall subsequently be included in the main evaluation report.

4.2 Consultation requirements for pre-evaluations

4.2.1 Key stakeholders shall be identified and consulted during the pre-evaluation and a list of contact details for stakeholders to be contacted as part of the subsequent main evaluation shall be compiled in accordance with FSC-STD-20-006.

4.2.2 The certification body may also initiate the general stakeholder consultation process at the pre-evaluation stage to facilitate conformity with the requirements of FSC-STD-20-006.

4.2.3 In a voluntary pre-evaluation, the preceding clauses 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 may be carried out in confidence if this is requested by the applicant.

5 Main evaluation

5.1 General requirements

- 5.1.1 During the main evaluation, the certification body is not required to actively seek evidence of conformity with requirements designated as low risk in the National Forest Stewardship Standard Risk Assessment and confirmed as such by the certification body in the Organization Risk Profile. If evidence emerges or if stakeholders raise significant concerns that one or several of those requirements designated as low risk in the National Forest Stewardship Standard Risk Assessment should not be considered low risk for the applicant Organization, the certification body shall audit them actively.

5.2 Evaluation of management system(s)

- 5.2.1 The certification body shall complete an explicit analysis of the critical aspects of management control required to ensure that the applicable FSC normative requirements are implemented over:
- The full geographical area of the evaluation;
 - The full range of management operations.

NOTE: The extent to which the management system is documented by the organization shall be an important part of the evaluation. A system based on verbal descriptions and simple documentation may be sufficient to confirm the implementation the requirements of the applicable FSC normative requirements for SLIMF MUs.

- 5.2.2 In the case of applicants for group certification, the certification body shall evaluate conformity with the requirements of FSC-STD-30-005.
- 5.2.3 The certification body shall evaluate the capacity of the applicant to implement its management system consistently and effectively as described. This evaluation shall include explicit consideration of:
- The technical resources available (e.g., the type and quantity of equipment);
 - The human resources available (e.g., the number of people involved in management, their level of training and experience; the availability of expert advice if required).

NOTE: If the certificate grows beyond its established maximum amount of group members a scope change evaluation audit is required (See FSC-STD-20-001).

- 5.2.4 The evaluation shall include an assessment of the documentation and records applicable to each level of management, sufficient to confirm that management is functioning effectively and as described.

- 5.2.5 The certification body shall evaluate the tracking and tracing of forest products within the evaluated forest area up to the forest gate, and procedures for the identification of products sourced from the evaluated forest area as part of the analysis of the forest management system.
- 5.2.6 Joint forest management/chain of custody certification shall only be awarded if the certification body is satisfied that the system of tracking and tracing implemented by The Organization is sufficient to provide a guarantee that all products invoiced by The Organization originate from the evaluated forest area.
- 5.2.7 In the case of evaluations of multiple MUs and groups or sets of SLIMF MUs, the certification body may evaluate each defined set of MUs as a whole against the requirements of the applicable FSC normative requirements, but it is not necessary that each sampled MU be evaluated by the certification body against all the requirements of the standard.
- 5.2.8 In the case of evaluations of all other forest management groups, the certification body shall evaluate each MU selected as part of the sample against all the requirements of the applicable National Forest Stewardship Standard that apply at the level of the group members (see FSC-STD-30-005).
- 5.2.9 In the case of evaluations of all types of forest management groups, the certification body shall evaluate the group entity against all the requirements of the applicable FSC normative requirements that apply at the level of the group entity.

NOTE: The forest management requirements that are applicable at the level of group members and at the level of the group entity must be defined in the group management system (see FSC-STD-30-005).

5.3 Evaluation at the level of the management unit

Documents and records

- 5.3.1 The auditor(s) shall identify and assess management documentation and a sufficient variety and number of records at each MU selected for evaluation as to make direct, factual observations to verify conformity with all the indicators of the applicable FSC normative requirements that are under evaluation at that MU and for which such documents are a necessary means of verification.

NOTE: Examples of such documentation and records are listed in Annex 1 of this standard.

Sites

- 5.3.2 The auditor(s) shall audit a sufficient variety and number of sites within each MU selected for evaluation to make direct, factual observations of conformity with the indicators of the applicable FSC normative requirements that are under evaluation at that MU.

NOTE: Examples of sites that may be assessed are listed in Annex 2 of this standard.

- 5.3.3 The auditor(s) should select sites for inspection based on an evaluation of the critical points of risk of non-conformity in the management system.

6 Surveillance

6.1 General requirements

6.1.1 Surveillance evaluation shall include:

- a) Evaluation of The Organization's conformity with corrective action requests;
- b) Review of any complaints or allegations of non-conformity with any aspect of the applicable FSC normative requirements;
- c) Evaluation of a sample of sites and records, and interviews with affected stakeholders sufficient to verify that management systems (documented or undocumented) are working effectively and consistently in practice, in the full range of management conditions present in the area under evaluation
- d) The certification body shall focus its evaluation on requirements of the applicable National Forest Stewardship Standard with specified risks of non-conformity, as identified in the Organization Risk Profile.
- e) The certification body is not required to actively seek evidence of conformity with requirements designated as low risk in the National Forest Stewardship Standard Risk Assessment and confirmed as such by the certification body in the Organization Risk Profile. If evidence emerges or if stakeholders raise significant concerns that one or several of those requirements designated as low risk in the National Forest Stewardship Standard Risk Assessment should not be considered low risk for the applicant organization, the certification body shall audit them actively.

NOTE: In the absence of a National Forest Stewardship Standard Risk Assessment identifying low risk indicators/criteria, the certification body may focus its surveillance during a particular annual surveillance evaluation on specific elements of the applicable FSC normative requirements (e.g. those pertaining to particular FSC Principles or to particular aspects of management) with the provision that all aspects of the FSC normative requirements are monitored during the period of validity of the certificate. Certification bodies may therefore focus on particular aspects of the forest management system reducing the time and cost of surveillance.

6.1.2 For the following types of operations, the certification body shall at minimum evaluate at each surveillance all indicators of the following sets of criteria from the applicable Forest Stewardship Standard in the absence of a National Forest Stewardship Standard Risk Assessment.

- a) Plantations larger than 10,000 ha

Criteria 1.6; 2.3; 4.4; 4.5; 7.6; 10.2; 10.3; 10.6; 10.7 and 10.12

For the applicable Forest Stewardship Standard according to FSC Principles and Criteria V4: Criteria 2.3; 4.2; 4.4; 6.7; 6.9; 10.6; 10.7 and 10.8.

- b) All non-plantation forest types larger than 50,000 hectares, unless the whole area meets the eligibility criteria for SLIMF (see FSC-STD-01-003)

Criteria 1.4; 1.6; 2.3; 3.2; 3.4; 4.4; 4.5; 5.2; 6.4; 6.6; 7.6; 8.2 and 9.4.

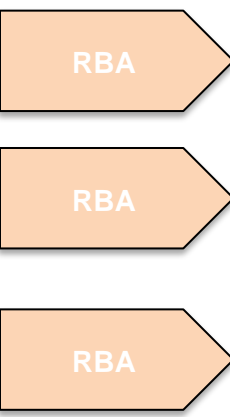
For the applicable Forest Stewardship Standard according to FSC Principles and Criteria V4: Criteria 1.4; 1.5; 2.3; 3.2; 4.2; 4.4; 5.6; 6.2; 6.3; 8.2 and 9.4

- c) MUs containing High Conservation Values, unless the whole area meets the eligibility criteria for SLIMF (see FSC-STD-01-003)

Criteria 6.4; 6.6; 9.4 and 10.3

For the applicable Forest Stewardship Standard according to FSC Principles and Criteria V4: Criteria 6.2; 6.3; 6.9 and 9.4

NOTE: These requirements are based on the level of risk associated with such operations.

- 
- 6.1.3 When a National Forest Stewardship Standard Risk Assessment has been approved, the certification body shall consider the list of indicators or criteria designated as specified risk instead of the criteria listed in 6.1.2.
 - 6.1.4 Based on the Organization Risk Profile, the certification body can justify deviation from the criteria listed in 6.1.2, or from the list of indicators or criteria designated as specified risk in the applicable National Forest Stewardship Standard Risk Assessment.
 - 6.1.5 After any surveillance evaluation, the certification body shall update the Organization Risk Profile as needed in the audit report.

6.2 Review of documentation and records

6.2.1 The certification body shall review:

- a) Any changes to the forest area included in the scope of the certificate, including additions, exclusions, or MU boundary changes;
- b) Changes to The Organization's management system;

NOTE: The certification body shall specifically assess the capacity of The Organization's management system to manage any change in scope of the certificate including any increase in size, number or complexity of MUs within the scope of the certificate.

- c) Complaints received;
- d) Accident records;
- e) Training records;

- f) Operational plan(s) for the next 12 months;
- g) Inventory records;
- h) Harvesting records;
- i) Chemical use records (and record quantitative data on the use of pesticides);
- j) Records of sales of FSC certified products (copies of invoices, bills, shipping documents).

7 Re-evaluation

7.1 General requirements

- 7.1.1 Re-evaluation shall follow the same procedures as for the main evaluation, with the following exceptions:
- a) The certification body is not required to submit the evaluation report for peer review;
 - b) The certification body is not required to prepare a full, new certification report. The original report may be updated to take account of any new findings, but shall include the complete set of observations made during the re-evaluation and on which the decision to re-issuing certification is based.
 - c) MUs may be selected at the same rate as for annual surveillance.
- 7.1.2 During re-evaluation, the certification body is not required to actively seek evidence of conformity with requirements designated as low risk in the National Forest Stewardship Standard Risk Assessment and confirmed as such by the certification body in the Organization Risk Profile. If evidence emerges or if stakeholders raise significant concerns that one or several of those requirements designated as low risk in the National Forest Stewardship Standard Risk Assessment should not be considered low risk for the applicant organization, the certification body shall actively audit them.

RBA

PART III DECISION MAKING AND CERTIFICATION

8 General requirements

- 8.1 In addition to the conditions necessary for a client to receive or maintain a certificate as specified in FSC-STD-20-001, certification bodies shall make certification decisions based on their evaluation of The Organization's conformity with the requirements specified in the applicable FSC normative requirements.
- 8.2 All non-conformities that are identified by the certification body during an evaluation shall be recorded in the evaluation report and associated checklists.
- 8.3 Non-conformities with requirements shall be recorded and addressed even if these are not in the specific focus of a particular evaluation.

- 8.4 Each non-conformity against indicators of the applicable FSC normative requirements shall be evaluated to determine whether it constitutes a minor or major non-conformity at the level of the associated FSC criterion.
- 8.5 Single corrective action requests shall not include requirements that relate to two (2) or more criteria from the applied FSC normative requirements.

NOTE: If a non-conformity arises under indicators from more than one criterion, the corrective action request should be raised against the criterion associated with the root cause of the non-conformity.

- 8.6 A non-conformity shall be considered major if, either alone or in combination with other non-conformities, it results in, or is likely to result in a fundamental failure:
- a) To achieve the objectives of the relevant FSC criterion, or
 - b) In a significant part of the applied management system.

NOTE: The cumulative impact of a number of minor non-conformities may result in a failure to achieve the overall objectives of the standard and thus constitute a major non-conformity.

- 8.7 Each non-conformity against other applicable FSC normative requirements (e.g., FSC-STD-30-005) shall be evaluated to determine whether it constitutes a minor or major non-conformity at the level of the individual requirement.

- 8.8 Non-conformities shall lead to corrective action requests, suspension or withdrawal of the certificate.

- 8.9 The certification body shall consider the impact of a non-conformity, taking account of the fragility and uniqueness of the forest resource, when evaluating whether a non-conformity results in or is likely to result in a fundamental failure to achieve the objective of the relevant FSC criterion.

NOTE: A major non-conformity may require immediate action to be taken by the forest manager e.g., immediate cessation of use of a prohibited pesticide, immediate cessation of dangerous activities or activities causing serious environmental damage.

- 8.10 If the certification body receives specific information of particular instances or allegations of non-conformity with aspects of the applicable FSC normative requirements at specific MUs (for example, information received from stakeholder consultation), the certification body shall investigate those instances. Such instances shall be evaluated to determine if the allegation is valid and, if valid, whether they constitute major or minor non-conformities with the FSC normative requirements.

9 Forest Management Groups

9.1 The certification body shall, at the time of main evaluation and at the time of surveillance, explicitly define the methodology by which the certification body determines 'failure' of a forest management group at an evaluation. The specification of 'failure' shall also distinguish between 'group failure' and 'member failure'/'forestry contractor failure', where:

9.1.1 'Group failure' shall lead to corrective actions, suspension or withdrawal of the group certificate, and may be caused by:

- a) Failure to fulfil a 'group entity' responsibility, such as administration, management planning, records, monitoring, etc.;
- b) Failure of the group entity to ensure that group members comply with a condition or corrective action issued by the certification body;
- c) Failure to fulfil group member responsibility(s), sufficient in number, extent and/or consequences to demonstrate that the group entity's responsibility for monitoring or quality control has broken down.

NOTE: The number as well as the seriousness of member/forestry contractor failures may each contribute to a group failure: many minor failures or few major failures may both suggest a breakdown in the group system for quality control and may be considered sufficient reason to suspend or withdraw certification.

9.1.2 Depending on the number and seriousness, 'member non-conformity' shall lead to corrective actions, suspension or expulsion of a group member.

9.1.3 Depending on the number and seriousness, 'forestry contractor non-conformity' shall lead to corrective actions, suspension or expulsion of a forestry contractor.

10 Ecosystem Services

10.1 When evaluating organizations implementing FSC-PRO-30-006 *Ecosystem Services Procedure: Impact Demonstration and Market Tools* the certification bodies shall evaluate the additional requirements laid out in this procedure.

11 Conflicts between certification requirements and laws and regulations

11.1 The certification body shall evaluate any conflicts between laws/ regulations and certification requirements of the applicable FSC normative requirements on a case-by-case basis, in arrangement with involved or affected parties.

- 11.2 When a conflict is established between FSC certification requirements and national legislation that prevents The Organization from fulfilling one or more requirements of the applicable standard, the certification body shall attempt to resolve the conflict between the affected parties and include FSC Network Partners or Standards Development Groups, where they exist. The certification body should involve the FSC Performance and Standards Unit as deemed appropriate. If the conflict cannot be resolved, and the non-conformity with the requirement(s) results in, or is likely to result in a fundamental failure, then the certification body shall issue a major corrective action request.
- 11.3 The certification body shall follow a precautionary approach in cases where there are:
- a) Conflicting, contradictory or otherwise inconsistent requirements for Organizations within or between applicable national or local laws, regulations and administrative requirements;
 - b) Differing interpretations of the above listed legal instruments by public authorities.
- A precautionary approach towards these cases implies that:
- c) The more or most restrictive requirements shall be applied as constituting the relevant legal basis;
 - d) The more or most rigorous interpretation by public authorities shall be used to determine the practical implementation of relevant requirements.
- 11.4 The certification body shall have a procedure for using the precautionary approach by identifying relevant conflicts in consultation with the relevant FSC Network Partners.
- 11.5 In above cases where the most restrictive requirements or most rigorous interpretation cannot be determined, the certification body shall seek clarification through a formal interpretation following PSU-PRO-10-201.

PART IV REPORTING

12 Certification reports

- 12.1 The certification body shall use the FSC FM Digital Audit Report template to prepare a certification report in accordance to the requirements specified in Annex 3 of this standard for each evaluation of The Organization to which certification is awarded.

13 Public summary reports

- 13.1 The public summary report shall include the mandatory information specified in Annex 4 of this standard.

NOTE: The public summary report will be automatically generated by the FSC FM Digital Audit Report template.

Annex 1 Examples of documentation and records

The following list provides examples of some of the documents and records that could be used to assess conformity with FSC normative requirements. This is not a complete list, nor is the certification body required to inspect all documents listed here.

- a) Copies of applicable laws
- b) Long term management plan(s)
- c) Technical management guides relating to roads, nurseries, planting, harvesting, inventory, etc.
- d) Concession agreements
- e) Documentation showing tenure or land-use rights and indigenous cultural landscapes.
- f) Up-to-date maps of roads, management sites, etc.
- g) Inventory records
- h) Work instructions
- i) Contractor contracts
- j) Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) agreements with affected local communities
- k) Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) agreements with affected Indigenous Peoples, etc.
- l) Records of payments of royalties, fees, or taxes
- m) Records of complaints/disputes and their resolution
- n) Records of payments to workers
- o) Wildlife evaluation records
- p) Environmental impacts monitoring records, e.g. on water quality, soil condition
- q) Social impact survey results
- r) Results of monitoring forest growth and health
- s) Harvesting and production records
- t) Chemical use records
- u) Communications with stakeholders
- v) Purchasing and sales documentation
- w) Maps including information on the High Conservation Values

Annex 2 Examples of sites for evaluation

The following list provides examples of some of the sites that should be audited to assess conformity with FSC normative requirements. This is not a complete list, nor is the certification body required to audit all sites listed here.

- a) Seed orchards;
- b) Nurseries;
- c) Production forest areas in a sufficient variety of conditions (e.g. on steeper slopes; different soil conditions; different silvicultural systems), including areas:
 - i. marked for thinning;
 - ii. recently thinned;
 - iii. marked for harvesting;
 - iv. recently harvested;
 - v. one year after harvesting;
 - vi. five years after harvesting;
 - vii. ten years after harvesting.
- d) Worker accommodation and amenities;
- e) Areas used by communities and/or Indigenous Peoples within or near the forest area;
- f) Water courses of different sizes, within and downstream of the forest area;
- g) Roads and forest roads of different sizes affected by the forest management;
- h) Sites where chemicals have been applied or stored, pesticide buffer zones, and pesticide exclusion zones;
- i) Protected areas (e.g. Conservation Areas Network, Representative Sample Areas) and potential High Conservation Value areas;
- j) Monitoring sites;
- k) Boundaries between MU and Indigenous Peoples or local communities.

Annex 3 Forest Certification Reports

Reports on certified Organizations are of particular importance. They are much more than a simple vehicle for presenting the certification decision, because:

- a) Many decisions in forest management and in the evaluation are guided by professional judgments, in the context of local, national and regional conditions. Such decisions require explanation and justification;
- b) In the event of a complaint, the certification report by the evaluation team will be vital evidence of:
 - i. the application of the certification system in practice;
 - ii. the state of management;
 - iii. the recommendations and conditions proposed by the evaluation team.

The reports on certified Organizations are used by the following users:

- a) Certification bodies to compile information on the forest management audit and for certification decision making;
- b) Forest managers to be informed about their performance against the applicable standards;
- c) Accreditation Services International (ASI) in evaluating certification bodies' performance;
- d) FSC to assess the impacts of FSC certification;
- e) Interested stakeholders for public access (forest certification public summary report).

The following requirements aim to ensure that the certification body decision making entity has sufficient information on which to base its decisions with respect to conformity with FSC normative requirements, and to help FSC ensure that there is consistency in decision making between different certification bodies.

Note for stakeholders for the consultation of the draft:

In parallel to this revision process, FSC has launched the [standardized format for digital audit reporting](#) which will be implemented in phases across all FSC Forest Management audits. The digital audit report template is based on existing requirements in the addenda of FSC-STD-20-007 V3-0. Once the revision of FSC-STD-20-007 is concluded, the template will be updated accordingly to reflect any changes agreed through the revision process.

Addenda a) and b) of V3-0 of the Standard is now presented as Annex 4 and 5, and open for stakeholder comment to guide the Technical Working Group on improving these reporting requirements.

General requirements

1 Language(s)

- 1.1 Forest certification reports may be written in any language at the convenience of clients and the requirements of the people involved in the certification body's technical review and decision-making process.
- 1.2 FSC reserves the right to request a translation of any forest certification report into one of the official languages of FSC, at the expense of the certification body.

2 Units

- 2.1 Data presented in the reports should be in metric system units. If non metric units are used the report shall provide conversion rates together with any assumptions made in order to make conversion into metric units possible.

3 Title page

- 3.1 The title page of the report shall clearly identify:
 - a) The name and contact details of the certification body, including contact person and website address;
 - b) The date (format: day/ month/ year) the report was last updated;
 - c) The name and contact details of The Organization² and contact person;
 - d) The name and/or location of the certified forest area(s)³;
 - e) The FSC certificate registration code;
 - f) The date of issue of the certificate.

4 Contents

- 4.1 The evaluation report should start with a table of contents.
- 4.2 The order in which information is presented may be determined by the certification body, but the report shall contain at least the information specified below in Box 6.
- 4.3 The elements marked with an asterisk (*) in the table are NOT required in the case of certificates issued to single SLIMF MUs but are required for all other certificates.
- 4.4 For all reports the length and detail of the report should reflect the scale and complexity of the forest area evaluated. In the case of reports on single SLIMF MUs a very brief summary of the required information may be provided.

² In the case of group certification, The Organization is the group entity

³ In the case of group certification, the region in which the group is located shall be specified.

Box 6

Description of forest management

- 1 Basic quantitative⁴ information about The Organization:
 - a) Type of certificate (single MU / multiple MU / group);
 - b) Is the certificate:
 - i) a *small* SLIMF certificate (i.e. a single/multiple MU that meets the requirements of FSC-STD-01-003)?
 - ii) a *low intensity* SLIMF certificate (i.e. a single/multiple MU that meets the requirements of FSC-STD-01-003)?
 - iii) a *group* SLIMF certificate (i.e. a group for which every group member individually meets the requirements of FSC-STD-01-003)?
 - c) Number of group members in the case of a group certificate;
 - d) Total number of MUs in the scope of certificate;
 - e) Number of MUs in the scope that are:
 - i) less than 100 ha in area
 - ii) 100 - 1000 ha in area
 - iii) 1000 - 10 000 ha in area
 - iv) more than 10 000 ha in area
 - f) Geographical location of the non-SLIMFs MU(s) in the scope of the certificate:
 - i) Latitude E/W ### degrees ## minutes
 - ii) Longitude N/S ### degrees ## minutes

NOTE: The coordinates should refer to the center of an MU.
 - g) Forest zone (boreal, temperate, subtropical, tropical)⁵;
 - h) Total forest area in scope of certificate which is included in MUs that:
 - i) are less than 100 ha in area;
 - ii) meet the eligibility criteria as low intensity SLIMF MUs;
 - iii) are between 100 ha and 1000 ha in area;
 - iv) exceed the eligibility criteria as SLIMF MUs.
 - i) Total forest area in scope of certificate which is:

⁴ The certification body may provide a 'best available estimate' when exact quantitative information is not available.

⁵ According to the Holdridge life zone classification scheme

- i. privately managed⁶;
 - ii. state managed;
 - iii. community managed;
 - iv. other⁷.
- j) Number of forest workers (including contractors) working in the forest within the scope of certificate (differentiated by gender);
 - k) Area of forest and non-forest land protected from commercial harvesting of timber and managed primarily for conservation objectives;
 - l) List of non-timber forest products included in the scope of certificate;
 - m) List of High Conservation Values present, identified through its six categories⁸;
 - n) List of any ecosystem services impact verified or validated according to FSC-PRO-30-006;
 - o) List of prohibited (only in emergency situations or by governmental orders), highly restricted, restricted highly hazardous pesticides (HHP), and other pesticides used within the MU, summarized quantitative data on their use and reason for use and site specific mitigation strategies to minimize risk for using the Highly Hazardous Pesticide, if any;
 - p) Total area of production forest (i.e. forest from which timber may be harvested);
 - q) Area of production forest classified as 'plantation';
 - r) Area of production forest regenerated primarily by replanting or by a combination of replanting and coppicing of the planted stems⁹;
 - s) Area of production forest regenerated primarily by natural regeneration, or by a combination of natural regeneration and coppicing of the naturally regenerated stems;
 - t) List of main commercial timber and non-timber species included in scope of certificate (botanical name and common trade name);

⁶ The category of 'private management' includes state owned forests that are leased to private companies for management, e.g., through a concession system.

⁷ A community managed forest management unit is one in which the management and use of the forest and tree resources is controlled by local communities.

⁸ High Conservation Values should be classified following the classification system given in FSC-STD-01-001

⁹ The area is the *total* area being regenerated primarily by planting, *not* the area which is replanted annually. NB this area may be different to the area defined as a 'plantation' for the purpose of calculating the Annual Accreditation Fee (AAF) or for other purposes.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> u) The sustainable rate of harvest (usually the Annual Allowable Cut where available) of commercial timber (cubic meters of round wood); v) Approximate annual commercial production of non-timber forest products included in the scope of the certificate, by product type; w) List of product categories included in scope of joint FM/COC certificate and therefore available for sale as FSC-certified products (include basic description of product - e.g. round wood, resin, non-timber forest products, etc.).
2*	<p>A summary of the legislative, administrative and land use contexts in which The Organization, including the roles of responsible government agencies involved in aspects of forest management (e.g. harvest, monitoring, protection, health and safety, infrastructure, and other uses).</p>
3	<p>A description of the ownership and use of the lands and forest included in the scope of the certificate, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) A summary of ownership and use-rights (both legal and customary) of parties other than The Organization; b) A summary of non-forestry activities being undertaken within the area evaluated, whether they are undertaken by The Organization or by some other party (e.g. mining, industrial operations, agriculture, hunting, commercial tourism, etc.).
4	<p>A full disclosure and brief description of any area of forest over which The Organization has some responsibility, whether as owner (including share or partial ownership, manager, consultant or other responsibility) which The Organization has chosen to exclude from the scope of the certificate, together with an explanation of the reason for its exclusion and description of the controls that are in place to prevent confusion being generated as to which activities or products are certified, and which are not. Conformity with FSC-POL-20-003 <i>The excision of areas from the scope of certification</i> shall be documented.</p>
5	<p>A summary of the management plan, including a description of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The management objectives; ii. The forest resources (land use and ownership status, socio-economic conditions, forest composition, profile of adjacent lands); iii. The management structures (e.g. management structure, division of responsibilities, use of contractors, provision of training, etc.) implemented by The Organization; iv. The silvicultural and/or other management systems being implemented (incl. harvesting techniques and equipment, rationale for species selection); v. The environmental safeguards;

- vi. The management strategy for the identification and protection of rare, threatened and endangered species and High Conservation Values;
 - vii. The management strategy for the identification and protection of High Conservation Values;
 - viii. The Organization's procedures for monitoring growth, yield and forest dynamics (incl. changes in flora and fauna), environmental and social impacts, and costs, productivity, and efficiency.
- 6 An estimate of the maximum sustainable yield for the main commercial species including:
- a) Explanation of the assumptions (e.g. silvicultural) on which estimates are based;
 - b) Reference to the source of data (e.g. inventory data, permanent sample plots, yield tables) on which estimates are based.
- 7 A quantitative summary of current and projected annual harvest for each of the main commercial species.
- 8 A clear explanation of how the MU meets the eligibility criteria as a SLIMF (FSC-STD-01-003) if the certification body has implemented streamlined certification procedures applicable to SLIMFs.

Standards

- 9 Reference to the standards used (e.g., Interim National Standard or National Forest Stewardship Standard) including the version number and date of finalization.
- 10 A copy of the standard, or the address of the website where it is published shall be included with the report.
- 11* A description of the process for developing the Interim National Standard, if applicable.

Summary of the evaluation process

- 12 The evaluation dates: (specify actual dates or month, year and duration);
- 13 Names and expertise of the auditor(s) involved in the evaluation.
- 14 A description of the evaluation including, if applicable, pre-evaluation audits. The description shall include:
- a) General itinerary with dates;
 - b)* Approach to evaluation of management systems (e.g. visits to head offices, regional offices, etc.), and main items and places audited;

c)* List of MUs selected for evaluation, and rationale for their selection;

NOTE: in the case of multiple MU evaluations the report shall include an analysis and description of the area in terms of discrete MUs (see FSC-STD-20-007 Clause 3.1 and demonstration of conformity with the requirements of FSC-STD-20-007 Clause 3.3 - sampling system employed).

d)* Main sites audited within each selected MU;

e)* Consultation with stakeholders including a list of institutions informed about the evaluation and a list of individuals who were interviewed by auditors or who contributed information in writing;

NOTE: Personal data (including names of individuals) are not required to be stated in the certification report (nor in the public summary report). It is only required to include a general description of the stakeholder who was interviewed or who shared information with the auditors in writing, such as “forest worker”; “employee of a contractor”; “inhabitant of a community adjacent to the MU”; “representative from the local administration”. Where the identification of individuals is deemed necessary to follow up on communication with the stakeholder, the certification body may record personal data for internal use, but only upon prior and informed consent of the stakeholder. Certification reports and public summary reports shall not violate applicable data protection legislation.

f)* Evaluation techniques employed for the evaluation (e.g., remote evaluation, on-site evaluation, ICT/GIS tools used).

15 A statement of the person’s total days spent on the evaluation including time spent on pre-evaluation or other preparatory work and time spent carrying out on-site work (incl. review of documents and records, interviewing stakeholders), but excluding travel to and from the region in which the certified forest is located.

16 Process and results of sampling shall be documented in the certification report.

17 The certification body shall include in the certification report:

- a) An updated description of the Organization Risk Profile and include justifications of deviations from the National Forest Stewardship Standard Risk Assessment designations when applicable;
- b) How the Organization Risk Profile informed the planning and implementation of the main evaluation;
- c) How the Organization Risk Profile will inform the planning and implementation of the following surveillance evaluation (see FSC-STD-20-007 Clause 5.1.1).

Observations

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- 18 Clear and systematic presentation of the observations and considerations on which the certification decision is based, at the level of the indicators defined in the applicable standard(s).

NOTE: Observations presenting evidence of conformity or non-conformity at the level of indicators should be presented in the form of a standardized checklist, attached as an annex to or included in the report.

- 19 Observations shall be presented separately for each MU evaluated in the case of group evaluations, unless *all* the MUs within the scope of the certificate meet the eligibility criteria as SLIMFs (see FSC-STD-01-003). Observations for different MUs evaluated may be combined into a single presentation in such cases, so long as the information about which site a particular observation relates to is maintained.

- 20 Observations regarding conformity with a given indicator across different MUs in the case of multiple MU evaluations may be combined into a single presentation, so long as the information about which site a particular observation relates to is maintained.

- 21 Observations shall clearly indicate whether or not the observed level of performance is considered to conform with the requirement of the applicable standard(s).

- 22 Observations shall include information relevant to the client's conformity or non-conformity with the requirements of the applicable FSC normative requirements gained as the result of stakeholder consultation.

- 23 Observations shall include those related to the impact, or potential impact, of non-forestry activities on The Organization's conformity with the applicable FSC normative requirements.

- 24 A description of any actions taken by The Organization prior to the certification decision to correct major or minor non-conformities that had been identified during the evaluation.

Certification decision

- 25* Clear and systematic presentation of the non-conformities identified during the evaluation, and justification for their classification as minor or major non-conformities.

- 26 Explicit identification and discussion of any issues that were hard to assess, for example because of contradictory evidence difficulty in interpreting the standard(s) in the field, and explanation of the conclusion reached.

NOTE: In cases where one or more stakeholders have alleged a non-conformity, but the auditors have concluded that a certificate should be issued, the report shall explain why the auditors concluded there was no non-conformity, *or* why the alleged non-conformity was considered minor, *or* what action was taken to correct the non-conformity prior to the issue of a certificate.

- 27 A clear specification of any conditions (corrections of minor non-conformities) or pre-conditions (corrections of major non-conformities) associated with the certification decision.
- 28 An explicit statement to the effect that, in the opinion of the lead auditor:
- a) The Organization's system of management, if implemented as described, is capable of ensuring that all of the requirements of the applicable standard(s) are met over the whole forest area covered by the scope of the evaluation;
 - b) The Organization has demonstrated, subject to correction of the identified non-conformities, that the described system of management is being implemented consistently over the whole forest area covered by the scope of the certificate.

Tracking, tracing and identification of certified products

- 29 The following elements shall be included in all reports for *joint* FM and COC certificates:
- a) An evaluation of the risk of products from non-certified sources (including any areas specifically excluded from the scope of the certificate) being mixed with products from the forest area evaluated;
 - b) A description of the control (tracking and tracing) systems in place that address the risk identified in a) above (If the evaluation does not include all the forest areas in which the client is involved, the report shall include an explicit statement explaining the special controls that are in place to ensure that there is no risk of confusion as to which activities or products are certified, and which are not).
 - c) A description of the final point or forest gate (e.g. log yard or depot) at which the certification body certifies that a product is sourced from the certified forest area;
 - d) A description of the documentation or marking system that allows products from the certified forest area to be reliably identified as such at the point specified in c) above.

NOTE: Please see Clause 4 above for the evaluation of primary or secondary processing facilities associated with the MU.

5 Additional content and structure for group forest management reports

Certification reports for group forest management certificates shall include the following elements in addition to the requirements specified in Section 4 above:

- 5.1 A clear description of the division of responsibilities between the group entity and the group members.
- 5.2 A clear demonstration that any responsibilities for implementation of the applicable standard(s) at the group entity level (e.g. management planning, inventory, monitoring) are conformed with.
- 5.3 A clear description of the sampling system employed to select MUs for evaluation, and its implementation.
- 5.4 A clear demonstration, for each of the non-SLIMF group members evaluated, that each non-SLIMF group member conformed with all of the requirements of FSC normative requirements, except those already conformed with at the group level.

NOTE: In the case of groups of SLIMFs and mixed groups that contain SLIMFs, for the SLIMF operations only, information may be presented in a general manner at the FSC criterion level rather than for each member evaluated.

- 5.5 A clear description of the maximum annual or total increase of the group (in terms of members) that the group entity has specified in their management system according to FSC-STD-30-005 Clause 5.2, before a re-evaluation of the group structure and systems shall be required.
- 5.6 A clear description of the surveillance schedule that will be implemented by the certification body.
- 5.7 A list of the members of the group including for each member:
 - a) Name and contact details;
 - b) Number of forest MUs included in the scope of the certificate;
 - c) Total area of forest included in the scope of the certificate;
 - d) Geographical location (coordinates) of each MU included in the scope of the certificate;
 - e) Area of forest that is:
 - i. privately managed¹⁰,
 - ii. state managed,
 - iii. community managed¹¹
 - f) Main products;

¹⁰ The category of 'private management' includes state owned forests that are leased to private companies for management, e.g., through a concession system.

¹¹ A community managed forest management unit is one in which the management and use of the forest and tree resources is controlled by local communities.

- g) The sub-certificate code.

NOTE: It is recommended that group certification reports are structured in a way which reflects the sampling strategy used. One clear way is to structure the report so that one section demonstrates conformity with the basic group entity requirements, a second section demonstrates conformity with those elements that apply to all group members and which are implemented at the group entity level, and further sections demonstrate conformity with the requirements that are the responsibility of the individual group member for each group member selected for evaluation.

6 Surveillance

- 6.1 The results of all surveillance evaluations shall be documented in surveillance evaluation reports.
- 6.2 The front of the surveillance evaluation report shall clearly identify:
- a) The certification body;
 - b) The date (day, month & year) the report was finalized;
 - c) The name and contact details of The Organization¹²;
 - d) The name and location of the certified forest area(s)¹³;
 - e) The date of the surveillance evaluation.
- 6.3 The surveillance evaluation report shall include at least the information specified in Box 7 below:

Box 7

The surveillance evaluation process

- 1 Names and expertise of the auditor(s) involved in the evaluation;
- 2 A description of the evaluation including:
 - a) General itinerary with dates;
 - b) Approach to evaluation of management systems (e.g. visits to head offices, regional offices, etc.), and main items and places audited;
 - c) List of MUs selected for evaluation, and rationale for their selection;
 - d) Updated list of members of a group certificate;
 - e) Main sites audited within each selected MU;

¹² In the case of group certification, the client is the entity contractually responsible to the certification body for maintaining conformity with the group requirements.

¹³ In the case of group certification the region in which the group is located shall be described.

- f) Consultation with stakeholders including a list of institutions/individuals informed about the evaluation and a list of individuals who were interviewed by auditors in the evaluation or who contributed information in writing);
 - g) Additional techniques employed for evaluation (e.g. overflight of whole forest area);
- 3 A statement of the total person days spent on the surveillance evaluation including preparatory work and time spent carrying out on-site work (including review of documents and records, interviewing stakeholders), but excluding travel to and from the region in which the certified forest is located.
- 4 An update specifying any changes to the scope of the certificate, including any changes to the group membership in the case of group certificates. The update shall include:
- a) Changes in the basic quantitative information as collected in accordance with (Box 6, clause 1);
 - b) List of chemical pesticides used within the forest area since the last audit, summarized quantitative data on their use (amount and area) and reason for use;
 - c) Number of accidents in forest work (serious / fatal) since the last audit.

Standards

- 5 A clear explanation of any changes to the Forest Stewardship Standard used in the previous evaluation. The Organization shall be assessed against any elements of the standard that have changed since the previous evaluation.

Observations

- 6 Systematic presentation of observations demonstrating conformity or non-conformity with applicable FSC normative requirements used for the evaluation.
- 7 Observations demonstrating whether or not The Organization has corrected all previously identified non-conformities (conditions).
- 8 Summarized presentation of the findings on conforming with FSC-POL-30-001 *FSC Pesticides Policy*, national indicators for the use and risk management of Highly Hazardous Pesticides and site-specific mitigation and monitoring strategies defined to minimize risk of the use of the chemical pesticide, as defined in the environmental and social risk assessment (ESRA).
- 9 Observations relating to the review and resolution of any complaints raised by stakeholders with The Organization, or with the certification body, since the previous evaluation.

Surveillance decision

- 10 Explicit identification and discussion of any issues that were hard to assess, for example because of divergent stakeholder opinions, or difficulty in interpreting the standard in the field.
- NOTE: In cases where one or more stakeholders have alleged a non-conformity but the auditors have concluded that a certificate should be maintained, the surveillance report shall explain why the auditors concluded there was no non-conformity, *or* why the alleged non-conformity was considered minor, *and/or* show how the allegation is explicitly linked to a new corrective action requirement;
- 11 Clear identification of any minor or major non-conformity identified as a result of surveillance.
- 12 Clear specification of any non-conformity identified as a result of surveillance, and/or non-conformities remaining to be closed out from previous evaluations.
- 13 A recommendation from the lead auditor:
- a) Whether or not The Organization is in continued conformity with the certification requirements;
 - b) Whether or not the certificate should be maintained, or if any corrective measures shall be taken.

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Annex 4 Forest Certification Public Summary Reports

Forest Certification Public Summary Reports are simplified reports that are automatically generated by the FSC FM Digital Audit Report template. They contain a summary of key information about each Organization's evaluation that is made publicly available on the FSC database of registered certificates. This mechanism aims at providing transparency about forest management evaluations, enabling all interested or affected parties to confirm that certification decisions are justified and acceptable. The size and complexity of the forest operation influence the extent of the information contained in Public Summary Reports (i.e. SLIMF's Public Summary Reports are typically shorter than the reports of large forest operations). Although these reports are automatically generated by FSC, this Annex of the standard specifies and provides clarity to stakeholders about the basic information that will be published in the public summaries.

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1 Language(s)

1.1 Public certification summaries shall be made available in:

- a) One of the official languages of FSC for certificates that cover a total forest area of more than 1,000 ha in the scope¹⁴, *and*
- b) At least one of the official language(s) of the country in which the certified forest MU is located, or the most widely spoken language of the Indigenous Peoples in the area in which the certified forest MU is located.

NOTE: FSC reserves the right to request a translation of any forest certification public summary report into one of the official languages of FSC, at the expense of the certification body.

2 Public availability

2.1 The forest certification public summary report (including translations as required) shall be published on the FSC database of registered certificates (<https://info.fsc.org/>) before a certificate is issued or re-issued.

2.2 Annual updates (see Section 7, below) shall be added to the published summary report or published separately on the FSC database of registered certificates (<https://info.fsc.org/>) no later than ninety (90) days after the on-site closing meeting at the end of a surveillance evaluation.

3 Units

3.1 Data presented in the reports should be in metric system units. If non metric system units are used the report shall provide conversion rates together with any assumptions made in order to make conversion into metric units possible.

4 Title page

4.1 The title page of the public summary report shall clearly identify:

- a) The name and contact details of the certification body, including contact person and website address;
- b) The date (format: day/ month/ year) the public summary was last updated;
- c) The name and contact details of The Organization¹⁵ and contact person;
- d) The name and/or location of the certified forest area(s)¹⁶;
- e) The FSC certificate registration code;

¹⁴ Unless *all* the MUs within the scope of the certificate meet the eligibility criteria for a 'small forest' (see *FSC-STD-01-003*).

¹⁵ In the case of group certification The Organization is the group entity.

¹⁶ In the case of group certification the region in which the group is located shall be specified.

- f) The dates of issue and expiry of the certificate;
- g) The sequential information on the evaluation results presented in the report (e.g. “main evaluation”, “2nd surveillance”, “3rd surveillance”).

5 Certificate registration information

- 5.1 The basic quantitative information for each certificate shall be entered by the certification body or updated in the FSC database of registered certificates (<https://info.fsc.org/>) at each evaluation as required by FSC.

6 Content

- 6.1 The report shall be short and concise and bring up the most important features and in the specific format outlined in this standard (as per Box 8 below). The report should not be more than 15-20 pages.

6.2 SLIMFs

The elements marked with an asterisk (*) in the table are NOT required in the case of certificates issued to single SLIMF MUs.

6.3 Groups

Forest certification public summary reports for group certificates shall include an up-to-date list of all non-SLIMFs group members with name, contact details and the geographical location of their MUs in the scope of the certificate, unless national legal restrictions do not allow publication of this kind of information (this needs to be specified in the public summary report).

NOTE: Group member information for SLIMF MUs may be added on a voluntary basis.

- 6.4 Certification bodies shall include an up-to-date list of all forestry contractors included in the scope of the certificate in the public summary report, including, for each contractor: a) Name and contact details; b) The date of entering the group and, where relevant, the date of leaving the group.

Box 8

Description of forest management

- 1* A description of the forest, land use history and regional context;
- 2 A general description of the management system (e.g., uneven-aged management, even-aged management, rotation length, silvicultural prescriptions);
- 3 A summary of the management plan, including a description of:
 - a) the management objectives;

- b) The forest resources (land use and ownership status, socio-economic conditions, forest composition, profile of adjacent lands);
- c) Geographical location of the non-SLIMFs MU(s) in the scope of the certificate:
 - i) Latitude E/W ### degrees ## minutes
 - ii) Longitude N/S #### degrees ## minutes

NOTE: The coordinates should refer to the center of a MU.
- d) The management structures (e.g. management structure, division of responsibilities, use of contractors, provision of training, etc.) implemented by The Organization;
- e) The silvicultural and/or other management systems being implemented (incl. harvesting techniques and equipment, rationale for species selection);
- f) The environmental safeguards;
- g) The management strategy for the identification and protection of rare, threatened and endangered species;
- h) The management strategy for the identification and protection of High Conservation Values;
- i) The Organization's procedures for monitoring growth, yield and forest dynamics (incl. changes in flora and fauna), environmental and social impacts, and costs, productivity, and efficiency;
- j) Summarized quantitative data on the use of pesticides (names and quantities of pesticides applied, size of area treated annually).

4 A description of any area of forest which The Organization has chosen to exclude from the scope of the certificate together with an explanation of the reason for its exclusion and description of the controls that are in place to ensure that there is no risk of confusion being generated as to which activities or products are certified and which are not.

Standard(s)

5 Reference to the standards used (e.g., Interim National Standard, National Forest Stewardship Standard; FSC-STD-30-005) including the version number and date of finalization.

NOTE: The summary report shall include a statement and/or link to the website(s) where the standard(s) used can be downloaded or requested.

6* A description of the process of local adaptation of the standard, if applicable.

The evaluation process

7 The evaluation dates: (specify actual dates or month, year and duration).

8* A general description of the evaluation including, if applicable, pre-evaluation audits. The description should give an overview of what was audited, audit methods and time allocation when significant.

NOTE: Translations shall be published no later than thirty (30) days after the publication of the annual updates.

9* A general description of the consultation process with stakeholders.

10 The forest certification public summary reports and their annual updates shall remain in the FSC database and shall not be removed at the next certification cycle or in case of suspension of The Organization.

Observations

11 A general presentation of the observations on which the certification decision is based, including:

a) A list of main strengths and weaknesses with respect to the overall conformity with the FSC normative requirements used for the evaluation;

b)* A summarized presentation of findings with clear information to enable the reader to make an easy correlation between the requirements of each of the criteria of the FSC normative document used and the performance of the certified operation;

c)* Clear and systematic presentation of the comments received from stakeholders (who are not members of The Organization under evaluation) before, during or after the evaluation, and the corresponding follow-up action and conclusions from the certification body;

NOTE: Similar stakeholder comments may be grouped by issues.

d)* A description of any preconditions that had been issued, and the actions taken by The Organization to close out those preconditions prior to the issue of the certificate.

Certification decision

12 A clear statement that the forest has been certified by the certification body as meeting the requirements of the specified standard, the date of certification, and the expiry date of the certificate.

13 A list of all non-conformities that the managers are required to correct in order to maintain their certification, including the time course within which corrective actions shall be taken.

7 Updates

- 7.1 An update of the public summary report shall be made publicly available on the FSC database of registered certificates ([FSC Public Search](#)) within ninety (90) days after the last field day of each surveillance evaluation, regardless of when the certification body holds the closing meeting. Updates should be in the form of additional pages published separately or added to the original public summary.
- 7.2 Updates shall include at least the following information:
- a) The date of the surveillance evaluation and a brief summary of the sites inspected;
 - b) A description of any significant changes in the management and/or harvesting methods;
 - c) Quantitative data on the use of pesticides (names and quantities of pesticides applied, size of area treated since last audit);
 - d) A description of the actions taken by The Organization to correct any non-conformities identified at previous evaluations or subsequently;
 - e) The certification body's conclusions as to whether the actions taken constitute full conformity with the requirements of the relevant elements of the applicable FSC normative requirements and, if not, whether the remaining non-conformities are considered 'minor' or 'major' non-conformities;
 - f) Description of any further non-conformities identified as a result of the surveillance audit;
 - g) Updated presentation of stakeholder comments as required in Box 8, Clause 11 c) above;
 - h) Updated list of members in a group certificate (see Clause 7.1 above);
 - i) Statement of new conditions (requirement to correct all identified non-conformities);
 - j) The updated certification decision.



Forest Stewardship Council®

www.fsc.org

FSC International Center gGmbH
Adenauerallee 134 · 53113 Bonn · Germany



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