

Developing Forest Stewardship Standards – A Survival Guide



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**Developing Forest Stewardship Standards
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Taiga Rescue Network (TRN) is an international network of non-governmental organizations and indigenous peoples working for the protection and sustainable use of the world's boreal forests. TRN was established in 1992 to give a voice to those wanting to see sensitive development in the boreal region. Today more than 180 organisations are participants of the network.

The report can be downloaded from TRN's website at www.taigarescue.org

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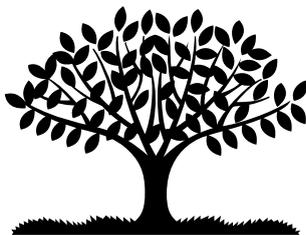
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Foreword

THIS REVISION OF THE SURVIVAL GUIDE to Developing Forest Stewardship Standards is extremely welcome. The standards have powerful impacts on the work of forest managers and certification bodies, so their development puts very heavy demands on everyone involved. The process is governed by numerous international protocols, as well as FSC's own guidelines. These can be intimidating. The survival guide describes the common-sense steps which underlie the whole process, and shows how the development of standards is not the preserve of technical specialists but is open to everyone interested.

The FSC system for forestry standards is based on open, multi-stakeholder participation. It is one of FSC's most valuable contributions to the future of good forestry. This guide will help to keep it so.

Timothy Synnott,
Forest Policy Director
Forest Stewardship Council



Introduction

The Forest Stewardship Council¹ (FSC)'s system of forest certification has become firmly established as a global mechanism for identifying and promoting good forest management. Good forest management is defined by standards developed by local stakeholders within the framework of the FSC's international Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship. Forest stewardship standards may be developed for a country or for a region. The use of national and regional forest stewardship standards ensures that the certification process is fair, transparent and locally relevant.

National and regional forest stewardship standards must be endorsed by FSC in order to ensure the consistency and integrity of standards used in the FSC certification system in different parts of the world. Endorsement means that the standards meet all the requirements set by FSC to ensure the credibility of the FSC certification process. These requirements refer to both the content of the standards and the process used to develop them. They include:

- Compatibility with the Principles and Criteria;

- a local consultative process for their design;
- compatibility with local circumstances;
- and documented efforts to harmonise the standard with FSC standards in neighbouring regions.

The continued success of the FSC system depends on the success of local stakeholders in developing national or regional forest stewardship standards. Developing a standard that meets all the requirements for FSC endorsement takes time and energy and involves a lot of people. It can appear complex and daunting. This guide is designed to help you on your way. It is aimed at the people most closely involved in developing forest stewardship standards. It is an informal document based on experience. It aims to present the key elements of the FSC's official documents on the subject, plus some practical advice based on lessons learned by groups that have already completed their standards or made significant progress.

Most of the official documentation is based on common sense, and can be summarised very simply as follows:

- Create a Working Group that bal-

¹ The Forest Stewardship Council is legally constituted as an "Asociacion Civil" (AC) or Civil Association, in Mexico. This is the legal entity that people join when they become members of the FSC. FSC owns the FSC trademark and licences their use and maintains the international Principles and Criteria of Forest Stewardship. In this document we try to distinguish between the organisation FSC and the FSC secretariat or headquarters.

ances the different interests as much as possible, and make every effort to solve problems and find solutions that everyone can live with.

- Establish clear rules of procedure at the beginning of the process.
- Consult everyone who is, or is likely to be, interested.
- Be open and transparent in the way you work.
- Communicate regularly with everyone involved, with FSC Groups in neighbouring countries and with FSC headquarters.
- Make sure that your Standard represents good practice, that it can be understood and interpreted by foresters and certification bodies alike, and that it is feasible to implement. A field test helps with this.
- Make sure that the Standard is compatible with the FSC Principles and Criteria and follows the structure of the P&C.
- Follow the instructions issued by FSC headquarters. Read them in full before you start and refer to them often, especially as they evolve over time (you will find that ignorance of the rules is no defence).

The guide does not replace the official documentation; every standard-setting committee should make sure they have copies of the official documents for reference. A number of other documents that standard-setting committees may find useful are listed in Annex 3. Some of the most useful documents will be the standards that other committees have developed and that have been endorsed by FSC or are at an advanced stage of drafting. Contact details are in Annex 4. At the end of the guide are two case histories: one from the Komi Republic in Russia, the other from Nicaragua. They are included just to illustrate how standard-setting processes have been established and made progress in two very different parts of the world.

The chances are that you will encounter problems that the guide and all the documents on the subject do not help you to solve; but it is likely that another committee has been there before you and will be able to help. There is now a lot of experience of standards development around the world, which you and your committee can draw on. Don't hesitate to use it.

The following FSC documents provide the official guidance for developing national or regional standards. They are available from the FSC secretariat (e-mail to: fscoax@fscoax.org):

- *FSC National Initiatives Manual* (Part 4 chapter 12 Drafting of Regional Forest Stewardship Standards), I.J. Evison, September 1998 or subsequent versions when revised.
(The guidance on process in this guide is simplified from this document – you should also make sure you have the full manual).
- *FSC Secretariat Generic Regional Forest Stewardship Standard Evaluation Report*, FSC, September 1998.
- *FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship*, FSC AC, Revised February 2000 (Annex 1).

FSC endorsement of forest stewardship standards

Endorsement of a standard refers to the process by which a draft forest stewardship standard becomes formally approved by the FSC Board of Directors. An FSC Working Group submits the final draft to the FSC secretariat together with a detailed description of the process, a completed checklist and any supporting documentation referred to in the standard. Any group can develop a forest stewardship standard, but the FSC board will consider only standards presented by an FSC endorsed Working Group (see the section on *Setting up an FSC working group* for more on this). The reason for this is to help ensure that the proper balance of stakeholders support the finished standard. Without local guidance it is very difficult for FSC to be able to evaluate the process.

Requirements for FSC working groups

One of the tasks of the FSC Contact Person is to promote the establishment of an FSC Working Group. Some of the FSC rules for Working Groups are listed below, and more are shown in the FSC National Initiatives Manual.

They include elements such as including at least 50 percent FSC mem-

bers. The working group is encouraged to go ahead with developing standards, at the same time as fulfilling the FSC requirements. The Working Group is usually set up as a separate legal entity, but it may also be an informal group, with legal responsibilities taken by an existing organization. When all the requirements are satisfied, the working group legal entity signs an agreement with FSC (the working group contract), and it becomes an officially endorsed FSC Working Group. The process requires the conditional approval of the FSC board of directors, and the final approval and signature of the FSC Executive Director. The agreement covers the range of roles and responsibilities, including the use of the FSC trademarks.

Make sure you understand the FSC's rules

FSC has developed guidelines and rules for standards and for their development process. Some standard-setting committees have made a lot of progress with developing a standard only to find that they have not followed all the FSC's rules. They have then had to make changes that require further discussion, which takes more time and money. It is therefore a good



idea to make sure you understand the rules before starting the process of developing a standard, and even before formally establishing a standard-setting committee. Once the process has started, Contact Persons or Working Group Co-ordinators are strongly advised to consult regularly with their FSC Regional Co-ordinator at the FSC Secretariat about the process, difficulties encountered, and successive drafts. This will help to avoid delays caused by misunderstandings that could have been cleared up earlier.

Specifically, the Board will want to know that the following process requirements have been met:

- **Shared ownership of process**

No one particular interest group has dominated the design or implementation of the process. The group that develops the standard must incorporate a balance of interests, including, but not limited to, ecological, social and economic interest groups.

- **Fair decision-making processes**

The Working Group must have fair decision-making procedures. The ideal is consensus based decision making, where nothing is agreed until all parties are content. This

may require some committee members to accept some aspects of the standard that are far from optimal in their own eyes in order to achieve agreement on the whole. However, other conventional democratic processes, such as majority voting, are acceptable, providing all members of the group or committee agree on the process in advance.

- **Transparency and accountability**

The standard-setting process must be transparent and accountable, both to Working Group members, and to the wider public. Minutes of meetings must be made available and the rationale and/or authority for any decisions should be clear.

- **Adequate participation and representation**

The process should attempt to engage with and take account of the views of as many stakeholder groups as possible, including those groups that may not fully agree with or endorse the concept of certification. All FSC members in the area should be contacted and invited to contribute.

- **Mechanism for future revision**

A mechanism for encouraging the future review and revision of the

standards, including ongoing, field-based input, should be included.

- **Clear grievance procedure**

The consultative process design must include a mechanism for reaching decisions and resolving disputes, preferably with a dispute resolution committee.

Since 1 January 1999, the following additional recommendations are being implemented by the FSC Secretariat²:

- **Structure**

National and regional FSC forest stewardship standards must follow the structure of the FSC P&C and must include the text of each P&C.

- **Auditability**

The FSC Board will endorse a forest stewardship standard only if it

can be applied in certification assessments without further interpretation or elaboration.

You will find further guidance on achieving FSC endorsement of your standard in the *FSC National Initiatives Manual* (available at the FSC web site) and *FSC Generic Regional Forest Stewardship Standard Evaluation Report Form* (available from FSC on request). Read and follow these in full in order to achieve FSC endorsement of your standard.



² A third recommendation – that FSC forest stewardship standards must specify operationally what would constitute a "major failure" of the FSC Principles and Criteria in a certification assessment – was not being implemented at the time this Guide was published. The reason it was not being implemented is that several Working Groups found the requirement almost impossible to fulfil. They argued that any non-compliance is "failure" to meet the Standard, but that what constitutes "major" and "minor" failures must be part of a certification body's overall evaluation and related to the specific context. You should check with FSC headquarters to see whether or not this is still the position.

Standards explained

To develop good standards it helps to understand how they are used. Forest certification requires auditors to assess the management of a forest against a standard. In the FSC system, the auditors are employed by independent organisations called certification bodies that are authorised to issue certificates confirming that forest management complies with the FSC's requirements. In a certification assessment, the auditors look for objective evidence that the requirements of the standard are being met. The evidence may come from a variety of sources:

- The forest organisation's documents;
- observation in the forest;
- statements made by the managers and other staff of the forest organisation or stakeholders such as local communities, non-governmental organisations and government agencies.

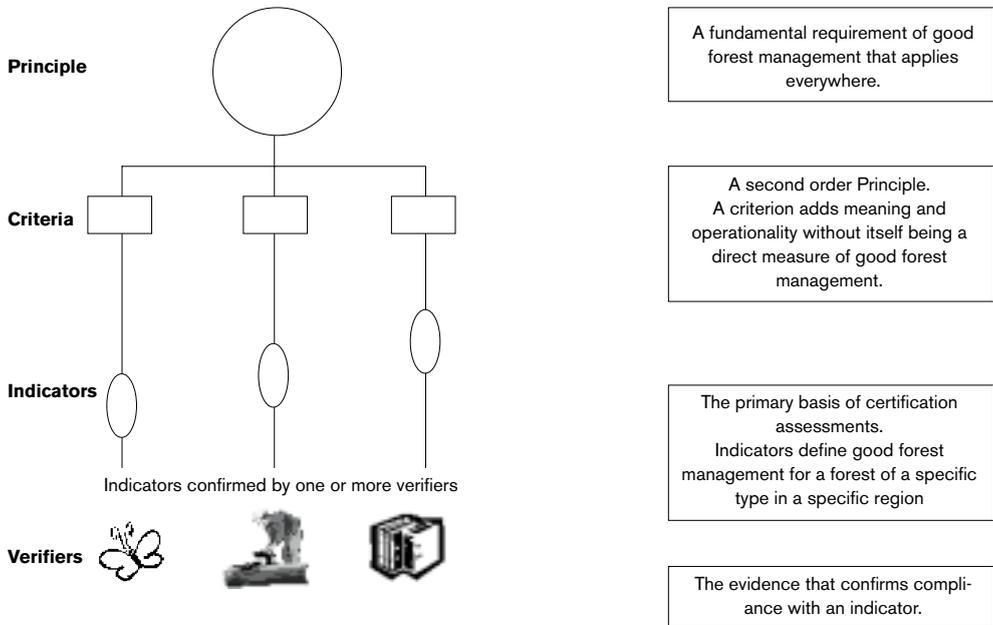
Depending on the size and sensitivity of the forest being assessed, it may take the audit team as little as a day or as much as several weeks to collect all of the objective evidence it needs.

When the audit team has finished the assessment, the team prepares a report setting out the objective evidence it has found and stating whether each requirement has been met. The

certification body then decides, on the basis of the report, whether or not to grant certification. The certification body also takes account of other guidelines, which are published by FSC from time to time. If some of the requirements are not met, the certification body may ask for corrective action to be taken before it grants certification or within a certain time after certification has been granted.

Principles, criteria, indicators and verifiers

The task of a standard-setting committee is to decide the requirements that auditors assess forests against in a particular country or region. This may sound simple, but the structure of a forest stewardship standard and the words that are used to describe the different elements often cause problems. The key words are Principles, Criteria, Indicators and Verifiers (P, C, I and V). A lot has been written about them but there is still much confusion about what they really are and how they relate to each other. You can save a lot of time and confusion by making sure everyone in the Working Group is clear about what these terms mean before you start. Think of P, C, I and Vs as a hierarchy of requirements, from Principles at the most global or abstract level, to Verifiers at the most



*Figure 1: The hierarchy of Principles, Criteria, Indicators and Verifiers
Adapted from CIFOR Criteria and Indicators Toolbox Series No 1*

local or practical level (Figure 1). Each level should relate to the next level in the hierarchy; that is, each Principle needs to have Criteria, each Criterion needs Indicators and each Indicator or group of Indicators needs Verifiers. This is why it is helpful to include the full text of each P&C in your standard as it gives the standard a structure and helps it to make sense.

In the FSC system, there is a single set of Principles and Criteria that applies globally and that has been decided by FSC internationally. The task of national and regional standards committees is to develop Indicators and Verifiers that interpret and elaborate these Principles and Criteria for their particular country or region. Box 1 gives some examples of indicators that have been developed by different standards committees under FSC Principle 6, Criterion 6.4, and verifiers that can be used to check compliance.

You will also come across the word Norm or Threshold. These specify a level of performance that must be achieved before a forest can be certified and are typically numeric or quantitative. In the example of an indicator from Sweden in Box 1, the figure of five per cent is a Norm/Threshold. You do not have to develop norms or thresholds; they are just one way of approaching the development of indicators.

If you want to read more about the concept of Principles, Criteria, Indicators and Verifiers, there is a very good discussion in Chapter 5 of CIFOR Criteria and Indicators Toolbox Series No 1 and other (references in Annex 2). Good indicators are usually simple statements that something is done, or that something exists. The auditors can then confirm compliance (yes) or non-compliance (no).

Box 1:

Examples of Indicators and Verifiers for FSC Principle 6

Principle 6: Forest management shall conserve biological diversity and its associated values, water resources, soils, and unique and fragile ecosystems and landscapes, and, by so doing, maintain the ecological functions and the integrity of the forest.

Criterion 6.4: Representative samples of existing ecosystems within the landscape shall be protected in their natural state and recorded on maps, appropriate to the scale and intensity of operations and the uniqueness of the affected resources.

Examples of Indicators: **From Canadian Maritimes Region** Existing ecosystems on the ownership are inventoried and documented on management plan maps. Management plan addresses the protection of representative samples of existing ecosystems within the landscape. Representative samples are protected in their natural state.

From Sweden At least 5 per cent of the productive forest area is exempted from measures other than the management required to preserve and support the natural biological diversity of the habitat. Selection and demarcation of areas shall be prioritised according to their importance for biodiversity and representation in the landscape. Exemptions may be made for land holdings of less than 20 ha of productive forest land which have no areas that have, or may in the near future develop high biodiversity values. Measures to promote outdoor activities may be taken on condition that the biodiversity values are not harmed.

From Bolivia The samples of representative ecosystems are identified at least in maps, and are not significantly threatened by forest utilisation.

Examples of Verifiers:

- Maps showing range and location of different ecosystems and showing location and size of representative samples to be protected.
- Management plan showing how these areas will be protected and what activities will and will not take place in these areas.
- Evidence from interviews with managers and forest workers that they know where these areas are, can identify the boundaries on the ground and understand the implications for their work.
- Site inspection of some of these areas that are close to harvesting sites to verify that they are identified and protected in practice.

Developing a national/ regional forest stewardship standard

The development of a forest stewardship standard follows a well established path, beginning with the setting-up of a standard-setting committee and ending with submission to FSC headquarters and (if you've done a good job) endorsement (Figure 2). Not all standard-setting committees stick to the exact line of this path, but a successful committee includes all of the stages. The time from start to finish varies enormously; two years is a reasonable expectation. It is unusual to take less time than this and it may take a lot longer. In this part of the guide we look at the key phases.

Committees, Groups and Initiatives

First, a short explanation of Standard-setting Committees, Working Groups and National Initiatives. FSC is represented in individual

countries by national initiatives. A national initiative may be led by one person (FSC Contact Person) or a group of people (FSC Working Group). FSC and the national initiative sign a for-

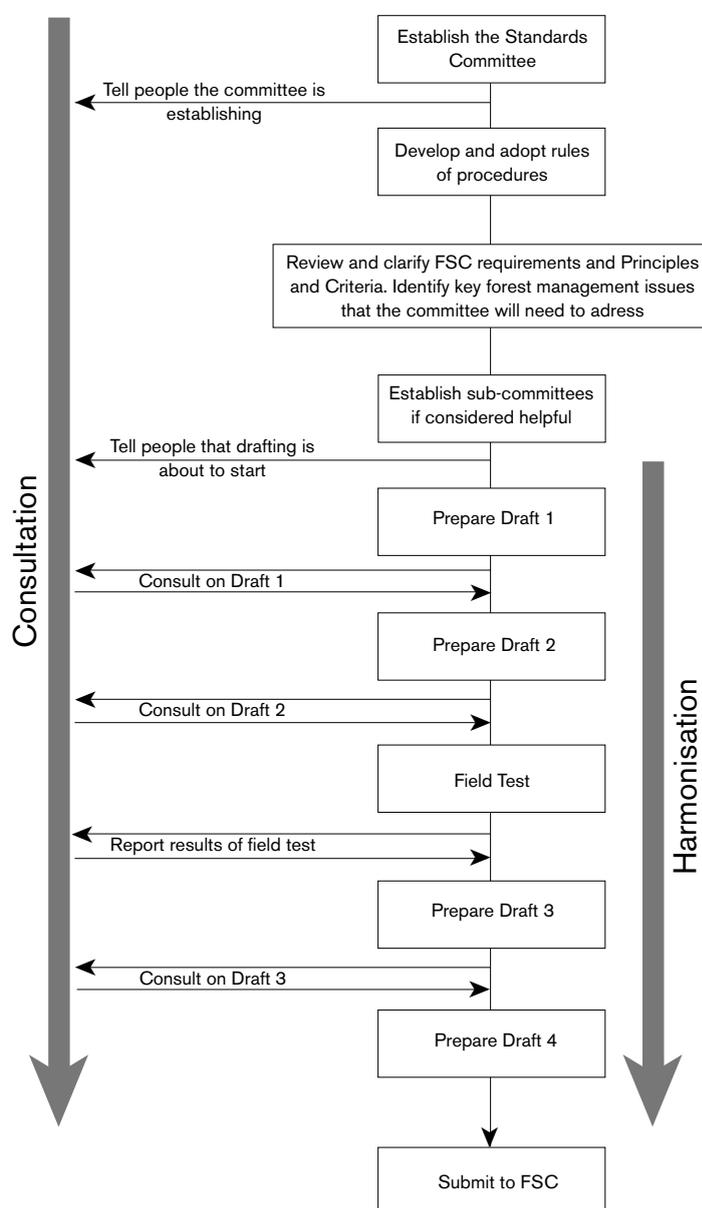


Figure 2: The process of developing a standard.

mal agreement that defines the powers and responsibilities of the national initiative. Chapter 3 of the FSC National Initiatives Manual goes into the detail. Standard-setting committees can be independent of FSC national initiatives, but most are established by an FSC Working Group. The important thing to remember is that the FSC board will consider standards for endorsement only when they are presented by a FSC endorsed Working Group. So if there isn't an FSC Working Group in your country, you need to establish one.

Setting up an FSC Working Group

An FSC Working Group can be any size but usually consists of between six and 20 people – a compromise between including as many interests as possible and having a group that is small enough to work efficiently in meetings. The group should be as balanced as possible between social, environmental and economic interests. It should also include people from different parts of the country, different parts of society and with different areas of expertise.

Include everyone from the start

When establishing the Working Group it is important to make sure that no sector is excluded, or has any reason to claim that they have been excluded. One way of doing this is to hold an open information meeting where the FSC process is explained and any question are answered. It is probably worthwhile to invite a representative from another country, where FSC is more advanced, to give

a presentation and help answer questions. It may be possible to invite a member of the FSC's headquarters secretariat or board instead or as well.

At the end of the session all those interested in forming an FSC group can be asked to remain or return to form the group. This approach was taken in both Canada and Ireland. Those who stayed or returned were then asked to choose their own representatives from each chamber. In both Canada and Ireland this was done simply by asking people to decide which chamber they belonged in, dividing them into different parts of the room and leaving them to decide who could best represent their interests.

Organise people into chambers

Most Working Groups divide their members into three chambers – the social, environmental and economic chambers of FSC. Some have added a fourth chamber because it suits their particular circumstances; for example, an indigenous peoples chamber in countries where first nations have a major stake in forest management. Take advice from FSC headquarters and other Working Groups on this.

In most countries, the government forestry administration has a lot of influence over the way forests are managed and in many cases own and manage forests. Government organisations cannot become voting members of the FSC, but FSC Working Groups are encouraged to welcome and involve government officials with specific expertise in national Working Groups either as participants or as observers.

Establishing a Standard-setting Committee

The standard-setting committee should include the skills and expertise needed for the technical exercise of developing the standard. If the Working Group has the necessary expertise, it could act as the standard-setting committee, appointing sub-committees, task groups or consultants to do the research and drafting³. The Committee also needs to be representative of the interests of all main stakeholder groups. This can be difficult to achieve, but it is essential that no major group of stakeholders is unrepresented. Special efforts may be necessary, especially towards social interests. At the same time, try to avoid the Committee becoming too large. People that are not members of the Committee can still participate actively in the process, but by commenting on drafts as stakeholders. There's more on this in the chapter "Potential problems" with the standard-setting process.

Responsibilities of committee members

Members of FSC Working Groups and Standard Committees need to be prepared to represent their constituency. If the Group or Committee is a sensible size, their FSC constituency is likely to be wider than their normal constituency, which may usually be their employer or the organisations they work for. In some cases they may be arguing on behalf of organisations which they might normally regard as competitors and opponents. For example, a social representative might need to represent both employees and contractors. It is very important that representatives communicate the activities of the Working Group and Committee to their constituencies and feed comments and concerns back into the process. This will help ensure that the finished standard takes account of all points of view and that it has wide acceptance.



³ In many countries the FSC national initiative has two or more committees for different purposes. For example in the UK there is a Steering Group (dealing with running the organisation, politics, setting terms of reference and funding), a Standards Working Group (developing and testing the standards) and a Promotion Working Group (marketing FSC and the FSC Logo). The sample Terms of Reference in Annex 3 explains this further.

Box 2: Build a Solid Platform – Advice from the Great Lakes process

Take time to establish a fair and functional process at the beginning, because it is the foundation upon which all else will rest. It is tempting for a group of stakeholders – especially like-minded stakeholders – to roll up their sleeves and get down to work, tackling substantive issues like the wording of regional standards. Rules of order and grievance procedures may seem academic or unduly cumbersome when discussions are going smoothly. However, these procedural “traffic cops” become crucial if an impasse is reached or discussions break down.

Adopting Terms of Reference

Standard-setting processes sometimes make a lot of progress then suddenly come to a halt because there is a problem and the Committee cannot agree on how to resolve it. You can help prevent this happening by agreeing Terms of Reference (ToR) before starting serious work on the standard. The ToR make it clear what the Committee is aiming to achieve and the procedures that the Committee will follow. It might be useful to choose a smaller group of people, a “core-group” to prepare the ToR, and to propose decision making processes, reporting structures and any other important information about how you intend to work.

To avoid confusion about the relationship of the standard to the FSC, the ToR can state that the process is linked to FSC and is not an unique national process that some members are linking to FSC while others are not. It is important that the ToR state that the intention is for the standard to comply with the FSC’s P&C, although obviously the standard may be used for other purposes than certification under the FSC. In addition to the ToR,

some Working Groups have asked all participants to sign a letter of commitment to the process and to the aims of FSC. The ToR also need to state the relationship of the Standard Committee and any subcommittees to the FSC Working Group. The ToR of the UK FSC Working Group’s Steering Group, Standards Group and Promotion Group are given in Annex 3 as an example.

Funding

The consultative process and drafting of a standard require money to cover the expenses of staff, consultants’ time and expenses, administration support, printing and distribution, among other things. The national initiatives’ role includes fundraising, and the staff should be supported by FSC Working Group members in identifying and approaching funding sources. Limited funding is available from the FSC Secretariat for some countries to develop standards. Funding will be in the form of financial and technical assistance. Financial assistance will be for initial certification workshops, consultative processes and for drafting standards. Technical assistance will be in the form of presentations on FSC certification

processes, consultative processes, help in drafting standards, and training by the FSC staff or consultants.

The funding available from FSC will not be enough to take you to the end of the process. You will need to be prepared to put a lot of effort into raising sufficient funds. National governments, international development agencies, private foundations, business and environmental organisations have all funded standards processes. Make sure that you have enough to be able to make substantial progress, at least to the first draft.

When you think you're ready ...

- Check that you've done everything possible to ensure a healthy process.
- Use the checklist in Box 3.

Box 3: Checklist for a healthy standards process

Adapted from Johnsson (2000)⁴

Who?

- Who is at the table, who do they represent, and what authority do they have?
- Who else should be at the table? Is there anyone else who needs to be consulted?
- What mechanisms should be used for broader consultation and when?
- How are latecomers or new arrivals integrated?
- When can observers attend and what is their role?

How?

- Set rules of conduct for members. For example:
 - Act in good faith
 - Focus on the problem, not people or personalities
 - Participants withholding agreement must propose alternatives; others must consider how all interests may be met
- Appoint a chairperson? Use a facilitator?
- Define consensus
- State what happens when you can't reach consensus. Alternatives include:
 - Use an outside panel of experts
 - Non-binding mediation
 - Vote
- Attendance/participation requirements
- Media relations – when, and who will be responsible for contacts with the media?
- Confidentiality – what can be said outside of the Committee?
- Records of discussions – how detailed should the records be? Should comments be attributed? Should records of meetings be formally approved?

Money

- How much money will be needed to complete the process?
- How much money is available?
- Who can be approached for more funds?
- Who will be responsible for fund raising?

⁴ Johnsson, Lorne, 2000. Process, Process, Process: Lessons Learned in Setting Regional Standards. Understorey: Journal of the Certified Forest Products Council. Volume 10, 1&2.

Drafting the standard

A helpful first step is to discuss the FSC Principles and Criteria as a Committee and identify aspects of forest management where there are wide differences of opinion or issues on which there is a serious shortage of information. You can then organise people (members of the Committee and additional experts if necessary) to put extra effort into those aspects at an early stage in the process.

Questions to ask about the standard as you draft it

Once drafting has started, there are some useful questions to ask about the structure and content of your standard to check that you are on course.

Will complying with this standard help to deliver good forest management?

Always keep in mind the real objective – good forest management. The FSC’s definition of good forest management is *management that is socially beneficial, environmentally appropriate and economically viable*. Try to make sure that all parts of your standard are relevant to this objective and do not have unintended negative effects. For example, demanding higher standards from managers who have more wildlife present because they have done more to conserve wildlife in the past

may encourage some managers to ensure that their forest retains as little wildlife as possible.

Inevitably, you will have to make trade-offs between different objectives when you are developing the standard. Make sure that you understand the trade-offs that your Committee is making. For example:

- harvesting has an unavoidable short term impact on the ecosystem; the Committee may agree that the impact is acceptable provided there is no long term harm to the forest ecosystem;
- setting aside areas for conservation of biodiversity reduces the economic return from the forest; the Committee may agree this is acceptable provided that the community that owns the forest still makes enough income to maintain itself and reinvest in the forest.

Does your text reflect the FSC Principles and Criteria?

The FSC Principles and Criteria (P&C) are your framework. You need to make sure that you have addressed all of the parts of the P&C. To make sure you do this, and because FSC requires it, you should organise your standard in the same order as the P&C and include the text of each P&C. This makes it easy to see whether anything



I am in favour of any reasonable, adequate measure, where appropriate.

has been missed out. You may find that some parts of the P&C are not relevant to your region, for example if there are no indigenous people or no plantations. This is fine as long as you can provide a reasoned explanation of why you are not addressing a particular aspect. The explanation must be clear to people from other regions and to the FSC Secretariat who will evaluate your final draft standard for endorsement. If you find whole Criteria that do not appear relevant, discuss it with the FSC Secretariat; it may be that you are not interpreting it correctly.

In some cases you may find that the stakeholder consensus in your country or region favours requirements that appear more demanding than the P&C. This is also fine as long as it really has wide support including amongst the people who will have to implement it – forest owners and managers in particular. You may also find that there are important forest issues in your region that the P&C do not mention; again, you may include these provided there is a consensus amongst the stakeholders involved in the proc-

ess. The P&C are the framework, they must all be addressed but you are not limited to what they contain. Extra criteria may be added, if agreed by the working group and the consultations.

Does the standard make sense?

The standard describes what **is** happening in a well-managed forest management not what we would like to happen. Using the present tense in your standard does this better than using future or conditional tenses. For example: "Archaeological sites **are** identified and protected" is preferable to "Archaeological sites **should be** identified and protected" or "Archaeological sites **will be** identified and protected". The certification body is evaluating the current management of the forest and needs to be able to answer YES or NO to each part of the standard.

Can an auditor use it to reach a clear decision?

Experienced forest auditors are the best people to answer this question and you can ask them to look at your stand-

Box 4: Provision for local adaptation in the FSC UK Standard

"It is also recognised that some applicants may feel that certain requirements are not appropriate to their particular situation. Some deviation to allow local adaptation may therefore be acceptable, but this will only be acceptable in the following situations:

- it is physically not possible to achieve the requirement in this forest;
- the approach taken is a more effective means of achieving the end result intended by the Principles and Criteria;
- the rationale for the deviation is greater social or environmental benefits, rather than economic gain;
- the impacts of the action – both positive & negative – are more carefully monitored and appraised than would otherwise be the case.

The certifier will take a professional judgement as to the acceptability of the deviation, and may consult appropriate specialists. The FSC Working Group will be fully informed of all significant deviations."

ard and give you some feedback about how useful it is as a tool for inspection. The trick is to achieve a balance between giving flexibility to forest managers to find solutions suitable for the multitude of different local circumstances, and giving the certification bodies clear enough instructions about what is acceptable. Try to avoid general wording like "reasonable, adequate, best and where appropriate" which is likely to be interpreted differently by different people. Be specific whenever possible, but remember that it is better to focus on what the group wants managed forests to be like rather than to prescribe in exact detail the methods that should be used to achieve this state. The field test will help to identify indicators and verifiers that auditors will find difficult to use in practise. Involving auditors in drafting from the beginning can help save time later in the process.

Flexibility versus auditability

One problem encountered is how to design the standard so that it is specific enough to be used for audits and assessments within the certification process, yet also flexible enough to be workable throughout the country or

region. This is a local issue, thus is best tackled with the advice of local expert stakeholders. You may also need to differentiate between requirements for large commercial properties and requirements for small, perhaps non-commercial operations, or requirements which only apply to specific forest types or parts of the country.

It is very important to make sure that your standard never results in managers having to carry out practices that are less good, just because parts of the standard are too rigid or inappropriate to their situation. On the other hand it is impossible to foresee and describe every possible scenario in a national or regional standard. One way to resolve this is to prepare a standard that covers the usual range of forest situations but to give forest managers the option to come up with a better solution for meeting a particular objective if the approach described in the standard is physically impossible or would actually lead to a worse outcome. If you do this it is helpful to indicate in the introduction under what sort of circumstances this is appropriate. See the introduction to the FSC UK Standard in Box 4 as an example.

Do responsible forest managers agree that it is operational?

There will always be some forest managers who argue that any standard does not work, but you do need to check that those who support the basic concept of certification, and are already considered to be using best practices, think they can use the standard on their own forests. If your supporters can't use it, the standard needs rethinking. Again, field trials are useful for checking this.

Is it fair to both small and large operations and for managers of different types of forest?

Some forest management issues can be addressed at every scale of operation. Some others can only be appropriately addressed at the landscape level; for example, landscape conservation and habitat requirements of large animals. The plans and actions of individual small owners can contribute to or detract from achieving landscape level goals but they cannot be expected to deliver them alone. A certification standard can address this by ensuring that each owner is responsible for doing their part and that they are working with their neighbours as much as possible.

In addition, there are some cases where owners or managers of large forests can reasonably be expected to do more than owners of small and perhaps financially marginal forests. Management planning, documentation, monitoring and training are the most likely aspects where it is not reasonable to expect small forest managers to have the same ambitions as a large company with many professional employees. When you organise the field

test, include different sizes of forests. It may be that you need to adjust the verifiers for small forests, for example the amount of documentation they have to provide. It may also be appropriate to decide that some indicators only apply for forests over a certain size. If this is the case it should be clear in the text what does and does not apply to a particular size or type of forest.

Do the standards work well in all parts of the country/region, and can it be applied to different forest types?

In countries or regions large enough to contain substantial geographical variation, you must ensure that all relevant forest types are covered by the standard. In some cases there will also be a need to use somewhat different formulations for similar forest types. The Swedish standard, for example, prescribes a certain amount of burning after logging in some areas of the boreal coniferous forest but not in others, depending on the amount of naturally occurring fires, while the UK standard allows larger scale logging operations in Scottish mountain areas than in small-scale southern English landscapes.

If it proves impossible to develop one standard covering all the forest types in a region, consider developing standards for specific biomes. For example, in Bolivia it is more difficult to develop a single standard for the whole country because the high plains are very different from the lowlands. So the standard prepared by the Bolivian committee is restricted to the lowlands and explains exactly where the standard may be used for certification.

Consultation

The purpose of consultation is:

- To maintain the transparency of the process and the accountability of the standard-setting committee;
- To provide a structured forum for stakeholder input;
- To produce a consensus-driven forest stewardship standard, acceptable to the broadest possible range of stakeholders.

Consultation is not just a matter of informing people about the standard-setting process and the content of the draft standard. You need to make every reasonable effort to get stakeholders to take an active interest in the process and to send in their comments. You need to take account of the comments that you receive and you need to be able to describe to FSC headquarters how you have taken account of them.

Who to consult

You will need to build up a list of people who want to be consulted about the standard. It is important to ensure that the process is not restricted to people who share your own perspective. Any individual, company or organisation interested in standards of forest management in your region is a stakeholder.

Some of these stakeholders will own or manage forests, some will be employed in the forestry sector or in the timber trade, others will be more

interested in public or traditional use of forests or in wildlife conservation. Others may live in or near forests and be affected by what goes on in those forests. Local and national government representatives also have a strong interest in the forestry, trade, employment, and environmental sectors.

It is better to have too many voices than too few. Although it will mean that the process takes longer it should also mean that you are more likely to have considered all aspects fully in the end. This should make the standards more robust and more widely accepted.

Check that people want to be consulted

Do not add names to your list without asking them – it may offend some people and generate more work with no benefit. Start by making a list of all the people and organisations that you think might be interested and write to them to ask if they would like to be consulted. Your first round of consultation will consist of all those who respond positively. Aim to increase the list especially in sectors that are under represented. You can do this by publishing open invitations to join the process at every available opportunity – in your leaflets, newsletters, annual reports, web site, at the end of your e-mail messages, in letters to specialist magazines and journals, at meetings

and conferences, and individually to people you meet.

When to consult

Most people feel more able to respond to a proposal document than to open questions, so you may want to develop a rough first draft within your Working Group before starting the wider consultation. All registered people consulted will need to receive the draft standard as it is developed. One month is the minimum amount of time you can reasonably give people to reply. More than two months is probably counter productive because they may put it to one side and forget. Once the first draft is prepared, the consultation process, including revisions of the drafts based upon the comments received, is likely to take at least one year.

How to consult

Consultation can take various forms and you may find that a mixture of approaches is useful. Some examples of approaches used are:

- Sending everyone a draft with a covering letter explaining what it is about and asking them for comments and suggestions for improvements;
- Circulating a very specific questionnaire addressing the most difficult issues;
- Holding local or national seminars where people can discuss their concerns;
- Posting information on web sites and starting chat rooms.

The approaches you use should be aligned to the needs of the particular groups you want to consult with. Whatever approaches you use it is important that people can see that you

are taking their input seriously; for example if you hold seminars, make sure someone is taking notes and that the input is transparently taken into account in preparing the next draft. People will get very frustrated if they make an effort to give input and it appears to be ignored. You can't make all the changes that will be suggested because they will often contradict each other but you can make sure that the comments are considered by the Working Group and that all sectors are able to exert some influence on the final text.

Limits to the consultative process

Consultative processes can be expensive, time-consuming and difficult to manage, particularly when a true diversity of interests is represented in the decision-making process. The FSC recognises these limitations. The overall aim of the consultative process is to develop a standard that is acceptable to the broadest range of stakeholders possible, without endangering the high level of integrity needed for certification to work as a credible mechanism.

Therefore, Working Groups should attempt to include as many diverse groups as possible in the consultative process, within realistic financial and time constraints. Furthermore, the Working Group should focus its efforts on targeting those groups and individuals that are clearly and demonstrably committed to FSC and certification, although it must not limit its consultation to this group. FSC membership should be considered one of several potential indications of commitment.

Field-testing – does it work in the woods?

FSC only recommends, and does not insist, that standards are field tested before being submitted for endorsement. In practice, field-testing is invaluable as a reality check and is likely to lead to significant improvements in the standard. The best people to lead the field trials are experienced forest auditors. One or two observers from the other sectors may be useful for building confidence in the process. However, the numbers should be kept small to enable the field-test team to work effectively.

If there are no certification bodies in your region who can do the field test, some of the FSC Working Group members or standard-setting committee members may be able to help but it is preferable to get the standard tested by people who have not been closely involved in its development. This is because it needs to be easily understood by the people who have to use it, not just those who wrote it; and authors often are not the best people to check their own work!

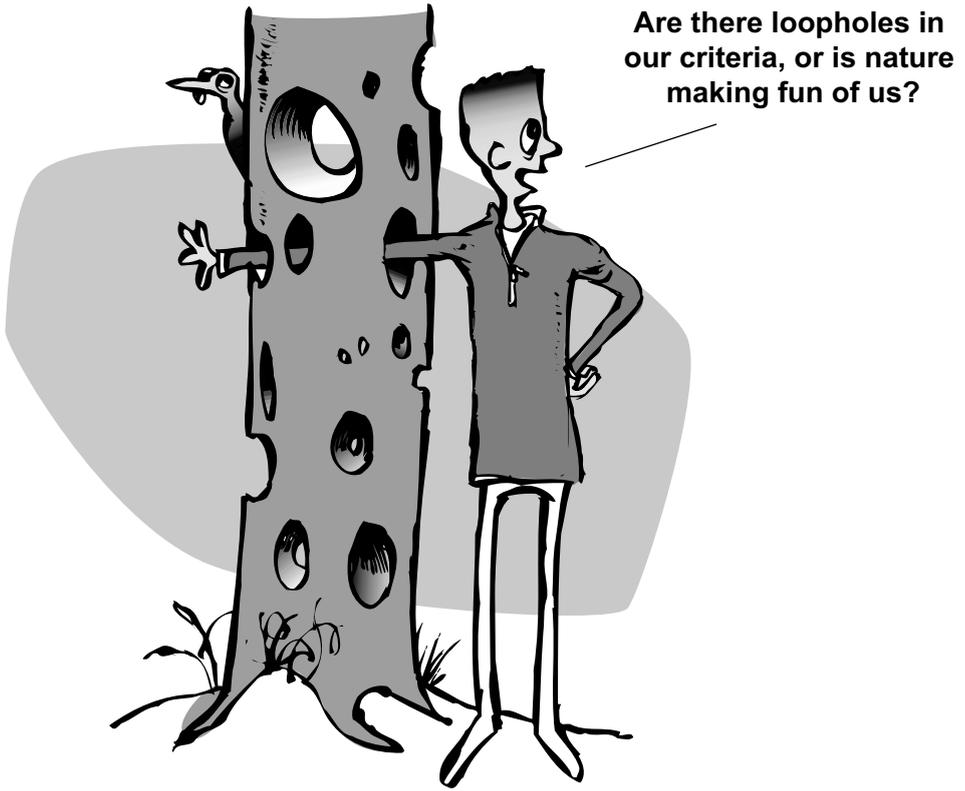
It is important to remember that it is the standard that is being tested, not the forest. The questions the field test team need to ask as they go through the draft standard with the forester in the test forest and forest office includes

the following:

- Can a responsible forest manager understand the Standard and reasonably be expected to comply with it?
- Can an auditor understand the standard?
- Can an auditor find the evidence necessary to evaluate compliance and make clear decisions?
- Does the standard allow certification to be commercially viable?

The standard is intended to identify good forest management, so you may find it most useful to test it in forests where the management is believed to be of a high quality; otherwise you may find it difficult to answer the first of these questions. Ideally the standard should be tested in the range of forest types, sizes and ownership and management structures that occur in the country or region where it will be applied. Field tests are expensive, however, and you may have to limit the scope of the test.

Certification has to be commercially viable for both the forest manager and the certification body. Therefore, it is important to take into account the costs of compliance as well as the costs of auditing. If it takes the audit team several days to collect suf-



ficient evidence to audit one small part of your standard, it will not work. Do not include verifiers that require auditors to carry out primary data collection; for example, auditors can verify compliance with indicators related to animal numbers or sedimentation of rivers by examining the quality of data collected by the forest organisation – they do not have to collect the data themselves.

Consider whether there are existing tools that can be used to assist the inspection process and make it simpler or more cost effective. For example, companies be required by law to carry out formal risk assessments for pesticide use, or environmental impact assessments, or surveys of wildlife. Auditors can use the reports of such assessments and surveys as verifiers.

Harmony with your neighbours

At an international level the FSC P&C define the scope of your standard. At the national or regional level the stakeholders define what that means for their forests. But there are also neighbours to be considered. This is probably the least developed aspect of FSC Standards development. We recognise that it is important (for reasons of equity and trade) that the FSC label should not be much more difficult for foresters in one country to gain than for their neighbours working in very similar forest over the border. However, there is also a need to recognise the right of stakeholders in each country to define a standard that is appropriate for their country. If different regional groups work separately on their standards they will inevitably reach different conclusions depending on how advanced forestry is in that country and the particular strengths and priorities of the stakeholders involved.

The aim of harmonisation is for the regional forest stewardship standards to provide a consistent interpretation of the Principles and Criteria worldwide. This is of particular concern where ecological boundaries do not match the national or regional political borders. FSC recognises that regional standards, even those developed

for the same forest ecosystem, may vary from region to region for social, legal, political or other reasons. However, significant variations in ecological indicators and verifiers for similar or identical forest ecosystems would imply inconsistent interpretation of the FSC Principles and Criteria and could lead to unfair competition.

To reduce the risk of this happening, FSC requires that efforts be made to achieve harmonisation during the standards drafting process. The FSC Board of Directors must be satisfied that the standard document is compatible with those of similar and/or neighbouring regions. Discrepancies must be justified on the basis of differing ecological, social or economic conditions. In the situation where a group in a neighbouring region with similar forest types is already well ahead in developing a regional forest stewardship standard, reinventing the wheel might be avoided by using their standard as a starting point. It is a good idea to contact neighbouring groups early on in the process. It is much more difficult to harmonise standards late in the process or after endorsement. Harmonisation with neighbouring groups will need to continue even after endorsement (see the *Review and revision* section later).

Once a number of regional groups have developed a draft standard, it is very useful to meet up with them and to consider the differences between the drafts. Where the forests are similar but the standard is different, discuss why they are different. If it is possible to make them more compatible, do so. Where it is not possible, you need to be able to justify the differences – either to FSC or to neighbouring Working Groups. Differences between standards do not always matter but they can cause problems. For example, forest managers will be less likely to agree to an indicator that is more demanding than in a neighbouring country, because they would feel at a disadvantage in the market place.

Some reasons why standards may differ include:

- Different history of forestry – some countries still have substantial areas of primary forests, while others are characterised by managed semi-natural forests. Others might be severely deforested and forestry

might focus mainly on establishing plantations on former agricultural land.

- Different natural disturbance dynamics – forests in some regions are dominated by shade tolerant tree species naturally regenerated by small-scale disturbances, while light demanding tree species adapted to recurrent larger-scale disturbances characterise other regions. These differences in turn tend to influence silvicultural systems.
- Different political, legal, social or economic situations – forestry dominated by centralised government or large corporations is likely to differ from forestry dominated by small private owners.
- Different national attitudes or philosophic approach to forestry – this is likely to be manifested in the membership of the Working Group.

It isn't easy to standardise nature





Where differences are real and cannot be overcome it is useful to take a step back and consider what is the reason for different solutions. Different countries or regions will frequently be starting from widely different positions and current best practises. If that is the case, it might be unrealistic to demand improvement to equal levels for all issues. However each FSC standard must reflect improvements towards more responsible forest management. Even for issues where the formulations differ between regions, it should therefore be possible to agree on common goals and core values.

Harmonisation should not lead to the lowest common denominator being adopted by everyone. It should preferably lead in the other direction, with the higher standards being adopted more widely. Once you have developed proposed changes to your

standard in order to reduce the avoidable differences you will need to go back to the stakeholders in your own region and try to win local support for them. It is no use having a standard which neighbouring countries support but not the stakeholders in the country concerned. If you find that forest managers in your country would rather prefer to be certified against an FSC standard developed in a neighbouring country, it is a clear signal that both Working Groups need to do some more work.

The contact details of FSC national initiatives are given in Annex 4. Regularly updated lists can be found on the FSC headquarters web site www.fscoax.org. Many of the FSC standards are available on request from the national initiatives, or are found on their web sites.

Potential problems with the standard-setting processes

The requirements of the standard-setting process are rigorous, so the national Working Group is likely to encounter some problems as it works through the various phases. A few of these, together with possible solutions, are discussed below (they are adapted from the *FSC National Initiatives Manual*).

Volume of work and time commitment

Even the most efficient standard-setting process will take quite some time. It is important that everyone involved understands this and is prepared for the length of the task ahead. Typically it might take two years but often takes longer. The Bolivian process took five years to achieve FSC endorsement, with conditions attached that will take a further one and a half years to comply with. There are various ways of making the process run efficiently without jeopardising wide acceptance of the finished standard:

- Elect a chair person – preferably someone who can dedicate enough time to the task. The chair person should be someone with high integrity that is trusted by all stakeholders. Besides being in charge of the meetings, the chair will frequently need to work as a

bridge-builder between different interests. This function will be facilitated if the chair holds a neutral position without voting rights.

- Appoint a secretary/secretariat/executive officer – this is often the best way to make things happen and ensure that decisions are implemented.
- Consider employing a consultant to draft the text – an independent, well-known and generally trusted individual may also help to facilitate and increase the credibility of the consultative process.
- Establish a drafting subcommittee, taking advantage of the skills and knowledge of stakeholders.
- Study, and where possible, adopt elements from standards drafted for regions with similar forest ecosystems. This will also contribute to the process of harmonisation.

Lack of input from key organisations

One component of the consultative process is to identify those who either do not respond at all or those who respond negatively. Some of these organisations may be impor-

tant to the consultative process because they represent a very large number of people, or because they are opinion leaders, or because they represent an important section of the stakeholder community, such as forest owners.

The Working Group should make every effort to enable such groups or their representatives to take part. Some methods used so far include:

- Inviting them to get involved from very early on.
- Listening to the concerns expressed and attempting to overcome or minimise them.

For example: This could be done either by explaining how FSC really works, if the concern is due to a mis-

understanding, or, if appropriate, making changes to the process. If the concerns are legitimate and caused by some aspect of the FSC's structure (e.g. a problem of access for small producers), the FSC secretariat should be informed together with any proposals you may have for overcoming the problem.

- Active encouragement to promote the organisations' participation, through individual letters, telephone calls and meetings;
- Maintaining an open channel for communication with these organisations or key individuals, by continuing to send the organisation FSC literature and invitations to attend events;
- Inviting observers to see how the

Box 5: Making the Committee representative. The Canadian Great Lakes regional standard-setting process

"When we launched the Great Lakes standards process, we sent out the same letters of invitation to every interested group and individual we could think of. Hundreds of notices went out across the region inviting people to a workshop to discuss certification and to elect a standards working group. The result was that we ended up with a decent cross section of environmentalists, industry representatives, woodlot owners, academics and forestry consultants, but not a single representative of First Nations or social organisations such as labour unions, social justice groups or local government. Predictably, representation on the working group that was elected that day resulted in a similar imbalance."

One might argue that the poor attendance from the social chamber is understandable and less troublesome given that the Great Lakes–St Lawrence region of Ontario is among the most prosperous in Canada. However, the lack of involvement from aboriginal groups is not so easily dismissed, and it has continued to plague the Great Lakes process.

"The first mistake we made was to treat First Nations like any other stakeholder and to solicit their involvement in the same way we did other potentially interested groups."

First Nations have a distinct status in Canada. They enjoy specific legal and treaty rights that continue to evolve over time. They don't view themselves as 'just another' stakeholder and, although they may not request special status within the process, their legal and cultural distinctiveness may call for a different approach if you want to gain their involvement.

"As our working group reassembles itself for the Boreal region of Ontario, there is unanimous agreement that there needs to be substantive First Nations involvement in and support for the process. As a first step, we have asked First Nations representatives how they would like to be involved, as opposed to simply inviting them to take a seat at our table."

FSC process works;

- Approaching some of their more progressive stakeholders individually;
- Use of an independent arbitrator or convenor.

Note: Maintain records and copies of correspondence with such groups in case they later claim that they were not invited or were denied access to the process.

See the example from the Canadian Great Lakes regional standard-setting process in Box 5.

Determining the relative weighting of different interests

In a process where the views of very different types of stakeholders are being gathered, it is likely that some of these opinions will be mutually exclusive. For example, it could be necessary to balance the views of the following: an international NGO that is not much concerned with local forestry but is a member of FSC, a national growers association that is involved in local forestry but is not supportive of FSC and a national NGO working in forestry that is supportive of FSC but not a member.

Scientific input is also very important even though the scientist may not wish to be seen as representing any particular interests. There are several ways in which their input can be encouraged. Researchers can be involved in the Working Group, they can act as non voting advisors to the Working Group, they can act as consultants to draft the Standards, they can form part of subcommittees or they can simply be consulted. You may wish to specifi-

cally seek expert advice on particular issues and you may get more useful input by doing this than by asking specialists to comment on the entire standard.

Each national initiative should make its own decision on how to balance these inputs. Although the consultative process should be as comprehensive as possible, it is important that progress is not completely obstructed by the consultation.

Resolving what cannot be resolved

You may find that some issues seem to be impossible to reach consensus on. If you have sorted out most of the standard but get stuck on a few issues which are preventing you from completing the standard, seek advice from FSC. There are various tools you can use to overcome apparently impossible situations. Some of these are listed below:

- Refer the issue to a smaller more specialist group to propose a resolution to the wider group;
- Make use of scientific research data to inform the group's discussions so that politics and economics do not dominate the discussion. This is particularly useful for issues such as pesticide use, natural disturbance regimes and impacts of different silvicultural systems;
- Agree on points of principle or core values first and then the detail should follow more easily;
- See if the group can unite on common long term goals of what they want the country's forests to be like in 50, 100 or even 500 years time. This may seem like an abstract ex-

ercise but it can help to focus the discussions more constructively because talking about the distant future is less threatening. If people can agree that (for example) eventually all their forestry should be chemical free then they may be more willing to agree that changes have to start now

- Try to establish what each group or individual really wants out of the discussion – are there other ways they could get that without blocking consensus on this issue?
- Try building in some informal time for people to relax a bit more than they can in formal meetings. Getting to know each other a bit better can help people to work more constructively together.
- Agree an interim text with a timetable for concluding – to avoid a single issue holding back agreement on the rest of the standard.

If the discussion seems to be getting lost refer back to levels which have already been agreed and which point to a way forward, e.g. the FSC P&C, any national regulations, policies or guidelines relating to forests and/or biodiversity, employment, land use planning or environmental impact assessment, any international treaties or conventions which the government is a signatory to. These documents often contain useful references but get forgotten because people feel they are not being implemented enough. For the purposes of defining standards what matters is that they say something useful and that they have been agreed – it is up to the certification body to judge whether they are being

implemented. If something has been agreed at a national level it is difficult for anyone to argue that best practice should be anything less.

Some issues may be difficult because of inadequate scientific knowledge, either in the Working Group or in the scientific community as a whole. If the former is the case you may need to commission a state of the knowledge review to inform your process. In some cases, such as alternatives to chemical use in new plantation establishment it may be important for the FSC group to encourage further primary research to resolve issues. It is unlikely that you will have funding to carry this out but it may be possible to either seek funding or request a university department to take on such work. Both types of research can help in several ways – it should give you better information, it gives you a way forward if the discussion is deadlocked (although you will need to agree an interim text) and it can help to raise the profile of the FSC group and to demonstrate that it is taking these issues seriously and is seeking useful answers to difficult issues.



When your standard has been endorsed

Endorsement by the FSC Board of Directors has very important consequences. Under the terms of the FSC Accreditation Contract, the certification bodies must use the national standards as the basis for their assessments. The forest management must comply with the standards in order to be certified. Managers are not expected to be perfect, nor are they expected to change their management over night, but the standards will affect forest management directly. Even small details will have a real impact. The final endorsement of standards is a major achievement, but it doesn't stop there. There are two more things you will need to think about and work on.

Clarification and dispute resolution

However carefully the standard is prepared there will be differences of interpretation once it is put into use and the certification bodies will often look to the Working Group for guidance. There will also be cases where disagreements and complaints arise and have to be resolved. It is much easier to deal with these situations in an efficient and professional way if you have decided on a process in advance. In the case of complaints and dispute resolution it is also a requirement of FSC

that you describe your process for resolving such cases. It is up to the Working Group to decide what the best process is but it should be fair, transparent and give equal voice to the environmental, social and economic sectors in the same way that other FSC processes do. You may find it useful to ask other national initiatives how they have developed systems for clarification and dispute resolution. FSC has a very detailed process for resolving disputes. It may be useful to look at this when developing your national Working Group process, although you will probably want a simpler system for grumble and complaints at the national level.

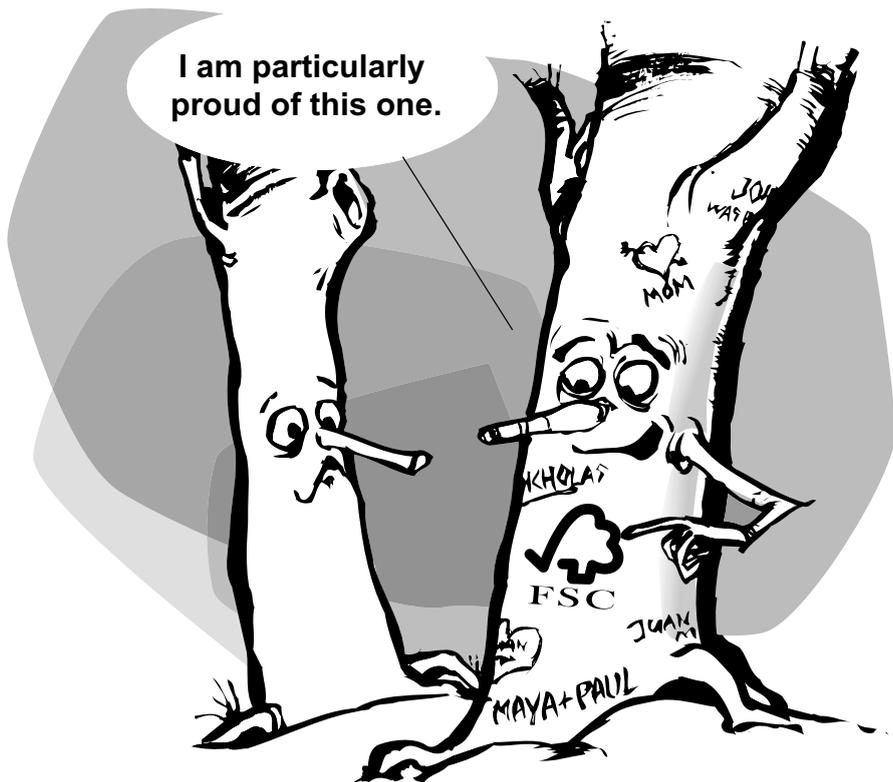
Review and revision

The standard you develop will not be fixed forever and FSC requires that it is reviewed and revised. It will need to change as our knowledge advances, as practices change and as new issues emerge. At this stage all you need to do is to define how and when you intend to review and revise it and to document that as part of your submission to FSC. A period of somewhere between two and five years is appropriate for the first full revision. It is worth keeping a file for comments and suggestions on the standard that are

received in between formal revisions so that they can be taken into account when the next revision is carried out.

You will also be required to take part in on-going harmonisation proc-

esses. Recommendations from harmonisation meetings with other FSC Working Groups can be addressed when the standard is next revised.



And finally, make life easier by...

- Request, read and refer to the *National Initiatives Manual, Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship* and other official documents from FSC.
- Make use of the standards and drafts prepared by other FSC Working Groups, especially in your region.
- Communicate effectively with the Working Group, local stakeholders, FSC headquarters and other FSC Working Groups. Do not assume anyone knows what you have been doing.
- Ask for advice when you need it – from FSC headquarters and from other FSC endorsed Working Groups and Contact Persons.

CASE HISTORY 1

KOMI REPUBLIC, RUSSIA

The FSC certification process in the Republic of Komi was initiated by the WWF *Sustainable Management of Northern Forests: "Priluzye" Model Forest* Project, which has been ongoing in the Priluzskiy Region of the Republic of Komi since 1997. The aim of the WWF Project is to demonstrate sustainable management of boreal forests according to the criteria of the Montreal Process in a typical forest management unit of northern European Russia.

The forest in Russia is in state ownership, meaning that the state is a forest owner and forests are managed by the Federal Forest Department and its local divisions (leskhoz – forest management unit, lesnichestvo – forest division). However, harvesting is usually carried out by private companies rather than the state. Hence the role of these two parties – the state forest service and private forest companies – in the certification process in Russia is of great significance.

Assistance with and promotion of FSC certification were identified as Project priorities and all of the members adopted the idea. The support of the Government of the Republic of Komi was of great importance in the FSC certification process. Its first supportive action involved the develop-

ment of an article, on voluntary choice of a forest certification system, for incorporation into the regional Law of Forests and Forest Use in the Republic of Komi. It was actively discussed in the Republican Parliament in 1998 and passed in January 1999. Thus, in contrast to Clause 71 of the Forest Code of the Russian Federation, which was endorsed in 1997 and specifies only mandatory certification, the Law of Forests and Forest Use in the Republic of Komi gives forest users ample scope for choosing a system of certification.

The credibility of FSC to government officials and wood producers rose considerably after a visit by two international experts (WWF's International Certification Officer and an expert from the Swedish company *Scandia Consult*) in August 1998. As a result of their meetings, the establishment of a FSC regional working group became a priority. After preliminary consultation, the founding assembly of the *FSC Forest Certification Working Group in the Republic of Komi* was held in November 1998. The statute of the organisation specifies that the main objective is the development of an FSC regional standard and the promotion of voluntary certification in the region. Representatives of regional forestry



management, forest business, scientific and designing institutions of the forest complex, and non-governmental environmental organisations formed the Working Group.

During the initial stages, the main task of the Working Group was the distribution of information about FSC certification among the members and the establishment of relations with participants of the FSC process in Russia and the world. Collaboration between the Working Group and the WWF "Priluzye" Model Forest Project helped to give impetus to the process. The Working Group was assisted by a grant of \$44,000 from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation in June 1999 to develop FSC certification in the Republic of Komi. The grant was used to buy office equipment (PC, fax, modem), fit out a working place for a full-time secretary, establish reliable and stable communication with the FSC Secretariat and other members of the certification process,

maintain current activities of the organisation in distributing information, promoting and developing the FSC process in the region.

An important phase in the development of the regional standard was the trial certification carried out in the Priluzye Model Forest by the Rainforest Alliance SmartWood Program (USA) in September and October 1999. All of the members of the Working Group, experts, and many observers from different regions of Russia were introduced to the FSC forest management certification procedure. The test certification of the Priluzye Model Forest was also supported by a grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation to the SmartWood Program. The results of the test certification were discussed at the International Conference, *Forest Certification and Sustainable Forest Management in the European North of Russia*, held in Syktyvkar, February 2000. The exchange of experiences in prac-

tical certification between participants was a significant achievement. It was attended by 145 representatives from 8 countries and 18 regions of Russia.

After the Conference, a regional certification standard was actively developed. Skilled experts were selected from the members of the Working Group and interested specialists to develop indicators and verifiers of a regional standard based on the FSC Principles and Criteria. The first draft standard was submitted to the Working Group in September 2000, and the Group began to discuss it article by article. The draft standard was simultaneously distributed among all stakeholders of the FSC process in Russia. Many of them sent in their comments, proposals and critiques for consideration in the article-by-article discussion of the standard.

The consultative process and article-by-article adoption of the standard took nearly half a year. This period included 8 full meetings of the Working Group and a great number of meetings with experts, foresters, and other stakeholders. There were many arguments and disputes between the environmental, economic, and social

interest groups during the consultative process. However they all were resolved. The FSC Komi regional standard was adopted in its first reading 10 July 2001.

As of August 2001, the regional standard with all annexes and comments had been distributed among potential participants of the certification process in the region to invite proposals to improve the wording of any articles, indicators, or verifiers. All the proposals will be discussed in September 2001, and the standard will be adopted in its second reading. Then it will be tested in the *Priluzye* Model Forest. After testing, the final discussion of the FSC Komi regional standard will be carried out, and it will be complemented and changed if required. Lastly, the standard will be submitted to the FSC Secretariat for endorsement.

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CASE HISTORY 2

NICARAGUA



Nicaragua has been represented in the FSC since 1996 by the non-governmental environmental organisation *Nicambiental*, which handles topics related to preservation of protected areas and sustainable forest management. This last topic clearly identifies with the objectives of forest certification and as a result has led to the incorporation of certification into the strategic plan of the organisation.

In August 1996 the first workshop "Forest Certification: towards the efficient management of the forests in Nicaragua" was organised. It was a great success and ended with the formation of an interim working group represented by enterprises, non governmental organisations and social groups. The national initiative of forest certification in Nicaragua was born.

The development of the National Initiative

The working group approved a base document of the national initiative, in which the general objectives of international forest certification and those particular to the country were assumed. From the beginning, the outline and procedures of FSC for the approval of national/regional standards were followed. The base document reflected the intended development of a unique outline and set of

standards applicable to the country and elaborated, consulted and approved by consensus by the different sectors or chambers, to achieve a proper geographic representation, above all the main forest regions.

In 1998 a participative workshop took place with representatives of enterprises, NGO's and social groups, resulting in the first draft of national standards. The consultation of this draft was planned in the following months but due to the national emergency caused by the hurricane "Mitch" and changes in politics and due to the institutionalisation of the governmental structures in charge of forests, it was set back.

In the year 2000, the Working Group was reorganised. Its new constitution has the advantage of relying on representatives, enterprises and organisations convinced of the benefits of forest certification and who are willing to promote and apply it in our country. In this new Working Group the participation of the social sectors was strengthened with representatives of forest owners, including indigenous communities, farmers and other forest owners like the veterans of the armed forces and the Nicaraguan resistance who benefited from forests and forest lands in the pacifying process of the 90's.

All of the work achieved between 1996 and 2000 was supported by Novib (OXFAM Netherland), WWF Central America and by the Ford Foundation. By the end of the year 2000, the consultation process was initiated. The forest Project (PROFOR) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAGFOR) supported it and it was financed by a loan from the World Bank.

The consultation process was organised into 6 workshops held in the main forest regions of the country. After the process was completed we immediately moved on to the preparation of the field testing of the draft of standards according to version Nr. 2 (post-consultation). With the support of WWF, a training course for all persons participating in the field testing (representatives from universities, enterprises, NGOs, governmental forest authority etc.), took place. The field testing was held in June 2001 at three different sites, each with a different scale, forest type, business structure and social reality. There were three groups of evaluators, one per site. Each group consisted of persons with experience in forest management, biology, social assessment and economics. The leader of each group was an expert in evaluations for forest certification and came from the USA, Costa Rica or Nicaragua.

The field testing methodology for the evaluation of the indicators was elaborated by a consultant and was based on investigations developed by CATIE/CIFOR, which were revised and modified by the Standards Committee created by the Working Group.

This methodology included a simple program for processing the field data that allowed a statistical evaluation of the applicability of the proposed indicators, not as a decisive factor but as input for the analysis by the evaluators.

The analysis of the results workshop, which was held immediately after the field testing, produced version Nr. 3 of the standards. The adjustments entrusted to the Standards Committee resulted in a Nr. 4 draft, which is currently undergoing one last consultation via e-mail and through direct meetings. During the mentioned workshop the need to discuss Principle 9 in a particular way was identified. In addition, due to the close relationship between indigenous territories and the main forest regions of the country, the need to deepen discussions pertaining to Principle 3 was also realized.

Finally, a General Assembly with the participation of all people, enterprises and institutions that have been linked to the national initiative, is foreseen with the objective of approving by consensus the last version (Nr. 5) of the standards that will be submitted for FSC approval.

Nicaragua is the only country in Central America that has elaborated a proposal of standards under the outline of the FSC. Great efforts are being made so that the country can have its first certified forests. At this moment six preliminary evaluations exist and at least three enterprises are taking firm steps to achieve forest certification in management as well as in chain of custody.

Main lessons learned

The transparency and credibility of the intentions of those who promote forest certification and the National Initiative is fundamental. In this it is important to foment a "collective leadership".

Forest certification is a key instrument in the establishment of consensus in issues of forest preservation and sustainable use. The Nicaraguan process has allowed the unification of stakeholders and has permitted the formulation of joint political proposals to benefit forest economics and the preservation of the forest ecosystems of the country.

The relation with the governmental forest authorities has been crucial to the process because it has facilitated the consideration of forest certification in both the national forest policy and in the draft of national forest law.

The active participation of the private sector is fundamental. It has to be clear that not all enterprises will actively support the promotion of forest certification. It is therefore more important to work with the convinced persons and leave the certification process to promote itself through example and market demand.

Forest certification, in countries like Nicaragua, must be understood not only according to exports. Efforts to create demand in the national /regional market and to significantly impact national forest production must be made.

The National Initiative is conceived as an Assembly and the Working Group as the directive or coordinating instance. The Working Group must consist of representatives from enterprises, NGOs and social groups that have a real interest in forest certification. This will allow the process to move quickly and in a more systematic way.

The participation of the social chamber or social sector is crucial. In Nicaragua, the small and medium forest owners and indigenous communities are vital to the preservation and good management of the country's forests.

The political institutional framework of the forest sector may play a role that promotes or does not promote incentives for forest certification, according to its work approach.

Forest certification has to be promoted based on its objectives of improvement forest management. It must ensure the access of forest products to the market and must not be identified as a way to obtain better prices. This will depend on the execution of the requirements of the market and the marketing ability.

It is important to consider existing experiences. The Nicaragua initiative has learned from the initiative of Bolivia. It has investigated the functioning of other initiatives and has taken into account experiences like CATIE/ CIFOR. In addition, support from peoples in Guatemala, Honduras,

Costa Rica and the United States of America has been requested and received, and people from other countries have contributed in the form of consultations and comments.

The economic factor is a major determinant of the amount of time that can be spent elaborating the national standards. It is useful to count on a financial strategy that is clear in

order to cover the expenses that the process demands.

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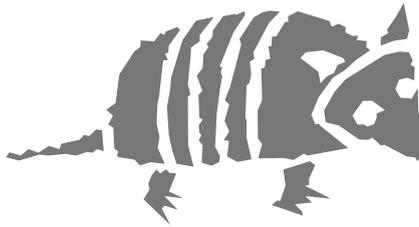
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Document 1.2

Principles and criteria for forest stewardship

Revised February 2000

INTRODUCTION

It is widely accepted that forest resources and associated lands should be managed to meet the social, economic, ecological, cultural and spiritual needs of present and future generations. Furthermore, growing public awareness of forest destruction and degradation has led consumers to demand that their purchases of wood and other forest products will not contribute to this destruction but rather help to secure forest resources for the future. In response to these demands, certification and self-certification programs of wood products have proliferated in the marketplace.

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is an international body which accredits certification organizations in order to guarantee the authenticity of their claims. In all cases the process of certification will be initiated voluntarily by forest owners and managers who request the services of a certification organization. The goal of FSC is to promote environmentally responsible, socially beneficial and economically viable management of the world's forests, by establishing a worldwide standard of recognized and respected Principles of Forest Stewardship.

The FSC's Principles and Criteria (P&C) apply to all tropical, temperate and boreal forests, as addressed in Principle #9 and the accompanying glossary. Many of these P&C apply also to plantations and partially replanted forests. More detailed standards for these and other vegetation types may be prepared at national and local levels. The P&C are to be incorporated into the evaluation systems and standards of all certification organizations seeking accreditation by FSC. While the P&C are

mainly designed for forests managed for the production of wood products, they are also relevant, to varying degrees, to forests managed for non-timber products and other services. The P&C are a complete package to be considered as a whole, and their sequence does not represent an ordering of priority. This document shall be used in conjunction with the FSC's Statutes, Procedures for Accreditation and Guidelines for Certifiers.

FSC and FSC-accredited certification organizations will not insist on perfection in satisfying the P&C. However, major failures in any individual Principles will normally disqualify a candidate from certification, or will lead to decertification. These decisions will be taken by individual certifiers, and guided by the extent to which each Criterion is satisfied, and by the importance and consequences of failures. Some flexibility will be allowed to cope with local circumstances.

The scale and intensity of forest management operations, the uniqueness of the affected resources, and the relative ecological fragility of the forest will be considered in all certification assessments. Differences and difficulties of interpretation of the P&C will be addressed in national and local forest stewardship standards. These standards are to be developed in each country or region involved, and will be evaluated for purposes of certification, by certifiers and other involved and affected parties on a case by case basis. If necessary, FSC dispute resolution mechanisms may also be called upon during the course of assessment. More information and guidance about the certification and accreditation process is included in the FSC Statutes, Accreditation Procedures, and Guidelines for Certifiers.

The FSC P&C should be used in conjunction with national and international laws and regulations. FSC intends to complement, not supplant, other initiatives that support responsible forest management worldwide.

The FSC will conduct educational activities to increase public awareness of the importance of the following:

- * improving forest management;
- * incorporating the full costs of management and production into the price of forest products;
- promoting the highest and best use of forest resources;
- * reducing damage and waste; and
- * avoiding over-consumption and over-harvesting.

FSC will also provide guidance to policy makers on these issues, including improving forest management legislation and policies.

PRINCIPLE #1: COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS AND FSC PRINCIPLES

Forest management shall respect all applicable laws of the country in which they occur, and international treaties and agreements to which the country is a signatory, and comply with all FSC Principles and Criteria.

- 1.1 Forest management shall respect all national and local laws and administrative requirements.
- 1.2 All applicable and legally prescribed fees, royalties, taxes and other charges shall be paid.
- 1.3 In signatory countries, the provisions of all binding international agreements such as CITES, ILO Conventions, ITTA, and Convention on Biological Diversity, shall be respected.
- 1.4 Conflicts between laws, regulations and the FSC Principles and Criteria shall be evaluated for the purposes of certification, on a case by case basis, by the certifiers and the involved or affected parties.
- 1.5 Forest management areas should be protected from illegal harvesting, settlement and other unauthorized activities.

- 1.6 Forest managers shall demonstrate a long-term commitment to adhere to the FSC Principles and Criteria.

PRINCIPLE #2: TENURE AND USE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Long-term tenure and use rights to the land and forest resources shall be clearly defined, documented and legally established.

- 2.1 Clear evidence of long-term forest use rights to the land (e.g. land title, customary rights, or lease agreements) shall be demonstrated.
- 2.2 Local communities with legal or customary tenure or use rights shall maintain control, to the extent necessary to protect their rights or resources, over forest operations unless they delegate control with free and informed consent to other agencies.
- 2.3 Appropriate mechanisms shall be employed to resolve disputes over tenure claims and use rights. The circumstances and status of any outstanding disputes will be explicitly considered in the certification evaluation. Disputes of substantial magnitude involving a significant number of interests will normally disqualify an operation from being certified.

PRINCIPLE #3: INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' RIGHTS

The legal and customary rights of indigenous peoples to own, use and manage their lands, territories, and resources shall be recognized and respected.

- 3.1 Indigenous peoples shall control forest management on their lands and territories unless they delegate control with free and informed consent to other agencies.
- 3.2 Forest management shall not threaten or diminish, either directly or indirectly, the resources or tenure rights of indigenous peoples.
- 3.3 Sites of special cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance to indigenous peoples shall be clearly identified in cooperation with such peoples, and recognized and pro-

- tected by forest managers.
- 3.4 Indigenous peoples shall be compensated for the application of their traditional knowledge regarding the use of forest species or management systems in forest operations. This compensation shall be formally agreed upon with their free and informed consent before forest operations commence.

PRINCIPLE #4: COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND WORKER’S RIGHTS

Forest management operations shall maintain or enhance the long-term social and economic well-being of forest workers and local communities.

- 4.1 The communities within, or adjacent to, the forest management area should be given opportunities for employment, training, and other services.
- 4.2 Forest management should meet or exceed all applicable laws and/or regulations covering health and safety of employees and their families.
- 4.3 The rights of workers to organize and voluntarily negotiate with their employers shall be guaranteed as outlined in Conventions 87 and 98 of the International Labour Organisation (ILO).
- 4.4 Management planning and operations shall incorporate the results of evaluations of social impact. Consultations shall be maintained with people and groups directly affected by management operations.
- 4.5 Appropriate mechanisms shall be employed for resolving grievances and for providing fair compensation in the case of loss or damage affecting the legal or customary rights, property, resources, or livelihoods of local peoples. Measures shall be taken to avoid such loss or damage.

PRINCIPLE # 5: BENEFITS FROM THE FOREST

Forest management operations shall encourage the efficient use of the forest's

multiple products and services to ensure economic viability and a wide range of environmental and social benefits.

- 5.1 Forest management should strive toward economic viability, while taking into account the full environmental, social, and operational costs of production, and ensuring the investments necessary to maintain the ecological productivity of the forest.
- 5.2 Forest management and marketing operations should encourage the optimal use and local processing of the forest's diversity of products.
- 5.3 Forest management should minimize waste associated with harvesting and on-site processing operations and avoid damage to other forest resources.
- 5.4 Forest management should strive to strengthen and diversify the local economy, avoiding dependence on a single forest product.
- 5.5 Forest management operations shall recognize, maintain, and, where appropriate, enhance the value of forest services and resources such as watersheds and fisheries.
- 5.6 The rate of harvest of forest products shall not exceed levels which can be permanently sustained.

PRINCIPLE #6: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Forest management shall conserve biological diversity and its associated values, water resources, soils, and unique and fragile ecosystems and landscapes, and, by so doing, maintain the ecological functions and the integrity of the forest.

- 6.1 Assessment of environmental impacts shall be completed – appropriate to the scale, intensity of forest management and the uniqueness of the affected resources – and adequately integrated into management systems. Assessments shall include landscape level considerations as well as the impacts of on-site processing facilities. Environmental impacts shall be assessed prior to commencement of site-disturbing operations.

- 6.2 Safeguards shall exist which protect rare, threatened and endangered species and their habitats (e.g., nesting and feeding areas). Conservation zones and protection areas shall be established, appropriate to the scale and intensity of forest management and the uniqueness of the affected resources. Inappropriate hunting, fishing, trapping and collecting shall be controlled.
- 6.3 Ecological functions and values shall be maintained intact, enhanced, or restored, including:
 - a) Forest regeneration and succession.
 - b) Genetic, species, and ecosystem diversity.
 - c) Natural cycles that affect the productivity of the forest ecosystem.
- 6.4 Representative samples of existing ecosystems within the landscape shall be protected in their natural state and recorded on maps, appropriate to the scale and intensity of operations and the uniqueness of the affected resources.
- 6.5 Written guidelines shall be prepared and implemented to: control erosion; minimize forest damage during harvesting, road construction, and all other mechanical disturbances; and protect water resources.
- 6.6 Management systems shall promote the development and adoption of environmentally friendly non-chemical methods of pest management and strive to avoid the use of chemical pesticides. World Health Organization Type 1A and 1B and chlorinated hydrocarbon pesticides; pesticides that are persistent, toxic or whose derivatives remain biologically active and accumulate in the food chain beyond their intended use; as well as any pesticides banned by international agreement, shall be prohibited. If chemicals are used, proper equipment and training shall be provided to minimize health and environmental risks.
- 6.7 Chemicals, containers, liquid and solid non-organic wastes including fuel and oil shall be disposed of in an environmentally appropriate man-

ner at off-site locations.

- 6.8 Use of biological control agents shall be documented, minimized, monitored and strictly controlled in accordance with national laws and internationally accepted scientific protocols. Use of genetically modified organisms shall be prohibited.
- 6.9 The use of exotic species shall be carefully controlled and actively monitored to avoid adverse ecological impacts.
- 6.10 Forest conversion to plantations or non-forest land uses shall not occur, except in circumstances where conversion:
 - a) entails a very limited portion of the forest management unit; and
 - b) does not occur on high conservation value forest areas; and
 - c) will enable clear, substantial, additional, secure, long term conservation benefits across the forest management unit.

PRINCIPLE #7: MANAGEMENT PLAN

A management plan – appropriate to the scale and intensity of the operations – shall be written, implemented, and kept up to date. The long term objectives of management, and the means of achieving them, shall be clearly stated.

- 7.1 The management plan and supporting documents shall provide:
 - a) Management objectives.
 - b) Description of the forest resource to be managed, environmental limitations, land use and ownership status, socio-economic conditions, and a profile of adjacent lands.
 - c) Description of silvicultural and/or other management system, based on the ecology of the forest in question and information gathered through resource inventories.
 - d) Rationale for rate of annual harvest and species selection.
 - e) Provisions for monitoring of forest growth and dynamics.
 - f) Environmental safeguards based on environmental assessments.
 - g) Plans for the identification and protection of rare, threatened and en-

- dangered species.
- h) Maps describing the forest resource base including protected areas, planned management activities and land ownership.
- i) Description and justification of harvesting techniques and equipment to be used.

- 7.2 The management plan shall be periodically revised to incorporate the results of monitoring or new scientific and technical information, as well as to respond to changing environmental, social and economic circumstances.
- 7.3 Forest workers shall receive adequate training and supervision to ensure proper implementation of the management plan.
- 7.4 While respecting the confidentiality of information, forest managers shall make publicly available a summary of the primary elements of the management plan, including those listed in Criterion 7.1.

PRINCIPLE #8: MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT

Monitoring shall be conducted – appropriate to the scale and intensity of forest management – to assess the condition of the forest, yields of forest products, chain of custody, management activities and their social and environmental impacts.

- 8.1 The frequency and intensity of monitoring should be determined by the scale and intensity of forest management operations as well as the relative complexity and fragility of the affected environment. Monitoring procedures should be consistent and replicable over time to allow comparison of results and assessment of change.
- 8.2 Forest management should include the research and data collection needed to monitor, at a minimum, the following indicators:
 - a) Yield of all forest products harvested.
 - b) Growth rates, regeneration and condition of the forest.
 - c) Composition and observed changes in the flora and fauna.

- d) Environmental and social impacts of harvesting and other operations.
- e) Costs, productivity, and efficiency of forest management.

- 8.3 Documentation shall be provided by the forest manager to enable monitoring and certifying organizations to trace each forest product from its origin, a process known as the "chain of custody."
- 8.4 The results of monitoring shall be incorporated into the implementation and revision of the management plan.
- 8.5 While respecting the confidentiality of information, forest managers shall make publicly available a summary of the results of monitoring indicators, including those listed in Criterion 8.2.

PRINCIPLE 9: MAINTENANCE OF HIGH CONSERVATION VALUE FORESTS

Management activities in high conservation value forests shall maintain or enhance the attributes which define such forests. Decisions regarding high conservation value forests shall always be considered in the context of a precautionary approach.

- 9.1 Assessment to determine the presence of the attributes consistent with High Conservation Value Forests will be completed, appropriate to scale and intensity of forest management.
- 9.2 The consultative portion of the certification process must place emphasis on the identified conservation attributes, and options for the maintenance thereof.
- 9.3 The management plan shall include and implement specific measures that ensure the maintenance and/or enhancement of the applicable conservation attributes consistent with the precautionary approach. These measures shall be specifically included in the publicly available management plan summary.
- 9.4 Annual monitoring shall be conducted to assess the effectiveness of the measures employed to maintain or enhance the applicable conservation attributes.

PRINCIPLE # 10: PLANTATIONS

Plantations shall be planned and managed in accordance with Principles and Criteria 1–9, and Principle 10 and its Criteria. While plantations can provide an array of social and economic benefits, and can contribute to satisfying the world's needs for forest products, they should complement the management of, reduce pressures on, and promote the restoration and conservation of natural forests.

- 10.1 The management objectives of the plantation, including natural forest conservation and restoration objectives, shall be explicitly stated in the management plan, and clearly demonstrated in the implementation of the plan.
- 10.2 The design and layout of plantations should promote the protection, restoration and conservation of natural forests, and not increase pressures on natural forests. Wildlife corridors, streamside zones and a mosaic of stands of different ages and rotation periods, shall be used in the layout of the plantation, consistent with the scale of the operation. The scale and layout of plantation blocks shall be consistent with the patterns of forest stands found within the natural landscape.
- 10.3 Diversity in the composition of plantations is preferred, so as to enhance economic, ecological and social stability. Such diversity may include the size and spatial distribution of management units within the landscape, number and genetic composition of species, age classes and structures.
- 10.4 The selection of species for planting shall be based on their overall suitability for the site and their appropriateness to the management objectives. In order to enhance the conservation of biological diversity, native species are preferred over exotic species in the establishment of plantations and the restoration of degraded ecosystems. Exotic species, which shall be used only when their performance is greater than that of native species, shall be carefully monitored to detect unusual mortality, disease, or insect outbreaks and

adverse ecological impacts.

- 10.5 A proportion of the overall forest management area, appropriate to the scale of the plantation and to be determined in regional standards, shall be managed so as to restore the site to a natural forest cover.
- 10.6 Measures shall be taken to maintain or improve soil structure, fertility, and biological activity. The techniques and rate of harvesting, road and trail construction and maintenance, and the choice of species shall not result in long term soil degradation or adverse impacts on water quality, quantity or substantial deviation from stream course drainage patterns.
- 10.7 Measures shall be taken to prevent and minimize outbreaks of pests, diseases, fire and invasive plant introductions. Integrated pest management shall form an essential part of the management plan, with primary reliance on prevention and biological control methods rather than chemical pesticides and fertilizers. Plantation management should make every effort to move away from chemical pesticides and fertilizers, including their use in nurseries. The use of chemicals is also covered in Criteria 6.6 and 6.7.
- 10.8 Appropriate to the scale and diversity of the operation, monitoring of plantations shall include regular assessment of potential on-site and off-site ecological and social impacts, (e.g. natural regeneration, effects on water resources and soil fertility, and impacts on local welfare and social well-being), in addition to those elements addressed in principles 8, 6 and 4. No species should be planted on a large scale until local trials and/or experience have shown that they are ecologically well-adapted to the site, are not invasive, and do not have significant negative ecological impacts on other ecosystems. Special attention will be paid to social issues of land acquisition for plantations, especially the protection of local rights of ownership, use or access.
- 10.9 Plantations established in areas converted from natural forests after No-

vember 1994 normally shall not qualify for certification. Certification may be allowed in circumstances where sufficient evidence is submitted to the certification body that the manager/owner is not responsible directly or indirectly of such conversion.

The FSC Founding Members and Board of Directors ratified principles 1–9 in September 1994.

The FSC Members and Board of Directors ratified principle 10 in February 1996.

The revision of Principle 9 and the addition of Criteria 6.10 and 10.9 were ratified by the FSC Members and Board of Directors in January 1999.

The definition of Precautionary Approach was ratified during the 1999 FSC General Assembly in June 1999.



GLOSSARY

Words in this document are used as defined in most standard English language dictionaries. The precise meaning and local interpretation of certain phrases (such as local communities) should be decided in the local context by forest managers and certifiers. In this document, the words below are understood as follows:

Biological diversity: The variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are a part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems. (see Convention on Biological Diversity, 1992)

Biological diversity values: The intrinsic, ecological, genetic, social, economic, scientific, educational, cultural, recreational and aesthetic values of biological diversity and its components. (see Convention on Biological Diversity, 1992)

Biological control agents: Living organisms used to eliminate or regulate the population of other living organisms.

Chain of custody: The channel through which products are distributed from their origin in the forest to their end-use.

Chemicals: The range of fertilizers, insecticides, fungicides, and hormones which are used in forest management.

Criterion (pl. Criteria): A means of judging whether or not a Principle (of forest stewardship) has been fulfilled.

Customary rights: Rights which result from a long series of habitual or customary actions, constantly repeated, which have, by such repetition and by uninterrupted acquiescence, acquired the force of a law within a geographical or sociological unit.

Ecosystem: A community of all plants and animals and their physical environment, functioning together as an interdependent unit.

Endangered species: Any species which is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

Exotic species: An introduced species not native or endemic to the area in question.

Forest integrity: The composition, dynamics, functions and structural attributes of a natural forest.

Forest management/manager: The people responsible for the operational management of the forest resource and of the enterprise, as well as the management system and structure, and the planning and field operations.

Genetically modified organisms: Biological organisms which have been induced by various means to consist of genetic structural changes.

Indigenous lands and territories: The total environment of the lands, air, water, sea, sea-ice, flora and fauna, and other resources which indigenous peoples have traditionally owned or otherwise occupied or used. (Draft Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: Part VI)

Indigenous peoples: "The existing descendants of the peoples who inhabited the present territory of a country wholly or partially at the time when persons of a different culture or ethnic origin arrived there from other parts of the world, overcame them and, by conquest, settlement, or other means reduced them to a non-dominant or colonial situation; who today live more in conformity with their particular social, economic and cultural customs and traditions than with the institutions of the country of which they now form a part, under State structure which incorporates mainly the national, social and cultural characteristics of other segments of the population which are predominant." (Working definition adopted by the UN Working Group on Indigenous Peoples).

High Conservation Value Forests: High Conservation Value Forests are those that possess one or more of the following attributes:

- a) forest areas containing globally, regionally or nationally significant concentrations of biodiversity values (e.g. endemism, endangered species, refugia); and/or large landscape level

forests, contained within, or containing the management unit, where viable populations of most if not all naturally occurring species exist in natural patterns of distribution and abundance

- b) forest areas that are in or contain rare, threatened or endangered ecosystems
- c) forest areas that provide basic services of nature in critical situations (e.g. watershed protection, erosion control)
- d) forest areas fundamental to meeting basic needs of local communities (e.g. subsistence, health) and/or critical to local communities' traditional cultural identity (areas of cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance identified in cooperation with such local communities).

Landscape: A geographical mosaic composed of interacting ecosystems resulting from the influence of geological, topographical, soil, climatic, biotic and human interactions in a given area.

Local laws: Includes all legal norms given by organisms of government whose jurisdiction is less than the national level, such as departmental, municipal and customary norms.

Long term: The time-scale of the forest owner or manager as manifested by the objectives of the management plan, the rate of harvesting, and the commitment to maintain permanent forest cover. The length of time involved will vary according to the context and ecological conditions, and will be a function of how long it takes a given ecosystem to recover its natural structure and composition following harvesting or disturbance, or to produce mature or primary conditions.

Native species: A species that occurs naturally in the region; endemic to the area.

Natural cycles: Nutrient and mineral cycling as a result of interactions between soils, water, plants, and animals in forest environments that affect the ecological productivity of a given site.

Natural Forest: Forest areas where many of the principal characteristics and key elements of native ecosystems such as complexity, structure and diversity are present,

as defined by FSC approved national and regional standards of forest management.

Non-timber forest products: All forest products except timber, including other materials obtained from trees such as resins and leaves, as well as any other plant and animal products.

Other forest types: Forest areas that do not fit the criteria for plantation or natural forests and which are defined more specifically by FSC-approved national and regional standards of forest stewardship.

Plantation: Forest areas lacking most of the principal characteristics and key elements of native ecosystems as defined by FSC-approved national and regional standards of forest stewardship, which result from the human activities of either planting, sowing or intensive silvicultural treatments.

Precautionary approach: Tool for the implementation of the precautionary principle.

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

Silviculture: The art of producing and tending a forest by manipulating its establishment, composition and growth to best fulfil the objectives of the owner. This may, or may not, include timber production.

Succession: Progressive changes in species composition and forest community structure caused by natural processes (nonhuman) over time.

Tenure: Socially defined agreements held by individuals or groups, recognized by legal statutes or customary practice, regarding the "bundle of rights and duties" of ownership, holding, access and/or usage of a particular land unit or the associated resources there within (such as individual trees, plant species, water, minerals, etc).

Threatened species: Any species which is likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

Use rights: Rights for the use of forest resources that can be defined by local custom, mutual agreements, or prescribed by other entities holding access rights. These rights may restrict the use of particular resources to specific levels of consumption or particular harvesting techniques.



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FSC website: www.fscoax.org

Useful Documents

The number of publications about forest certification and forest certification standards is growing quickly. Among the most useful will be case studies of national and regional standard-setting processes. Contact other national or regional groups to find out what is available and useful. Some general reference documents that your standards committee may find useful include:

Criteria and Indicators Toolbox Series, 1999, Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), PO BOX 6596, JKPWB Jakarta 10065, Indonesia, Tel: +62 251 622 622, Fax: +62 251 622 100, E-mail to: CIFOR@cgiar.org

The most useful tools from this box are:

C&I Tool No. 1 *Guidelines for Developing, Testing and Selecting Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management* by Prabhu, R., Colfer, C.J.P. and Dudley, R.G.

C&I Tool No. 2 *The CIFOR Criteria and Indicators Generic Template*, by the CIFOR C&I Team (note that the generic template is designed for natural tropical forests, but it is nevertheless useful as a checklist of issues for other types of forest).

Both of them can be downloaded free of charge from the CIFOR web site, <http://www.cifor.cgiar.org>

The Forest Certification Handbook, by Christopher Upton and Stephen Bass, 1995. Earthscan Publications, London. Earthscan Publications Limited, 120 Pentonville Road, London, N1 9JN, United Kingdom. Email: earthinfo@earthscan.co.uk. <http://www.earthscan.co.uk>

A good general reference on forest certification systems. It's discussion of different certification schemes is already out of date; but it is still the most useful introduction to forest certification available.

The Sustainable Forestry Handbook, by Sophie Higman, Stephen Bass, Neil Judd, James Mayers and Ruth Nussbaum. Earthscan Publications, 1999. Earthscan Publications Limited, 120 Pentonville Road, London, N1 9JN, United Kingdom. Email: earthinfo@earthscan.co.uk. <http://www.earthscan.co.uk>

Hierarchical Framework for the Formulation of Sustainable Forest Management Standards. 1997. E.M.L. van Bueren and E. Blom. The Tropenbos Foundation, The Netherlands.

Process, Process, Process: Lessons Learned in Setting Regional Standards, 2000 Johnson, Lorne. Understorey: Journal of the Certified Forest Products Council. Volume 10, 1&2.

FSC UK National Working Group revised terms of reference (TOR)

MAY 1997

The Forest Stewardship Council is an independent non profit, non governmental organisation. It was founded in 1993 by a diverse group of representatives from environmental institutions, the timber trade, the forestry profession, indigenous people's organisations, community forestry groups and forest product certification organisations from 25 countries. The FSC supports environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial and economically viable management of the world's forests. The FSC intends to promote good forest management by evaluating and accrediting certification bodies, by encouraging the development of national and regional forest management standards, and by strengthening national certification capacity by supporting the development of certification initiatives world-wide.

In the UK such an initiative has now been set up by those Founding Members of the FSC who are based in the UK. It is comprised of three closely linked Working Groups; each one will deal with different aspects of the process of promoting and overseeing independent certification of forests as a mechanism for encouraging good forest management to agreed national standards. The Terms of Reference for each of these groups are given below.

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR GROUP 1 Steering Group

OBJECTIVE: It will ensure the smooth functioning of the FSC process in the UK by meeting with and building good working relations with representatives from stakeholder groups and providing a forum for discussion and airing of grievances, from members, supporters and detractors. It will also find and develop ways of integrating the FSC process with existing initiatives in Britain. It will specifically develop a working relationship with government and industry. It will communicate ideas and proposals from the UK to FSC International and will arrange consultation with UK stakeholders relating to changes in policy or developments proposed by FSC International. It will oversee fund-raising and budget control for all three groups. It will oversee and approve the work programmes and outputs of the Standards and Promotion Groups. It will keep FSC International informed of progress by all three groups through the Secretariat.

MEANS OF OPERATING: This Group will report directly to FSC International in Oaxaca. It will meet at least three times per year. The Group will elect their own Chair, Deputy Chair and Treasurer. Elected members

of the Steering Group will serve for two years with three out of six to stand down after one year initially. Quorum for the group shall be four out of six of the elected members. The Group will always aim to work through consensus but where that is impossible a vote may be called with voting restricted to FSC members and with each chamber having equal weight of votes.

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR GROUP 2 Standards Group

OBJECTIVE: To prepare, by a process of consultation and consensus a set of national standards to be used for certifying forest management in the UK. These need to be consistent with the FSC Principles and Criteria, national legislation and Forestry Commission Guidelines for the UK. Consultation with a very wide range of stakeholders is essential and the final document needs to have an explicit endorsement from a broad range of stakeholders.

MEANS OF OPERATING: The group will elect its own chairperson, who will also sit on Group 1, it will also elect a deputy Chair. The Group will report to Group 1. Funding will be sought to pay for consultant/s to draft documents if the Group chooses and to pay for the consultation process. A secretariat for the Group will be provided. Meetings to be organised on an "as needs" basis.

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR GROUP 3 Promotion Group

OBJECTIVE: To develop and implement a co-ordinated strategy to raise public awareness of the FSC process, logo and accredited products and to promote independent certification amongst producers, processors, retailers and consumers. Target audiences to be defined by the Group. A budget for the agreed strategy to be drawn up and funding sought.

MEANS OF OPERATING: The group will elect its own chairperson, who will also sit on Group 1, it will also elect a deputy Chair. The Group will report to Group 1. A secretariat for the Group will be provided. Meetings to be organised on an "as needs" basis.

NOTE:

The co-ordinator for these groups is Anna Jenkins, Unit D, Station Building, Llanidloes, Powys, Wales, SY18 6EB, Tel/Fax: +44 (0) 1686 412176. E-mail to: fsc-uk@fsc-uk.demon.co.uk Please contact her for further details.

FSC National Initiatives

This list is correct at September 2001. Check corrections and updates at FSC's website: www.fscoax.org or bookmark www.fscoax.org/html/fsc_around_world.htm

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Taiga Rescue Network (TRN) is an international network of non-governmental organisations and indigenous peoples working for the protection and sustainable use of the world's boreal forests. TRN was established in 1992 to give a voice to those wanting to see sensitive development in the boreal region. Today more than 180 organisations are participants of the network.



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