

PART 3 FSC ADVICES ON FSC-PRO-60-006b

ADV-PRO-60-006b_01 Assessment of conversion of natural forest and transformation of plantations to agricultural use	
Normative reference	Clauses 16.3, 16.4 and Table 3 of < <u>FSC-PRO-60-006b V2-0 Risk Assessment Framework</u> >
Scope	This Advice Note applies to or is relevant for organizations sourcing FSC Controlled Wood using < <u>FSC-STD-40-005 V3-1 Requirements for Sourcing FSC Controlled Wood</u> > and all the parties involved in the development or revision of FSC Risk Assessments. It also applies to organizations implementing the FSC Regulatory Modules ² as a tool to demonstrate conformance with the 'Regulation (EU) 2023/1115 on deforestation-free products' (EUDR).
Approval date	14 October 2025 by FSC Director General
Publication date	31 October 2025
Status	Final
Effective date	This Advice Note shall have two effective dates: a) 01 November 2025: For all the parties involved in the development or revision of FSC Risk Assessments in accordance with < <u>FSC-PRO-60-006b V2-0 Risk Assessment Framework</u> >. b) 01 January 2026: For organizations developing Extended Company Risk Assessments (ECRA) in accordance with < <u>FSC-STD-40-005 V3-1 Requirements for Sourcing FSC Controlled Wood</u> > or in accordance with the <u>FSC Regulatory Modules</u> .
Transition end date	Not applicable
Period of validity	Until withdrawn or replaced by other normative documents.
Background	One of the key changes introduced with the revised < <u>FSC-PRO-60-006b V2-0 Risk Assessment Framework</u> > is the alignment of FSC normative requirements with the < <u>FSC-POL-01-007 Policy to Address Conversion</u> > and the EUDR. In this context, 5 new risk assessment indicators were included in this framework. Among those, Indicator 55 focuses on the assessment of conversion of natural forests and transformation of plantations to agricultural use after 31 December 2020. Further information can be found in < <u>FSC-GUI-40-005 Crosswalk of Indicators between Risk Assessment Framework V1-0 and V2-0</u> >. Considering the provisions of < <u>FSC-POL-01-007 Policy to Address Conversion</u> > and the definition of 'deforestation-free' in Article 2.13 of the EUDR, Clauses 16.3 and 16.4 were included in < <u>FSC-PRO-60-006b V2-0 Risk Assessment Framework</u> > for the assessment of Indicator 55. These clauses were based on the precautionary approach, which resulted in a default 'non-negligible' risk designation for this indicator. Only in the case of a risk assessment conducted via a major type of process, it allowed a chamber-

² The FSC Regulatory Modules refers to <FSC-STD-60-004r_Regulatory Module - International Generic Indicators>, <FSC-STD-40-004r_Regulatory Module - Chain of Custody Certification>, <FSC-STD-50-001r_Regulatory Module - Trademark>, <FSC-STD-40-006r_Regulatory Module - Project Certification>, <FSC-STD-30-005r_Regulatory Module - Forest Management Groups>, <FSC-STD-20-011r_Regulatory Module - Chain of Custody Evaluations>, <FSC-STD-20-001r_Regulatory Module - General Requirements for Certification Bodies>, <FSC-STD-30-010r_Regulatory Module - Controlled Forest Management>, and <FSC-STD-20-007r_Regulatory Module – Forest Management Evaluations>.

	<p>balanced Working Group to designate an area as 'negligible risk', provided they are able to demonstrate via data that relevant conversion or transformation activities have not taken place in the area under assessment since 31 December 2020.</p> <p>In May 2025, the <u>EU benchmarking</u> was released by the European Commission (EC) in line with Article 29 of the EUDR. This benchmarking assesses the deforestation risk at the level of a country, or parts thereof, based on a range of criteria that reflects quantitative, objective and internationally recognised data. The benchmarking system is based on a three-tier system for classification of countries as low, standard or high risk. 'Low risk' refers to countries, or parts thereof, where there is sufficient assurance that production of commodities/products is deforestation-free, or in case issues are found, these are exceptional.</p> <p>Therefore, taking into consideration the recently published EU benchmarking, FSC has decided to align the methodology for the assessment of Indicator 55 with the results of the EU benchmarking.</p>						
Advice	<p>1. Clauses 16.3 and 16.4 of <<u>FSC-PRO-60-006b V2-0 Risk Assessment Framework</u>> on the application of the precautionary approach for the assessment of Indicator 55 shall be considered withdrawn.</p> <p>2. The following revised definitions of and notes under the 'non-negligible risk thresholds' for Indicator 55 in Table 3 of <<u>FSC-PRO-60-006b V2-0 Risk Assessment Framework</u>> shall apply:</p> <table><tr><th>No.</th><th>Indicator</th><th>Non-negligible risk thresholds</th></tr><tr><td>55</td><td><i>There is no conversion of natural forest and no transformation of plantations to agricultural use since 31 December 2020.</i></td><td><p>1. The European Commission's official assessment³ based on Article 29 of EU Regulation 2023/1115 does not classify the country under assessment, or parts thereof, as low risk.</p><p>2. More recent/additional data available indicates that the low risk classification for the country under assessment, or parts thereof, by the European Commission's official assessment based on Article 29 of EU Regulation 2023/1115 should be revised.</p><p>3. In the absence of an official assessment by the European Commission based on EU Regulation 2023/1115, the following threshold applies:</p><p>Evidence indicates that conversion of natural forest and/or transformation of plantations to agricultural use has occurred after 31 December 2020.</p><p>NOTE: Various methods may be used to assess this risk threshold and proof that the requirements under this indicator are met. For example: enforcement of applicable legislation, spatial analysis, etc.</p></td></tr></table>	No.	Indicator	Non-negligible risk thresholds	55	<i>There is no conversion of natural forest and no transformation of plantations to agricultural use since 31 December 2020.</i>	<p>1. The European Commission's official assessment³ based on Article 29 of EU Regulation 2023/1115 does not classify the country under assessment, or parts thereof, as low risk.</p> <p>2. More recent/additional data available indicates that the low risk classification for the country under assessment, or parts thereof, by the European Commission's official assessment based on Article 29 of EU Regulation 2023/1115 should be revised.</p> <p>3. In the absence of an official assessment by the European Commission based on EU Regulation 2023/1115, the following threshold applies:</p> <p>Evidence indicates that conversion of natural forest and/or transformation of plantations to agricultural use has occurred after 31 December 2020.</p> <p>NOTE: Various methods may be used to assess this risk threshold and proof that the requirements under this indicator are met. For example: enforcement of applicable legislation, spatial analysis, etc.</p>
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³ European Commission Reference: C(2025)3279. Accessible here: [https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/documents-register/detail?ref=C\(2025\)3279&lang=en](https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/documents-register/detail?ref=C(2025)3279&lang=en)