

**FSC® PROCEDURE**

**Development and Transfer of National Forest Stewardship Standards to the FSC Principles and Criteria Version 5 (FSC-STD-01-001 V5)**

FSC-PRO-XX-XXX V1-0 EN (Document code to be assigned by PSU after approval )



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P&C V5

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## **DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSFER OF NATIONAL FOREST STEWARDSHIP STANDARDS TO THE FSC PRINCIPLES AND CRITERIA VERSION 5 (FSC-STD-01-001 V5)**

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

FSC's vision is that the world's forests meet the social, ecological, and economic rights and needs of the present generation without compromising those of future generations.

## Foreword

Following the membership approval of the Principles and Criteria Version 5 (P&C V5) in February 2012, all National Forest Stewardship Standards (NFSSs) need to be transferred or developed to comply with the approved P&C V5.

With the purpose of supporting the implementation of the P&C V5, FSC and its global membership launched the development of a coherent set of International Generic Indicators (IGIs). This global set of indicators will serve as a starting point (see clause 2.1 below for definition of starting point) for Standards Development Groups (SDGs) with existing<sup>1</sup> NFSS, to transfer their standard to the revised P&CV5, and for new<sup>2</sup> NFSSs to be developed according to the revised P&CV5.

With the development of the IGIs, FSC aims at improving global consistency in content and therefore implementation of NFSSs.

Since the beginning of the IGI development process, the Policy and Standards Unit (PSU) of FSC has made several publications on the background of the process and how the organization envisions a pragmatic, consistent and efficient NFSS transfer and development process.

This document serves as a formal and required Procedure that describes the role of the IGIs as a starting point to the transfer and development of NFSSs.

The proposal to develop this document was endorsed by the IGI Steering Committee, and PSU was mandated to produce a Procedure together with a Working Group consisting of FSC Network Partners.

<sup>1</sup> Existing standards are approved National Standards that cover the full scope of forest management in the country; approved National Standards with limited scope (SLIMFs; Plantations; Natural Forests, NTFP, etc.); and draft National Standards.

<sup>2</sup> For those countries where there is currently no Forest Stewardship Standards as described in point 2 below.

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## A. Objective

The objective of this Procedure is to provide clear and unambiguous methods for transferring or developing National Forest Stewardship Standards (NFSSs) to the Principles and Criteria Version 5 (P&C V5).

## B. Scope

This document specifies procedural requirements for registered Standards Development Groups (SDGs) to transfer or develop indicators and other normative elements<sup>3</sup> in NFSS, compliant with the approved P&C V5.

The document is to be used exclusively during the transfer or development of NFSS to the P&C V5. FSC will phase out this Procedure when all existing NFSS are successfully transferred.

Existing standards in the FSC Normative Framework that outline requirements on content and structure, and the process for development of NFSSs (FSC-STD-60-002 and FSC-STD-60-006) are to be used together with this procedure. These standards will be revised after the transfer period to incorporate relevant aspects of this procedure.

All aspects of this Procedure are considered to be normative, including the scope, effective date, references, terms and definitions, notes and tables and annexes, unless otherwise stated.

## C. Effective Date

This will be assigned as soon as the standard effective date is decided upon after public consultation

## D. References

The following documents are relevant for the application of this document. For references without a version number, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

*FSC-STD-60-006 (V1-2) EN Process requirements for the development and maintenance of National Forest Stewardship Standards;*

*FSC-STD-60-002 (V1-0) EN Structure and Content of National Forest Stewardship Standards;*

*FSC-TPT-60-007 (V2-1) EN Proposal for the transfer of Forest Stewardship Standards to the Principles and Criteria version 5*

## E. Terms and Definitions

For the purposes of this procedure, the terms and definitions given in *FSC-STD-01-002 FSC Glossary of Terms*, *FSC-STD-01-001 FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship* and *FSC-STD-01-004 FSC International Generic Indicators* apply.

<sup>3</sup> "Other normative elements", here refers to other normative requirements that are not necessarily expressed in the IGIs, such as the Annex of applicable laws and legislation, etc.

## 1. Generic requirements for developing or transferring NFSSs to the FSC P&C version 5:

- 1.1. Standard Development Groups (SDGs) shall be registered and approved by the FSC Policy and Standards Unit (PSU) for the transfer or development of National Forest Stewardship Standards (NFSSs) to the Principles and Criteria Version 5 (P&C V5).
- 1.2. Registered SDGs shall meet the applicable process requirements for development and maintenance NFSSs in accordance with FSC-STD-60-006 V1-2 EN.

**NOTE 1:** For SDGs developing a new NFSS, FSC-STD-60-006 V1-2 EN applies in its entirety  
For SDGs transferring an existing NFSS, FSC-STD-60-006 V1-2 EN applies as indicated in the FSC Transfer Template (see Clause 1.3, below).

- 1.3. In order to register, SDGs shall complete and send to PSU the FSC Transfer Template '*Proposal for the transfer of Forest Stewardship Standards to the Principles and Criteria Version 5. (FSC-TPT-60-007 (V2-1) EN*).
- 1.4. The formal transfer or development of a NFSS shall not commence until receipt of official notification from PSU that the SDG is registered. SDGs that already started work on their NFSS prior to receipt of PSU notification will not be qualified for transfer or development of NFSS.
- 1.5. Registered SDGs shall carry out the transfer or development of NFSSs to the P&C V5 within the timeline specified in the FSC Transfer Template sent to PSU.
- 1.6. Registered SDGs shall submit a request to PSU to extend transfer or standard development deadline mentioned in their Transfer Template if there is a need for variation in timelines at national level.

**NOTE 2:** The transfer process timeline is inherently tied with the timeline for developing the FSC International Generic Indicators (IGIs) (FSC-STD-01-004).

- 1.7. NFSSs developed or transferred in accordance with this procedure shall have five (5) year validity after the effective date.
- 1.8. Registered SDGs shall adhere to the requirements on structure and content of NFSSs specified in FSC-60-002 V1-0 EN when developing or transferring NFSSs.

## 2. Using the IGIs

- 2.1. The IGIs shall be used together with the IGI Notes (Addendum to FSC-STD-01-004) as the starting point in the transfer of NFSSs or in development of new NFSSs P&C V5. Starting point means that each IGI and the associated Notes shall be considered in line with the requirements specified in this Section.
- 2.2. While transferring or developing NFSSs, each IGI shall be considered by using one of the following options:

**a. Adopting**

The SDG copies an IGI into the NFSS as it is written in the IGIs Standard (FSC-STD-01-004).

**b. Adapting**

The SDG reviews and revises an IGI in order to address terminology, scope, or effectiveness in measuring conformance to a Criterion in a regional/ national context. This may take multiple forms:

- I. Revision of the wording of an IGI to include terminology appropriate in the regional/national context, while maintaining the intended scope and outcome of the IGI.
- II. Adding locally relevant thresholds, other national/regional norms, or best practices to an IGI to improve intended outcomes and consistency in measuring conformance with a Criterion.
- III. Splitting an IGI to allow more effective and efficient measures of conformance to a Criterion without changing the intended outcome of the IGI.
- IV. Using an existing Indicator from an approved FSC Forest Stewardship Standard instead of an IGI where it corresponds directly with the elements of the IGI and with the relevant Criterion.
- V. Expanding or focusing the scope of an IGI, in order to better achieve intended outcomes and conformance to the criterion based on national context. This option results in narrowing or expanding the intended outcome of the IGI.

**NOTE 3:** Item V is intended for those IGIs that contain lists or other multiple or complex requirements. For example, in cases of IGIs with lists, the SDG may agree to include all elements of a list, or only some of the elements of the list, or to add new elements to the list, as applicable.

**c. Dropping**

The SDG may omit an IGI where it is determined to be inapplicable or otherwise noncontributing in measuring conformance to a criterion in a national context.

**NOTE 4:** IGIs may be considered inapplicable where the IGI addresses a condition that will never exist in the national context. IGIs may be considered noncontributing where the SDG agrees that omission of an IGI will allow better overall performance of the standard, while not lowering conformance to any particular Criterion.

**d. Adding a new indicator**

The SDG may suggest additional indicators in order to better establish conformance to a Criterion in the regional/ national context. Additional Indicators shall comply with Section 4 of FSC-STD-60-002 (Structure and Content of National Forest Stewardship Standards).

- 2.3. Options b) (adapting), c) (dropping) and d) (adding) require written justifications when submitting the NFSS for approval. Justifications may be brief and may address multiple IGIs simultaneously if the conditions and rationale for the decisions are uniform. Justifications shall not conflict with FSC Policies, Standards, Advice Notes or Procedures.

- 2.4. The IGI Notes (Addendum to FSC-STD-01-004) shall be considered in terms of their verbal forms for the expression of provisions according to the ISO/IEC Directives Part 2 (“Rules for the structure and drafting of International Standards”).

### 3. Transfer Option - Transferring an existing NFSS

- 3.1. Countries with an approved NFSS with full or limited scope (e.g. SLIMFs, Plantations, NTFP, etc.) or a draft NFSS shall follow the requirements in this Section and the specifications for the Transfer Option as described in the FSC Transfer Template.
- 3.2. The SDG shall transfer their existing NFSS, to the structure and content of the P&C V5.
- 3.3. The recommended steps to transfer a NFSS are as follows:
- I. Identify indicators in the existing NFSS which cover the normative elements in the P&C V5 criteria and transfer them to the new NFSS structure. Transfer may be done by using the Transfer Matrix in FSC-TPT-60-008.
  - II. Compare each transferred indicator with the corresponding IGI and choose the one that best covers the normative element in the criterion.
  - III. Identify normative elements in the P&C V5 criteria not covered by a transferred indicator and fill them with the corresponding IGIs in words originally suggested by the IGI Working Group.
  - IV. Verify that all normative elements in each criterion of the new NFSS are covered by the indicators.
  - V. Go through each indicator to adopt or adapt its wording, drop them or add new indicators as per Clause 2.2 and 2.3.
  - VI. Verify Criterion by Criterion that the set of indicators is coherent, without gaps and redundancies and consistent in language and terminology. Go through the new NFSS as a whole to edit it, check references and consistency.

**NOTE 5:** PSU recommends a process along the lines as presented above, but does not require the implementation of these steps in the number and order as presented as long as the transfer addresses the various stages of the transfer (gap analysis, IGI consideration, etc.).

- 3.4. When transferring the standard, the SDG shall evaluate the new NFSS for compliance with FSC-STD-60-002. Detected nonconformities shall be addressed before submitting the NFSS for approval.

### 4. Development Option - Developing a new NFSS

- 4.1. Countries that do not have an approved or draft NFSS shall follow the specific requirements in this Section and the specifications for the Development Option in the FSC Transfer Template.



- 4.2. Requirements on structure and content as specified in FSC-STD-60-002 shall be followed for the development of new NFSSs, with the following modifications:
- I. Clause 2.1 in FSC-STD-60-002 shall read as follows: *“The standard shall be structured as a hierarchy of Principles, Criteria and associated Indicators. As content, structure and numbering of the hierarchical levels of Principles and Criteria is already provided by FSC, national Standard Development Groups are responsible for developing the indicators and verifiers. The FSC International Generic Indicators (IGIs) (FSC-STD-01-004) shall be used as a starting point for the development of the standard to facilitate compliance with this requirement for a hierarchical framework.”*
  - II. Clause 4.1 in FSC-STD-60-002 shall read as follows: *“The standard shall specify at least one indicator for each normative element of every criterion in accordance to the requirements of this standard. The FSC International Generic Indicators (IGIs) (FSC-STD-01-004) together with the IGI Notes (addendum to FSC-STD-01-004) shall be used as the starting point for the development of national indicators.”*
  - III. Clauses 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 (above) shall be applied in addition to Section 4 of FSC-STD-60-002.
  - IV. The concept of Scale, Intensity and Risk (SIR) shall be applied at minimum to all criteria of the P&C V5 that explicitly require adaptation to Scale, Intensity or Risk in their wording (superseding Section 6 of FSC-STD-60-002).

## 5. Phase-in of transferred NFSSs

- 5.1. Approved NFSS shall be implemented, as specified in accordance with its scope and standard effective date.
- 5.2. In territories where FSC Forest Management certification is already established, the standard effective date shall be at least three (3) months following the announcement of the standard’s approval; in order to allow Certification Bodies to adjust their systems to the new standard.
- 5.3. As audits take place over the course of the year, all existing certificate holders shall be audited against the new NFSS standard in the course of year in order to remain certified and any certificates against the old standard will be considered expired by FSC 1, 5 years after the effective date of the new NFSS.

**NOTE 6:** Exceptions to these requirements may be considered and approved by PSU on request by the SDG or NO.

## Annex I – Transfer Matrix Template

The full Transfer Matrix is included in the FSC-TPT-60-008, which will be updated once the IGIs are approved