



6 February 2014

Call for applicants: Policy for Association (PfA) Working Group

Dear FSC colleagues,

Following the FSC Board decision to revise the FSC Policy for Association of Organizations with FSC (FSC-POL-01-004) and its associated Due Diligence System (FSC-PRO-10-004), we are now seeking applicants for the Working Group that will lead this revision process. Background information can be found in the attached Annex 1.

FSC members are invited to submit their applications using the attached application form. The Working Group shall consist of 6 people, sub-chamber balanced FSC members. The approved Terms of Reference will be available shortly.

FSC Network Partners, FSC-accredited certification bodies and ASI staff are not eligible to participate on the Working Group but may participate as Technical Advisors to the Working Group. An application form for Technical Advisors is also attached.

FSC has contracted Karen Steer to manage this revision process. A Steering Committee, comprised of the FSC Director General and the Directors of FSC's Policy & Standards Unit and Quality Assurance Unit, will provide direct oversight.

All applications must be submitted to Karen Steer, k.steer@fsc.org, by 28 February 2014. The FSC Board of Directors will make decisions on the composition of the Working Group, and their Terms of Reference, at their March meeting. The Working Group will commence its work in late March 2014.

For stakeholders who are not able to participate in the Working Group or as Technical Experts, please consider joining the Consultative Forum established as a means of providing input on an ongoing basis. Please contact Karen if you would like to join this forum.

Please do not hesitate to contact Karen if you have any questions or comments regarding this call for applicants.

The Policy for Association has quickly become a core document in the FSC system and an important tool for safeguarding FSC's reputation. We hope you will consider being part of the team to lead its revision process.

Best regards,

Steering Committee for the revision of the Policy for Association

Annex 1: Revision of the FSC Policy for Association (PfA)

Background

The Policy for the Association of Organizations with FSC (FSC-POL-01-004) defines FSC's position on unacceptable activities of organizations associated with FSC and aims to identify organizations not committed to the fundamentals of responsible forest management and prevent them from misusing their association with FSC. As a market-based approach to responsible forestry, FSC's brand integrity is fundamental to achieving its mission and the Policy for Association (PfA) has quickly become a core document in the FSC system and an important tool for safeguarding FSC's reputation.

Since the last approval of the PfA in 2011, the FSC community has witnessed what works well, and not so well, with its implementation, including inconsistencies in its application and a continuous need for interpretations. In light of these experiences, and based on strong stakeholder request, the FSC Board of Directors in December 2013 mandated FSC to undergo a revision of this important policy.

Further, FSC proposes to revise its related Due Diligence System (DDS) so that the process prior to associating with an organization is strengthened significantly. The existing procedures for Due Diligence (FSC-PRO-10-004) are not sufficiently robust given the growth in the number of FSC certificates and the global reach of FSC certification which has stretched the limits of what the existing PfA is set up to deliver. As such, an operational and effective due diligence process prior to associating with an organization is critical for maintaining FSC's credibility and reputation.

The process for revising the PfA and related DDS will follow FSC-PRO-01-001 (V3-0), *The Development and Revision of FSC Normative Documents*. A sub-chamber balanced Working Group (6 FSC members in total) will guide the development of the revision process. Technical Experts will serve as a resource to the Working Group, particularly important for the development of the DDS.

Objectives of the Working Group

The Working Group (WG) will provide technical, scientific and strategic advice and recommendations on all elements of the Policy for Association (FSC-POL-01-004):

- The revision of the PfA including terms and definitions, policy elements and policy implementation.
- The revision of the procedures for Due Diligence evaluations (FSC-PRO-10-004).
- The development of a procedure for pro-active PfA evaluations

NOTE: FSC will provide WG members with a discussion draft and background documents on key issues, lessons learned and other information to help guide the revision process.

Selection of Working Group members

WG members shall be FSC members selected based on the following criteria:

- Experience with, and understanding of, the application of the PfA
- Ability and interest to serve as a representative of their Chamber/sub-chamber
- Knowledge of FSC's systems and procedures
- Understanding of the impacts of a normative document on affected stakeholders
- Commitment to FSC's mission and vision
- Desire to seek and reach consensus on controversial issues

- Ability to review and comment on documents in English
- Ability to actively participate in the process until final approval of the PfA and revision of the DDS
- Gender balance, as possible

The WG shall be sub-Chamber balanced (one from each Chamber and from Global North/South, for a total of six members).

FSC accredited Certification Bodies, FSC staff and Network Partners, and ASI are not eligible to participate on the WG but may serve as Technical Experts to the WG, thereby participating in WG meetings and all other aspects of this revision process with the exception of decision-making

The WG composition is approved by the FSC Board of Directors. Technical Experts are approved by the Steering Committee.

Tasks and responsibilities of the Working Group and other entities in the process

WG members shall:

- Serve as a liaison to their respective Chambers/sub-chambers
- Provide detailed input on the issues (needs, challenges, opportunities) that need to be incorporated into the revision process/development of PfA/DDS.
- Review, propose and approve revisions to the DDS/PfA, considering input from the Technical Experts and the Consultative Forum, and according to these Terms of Reference, the procedures of PRO-01-001 and the approved workplan for the revision process.
- Review and consider stakeholder comments received during and outside the formal public consultations.
- Decide when a draft is ready for public consultation;
- Decide when the final draft is ready for review and approval by the FSC Board of Directors.

In addition to the WG, the following bodies, established as required by FSC-PRO-01-001, are involved in the PfA/DDS revision process:

A Coordinator appointed by the FSC Quality & Assurance Unit (QAU) to administer the process and to manage the WG and the Consultative Forum. The Coordinator ensures that the WG operates responsibly and in accordance with its Terms of Reference, the workplan, and all other applicable procedures. The Coordinator is also responsible for drafting documents based on input from the WG, coordinating with QAU staff, and seeking other expertise as necessary.

A Steering Committee (composed of the FSC Quality Assurance Unit Director, the FSC Managing Director and the FSC Policy and Standards Unit Director) which provides oversight on all phases of the process until the final decision by the FSC Board of Directors.

Technical Experts, who are experienced specialists on subject matters of relevance to this revision process, and are invited to participate in WG discussions as resource persons.

A Consultative Forum which is a self-selecting group of interested/affected members, certificate holders, certification bodies and other stakeholders interested in providing ongoing, direct and meaningful input into the process. The Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that all interests are represented in the Consultative Forum. The role of the Consultative Forum is to ensure that all stakeholders who may be affected by the implementation of the PoA/DDS have the opportunity to comment, formally, during the process of their development.

Workplan and time commitment

WG members (and the Technical Experts) are expected to participate in up to three Face-to-Face meetings of three days each throughout the years 2014-2015. In addition, the group will conduct part of its work over email and conference calls.

The start-date for the Working Group is late March 2014, with a targeted completion date of February 2015. The first public consultation is tentatively scheduled for June 2014, with a second public consultation in November 2014.

Language

The working language of the WG is English.

All formal drafts for consultation, as well as other documents as requested and as possible, shall be translated into Spanish. Documents may also be translated into other languages if requested by the Working Group and depending on resource availability.