



Monitoring and Evaluation at the Forest Stewardship Council:

FSC M&E Public System Report

February 2016

Introduction

This concise report provides a basic overview of FSC's Monitoring & Evaluation System. It is prepared as part of the ISEAL Impact Code Requirements and aims to inform all FSC stakeholders interested in FSC's monitoring and evaluation activities.

1. Scope and Boundaries of the M&E System

It is FSC's mission to promote environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests. Consequently FSC's M&E program monitors at a global level how FSC's governance system and forest management certification as a prominent tool of FSC have an effect on certified forest management practices and people affected, on ecosystems and on aspects of the supply chain of products from FSC certified forests, as well as on other sectors addressed through FSC supporting strategies, as described in the FSC Theory of Change (ToC).

The ToC guides FSC's M&E system of the M&E program. The graphic in Annex 1, gives an overview of the 12 areas of FSC's intended impacts, which frame the scope of the M&E system. The section on the ToC on the FSC website explains how the ToC was developed, and how the intended impact areas are related to broader sustainability goals of global organizations such as the United Nations.

The core objectives of the FSC M&E System are:

- Provide FSC Senior Management and Board of Directors with the information needed for impact-oriented management.
- Provide relevant FSC stakeholders (FSC staff, FSC members and FSC expert panels, i.e. Standard Development Working Groups) with information to integrate lessons' learned from the FSC M&E System in the development of FSC policies, standards, and strategies.
- Incentivize other FSC stakeholders to promote responsible forest management, and actively engage in the FSC system.
- Communicate to FSC stakeholders about on-the-ground outcomes and impacts of FSC certification.

For more information:

- Full documentation on FSC's Theory of Change:
<https://ic.fsc.org/en/our-impact/program-areas/monitoring-and-evaluation/fsc-theory-of-change>
- 2-page Factsheet on FSC's Theory of Change and on FSC 's M&E System:
<https://ic.fsc.org/en/our-impact/program-areas/monitoring-and-evaluation>



2. Roles and Responsibilities

The FSC M&E Program is part of the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) of FSC International and is implemented by the FSC M&E Program Manager, whose responsibilities include:

- Data collection from different entities within the FSC International, and managing projects that enable improved data collection and dissemination.
- Reporting and analysis of FSC certification impacts in the various areas of interest to the FSC M&E Program, and to other FSC programs, units, accredited certification bodies, the FSC network, and independent researchers.
- Internal and public dissemination of information derived from the different M&E activities as described in the FSC M&E System objectives.

Table 1: FSC M&E program positions (status of January 2016)

Role	FTE	Responsibilities
Director of QAU	0.1	Supervision of the M&E Program Manager
FSC M&E Program Manager	1	Implementation and management of the FSC M&E Program
FSC M&E Officer	0.5	Support to the different activities of the FSC M&E Program
Temporary student assistants	Irregular	Support with data collection

3. Defining the intended change

The FSC mission is to promote environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests, through the FSC scheme. The FSC scheme credibly identifies well-managed forests as the source of responsibly produced wood products.

In order to measure and monitor to what extent FSC achieves its mission, FSC has developed a Theory of Change including 12 intended impacts, subdivided into four categories. For each of these impacts, indicators have been developed as a basis for monitoring and evaluation. In Annex 2 you can find a graphic simplified display of FSC's ToC.

For more information:

- Full documentation on FSC's Theory of Change:
<https://ic.fsc.org/en/our-impact/program-areas/monitoring-and-evaluation/fsc-theory-of-change>
- 2-page Factsheet on FSC's Theory of Change:
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4. Performance monitoring

Performance is being monitored at least annually through the preparation and dissemination of the Annual FSC M&E Report. This represents the current formal performance monitoring by the M&E pro-



gram. Simultaneously there are multiple formal and informal monitoring processes conducted at many different levels of the organization. One example is the monthly preparation of core statistics for SMT review.

For structured performance monitoring based on the ToC and the 12 intended impacts, the M&E program relies on different data sources in the organization, among which are:

- FSC certificate database
- Membership database
- Reports from internal Working groups, studies commissioned etc.
- FSCs Global Market Survey

Some of the data needed to monitor the 12 intended impacts are currently available, others not yet. The M&E program is dependent on a number of other processes in the organization that are intended a.o. to provide us with more structured and better quality data needed to structurally monitor FSCs intended impacts (see section 6.)

For more information:

- Full list of FSCs intended impacts and associated indicators and how these are measured in Annex 3 to the M&E System Report:
<https://ic.fsc.org/preview.fsc-monitoring-and-evaluation-system-report.a-3503.pdf>
- FSC M&E Reports for 2013 and 2014: Context, figures, effects and impacts:
<https://ic.fsc.org/en/our-impact/program-areas/monitoring-and-evaluation/monitoring-evaluation-reports>

5. Outcome and impact evaluation

Currently, the FSC M&E Program does not commission or undertake outcome or impact evaluation studies. To assess outcomes and impacts of FSC certification, FSC relies on:

- increased interactions with the research community;
- involvement in steering committees of research projects on FSC outcomes and impacts conducted by third parties;
- and contributing financially, or in-kind, to research projects (only in very rare cases)

A number of researchers and research institutions are undertaking such evaluations. FSC invests a sizeable share of the M&E Program Manager's time for interacting with the research community, for example by providing data from FSC sources, explaining complexities of the FSC system or giving input to research proposals and drafts.



FSC is preparing a simple online database for FSC related literature, research and impact evaluations. This database is planned to launch towards the end of 2016. It aims to make such literature more easily accessible for both internal and external stakeholders.

In addition, FSC has prepared a 'list with research themes of interest to FSC'. This list aims to provide researchers interested in FSC with inspiration for research that in our view is relevant, needed and presents current research gaps. This is expected to help create more and more structured knowledge on the outcomes and impacts of FSC certification.

For more information:

- A literature review on FSC outcomes and impacts prepared by FSC in 2009 [*FSC reflected in scientific and professional literature*](#)
 - [Overview of some of the latest and most relevant studies on FSC's outcomes and impacts](#)
 - [2014 Monitoring and Evaluation report](#)
 - List with research themes of interest to FSC (note: to be uploaded to the website soon)
- All can be found at: <https://ic.fsc.org/en/our-impact/program-areas/monitoring-and-evaluation/monitoring-evaluation-reports>

6. Improving the effectiveness of the M&E System

FSC is working on numerous projects to generate additional and better data, including:

- Streamlining FSC M&E System requirements when designing new programs;
- Supporting the development of an FSC revised, standardized electronic reporting format for public forest management certification reports, including impacts indicators specified in the ToC, to improving audit data quality and accessibility.

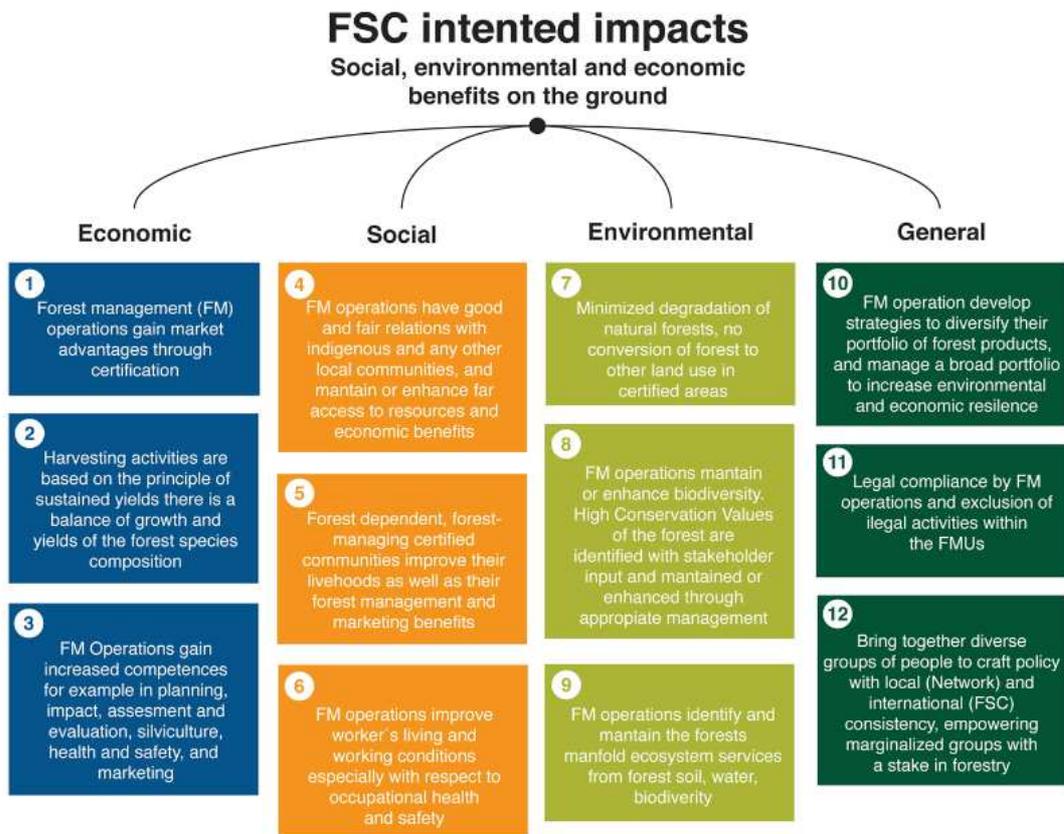
Getting access to more and better data is the current main priority for the FSC M&E Program.

7. Opportunities for engagement

Any comments or questions with regards to FSC's M&E System can be directed to FSC's M&E Program Manager, Dr. Marion Karmann at m.karmann@fsc.org.

Currently there are no public consultations planned for the FSC M&E System. However, FSC welcomes all feedback and is open to learn from research conducted on our certification system. Please feel invited to share with us any research, finished or in progress, related to FSC.

Annex 1: FSC Intended Impacts



Annex 2: High-level graphic outlining FSC’s Theory of Change

ToC: Transformation through FSC Certification

