

Collective Impact model – a methodology to find solutions together



The background

For smallholders in the Tropics, it is hard to make forest management profitable. Their forests have a high diversity of species. And the market requires high volumes of just a few. So, FSC certification often does not provide enough financial benefits.

Following up on previous experiences from Latin America region, FSC is now focusing on helping smallholders to become more efficient and successful businesses as a first step, seeking the right angle on accessing the market rather than seeing FSC certification as the immediate goal.

“Instead of pushing for certification, FSC will work with smallholders to together with them implement actions that contribute to responsible forest operations.”

What we are doing

The solutions to the problems that smallholders face, particularly in Latin America, are complex and demand a collaborative response from a myriad of actors, including governments, companies, buyers and NGOs.

FSC has more than 20 years of experience, where copying and pasting solutions from other areas of the world have not succeeded. FSC is now focused on applying the Collective Impact model, a methodology that proposes the joint commitment of a group of actors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem. For the commitment to be successfully achieved, five criteria must be secured:

- **Common agenda:** All participating organizations have a shared vision for social change that includes a common understanding of the problem and an approach to solving it through agreed actions.
- **Shared measurement system:** Agreement on the ways success will be measured and reported.

- **Mutually reinforcing activities:** Engagement of a diverse set of stakeholders, typically in multiple sectors, coordinating a set of differentiated activities through a mutually-reinforcing plan of action.
- **Continuous communication:** Over a long period of time among key players within and between organizations, to build trust and encourage ongoing learning and adaptation.
- **Backbone organization:** Ongoing support provided by an independent staff.

Rather than focusing work on several isolated projects, the proposal is to set up a collaboration process, that includes an action-learning approach with agreed key performance indicators (KPI), monitoring and evaluation framework and reporting, and which learnings will be replicable and refined from country to country.

Key features

- Instead of pushing for FSC certification as the first step, the

Collective Impact model means FSC would **work in partnership with smallholders** to support them implement actions that contribute to improve the competitiveness of responsible forest operations.

- The idea is to **increase the sense of ownership and accountability** of all the actors involved, especially the small forest owners and communities, and use FSC experience to co-create a tailor made market solution.

Current progress and next steps

2020 emphasis is trialling this model in two different settings:

- a well-established wood supply chain that aims to provide a wider approach to small and medium forest owners (Chile).
- a more diffuse context, for a non-timber forest products value chain approach, with shared benefits for all the actors involved, especially the Traditional Communities and Indigenous Peoples (Brazil).