

# Forestry Contractors certification



## The background

FSC has been exploring how it can improve access to certification for smallholders through the inclusion of forestry contractors into the system. Back in the Vancouver General Assembly in 2017, the FSC membership requested FSC to develop a solution for this through the motion 46/2017.

Right now, contractors providing services to any forest management certificate holder are not included in the FSC certification framework. FSC has been trying to find an effective way of dividing responsibilities between a certificate holder, forest owner and contractor.

“We want to find more effective ways of dividing responsibilities between certificate holders, forest owners and contractors.”

## What we are doing

As part of a pilot test, FSC has evaluated how the Group Model Type III might be applied, whereby an existing FSC certification standard – and the technical requirements of FSC-STD-30-005 for managing an FSC forest management group certificate – is used, and forestry contractors are simply included in it.

Beyond that idea, a technical working group has also evaluated concepts that are completely new to the FSC system: a) utilization of existing forestry contractor schemes for forest management certification; and b) the creation of a standalone forestry contractor certification standard. This would be an international standard setting out requirements for any contractor to become certified and then evaluate the relationship between a contractor certificate and a forest management group certificate (the current approach for private forest owners to get certified).

## Key features

- The new standard could see contractors and forest owners **share the responsibility of certification**. For example, the current forest management group certificate holder could have the responsibility over 70% of the standard requirements, with the remaining 30% fulfilled by a certified contractor.
- Many contractors work with multiple forest owners, so getting certified can be quite burdensome. If they could manage their own certificate – providing services from that certificate to other certificate holders – **the whole system could be streamlined**.
- This would be a voluntary system for contractors, **creating mutual benefits** for themselves and existing certificate holders.

## Current progress and next steps

Revisions to the Group Standard, which feature the inclusion of contractors, have been made and the first public consultation has been conducted, with the consultation feedback analysis under way.

The concept of developing a new set of standards for contractors is still at an early stage, with pilot testing continuing throughout 2020.

## Reference documents

- FSC-POL-01-001 FSC Policy for Pilot Tests of Draft FSC Standards
- FSC-STD-30-005 FSC Standard for Group Entities in Forest Management Groups
- FSC-STD-20-007 Forest Management Evaluations

> [Process weblink](#)