

FSC POLICY

FSC-POL-01-005 V1-0 D1-0 EN

Policy for Labeling Community and SLIMF Products



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The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is an independent, not for profit, non-government organisation based in Bonn, Germany.

The mission of the Forest Stewardship Council is to support environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests.

FSC develops, supports and promotes international, national and regional standards in line with its mission; evaluates, accredits and monitors certification bodies which verify the use of FSC standards; provides training and information; and promotes the use of products that carry the FSC logo.

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POLICY FOR LABELING COMMUNITY AND SLIMF PRODUCTS

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Please complete and send the attached questionnaire to:

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A Background

Currently, the market for FSC certified products does not differentiate between products from industrial operations and products from community or small or low intensity managed forest (SLIMF¹) operations. The development of the Policy for Labeling Community and SLIMF Products is driven by Policy motion 19, which was passed at the 2008 FSC General Assembly, and states:

FSC shall develop a strategy to differentiate community forest products from other products, that allows a phrase like “COMMUNITY ORIGIN PRODUCT”, in the claim on the FSC product. The strategy shall include all relevant aspects of Chain of custody and labeling to guarantee product traceability. * See definition of community forest management approved by FSC.*

* There is no FSC-approved definition of community forest management in the FSC Principles and Criteria Glossary.²

As community and SLIMF producers frequently face similar disadvantages in the market, especially small volumes which make it difficult to attract buyers and negotiate good prices, the FSC IC included both community and SLIMF producers in this new marketing strategy. The goal is that consumers who value the opportunity to support community and/or SLIMF producers will choose products from these producers and/or pay more for them. This could provide new and exciting marketing and sales opportunities to community and SLIMF producers, as well as large companies who purchase forest products from these producers.

The policy will involve the development of a new label (likely very similar to the current FSC label) for products made of 100% content from eligible producers. The label will also be used in the pilot project for FSC-Fairtrade Dual Labeling of timber products from community and SLIMF producers in developing countries (see www.fsc.org for more information on this project).

There are three general categories of community and SLIMF producers who could utilize this new policy:

1. Producers of final products (e.g., furniture, Brazil nuts, kitchen utensils)
2. Producers of primary and secondary products (e.g., logs, boards, resins) for companies
3. Producers that sell standing timber to companies.

There are two types of companies who could utilize this new policy:

1. Companies who purchase standing trees and raw materials from communities and SLIMF producers, and pass this material through the supply chain
2. Companies who sell final products with 100% content from eligible producers.

B Scope

This Policy provides guidance on who will be eligible to use the new FSC logo for products from community and SLIMF producers.

C Effective date

Effective upon approval.

¹ See SLIMF Eligibility Criteria (FSC-STD-1-003) and Addendums.

² There is a statement providing guidance on what a “community managed forest management unit” is in FSC-STD-007a-V1-0_EN, but this is only to provide guidance to certification bodies on certification procedures, specifically for preparing certification reports.

D References

The following referenced document is indispensable for the application of this document.

FSC-STD-1-003 SLIMF Eligibility Criteria and Addendums

E Process to be followed

A copy of the draft policy and a questionnaire are being distributed to: the FSC Board of Directors, all FSC National Initiatives and Regional Offices, FSC-accredited certification bodies, FSC IC Heads of Units, FSC Global Development Director, Accreditation Services International Director, and all members of the Consultative Forum, which was set up for this new policy and is comprised of individuals and/or organizations reflecting the full range of stakeholders affected by the policy. The feedback will be compiled, made publicly available, and considered in revising the policy as necessary.

The policy will then be submitted with an implementation plan to the Policy and Standards Committee for approval for a 1-year pilot period. The Policy Coordinator will monitor experiences with the use of the label with producers and retailers over the next year, and decide if revisions to the policy are necessary. If revisions are necessary, a revised version of the policy will be distributed for public comment. Further revision and public comment will be implemented until a final draft is submitted with an action plan to the Policy and Standards Committee for final approval.

F Timeline for completion

The policy will be revised, as necessary based on the comments received, and submitted to the Policy and Standards Committee by February 1, 2011. A revised version will be submitted (if further revision is necessary after the 1 year pilot implementation phase) by Feb 1, 2012.

Part I Policy Elements

1 Producer eligibility criteria

The following categories of producers are eligible to utilize this policy, no matter where they are located geographically.

1.1. Community producers

Groups of landowners (SLIMF or not) who have communally held legal right (e.g., title, long-term lease, concession) to forestland (e.g., *ejidos* in Mexico, First Nations in Canada, community concessions in Guatemala, sustainable development reserves in Brazil).

1.2 Small or Low Intensity Managed Forest (SLIMF) producers

These can be individuals or groups of SLIMF producers. See SLIMF Eligibility Criteria (FSC-STD-1-003) and Addenda. For Group certificate holders that include non-SLIMF FMUs, only the FMUs categorized as SLIMFs are eligible.

2 Type of product

Both timber and non-timber forest products qualify. These must be from FSC certified FM/COC operations.

3 Minimum content

The policy can only be used for products that have both at least 70% pure FSC content, and 100% content from eligible producers. The content refers to the original source of the forest product: whether it is from a community or SLIMF producer. Therefore, the use of the label is not determined by who is legally responsible for the forest management, who executes the management plan, or who processes the product.

Part II Policy Implementation

1 The use of the new label will be a voluntary option as soon as the policy is approved by the Policy and Standards Committee and the label design has been finalized by the FSC IC.

2 Eligibility to use the label on a product will be determined based on documentation regarding the origin of the product.