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FSC PROCEDURE

THE DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL OF FSC SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

FSC-PRO-01-001 (Version 2-0) EN

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THE DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL OF FSC SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

FSC-PRO-01-001 V2-0 EN

Approved March 2007
at 44th meeting of FSC Board of Directors

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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 provincial 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.

Summary

This document specifies the requirements and procedures to be followed by FSC for the development, approval and revision of FSC social and environmental international standards. Social and environmental international standards in the FSC system are forest management standards that fulfill social and environmental policy objectives, such as the FSC Principles & Criteria and the Standards for FSC Controlled Wood, or standards related to the trade and processing of FSC products, such as standards for FSC Chain of Custody certification. On the specific case of the FSC Principles & Criteria, small modifications to these procedures will be needed with regards to decision making, given the statutory requirements of FSC.

These procedures are designed to comply with the ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards (2004), and thereby to demonstrate compliance with the applicable requirements of *ISO/IEC Guide 59 Code of good practice for standardization*, and the WTO Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Agreement Annex 3 *Code of good practice for the preparation, adoption and application of standards*. Excerpts from the *TBT Second Triennial Review Annex 4, Principles for the Development of International Standards, Guides and Recommendations with Relation to Articles 2, 5 and Annex 3 of the Agreement* have also been drawn upon where appropriate.

The objective of these procedures is to ensure the credibility of all FSC social and environmental international standards, by incorporating the values of transparency, participation and fairness into the processes for their development, and through compliance with international best practice for standards development.

Notes on use of this procedure

All aspects of this procedure are considered to be normative, including the scope, procedure effective date, references, terms and definitions, tables and annexes, unless otherwise stated.

Notes on development of this procedure

Version 1-0 approved at the 35th meeting of the FSC Board of Directors, 27th November 2004.

Version 1-1 approved by FSC Executive Director, 18th February 2005 with minor substantive change, new paragraph 16.2.

Version 1-2 was submitted for approval to the FSC Board of Directors at their 41st meeting in March 2006. It was approved by the Board with a recommendation to solicit further stakeholder input until the end of 2006.

Version 2-0 was drafted during November and December 2006 (circulated as Version 1-3), taking into account stakeholder comments received during 2006. It also includes changes necessary to address minor inconsistencies related to the ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards. It was approved at the 44th meeting of the FSC Board of Directors, with the name FSC-PRO-01-001 The Development and Approval of Social and Environmental Standards.

Please send comments and suggestions on this policy to the Policy and Standards:

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A Scope

This document specifies the procedures to be followed by the FSC for the development, revision and approval of FSC social and environmental international standards.

NOTE: These procedures may also provide the basis for development of other FSC internal or technical standards. These procedures are not obligatory for such standards.

B Procedure effective date

Version 1-0 of the specified procedures became formal requirements with immediate effect from November 27, 2004, the date of approval by the FSC Board of Directors. Version 1-2 became effective as of May 1, 2006, following approval by the FSC Board of Directors. Version 2-0 became effective upon approval by the FSC Board of Directors at its 44th meeting in March 2007. See section 20 for approved departures from procedures.

C References

FSC-POL-01-001 Policy for pilot tests of draft FSC standards (version 2-0)

FSC-STD-01-002 FSC glossary of terms

FSC-STD-20-002 Structure and content of Forest Stewardship Standards

FSC-STD-20-003 Local adaptation of generic Forest Stewardship Standards

FSC-STD-60-006 Requirements for procedures for development of Forest Stewardship Standards

ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards (2004)

D Terms and definitions

Terms and definitions are provided in *FSC-STD-01-002 FSC glossary of terms*.

1. Decision to develop an FSC social and environmental international standard

1.1 Proposals to develop new FSC social and environmental international standards may originate from discussion by the FSC Board of Directors, the FSC General Assembly, or from proposals by FSC members, FSC accredited National Initiatives, members of FSC staff or staff of Accreditation Services International. Proposals may be made as the result of FSC discussion papers, or be included in the FSC annual work plan.

NOTE: 'FSC staff' is understood to include the staff of FSC International Center, National and Regional Offices.

1.2 The formal decision to authorize development of a new FSC social and environmental international standard shall be taken by the FSC Executive Director, taking account of the approved strategic planning documentation, work plans and other instructions of the FSC Board of Directors.

1.3 The following requirements shall be satisfied prior to such authorization:

1.3.1 There shall be a written proposal, which:

- a) specifies the aims and objectives of the new standard(s), including the benefits related to credibility, integrity and efficiency;
- b) explains how these aims and objectives contribute to FSC's mission;
- c) references any background papers, FSC discussion papers, previous decisions by the FSC Board of Directors, approved FSC General Assembly motions, etc., that support the need to develop the proposed standard(s);

- d) states whether the proposed standard(s) will be developed in compliance with the ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Setting Environmental and Social Standards;
- e) includes a statement as to the effort that has been made to identify any existing standard(s) or guidelines already developed by third parties which might achieve FSC's aims and objectives, and the reason why any such standard(s) or guidelines that are identified should not be adopted by FSC;
- f) includes a statement of the results of an analysis of the impact the proposed standard would have on and its relationship to other FSC standards and policies;
- g) lists support for the proposal for FSC to develop the standard(s);
- h) identifies the key stakeholder groups that will be affected by the new standard and the potential impacts upon them;
- i) specifies an estimated budget for the standards development process;
- j) provides an indication of whether funding is available, and/or of potential sources of funding, in order for the proposed standards development process to be completed.

1.3.2 The written proposal shall be circulated for comment to all FSC National Initiatives, FSC National and Regional Offices, FSC-accredited certification bodies and to the FSC Board of Directors for review and comment prior to the decision to develop the new standard.

2. Official announcement of a new standard under development

2.1 Subject to completion of the requirements specified in section 1, above, the decision to develop a new FSC social and environmental international standard shall be officially announced, e.g. through publication in *FSC News and Notes* and on the FSC website (www.fsc.org). The announcement shall be copied to the ISEAL Alliance and circulated to:

- a) the FSC Board of Directors;
- b) all FSC National Initiatives and National and Regional Offices;
- c) all FSC-accredited certification bodies;
- d) all supervisors of FSC core programs;
- e) all key stakeholder groups identified under 1.3.1. (h); and
- f) all members of the applicable Consultative Forum.

2.2 The announcement shall include:

- a) a brief, clear description of the scope and objectives of the proposed standard(s);
- b) the justification of the need to develop the standard(s);
- c) the FSC registration code(s) that are proposed for the standard(s);

- d) the contact point at the FSC for further information;
- e) the estimated timeline for completion of the proposed standard(s);
- f) whether the process will be in compliance with the ISEAL Code of Good Practice.

3. Appointment of a Facilitator

- 3.1 The supervisor of the FSC Policy & Standards Program shall appoint the Facilitator of the Working Group which will develop the standard(s).
- 3.2 The Facilitator of the Working Group shall be responsible for the administration and management of the Working Group and for the drafting of the new standard(s).

NOTE: The Facilitator will usually be an FSC Policy Manager, but may be another properly qualified individual, for example a staff member of an FSC National or Regional Office, an FSC National Initiative or a consultant on contract to FSC.

4. Steering Committee

- 4.1 The supervisor of the FSC Policy & Standards program together with the FSC Executive Director and the Facilitator of the Working Group shall constitute the Steering Committee for the standards development process. Staff of FSC may join the Steering Committee on request and at the discretion of the FSC Executive Director. Representatives from other standard setting bodies may also join the Steering Committee on request and at the discretion of the FSC Executive Director, whenever their expertise can contribute to the standard development.
- 4.2 The Steering Committee shall oversee the development of the specified FSC social and environmental international standard(s), and ensure that the process complies with the terms of reference (see 5.2), the draft work plan (see 5.3), any documented procedures and agreed budgets and timelines.
- 4.3 The supervisor of Policy & Standards program shall provide a formal point of contact for the FSC Board of Directors in regard to the development of the specified FSC social and environmental international standard(s), and shall provide support and advice to the Facilitator of the Working Group in relation to the successful completion of the specified standard(s).
- 4.4 The Steering Committee shall:
 - a) review and approve the terms of reference for the Working Group;
 - b) review and approve the workplan of the Working Group;
 - c) define the process to be followed to produce a first draft of the proposed standard;
 - d) monitor the progress of the Working Group in relation to implementing its terms of reference;
 - e) provide advice or support in response to requests by the supervisor of the FSC Policy & Standards program or Facilitator of the Working Group during the development and testing of the standard(s);

- f) review the membership of the Consultative Forum to determine whether it includes members from all the stakeholder groups identified as being affected by a particular FSC social and environmental international standard, as identified under 1.3.1 (h).

5. Terms of Reference and Workplan

- 5.1 The supervisor of the FSC Policy & Standards program, in consultation with the Facilitator of the Working Group shall draft a workplan and budget for the development of the proposed standard(s), including specific terms of reference for the Working Group charged with developing the standard(s).
 - 5.2 The Terms of Reference for the Working Group shall include at least the following:
 - a) the aims and objectives of the standard(s) that the group is mandated to develop;
 - b) the procedures to be followed, including those listed in Annex 1;
 - c) the working language(s) for the Technical Working Group (see 9.1, below);
 - d) any additional specific requirements to complete the work;
 - e) timetable for the standard development process.
- NOTE: The terms of reference may provide for the constitution of one or more 'sub-groups' mandated to address specific aspects of the overall terms of reference.
- 5.3 The workplan shall include at least the following:
 - a) The setting up and support of the Working Group in compliance with the requirements specified in section 6 of this procedure;
 - b) The setting up and support of a Consultative Forum in compliance with the requirements specified in section 7 of this procedure;
 - c) Drafting, consulting on, and redrafting standard(s) in compliance with section 8 of this procedure;
 - d) Multi-country field testing or pilot testing of at least one draft of the standard(s) prior to submission of a final draft to the FSC Board of Directors for approval, when this is considered appropriate for the type of standard under development;
 - e) Specification of a communications plan for the standard development process;
 - f) An estimated date on which the completed standard(s) will be submitted to the FSC Board of Directors for approval.
 - 5.4 The draft workplan shall be submitted to the FSC Board of Directors for a two (2) week period for review and comment. The Steering Committee shall then review and finalize the workplan.

6. Working Group

- 6.1 The appointed Facilitator shall be responsible for setting up and supporting a Working Group for each FSC social and environmental international standard or group of similar FSC standards.
- 6.2 The Working Group shall:
- a) seek comprehensive advice on all aspects of the development of FSC social and environmental international standards from the FSC, FSC Regional and National Offices, FSC National Initiatives, FSC-accredited certification bodies, FSC certificate holders, FSC members, FSC stakeholders and/or relevant technical experts;
 - b) provide detailed input to the development of the FSC social and environmental international standard or group of similar standards in accordance with its terms of reference;
 - c) formally recommend that the final draft standard be submitted to the FSC Board of Directors for its approval.
- 6.3 The Working Group shall be chaired by the Facilitator.
- 6.4 Membership of the Working Group shall be proposed and approved by the FSC Board of Directors, with the support of the Steering Committee.
- 6.5 The FSC Board of Directors shall inform all FSC members of the opportunity of participating in the Working Group. It shall also inform all FSC members of the proposed Working Group membership before it is formally approved, providing at least 30 days for comments.
- 6.6 Given the nature of social and environmental standards in the FSC system, the number of members of the Working Group shall be normally a multiple of the six FSC sub-chambers (6, 12 or 18). The number of members should not exceed that required for efficient operation and shall take account of available funds.
- 6.7 All members of the Working Group shall be FSC members and membership of the Working Group shall be balanced in terms of the six FSC sub-chambers.

NOTE: Members of the FSC Board of Directors, FSC staff and staff from FSC National Initiatives and FSC accredited certification bodies shall not be eligible for formal Working Group membership. The role of FSC National Initiatives in the development of social and environmental standards is further defined in Annex 3.

- 6.8 Members of FSC Working Groups shall be selected on the basis of their:
- a) expert knowledge and/or experience of the issue under consideration;
 - b) up-to-date knowledge and experience of FSC's systems and procedures;
 - c) representation of points of view from the corresponding FSC sub-chamber, and the points of view of small, medium and large enterprises affected by the standard;

- d) understanding of the potential impact of a (policy or) standard on affected stakeholders;
 - e) understanding of and support for FSC's mission and vision;
 - f) ability to review and comment on documents submitted in the working language(s) agreed for the Working Group (see 9.1, below).
- 6.9 All members of the Working Group shall receive a copy of these procedures, and the Working Group's final terms of reference and work plan prior to commencement of its work.
- 6.10 The supervisor of the Policy & Standards program may appoint technical experts to participate in Working Group discussions as resource persons. These resource persons shall have voice in Working Group discussions but no formal vote in its decision making processes.
- 7. Consultative Forum**
- 7.1 The Facilitator shall be responsible for setting up a Consultative Forum for each FSC social and environmental international standard or group of similar FSC Standards.
- 7.2 The role of the Consultative Forum is to ensure that all stakeholders who may be affected by the implementation of a specific FSC social and environmental international standard have the opportunity to comment, formally, during the process of development of the standard.
- 7.3 Membership of a Consultative Forum shall be open to any stakeholder on request, whether or not the stakeholder is an FSC member. The number of members shall not be limited.
- 7.4 The Facilitator shall ensure that the Consultative Forum includes individuals and/or organizations reflecting the full range of stakeholders affected by the standard(s) under development, as identified under 1.3.1 (h).
- 7.5 The Facilitator shall:
- a) invite the participation of all FSC members, through an invitation in respective *FSC newsletter*;
 - b) request that members of the Working Group suggest individuals and organizations that should be invited to take part on the Consultative Forum;
 - c) request that members of the FSC Board of Directors, FSC National Initiatives, FSC National and Regional Offices, FSC-accredited certification bodies and other partners and constituents suggest individuals and organizations that should be invited to take part on the Consultative Forum.
- 7.6 Members of the FSC Consultative Forum shall complete a simple questionnaire which identifies the stakeholder group(s) to which they belong, and which identifies whether they are an FSC member (see example stakeholder questionnaire, Annex 2).

8. Preparatory drafting and consultation

8.1 The Steering Committee shall agree on the process to be followed to produce a first draft of the proposed standard.

8.2 Draft standards shall be based on the template for FSC international standards, which specifies the standard's title, draft number, date, status, time-limit for comments, expected date for approval of the finalized standard, FSC registration code, Facilitator's contact details, etc.

8.3 The first and subsequent drafts may be specified as being for public consultation, or for technical consultation. Drafts shall be numbered as "(Draft #-#)" where the first number is the number of the applicable draft for public consultation, and the second number is the applicable revision number of the drafts for technical consultation.

For example, Draft 1-0 would be the first draft released for public consultation. Draft 1-1 would be a revision of this draft, for technical consultation only. Draft 2-0 would be the next draft for public consultation. If initial drafts are circulated for technical consultation only they would be numbered Draft 0-0, 0-1, etc.

8.4 Drafts for public consultation shall be officially announced, e.g. through publication in the respective *FSC newsletter*, and published on the FSC website together with a summary of the key points and a formal comments form for free download, and shall be circulated to:

- a) the FSC Board of Directors
- b) all members of the Working Group,
- c) all members of the Consultative Forum,
- d) all FSC National Initiatives and National and Regional Offices,
- e) all FSC-accredited certification bodies,
- f) all key stakeholder groups identified under 1.3.1. (h), and
- g) all supervisors of FSC core programs

8.5 The period to submit comments on the first draft for public consultation shall be a minimum of 60 days from the date of publication. The period for consultation on intermediate drafts shall be a minimum of 30 days from the date of publication. The period for consultation on the final draft prior to decision making (see 12.4, below) shall be 60 days from the date of publication, except in the following circumstances:

- a) the period may be reduced to a minimum of 30 days if: the Steering Committee agrees in writing that the changes introduced into the final draft compared to the previous draft are relatively minor and/or non-controversial;
- b) the period may be reduced to a minimum of 45 days if the Steering Committee agrees in writing that delaying a decision until the subsequent meeting of the FSC Board of Directors would substantially compromise the social and/or environmental objectives the standard is designed to address.

- 8.6 For consideration as formal comments, comments shall be submitted:
- a) in English or Spanish, or any additional language as identified under 9.1;
 - b) to the email address on the header of the draft standard;
 - c) prior to the closing of the period for submitting comments, stated on the header of the draft standard; and
 - d) with required information about the commenter (see example stakeholder questionnaire, Annex 2).
- 8.7 All other comments shall be considered as informal comments. Whenever possible, FSC will encourage that informal comments be made formal. Informal comments will be responded to in so far as the capacity of the FSC allows.
- 8.8 All comments (formal or informal) should be attributed, and will be considered as being publicly available, unless the contributor explicitly requests that the comments should be treated confidentially. Anonymous comments shall not be considered.
- 8.9 All formal comments shall be acknowledged on receipt and collated by the Facilitator.
- 8.10 The Facilitator shall prepare a report on the formal comments which includes:
- a) a summary of the issues raised;
 - b) an analysis of the range of stakeholder groups who have submitted comments;
 - c) a general response to the comments;
 - d) an indication of how they have been taken into account in the subsequent public draft standard; and
 - e) a copy of all the formal comments as an Annex.
- 8.11 The report on the formal comments shall be circulated to all members of the Working Group. The report shall be published on the FSC website together with the subsequent public draft of the standard.
- 8.12 The Facilitator and Working Group shall analyze the sources of the comments to ensure that formal comments have been received from representatives of all the key stakeholder groups identified as being impacted by the implementation of the proposed standard.
- 8.13 The Facilitator shall, together with the members of the Working Group, be proactive in seeking input from representatives of stakeholder groups identified under 1.3.1 (h). The Facilitator shall make special provision to ensure that formal comments are received from representatives of any marginalized groups that may be affected by the standard, and/or ensure that specific provisions have been made to ensure that the potential impacts of the standard on such groups have been explicitly identified and taken into account.

8.14 The number of draft standards circulated for public consultation prior to finalization of the standard shall be at the discretion of the Steering Committee, taking account of the comments of the members of the Working Group. In the case of new standards or revisions of existing standards that take place in compliance with the ISEAL Code of Good Practice, there shall be at least two rounds of public draft standards circulated for public review prior to finalization.

9. Language

9.1 The working language of Working Groups shall be English, unless a different or additional working language is explicitly identified by the Steering Committee when the Working Group is constituted.

9.2 All drafts of each standard for public consultation shall be made available in English.

9.3 The meaning of English words should follow those given in the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary or the Concise Oxford Dictionary, unless the intended meaning is specified in the standard or provided in *FSC-STD-01-002 FSC glossary of terms*.

9.4 The following words will be used in accordance with the specific meanings given below:

- i) the word 'shall' to indicate a requirement of the standard, and the words 'shall not' to indicate a prohibition.
- ii) the words 'should' or 'should not' to indicate a recommendation, rather than a requirement or prohibition, of the standard.
- iii) the word 'may' to indicate a permitted course of action, within the limits of the standard.
- iv) the words 'need not' to indicate that a specified course of action is not a requirement.

9.5 The reference version of all standards shall be the English version. All versions in other languages shall include a disclaimer, explaining that in case of doubt the English language version of the standards shall take precedence.

10. Content

10.1 Social and environmental international standards that are designed as the basis for corresponding regional, trans-national, national or sub-national standards shall be accompanied by clear guidance or related policies and procedures for taking account of local economic, social, environmental and regulatory conditions where the standard is applied. This guidance shall include criteria to judge the acceptability of the proposed local variations in the standard.

NOTE: The criteria to judge the acceptability of proposed local variations may refer to process requirements, rather than specific performance requirements.

NOTE: In the case of the FSC Principles & Criteria such guidance is provided by *FSC-STD-20-002 Structure and content of Forest Stewardship Standards*, *FSC-STD-20-003 Local adaptation of generic Forest Stewardship Standards*, and *FSC-STD-60-006 Process requirements for the development of national or sub-national Forest Stewardship Standards*.

- 10.2 Requirements shall be specified in order to achieve the objectives of the standard and shall not be defined in terms of design or descriptive characteristics that are not necessary for the achievement of the objectives, or that favor a particular technology or patented item.
- 10.3 The meaning of the specified requirements and the level of performance required to comply should be clear to the reader.
- 10.4 Requirements should be free from subjective elements. The use of such phrases as “ordinarily”, “substantial”, “proactive”, “appropriate to”, “minimize”, “wherever possible”, “thorough” or “best available” should be avoided.
- 10.5 The standard shall include clear supplementary information as necessary to identify any categories of users to whom special provisions are applicable, e.g. 'small-scale', 'low intensity' or 'community' forest management units.
- 10.6 The standard may include guidance notes to help auditors or other users in implementing the standard. Such guidance notes or applicability notes may be included as annexes to the standard, or be published as separate documents. In all cases the standard shall state that guidance or applicability notes shall not be normative.
- 10.7 The standard may include references to supplementary standards or documents (e.g. best practice guidelines) developed by third parties that provide additional guidance on implementation. Such references shall specify clearly whether compliance with any additional requirements is normative.
- 10.8 Standards that are intended for direct implementation shall include objective and verifiable criteria, indicators and, where appropriate, benchmarks and means of verification. Whenever possible, they should be flexible enough to be applied by enterprises of all scales, and to account for local variations.

11. Pilot and Field testing

- 11.1 Draft standards may be pilot tested in accordance with *FSC-POL-01-001 Policy for pilot tests of draft FSC standards*, with due authorization from the FSC Executive Director.

A key feature of an FSC **pilot test** is that it may result in the issue of a certificate permitting use of the FSC logo on products for a limited duration. It therefore differs from normal **field testing**¹ which may be carried out at any time without approval of the FSC Board of Directors or the Executive Director but which cannot result in the issue of an FSC certificate or in use of the FSC logo.

12. Draft standard(s) submitted for decision making

¹ FSC encourages field testing of any draft standard prior to its submission for approval by the FSC Board of Directors. Permission to field test a standard is not required. However, the results of field testing cannot result in the issue of an FSC endorsed certificate, and do NOT permit the company that takes part to make use of the FSC logo or registered trademarks, either on- or off-product.

- 12.1 When the Steering Committee considers that a draft standard is ready for approval by the FSC Board of Directors, the Facilitator shall seek a formal recommendation from the Working Group as described in Annex 1, paragraph 1.5.
- 12.2 If a final draft cannot be agreed within the time specified in the Working Group's terms of reference, the Facilitator shall seek the advice of the Steering Committee as to how to proceed, with the option to extend the time specified for completion by up to six months to carry out further work prior to seeking the approval of the Working Group for a revised draft. If after this period consensus cannot be achieved the Steering Committee shall present a report to the FSC Board of Directors proposing how to proceed and seeking a decision on this proposal from the FSC Board of Directors. The decision of the FSC Board of Directors shall be final.
- 12.3 When a draft standard(s) has the approval of the Working Group it shall be published on the FSC website together with a formal comment form for the final period of public consultation.
- 12.4 The Facilitator shall prepare a report on behalf of the Working Group. The report shall:
 - a) summaries the standards development process, taking into account any deviations from the original work plan, as established under 5.3;
 - b) explain the main issues and concerns raised during the process, and explain how these have been addressed;
 - c) include a clear statement as to whether the process complied with the ISEAL Code of Good Practice;
 - d) include a clear description of any departures from these procedures, demonstrating compliance with the requirements of section 20 of this document;
 - e) include as Annexes a list of the names and affiliations of the members of the Working Group, and the names and affiliations (including specification whether the stakeholder is an FSC member, and, if so, of which chamber and sub-chamber) of all stakeholders that have submitted comments during the standards development process; and
 - f) include the motion of approval of the Working Group, and the results of this motion.
- 12.5 The report shall be reviewed and commented on by the associated Steering Committee, and shall be revised by the Facilitator as a result. The finalized report shall be approved by the Steering Committee.
- 12.6 After approval by the Steering Committee, the FSC Executive Director shall submit the final report to the FSC Board of Directors together with:
 - a) The standard submitted for decision making; and
 - b) A copy of all formal comments received during the final period of public consultation.

13. Decision making

- 13.1 All FSC social and environmental international standards shall be approved by the FSC Board of Directors, with the exception of the FSC Principles and Criteria. The FSC Board of Directors may delegate its powers to a formal committee charged with this duty, subject to oversight by the FSC Board of Directors.
- 13.2 The FSC Board of Directors (or its designated committee) shall either:
- a) give the standard approval as an international standard; or
 - b) give the standard approval as an international standard, with minor amendments; or
 - c) reject the standard.
- 13.3 If the FSC Board of Directors rejects the standard, within 30 days of its decision it shall state the reasons for the rejection, and may suggest what steps it considers necessary in order to address its concerns. The Steering Committee shall consider these reasons and decide what further actions should be taken. If these actions result in major substantive revisions to the standard, the standard shall be re-submitted to the Working Group for approval, and steps 12.1 to 12.6 above shall be repeated. If these actions result in minor amendments to the standard, the standard shall be re-submitted to the FSC Board of Directors for decision (13.2 b).

14. Approval as a Version 1-0 standard

- 14.1 If the standard receives the approval of the FSC Board of Directors as a social and environmental international standard, it shall be published as an approved international standard on the FSC website and this shall be publicly announced to:
- a) FSC members;
 - b) all members of the Working Group,
 - c) all members of the Consultative Forum,
 - d) all FSC National Initiatives and National and Regional Offices,
 - e) all FSC-accredited certification bodies,
 - f) all FSC certificate holders,
 - f) all key stakeholder groups identified under 1.3.1. (h), and
 - g) all supervisors of FSC core programs
- 14.2 The standard may then be implemented, as specified in accordance with its scope and standard effective date(s).

15. Review and revision of a social and environmental international standard

- 15.1 After approval typographical errors and minor inconsistencies may be corrected with the approval of the supervisor of the FSC Policy & Standards program.

- 15.2 The supervisor of the FSC Policy & Standards program may also propose minor changes. The supervisor of the FSC Policy & Standards program shall draft a written justification for the proposed change, which shall be circulated to the FSC members, FSC Board of Directors, members of the appropriate Working Group, appropriate Consultative Forum, FSC National Initiatives, FSC National and Regional Offices, Accreditation Services International and to FSC-accredited certification bodies for a 30-day review period. After this 30-day review period the supervisor of the FSC Policy & Standards program shall report to the FSC Executive Director on the proposed amendments to the standard in line with the proposal, taking account of any comments received. The FSC Executive Director decides on minor substantive amendments to the standard.
- 15.3 In the case of changes resulting from corrections or amendments as described in 15.1 and 15.2 above, the updated standard will be given a new number, V1-1, V1-2, etc, together with the date of the update. The most recent version will be published on the FSC website.
- 15.4 Up to 12 months after the standard effective date, members of the FSC Board of Directors, FSC National and Regional Offices, FSC National Initiatives, the ASI-Accreditation Services International and FSC-accredited certification bodies are requested to submit formal comments about the implementation of the standard to the FSC Policy & Standards program. 12 months after the standard's effective date, the Policy & Standards program will review the submitted comments, and make proposals as to whether the standard should be modified in the light of these comments. The respective report may be publicly announced e.g. through publication in the respective *FSC newsletter*, circulated to members of the appropriate Working Group, and may be published on the FSC website for a 60-day period of public comment.
- 15.5 All formal comments to the report shall be acknowledged on receipt. Formal comments shall be collated by the FSC Policy & Standards program, who shall prepare a report which includes a summary of the issues raised, and an analysis of the range of stakeholder groups who have submitted the comments. A copy of all the formal comments shall be included as an annex. The report shall be reviewed by the Steering Committee, which shall propose what (if any) further work is required in relation to review and possible revision of the standard at that time.
- 15.6 If the Steering Committee proposes that the standard be revised, it shall specify the procedure to be followed. Substantive revisions shall be submitted to the FSC Board of Directors for approval, in line with the applicable requirements specified in section 13, above. The FSC Board of Directors may approve the proposed revisions, or reject the proposed revisions. If the FSC Board of Directors rejects the proposed revisions it shall state the reasons for the rejection, and may suggest what steps it considers necessary in order to address its concerns. The Steering Committee shall consider these reasons and decide what further actions should be taken. If these actions result in further revisions to the standard, the standard shall be re-submitted to the FSC Board of Directors for decision.
- 16. Review and revision of approved standards**
- 16.1 The FSC Policy & Standard program shall keep a file of all comments on FSC standards that are submitted after the approval of the standard(s).

- 16.2 No later than three years after the approval date of the most recently approved version of the social and environmental international standard, the Policy & Standards program shall collate and review all the comments on the standard, as well take into account external circumstances and the continued relevance of the standard, and prepare a report proposing what if any steps should be taken to revise the standard.
- 16.3 The report of the FSC Policy & Standards program shall be submitted for approval by the FSC Executive Director.
- 16.4 If substantive changes to the standard are perceived as necessary as a result of the analysis, the standard shall be revised according to the requirements specified in this procedure.
- 16.5 If only minor changes to the standard are perceived as necessary as a result of the analysis, the Policy & Standards program shall specify the procedure to be followed.
- 17. Revision of a standard by the FSC General Assembly**
- 17.1 Notwithstanding the decision of the FSC Board of Directors as described in this procedure, revisions to an FSC social and environmental international standard may also be proposed by a duly approved motion of the FSC General Assembly.
- 17.2 In the special case of the FSC Principles & Criteria for Forest Stewardship (published as *FSC-STD-01-001*) a duly proposed and approved motion of the FSC General Assembly is a requirement in order to approve any modification of the standard.
- 18. Complaints and disputes**
- 18.1 Complaints/disputes related to content of the approved standard shall be responded to by the FSC Policy & Standards program, by providing an explanation of why a particular point of view was not incorporated into the final standard submitted for approval, and/or explaining how the point may be raised again in relation to future revisions of the standard.
- 18.2 Complaints/disputes related to procedural issues shall be responded to initially by the FSC Policy & Standards program. If the complainant is not satisfied with the FSC Policy & Standards program explanation, the complaint /dispute shall be addressed through the applicable FSC Dispute Resolution process.
- 19. Availability of approved FSC social and environmental international standards**
- 19.1 Approved FSC social and environmental international standards shall be available to stakeholders free of license charges in electronic format. FSC may charge at cost for providing and making available hardcopies of its standards (e.g. the cost for posting, printing, postage and packing for orders).
- 20. Approved departures from procedures**
- 20.1 Departures from these procedures may be approved in exceptional circumstances, when compliance with the procedure was not possible for reasons beyond the control of the FSC, and/or when an alternative process would be in the best interests of the mission of FSC.

20.2 The FSC Policy & Standards program and/or the Facilitator shall report any departures in writing to the Steering Committee as soon as they are proposed or come to their notice. The report shall explain the nature of the departure, and the reason or justification for the departure. The Steering Committee shall review the report on the departure and recommend approval or corrective action to be taken in relation to the departure. The report, together with the Steering Committee's recommendation shall be forwarded to the FSC Board of Directors with copy to the members of the Working Group. The FSC Board of Directors shall decide on any departure from these procedures, including any necessary corrective actions. The report with the approved departures from these procedures may be made publicly available, together with the final standards.

21. Record keeping

21.1 The FSC shall keep the following records for each standard/ set of standards developed:

- a) written proposal to develop the standard (see 1.3.1);
- b) names and affiliations of members of Steering Committee, Working Group(s) and Consultative Forum(s), and of other stakeholders that were consulted on the standards during their development;
- c) copies of public draft standards circulated for comment;
- d) copies of all comments received on public draft standards;
- e) summary of comments received in response to each public draft, together with a general response to those comments;
- f) copies of technical drafts;
- g) the Working Group report and all comments received on the Working Group report (see 12.4 - 12.6);
- h) a description of all departures from the specified procedures for standards development, and the actions taken in respect of those departures (see section 20); and
- i) the decisions of the FSC Board of Directors (see 13.2, 13.3 and 15.6).

Annex 1: FSC Working Group General Procedures

1 General Requirements

The Working Group shall work in accordance with its specific terms of reference, and with the procedures specified in this document, *FSC-PRO-01-001*, Annex 1.

1.1 Role of the Chairperson

The Working Group shall be chaired by the Facilitator appointed by the Supervisor of the FSC Policy & Standards program. The Facilitator shall be responsible for ensuring that the group operates responsibly and in accordance with its terms of reference and the applicable procedures. The Facilitator shall ensure that all members of the Working Group have the opportunity to express their opinions and concerns, and shall aim to find consensus in all recommendations of the Working Group.

1.2 Declaration of interests

All members of the Working Group shall declare any interests they have, whether general or specific, that may be affected by the standard under consideration. The Facilitator shall determine whether any declared interest is sufficient to prevent an individual's membership of the Working Group. If a member is subsequently found not to have declared interests that are considered relevant to the issue being considered by the group, then that person may be excluded from further participation in the Working Group. The decision on exclusion of a member from the Working Group shall be taken by the FSC Executive Director.

NOTE: the existence of an interest does not prevent someone from being a working group member - potential conflicts may be addressed by ensuring that there is a balance of interests within the working group. Members of working groups are typically selected because they have a specific interest in the results of the process.

1.3 Drafting of standards

The Working Group Facilitator is responsible for drafting standards on behalf of the Working Group. The role of the Working Group members is to scrutinize and comment on drafts, review and advise on comments submitted by other stakeholders, and to suggest wording on specific aspects that might achieve consensus support of all members of the Working Group.

1.4 Consultation

Consultation on draft standards shall follow the procedures specified in Section 12 of *FSC-PRO-01-001*.

1.5 Decision making

Formal decision making authority in relation to approval of FSC social and environmental international standards rests with the FSC Board of Directors. The role of the Working Group is to provide its support for the draft standard which is submitted to the FSC Board of Directors for approval.

When the Steering Group considers that the draft standard is ready for approval of the FSC Board of Directors, the Facilitator shall put a formal motion to the Working Group members to the effect that, in the opinion of the Working Group, the draft standard:

- has undergone sufficient consultation and testing to have identified the likely impacts of implementation;
- meets the aims and objectives specified in the terms of reference of the Working Group;

- merits the approval by the FSC Board of Directors.

The Working Group shall make its decision by consensus, defined as general agreement in favor of a proposal, plus the absence of a sustained objection to the proposal. If a vote is required, then consensus is defined as meaning that at least 66% of the members of the Working Group vote in favor of the proposal, and there are no votes against the proposal. Abstentions and absentees shall not count as votes against the proposal, but shall be included in the calculation of the membership of the Working Group.

The Facilitator shall not vote, and shall not be included in the calculation of the membership of the Working Group for the purpose of calculating voting results.

Annex 2: Example stakeholder questionnaire

Questionnaire

To be used to provide information on members of consultative forums and contributors of formal comments on FSC documents

Cover note

Please read this cover note and fill in the questionnaire form carefully. By this, you can become a member of an FSC Consultative Forum and help that any contribution on FSC documents will be considered as a formal comment.

In order to be fully considered, responded to and included in reports, comments on draft FSC policies and standards or FSC discussion papers must be fully attributable to:

- a person; and, where relevant,
- the organization or company on behalf of which the comment is being submitted; and
- the formal status of the person within this organization.

Comments submitted on FSC documents in development or under review will be considered as being publicly available (without information about the contributor), unless the contributor explicitly requests that the comments should be treated as being confidential.

How to enter information in the questionnaire form

Information can only be entered into the provided form fields which are shaded grey by default. The fields are extending when you are entering information: You can write beyond each line and you can also press <ENTER> to add further paragraphs within one field. In order to move to the next field press <TAB> or use the cursor keys.

Fields titled in bold must be filled in, where applicable, to provide the required minimum information on formal comments.

Fields suffixed by an asterisk (*) are considered as being publicly available.

If you have provided this information before and the information is still valid, a reference to the previously submitted questionnaire/comment is sufficient (see bottom of form).

QUESTIONNAIRE FORM

Person: Full name

First name*:

Last name*:

Title:

On behalf of (organization, company, government agency, etc.) – if applicable

Organization*:

Please enter the legal or registered name of your organization or company.

Department:

Position*:

Please indicate the position or function you exert within your organization or company.

Description:

Please provide a short description of your organization, highlighting any special features in comparison to other organizations of the same sector.

Mailing address

Phone, fax, email & internet

Tel: +

Mob: +

Fax: +

email:

www:

Country:

FSC relationship

Type of contributor

FSC Member

Member of FSC National Initiative

FSC Sub-Chamber:

FSC Certificate Holder

Group member

Code number:

FSC-accredited certification body

Affiliate or sub-contractor

Organization

Private company or corporation

Industry association

Non-profit organization

Trade association

Government or local authority

Other:

Individual

Background:

How submitted information should be handled

I would like to become a member of the corresponding Consultative Forum which is regularly consulted with on subsequent public drafts of this document.

Please treat my comments as confidential.

Full information previously submitted:

FSC document:

Date:

Code, version and/or title of commented FSC document

of questionnaire sent

Annex 3: The role of National Initiatives in consultation on draft FSC social and environmental international standards

The FSC welcomes and encourages involvement of FSC National Initiatives at all stages of development of international policies and standards.

The FSC recognizes that the capacity of individual FSC National Initiatives to take an active part in the development of FSC international standards varies greatly. Some FSC National Initiatives may wish to take an active role in the development of many standards, other FSC National Initiatives may have the capacity to play an active part only in the development of standards of special interest to their country or region.

As representatives of FSC, FSC National Initiatives' staff should not take public positions in relation to FSC standards under development, and should not be considered to be representatives of national stakeholders. The role of FSC National Initiatives is to ensure that the views of national stakeholders are properly included in the standards development process, not to be the representative of those views.

The following notes are designed to provide FSC National Initiatives with guidance as to the range of options for participation which are currently available. It is recognized that these options are based on the current FSC structure. If FSC changes its organizational model, then procedures would need to be reviewed and would likely need to be revised.

Comments on draft standards

FSC National Initiatives' staff are selected for their knowledge of the forest and wood products sector in their country, and their understanding of, and respect by, a wide variety of stakeholders. FSC National Initiatives' staff are encouraged to comment on all draft standards, and to provide such comments to the Facilitator of the applicable Working Group.

Face to face meetings with the FSC Policy & Standards program

FSC National Initiatives' staff are encouraged to contact the Facilitators of the relevant Working Groups at any time to discuss standards under development, or to clarify issues that are not clear.

The FSC Policy & Standards program aims to meet FSC National Initiatives' staff at regional meetings at least once a year, and to provide time at these meetings to discuss any ongoing standards development processes.

Circulation of draft standards to national stakeholders

FSC National Initiatives are encouraged to keep local stakeholders informed of FSC international standards under development, for example by including notes on development in national newsletters, on national websites, etc. FSC National Initiatives may circulate draft FSC standards to local stakeholders and seek feedback to pass on to the FSC, or encourage national stakeholders to provide their feedback directly to FSC.

Translation of draft standards

The FSC International Center usually develops draft standards in English. National Initiatives are encouraged to translate draft standards into one or more local languages in order to improve review and stakeholder consultation in their country or region. If translations are developed by FSC National Initiatives they should always include a disclaimer to the effect that the original document takes precedence over the translation, in case of doubt.

National stakeholder meetings and tele-conferences

FSC National Initiatives are encouraged to organize meetings or tele-conferences of national stakeholders to discuss FSC international standards that are under development, and are encouraged to invite FSC international staff to these meetings to present the latest draft standards and enter into question and answer sessions with stakeholders.

Summarizing national viewpoints

FSC National Initiatives may summarize the viewpoints of national stakeholders, and submit such summaries to the Facilitator of the relevant Working Group. In this case the FSC National Initiative should ensure that the names and affiliations of the individuals or organizations whose viewpoints are summarized are listed, and make clear whether the viewpoints being presented are a consensus agreement of those individuals and organizations, or include a variety of disparate views. The FSC National Initiative should also clarify whether the individuals/organizations are speaking in their own, individual capacity, or whether they are speaking as the formal representatives of a stakeholder group or category.

In all such cases the FSC National Initiative shall be clear that the views are those of the national stakeholders, and do not represent the views of the FSC National Initiatives' staff.

The FSC National Initiative is also encouraged to provide additional intelligence in relation to whether views expressed by national representatives are widely held, and/or in relation to the likely impacts of FSC standards on national stakeholders.

Annex 4: Special considerations for inclusion of stakeholders from FSC southern countries

The procedures have been specified to try to ensure fair participation of all key stakeholders from whatever part of the world. However, some specific considerations are appropriate to try to ensure participation of stakeholders from countries considered southern, according to FSC's definition.

These include:

- Seeking funding to hold Working Group meetings in southern countries, where appropriate.
- Seeking opportunities to meet with southern stakeholders in association with other meetings;
- Carrying out pilot testing/field testing in at least some southern countries
- Aiming to include southern, and in particular regional representation in Working Groups
- Working with FSC National Initiatives in southern countries to hold telephone conferences with southern stakeholders
- Seeking funding to facilitate consultation by southern FSC National Initiatives