



FOREST STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

International Center

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FSC SOCIAL STRATEGY:

BUILDING AND IMPLEMENTING A SOCIAL AGENDA

VERSION 2.1

Section C: FSC Social Strategy

This is not a complete document. This summary does not contain Section A (Background and Rationale), Section B (Social Issues within the FSC), Section D (Strategy Implementation), Appendices I – VI, document definitions or references. Please refer to the Social Strategy (version 2.1) for the full document.

April 2003

Introduction

This summary provides a quick reference for the “heart” of the FSC Social Strategy. It presents the goal, objectives, outputs and activities (Section C). It does not include the background information on the development of the document, or the six appendices.

The Social Strategy was written for all FSC stakeholders and clients, but targets four stakeholder groups that experience particular challenges in the FSC system. These groups, called “social constituencies” in the strategy, include:

- Local community forest users
- Indigenous Peoples
- Forest workers
- Small scale and low intensity forest users.

The Social Strategy addresses the following key issues raised by the social constituencies:

1. Improving the **implementation** and **monitoring** of the “social” Principles (Principles 2, 3 and 4)
2. Respecting the **rights of people** involved in or impacted by forest management
3. Addressing issues of **scale** and **intensity**
4. Building **local capacity** in the FSC system
5. Capacity building and support for **community use** and **management** of forests
6. Improving **two-way communication** between FSC and its social constituencies
7. Addressing **market inequities**.

The FSC Board of Directors has endorsed the Social Strategy as a document to guide FSC operations and planning (26th meeting, September 2002). FSC is working within its network and building new partnerships to ensure the goal and objectives of this strategy are successfully achieved.

The Social Strategy is a living document. We welcome your input. To comment on this document, please write to social@fscsoax.org or by mail or fax to the address on the front page.

FSC welcomes partnerships to promote the Social Strategy as part of our commitment to socially beneficial, environmentally appropriate and economically viable forest management.

C. FSC SOCIAL STRATEGY

C.1. Mission, Vision, Goal and Values

FSC's Mission Statement is:

"The Forest Stewardship Council A.C. (FSC) shall promote environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests."

It offers the following definition of 'socially beneficial':

"Socially beneficial forest management helps both local people and society at large to enjoy long-term benefits, and also provides strong incentives to local people to sustain the forest resources and adhere to long-term management plans."¹

This strategy document proposes a revised definition of socially beneficial forestry.

FSC's Vision of socially beneficial forestry is:

Forest management practices that:

- Enhance forest values, products and services;
- Ensure that current and future generations of forest-resident communities, Indigenous Peoples, local people, forest owners, forest workers and society at large enjoy the benefits of well-managed forests
- Recognise, respect and address indigenous land tenure and rights, traditional and customary rights, and the local culture of indigenous peoples and local communities
- Contribute to the enhancement of local livelihoods and well-being.

The overall **Goal of FSC's Social Strategy** is:

FSC social vision incorporated and made operational by FSC board of directors, all FSC Units, Regional Offices and National Initiatives.

FSC shall, while implementing its mission and social vision, maintain the credibility of the FSC system as a whole, and be guided by its **Core Social Values** of:

- **Access:** Strive to make certification equally accessible to all forest owners and managers, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, faith, cultural background, geographical location, scale or intensity of the operation, or ecosystem in which they operate.
- **Partnerships:** Build long-term partnerships based on transparency, respect, mutual learning and reciprocal accountability.
- **Legal rights:** Support and facilitate the legal and meaningful recognition of indigenous peoples', local communities' and workers' rights, including traditional and customary rights to forest-related knowledge.
- **Equity:** Promote inter-generational equity and the equitable distribution of benefits from the forest to Indigenous peoples and local forest dependant communities.

¹ Forest Stewardship Council A.C. By-Laws Document 1.1 (Ratified, September 1994; Editorial Revision, August 2000).

- **Cultural identity:** Respect cultural identity and diversity, traditional local governance structures and decision-making processes, and the right to self-determination and self-development.
- **Subsistence forest use:** Recognise and support as fundamental the subsistence use of forests by forest dwellers.
- **Traditional forest stewardship:** Support traditional forms of good forest stewardship and their adaptation to changing social, economic and environmental conditions.

C.2. Objectives, Outputs and Activities

One of the challenges facing the development of this Strategy is to align the priorities of FSC to those of the individual social constituencies, where this falls within the remit of FSC's core business. The aim is to develop an effective Social Strategy that will deliver the social benefits of certification. Achieving this will require the sustained efforts of a wide variety of individuals and partner organisations.

Four major, complementary objectives are presented below, together with their related outputs and activities. Indicators will be developed shortly as part of the monitoring and evaluation plan.

The current order of the objectives, outputs and activities reflects the order of priority suggested by FSC National Initiative social strategy consultation processes and the comments received by organizations and individuals on Version 1 of the Social Strategy. (See Annex V: The Consultation Process on Version 1).

*Objective 1: **Compliance***

By 2006, enhance FSC processes and procedures to ensure:

- ***effective compliance with the FSC's 'social' Principles and Criteria (P&Cs,) and***
- ***more equitable access to FSC forest certification among all forms of forest users and tenure holders.***

*Objective 2: **Communication***

By 2006, establish a communication system that facilitates the exchange of information, experiences and lessons learned on social issues and forest certification at local, national and international levels.

*Objective 3: **Capacity building***

By 2006, increase capacity within FSC, its social constituents, and in partnership with other key stakeholders, to support marginalized social groups to play an equitable role in FSC certification processes and to achieve their goals in forest use and certification.

*Objective 4: **Market benefits***

By 2006, support systems created and offered to social constituents to promote the equitable distribution of forest benefits to social constituencies and optimise market benefits from forest certification.

Objective 1. FSC Compliance

By 2006, enhance FSC processes and procedures to ensure:

- effective compliance with the FSC's 'social' Principles and Criteria (P&Cs,) and***
- more equitable access to FSC forest certification among all forms of forest users and tenure holders.***

In order for social priorities and concerns to be addressed effectively, they should be mainstreamed through adoption and prioritisation within FSC's core activities and business plans. The outputs and activities described below are designed to provide guidance to leaders of FSC Units, Regional Offices and National Initiatives (NIs) in improving their understanding and delivery of the FSC social vision.

Outputs:

- 1.1 Certification standards:** Standards set and guidance provided to Certification Bodies to better identify and assess social issues.
- 1.2 National Initiatives:** National Initiatives supported in achieving meaningful participation of social stakeholders and a balance of social, environmental and economic concerns in standards development.
- 1.3 Policy development:** The positive social impact of FSC strengthened through a process of continuous improvement of its policies, built upon lessons learned and innovative approaches.
- 1.4 Accreditation:** Accreditation programme revised to be responsive to the needs of social constituents.
- 1.5 Research / New Policy Development:** Applied research on key issues, based on bottom-up, participatory and adaptive approaches, is carried out, and lessons learned disseminated.

Outputs and Activities:

Output 1.1. Certification Standards

Standards set and guidance provided to Certification Bodies to better assess social issues.

Activities:

- 1.1.1 Develop comprehensive and transparent protocols on consultation requirements, for working with stakeholders such as indigenous peoples, local communities and other interested parties, including a means for stakeholder analysis and representativity.
- 1.1.2 Produce a toolkit for culturally sensitive and appropriate stakeholder analysis and consultation techniques.
- 1.1.3 Provide guidance for the certification of large-scale or industrial-scale operations, with regard to their obligations, rights and responsibilities to indigenous peoples and local communities.
- 1.1.4 Produce guidelines on conflict resolution in certification assessments.
- 1.1.5 Develop methodologies and mechanisms for measuring and analysing both positive and negative social impacts on key stakeholders.
- 1.1.6 Provide guidance and training to Certification Bodies on applying criteria relating to workers' rights, indigenous peoples' rights and land tenure issues.

- 1.1.7 Develop social performance standards for Chain of Custody certification operations.
- 1.1.8 Create incentives for the development of national and regional forest stewardship standards.

Output 1.2 National Initiatives

National Initiatives supported in achieving meaningful participation of social stakeholders and a balance of social, environmental and economic concerns in standards development.

Activities:

- 1.2.1 Develop culturally and socially appropriate processes and communication tools to engage key stakeholders including: indigenous peoples, local communities, forest workers, and small-scale forest operations to improve their representation in National Initiative processes such as standards development.
- 1.2.2 Establish a social fund for National Initiatives to be used for the meaningful participation of social groups in standards setting processes (Refer to Section D for information on the social fund.).
- 1.2.3 Update the National Initiatives manual to address the requirements for adequate social representation.
- 1.2.4 Produce guidelines to enhance participatory approaches, stakeholder analysis, consultation, and conflict resolution mechanisms in standards setting.
- 1.2.5 Provide guidance to NIs on adapting or interpreting P&Cs during National Standard setting process to address social concerns.

Output 1.3 Policy development

The positive social impact of FSC strengthened through a process of continuous improvement of its policies, built upon lessons learned and innovative approaches.

Activities:

- 1.3.1 Research and formulate recommendations on how to adapt FSC certification processes and procedures (including assessment and interpretation of P&Cs and certification of CoC operations) to different scales and types of forest operation, taking into account current inequities regarding: small vs. large scales, timber harvesting vs. multiple forest use and NTFP use, and subsistence/traditional vs. commercial use. Reduce the cost of certification in keeping with the size and scale of the operation.
- 1.3.2 Organise a geographically and gender balanced Experts Panel for improving the implementation of FSC Principles 2 (Land tenure and use rights) and FSC Principle 3 (Legal and customary rights), with respect to indigenous peoples' and local communities participation in certification, based on a review of international norms, past standards and certification experiences in order to document and analyse lessons learned, and feed back into FSC processes and procedures.
- 1.3.3 Design and implement a social impact assessment (SIA) checklist for new and existing FSC policy and procedures to assess their fit with the core social values and impact on social constituents. Identify and address any negative impacts.
- 1.3.4 Guidance developed for certification bodies on participatory planning and stakeholder consultation requirements.

- 1.3.5 Form partnerships to develop and implement a system to monitor and evaluate FSC's social impacts and incorporate lessons learned from social evaluations into targets for improvement in the FSC core business unit work plans.
- 1.3.6 Develop clear consistent procedures for policy development, with distinct stages for input and consultation and make this available and accessible.
- 1.3.7 Develop a definition of, and mechanisms and guidance for interpreting and assessing 'Free and Informed Consent' in the framework of FSC's work.
- 1.3.8 Streamline certification systems, without compromising the integrity and credibility of the system, so as to facilitate access to certification for indigenous peoples and local communities to make it cost appropriate to the incomes derived from the forest.
- 1.3.9 Develop a plan for implementation of the FSC policy on ILO, as defined in FSC's policy document of May 2002.
- 1.3.10 Create a task force on "social issues and plantations" and implement its recommendations.

Output 1.4 Accreditation

Accreditation programme revised to be responsive to the needs of social constituents.

Activities:

- 1.4.1 Ensure that Certification Bodies' complaints and grievance procedures are clear, accessible to all, applicable to a range of situations, and include mechanisms for full access to and understanding of the procedures.
- 1.4.2 FSC complaints mechanisms made more agile and accessible to all regions.
- 1.4.3 Review accreditation audit procedures to ensure monitoring and measuring of the performance of Certification Bodies in addressing the social aspects of certification, especially stakeholder analysis and consultation requirements, and the inclusion of social expertise in audit team composition.
- 1.4.4 Develop and standardise a consultation procedure for key stakeholders and other interested parties to be included in the accreditation manual, based on best practices of Certification Bodies.
- 1.4.5 Identify and implement means to promote national certification bodies and local certification capacity.
- 1.4.6 Require that Certification Bodies make publicly available lists of upcoming certifications, inform and consult in a timely manner all FSC members in the region where a certification will take place, and maintain a publicly available list of when, how and who was consulted.
- 1.4.7 Establish a system of quality control and monitoring for the accreditation of National Initiatives and Forest Management Standards.

Output 1.5 Research / New Policy Development

Applied research on key issues, based on bottom-up, participatory and adaptive approaches, is carried out, and lessons disseminated.

Activities:

- 1.5.1 Review the impact of certification on social groups in environmental, social and economic terms.
- 1.5.2 Carry out a feasibility study for the inclusion of labour issues in Chain of Custody certification, to include potential social impacts, particularly on small and

community operations in developing countries, and the impact on the flow of certified goods, particularly to local markets.

- 1.5.3 Conduct research to identify ways in which FSC certification systems can be applied to the certification needs of traditional resource management practices, and integrated land uses as practiced by indigenous peoples and local communities.
- 1.5.4 Investigate the various management arrangements (e.g. joint / collaborative / co-management) used by communities in their efforts to restore and protect forest lands. Determine the ways in which FSC certification can support these efforts.
- 1.5.5 Research the mechanisms of relevant international processes for the meaningful recognition of rights of indigenous and local communities to collective ownership of territories, to exercise customary laws according to local and cultural practices, to self-representation through traditional institutions, and to protect and nurture their own knowledge, as they pertain to forests and FSC activities.
- 1.5.6 Conduct research on the potential relationship between forest restoration and forest certification, taking into account different geographical scales.

Objective 2. Communication

By 2006, establish a communication system that facilitates the exchange of information, experiences and lessons learned on social issues and forest certification at local, national and international levels.

Outputs:

- 2.1 Two-way communication.** Methodologies developed and alliances built to facilitate and support two-way communication between social constituency groups and the FSC.
- 2.2 External Audience Communication.** The message of FSC's core activities with regard to social issues is communicated strategically and proactively to the external audience.
- 2.3 Lessons learned.** Lessons learned on social issues in certification disseminated to FSC network (including: NIs, Regional Offices, key social NGOs, and FSC International Centre).

Outputs and Activities:

Output 2.1 Communication between target groups and FSC.

Methodologies developed and alliances built to facilitate and support two-way communication between social target groups and the FSC

Activities:

- 2.1.1 Establish clear communication channels between constituencies within the FSC network to discuss FSC systems, policy and practice.
- 2.1.2 Develop and make accessible a list of ongoing research regarding social aspects of certification to facilitate networking among researchers and to improve the applicability of the results.
- 2.1.3 Produce and disseminate summary material of FSC P&C, policies and practices targeted at the key social constituents.
- 2.1.4 Produce communication material on the complaints and disputes mechanisms targeted at social constituencies using appropriate language and media.
- 2.1.5 Establish a regularly updated list of forthcoming or ongoing certification evaluations to facilitate stakeholder participation.
- 2.1.6 Build strong partnerships with other organizations to facilitate effective two-way communication between social constituencies and FSC, at national and international levels.

Output 2.2 External Audience Communication

The message of FSC's core activities with regard to social issues is communicated strategically and proactively to the external audience.

Activities:

- 2.2.1 Produce and disseminate success stories, which relate to social constituencies.
- 2.2.2 Improve the FSC international website with regard to the quality and quantity of information on social issues, the social chamber, social constituents and the status of implementation of the social strategy
- 2.2.3 Develop communication material that explains the non-market benefits of certification targeted at donors, governments, intergovernmental organisations and mass media.

Output 2.3 Lessons learned

Lessons learned on social issues in certification disseminated to FSC network, NIs, Regional Offices and the FSC International Centre.

Activities:

- 2.3.1 Establish communication agreements with partner organisations working directly with social constituencies and monitoring social impacts of certification, to share lessons learned on certification activities.
- 2.3.2 Develop communication material for disseminating lessons learned (successes and failures) on social issues within the FSC network.

Objective 3. Capacity building

By 2006, using partnerships with other key stakeholders increase capacity within FSC and its social target groups to better enable marginalized social groups to achieve their goals in forest use and certification.

Outputs:

- 3.1 **Generating Understanding:** Understanding of FSC certification systems improved for social constituencies.
- 3.2 **Capacity building on social issues:** Capacity built within the FSC, National Initiatives, Certification Bodies, forest owners, and forest managers to better deal with social issues.
- 3.3 **Community-based forest management:** Mechanisms identified to support community-based forest management.

Outputs and Activities:

Output 3.1 Generating Understanding

Improve understanding of FSC certification systems for social constituencies.

Activities:

- 3.1.1 Support exchanges of experiences among social constituencies, and support networking among them to share lessons within and among regions.
- 3.1.2 Build partnerships to ensure the establishment of a systematic capacity building programme for key stakeholders such as indigenous peoples, local communities, government officials, foresters, policy makers, and NGOs to enable them to participate equitably in forest certification.
- 3.1.3 Train social constituency groups in FSC P&C, stakeholder consultation mechanisms, and standards development.
- 3.1.4 Support the incorporation of certification information into education curricula for forestry, rural development, public policy and natural resource management.

Output 3.2 Capacity building on social issues

Capacity built within FSC, National Initiatives, Certification Bodies, forest owners, and forest managers to better deal with social issues.

Activities:

- 3.2.1 Establish a permanent training programme for national initiatives to allow constant up-dating on FSC policies and changes in the global and regional institutional environment relating to social issues.
- 3.2.2 Train FSC staff in adaptive management and learning, participatory research techniques, and the use of tools to evaluate the impact of policy and standards.
- 3.2.3 Train National Initiatives on facilitation, conflict resolution, participatory decision making, and methods of improving social representation.
- 3.2.4 Develop innovative mechanisms to increase membership in the social chamber.

- 3.2.5 Promote initiatives that build local auditing capacity.
- 3.2.6 Support National Initiatives to produce a list of professionally trained local auditors as a resource for Certification Bodies.
- 3.2.7 Support National Initiatives in articulating the FSC P&C within national forest management policy debates .

Output 3.3: Community Forestry

Mechanisms to support community-based forest management identified.

Activities:

- 3.3.1 Establish pilot projects in key countries or regions where community forestry certification is already operating, to facilitate dialogue between government agencies and community forestry actors at local and national level, with a view to addressing legal and land tenure issues. Disseminate lessons learned.
- 3.3.2 Establish partnerships to encourage financial support for community forestry management and organization and on taking steps toward certification.

Objective 4. Market benefits

By 2006, support systems created and offered to social constituents to promote the equitable distribution of forest benefits to social constituencies and optimise market benefits from forest certification².

Output 4.1 Partnerships

Partnerships and strategic alliances developed to better address market issues of social constituents.

Activities:

- 4.1.1 Local/regional actors supported through appropriate partnerships in defining strategies to open and develop local and international markets for certified community products
- 4.1.2 Establish pilot projects in areas where community forest certification is established, and in support of developing markets for certified, small-scale forest operations (processed wood products, carvings, etc.).
- 4.1.3 Develop entrepreneurial negotiation and marketing tools that are specific, appropriate, and culturally sensitive for the realities of the social constituencies.
- 4.1.4 Develop and diversify certified markets to promote lesser known species and NTFPs.
- 4.1.5 In support of smaller producers, develop comprehensive and up-to-date information systems on certified product availability, and make this widely available.
- 4.1.6 Implement mechanisms for better integration of forest certification and Fair Trade mechanisms³. Propose mechanisms for realising this integration within the Global Forest and Trade Networks (GFTNs), particularly for community products.
- 4.1.7 Research the possibility of developing an social label or claim for FSC, to more visibly identify products with certain social values, and make recommendations.
- 4.1.8 Organize trade fairs of FSC products for “Fair Trade”⁴ consumers.

² The proposed activities are outside the current scope of FSC as an accreditation body, but could usefully be carry out by partners in support of FSC's mission.

³ 'Fair trade' recognises that most international trade excludes the poorest and most disadvantaged in the developing world. It works with these groups, developing their capacity to enter the international market and earn income that will allow them to improve their lives and their countries to earn foreign exchange. (Traidcraft web site). IFAT (International Federation for Alternative Trade) developed a working definition of Fair Trade in 1999 “*Fair Trade is an alternative approach to conventional international trade. It is a trading partnership which aims at sustainable development for excluded and disadvantaged producers. It seeks to do this by providing better trading conditions, by awareness raising and by campaigning*”.

⁴ See footnote 7.

Stable Funding of Strategy Sought

In order for the priority activities outlined in section C to be implemented, FSC proposes to establish a Social Development Fund as part of the current Global Fund. Donors whose main focus is social development, rural livelihood enhancement, poverty alleviation, human rights, workers rights and Indigenous Peoples' rights will be invited to support this fund.

By internalising much of the social strategy as part of its core activities the costs of delivering most of the activities relating to compliance and communication will be included within the budget planning exercises of unit heads. FSC will be actively seeking support from its alliances with national and international organizations to promote the funding of the various elements of the social strategy.