



FSC CERTIFICATION AND SOCIAL ISSUES

The **FSC Principles and Criteria (P&C)** describe how forests have to be managed to meet the social, economic, ecological, cultural and spiritual needs of present and future generations. They include managerial aspects as well as environmental and social requirements. FSC rules are the strictest and FSC's social and environmental requirements the highest.

FSC SOCIAL POLICY BACKGROUND

FSC has a long and successful history of addressing social issues through certification requirements and a dedicated Social Policy Program. Through the FSC Principles and Criteria, supporting policies, and continued stakeholder engagement, FSC has proven effective in improving critical social considerations throughout the supply chain.

FSC's unique, democratic and transparent structure prioritizes access and benefits to small and community producers, recognition and respect of indigenous rights,

endorsement of the rights of forest workers, and effective stakeholder consultation. The social stakeholders in the FSC system include small or low-intensity producers, community producers, people affected by FSC certified forest operations, indigenous peoples, and forest workers.

FSC SOCIAL POLICY MILESTONES

1994 FSC Principles and Criteria (P&C) require **free prior and informed consent** as an integral part of recognizing the rights of indigenous peoples in forest management decisions.

The P&C outline measures for forest workers, including adherence to the **ILO conventions** in all signatory countries. In particular, Principle 4 includes the ILO conventions on organizing and negotiating (in all countries, signatory or otherwise), access to jobs, training and health for all workers and their families, consideration of the results of social impact assessments, and conflict resolution mechanisms.

FSC Principles and Criteria - Overview

- ✓ Legality verification - follow all applicable laws
- ✓ Demonstrated long-term land tenure and use rights
- ✓ Respect rights of workers, indigenous peoples
- ✓ Equitable use and sharing of benefits
- ✓ Reduction of environmental impact of logging activities
- ✓ Identification and appropriate management of areas that need special protection (e.g. cultural or sacred sites, habitat of endangered animals or plants)

For more information about the FSC Principles and Criteria, visit www.fsc.org/pc.html.





1999 The FSC membership passes Motion 40, mandating explicit incorporation of all ILO Core Conventions (in addition to those already covered in the Principles and Criteria) in all FSC certified forest management areas. This landmark decision strengthens FSC's long-standing commitment to workers rights.

FSC introduces the **High Conservation Value Forest concept** to define forest areas of outstanding biological, ecological, social and cultural importance - a holistic approach that recognizes the needs and rights of many otherwise marginalized peoples. The HCVF concept has had strong influence on more recent forest conservation mechanisms, such as REDD, that are inclusive of social and cultural values.

2000 FSC holds the **Conference "Certification for the People"**, with workshops on the preparation of the FSC Social Strategy.

2002 FSC completes the Social Strategy, including plans to increase access and benefits from FSC certification for small and community producers.

In addition, the strategy pushes for the development of policies to incorporate ILO conventions, including the **Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention**, into FSC forest management certification. Consequently, under Principle 4 of the P&C, forest managers must comply with all ILO conventions that have been ratified in their country and all forest managers must comply with the Core Conventions, regardless of ratification. The strategy also calls for ILO conventions to apply to chain of custody certificates.

2004 FSC introduces a standard for **small and low-intensity managed forests (SLIMFs)**. This is a ground-breaking policy, both for the participatory mechanisms used in the development, and for the changes it makes to certification audits and national standards development. It includes SLIMF eligibility guidelines and streamlined procedures for certifying SLIMFs aimed at making certification more accessible.

2005 FSC completes the guidance document for Principles 2 and 3, dealing with the rights of indigenous peoples and guidance on appropriate consultative processes for FSC certificate holders.

2008 As a result of Motion 62 from the 2005 General Assembly, FSC conducts a review of the SLIMF initiative. Third-party research results show that the costs of certification have been reduced and the certification process is faster. The review reveals opportunities to further simplify the standards, and highlights the need for further training of auditors to perform SLIMF certification assessments.

The Lisbon Process follows up on the SLIMF review and highlights the need for more and better informational materials for SLIMF and community producers. This leads to Motion 27, from the 2008 General Assembly, which calls for making certification more accessible and beneficial for SLIMF and community producers through a variety of activities.

2009 FSC Board of Directors approves the **Policy on Association**, a comprehensive approach to all certification requirements which applies to organizations associated with FSC through forest management, chain of custody and Controlled Wood certification. The Policy maintains that FSC only allows association with organizations that uphold fundamental environmental and social criteria, including respect of traditional and human rights and the ILO Core Conventions for all working people including employees, contractors, subcontractors, workers without contracts.

The **Interpretation of the Principles and Criteria for SLIMFs** is released as guidance for development of SLIMF standards at the National level.

For more information on the FSC and social issues, visit www.fsc.org/socialprogram.html.

For more information on the Smallholders Program, visit www.fsc.org/smallholders.html.

