



Terms of Reference

WORKING GROUP TO REVISE REQUIREMENTS FOR IFL CONSERVATION



WORKING GROUP SUMMARY

Process Title:	Working Group to revise requirements for IFL conservation
Scope:	Revision
Type of WG:	sub-chamber balanced
# of Working Group members:	6
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Working language:	English
ToR approval date:	14 September 2023
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1. Process Information

Background and introduction

Mandate for the work

Mandated by *Motion 23: Use landscape-wide approaches adapted to local conditions and strengthen Standard Development Groups (SDGs) to improve protection of Intact Forest Landscapes* (General Assembly, 2020), approved at General Assembly 2021-2022 in Bali Indonesia, FSC is developing through engagement with members, SDGs, stakeholders, and partnerships a revised landscape approach for FSC stewardship in forests with high social and environmental values, in particular Intact Forest Landscapes (IFLs). As an outcome of this Motion SDGs will be able to implement a landscape approach process to protect and manage IFLs following developed, relevant, and published requirements in the normative framework.

Introduction to the process

At its meeting in August 2023 (BM96) the BoD approved the implementation of “major process” according to <[FSC-PRO-01-001 V4-0 Development and Revision of FSC Requirements](#)> based on a piloting approach, and with the deviations described in this ToR.

Motion 23 grants one year to review and revise the current approach to IFLs conservation and enable SDGs to identify and recommend improvements to be made. Pilot testing allows the implementation of draft requirements which may result in temporary use of FSC trademarks in the labelling and promotion of FSC-certified products.

While the revision of the applicable normative framework is expected to be completed by 2026, SDGs will be able to implement a landscape approach process, through pilot testing, to protect and manage IFLs, which will enable the consequent certification of management units before this date.

Objectives and expected outcomes

Objectives of the process

Strengthening the approaches for identification, protection, maintenance and/or enhancement of High Conservation Values 2, including IFL conservation at landscape level in National and Regional Forest Stewardship Standards, and enabling SDGs through pilots to identify and recommend improvements to FSC’s normative framework.

Outcomes of the process

Table 1 Outcomes of the process

Title	Description of the outcome
New Procedure for SDGs to determine the placement and extent of IFL core areas and conservation measures, based on the conditions in the wider landscape.	<p>Procedure to define IFL protection levels at landscape level in Forest Stewardship Standards (FSS) is available for SDGs to be implemented.</p> <p>The Procedure will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support SDGs to identify landscapes in the country/region and to define the role of the management unit in the wider

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- landscape in the protection of IFLs.
- Support SDGs to map social, environmental, and economic stakeholders in the landscape.
 - Provide a landscape scenario building methodology and support for efficient use in FSC, including training of staff.
 - Provide a monitoring and evaluation solution for the landscape scenario implementation while managing risks.

In line with Motion 23 the approach presented in the Procedure will:

- Support the intent of <FSC-STD-01-001 FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship> and previous motions, and address effective protection of the vast majority of High Conservation Values 2 (HCV)/IFLs at the landscape level.
 - Enable to change current international requirements for placement and extent of IFL core areas and conservation measures (including thresholds for strict IFL conservation related to FSC certified Management Units (MUs)) as defined in <FSC-STD-60-004 International Generic Indicators> and <FSC-GUI-60-004 Guidance for Standard Developers to Develop a National Threshold for the Core Area of Intact Forest Landscapes (IFL) within the Management Unit>, to achieve best possible contribution to conservation of HCV2/IFL across the entire landscape.
 - Enable the use of best available information; the results of regional assessments (Motion 34/2017); expert knowledge and peer review; on-the-ground (below-the-canopy) analyses of ecological, social, and socio-economic values and conditions including different degrees of intactness in terms of natural disturbances, forest types, human interventions, fragmentation and/or biodiversity values.
 - Include risk analyses in the identification, prioritization and balancing of conservation and management measures for HCV2/IFLs protection at landscape level; by assessing risks and benefits as well as threats and opportunities related to biodiversity, forest carbon stocks, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, the FSC brand, certified operations, and other HCV2/IFL related values.
 - Strengthen and clarify the role of SDGs in adapting FSC's international approach and operationalizing requirements for HCV2/IFL conservation at landscape level within specific environmental, social and socio-economic conditions at local, national and/or regional level.
 - Utilize consultation with Indigenous and Traditional Peoples who may rely upon or be affected by IFL conservation, and uphold their rights, including their right to Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) and following FPIC procedures wherever applicable.
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- Be consensus based and equitably engage with all relevant stakeholders at national/regional level, especially local communities, and stakeholders who may rely upon or be affected by IFL conservation as well as governmental agencies where appropriate (e.g. as forest owner, as landscape planning authority, etc.).
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Connection to other processes:

FSC will develop the following four guidelines for Standard Development Groups on the protection of IFLs in collaboration with Bern University of Applied Studies, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (ETG Zurich) and University of Liege:

- 1) Guideline for identifying landscapes in the country/region and to define the role of the management unit in the protection of IFLs in the wider landscape.
- 2) Guideline for mapping the social, environmental, and economic stakeholders in the landscape.
- 3) Guideline on a methodology for building landscape scenarios (including training of FSC staff)
- 4) Guideline for evaluation and monitoring of solutions for the landscape scenario implementation, while managing risks.

The development of the four guidelines is not included directly in the scope of the process. However, as the Procedure will refer to these guidelines and provide options and methodologies, the WG is expected to also provide input and feedback on the development of the guidelines.

2. Working Group Information

Tasks and responsibilities of the Working Group

Tasks of the Working Group

Table 2 Tasks of the WG

Outcome	Description of the task
New Procedure for SDGs to determine the placement and extent of IFL core areas and conservation measures, based on the conditions in the wider landscape.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Provide input for development of the Procedure based on guidelines, Motion 23, and this ToR.2. Endorse the draft Procedure before start of pilots in 2024 and before consultation in 2025.3. Endorse the Procedure before submission to Policy and Standards Committee and Board of Directors for decision-making in 2025.

Responsibilities of the Working Group

The members of the working group will work together throughout the process, discussing issues and interacting with each other as a group in and outside of meetings as necessary and/or required by the process lead.

General key responsibilities of the working group are to:

- review draft documents and advise on finalising;
- recommend when the draft is ready for piloting and public consultation;
- participating in stakeholder outreach and information-sharing forums, as needed;
- seek comprehensive advice on the development and outcome from the FSC Membership, FSC Board of Directors, FSC accredited CBs, FSC certificate holders, other FSC stakeholders and/or relevant Technical Experts;
- consider feedback gathered during pilots and public consultation;
- recommend when the final draft is ready to be sent for decision making by the FSC Board of Directors.

Organizational set up of the process

Relevant working bodies

Table 3 Roles and responsibilities of the relevant working bodies

Working Body	Roles and responsibilities
Process lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> set up, manage and administer the Working Group (WG)<input type="checkbox"/> contribute to the development of materials to be shared with interested stakeholders.<input type="checkbox"/> administer the process, keep track of the work plan and timelines, and inform the rest of the participating bodies of the work plan milestones and upcoming deadlines<input type="checkbox"/> draft the different versions of the draft normative documents, striving to achieve consensus between conflicting aspects<input type="checkbox"/> prepare and launch the public consultations

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- compile the feedback from the public consultations and prepare summaries for the WG
 - ensure that the WG operates responsibly and in accordance with its Terms of Reference and applicable procedures
 - coordinate with other FSC staff and Programs related to the project to seek expertise as necessary
 - manage the communications, both within the project and with external stakeholders
 - report to the Policy Steering Group
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- Policy Steering Group (PSG)**
- provides oversight on all phases of the process until the final decision by the FSC Board of Directors
 - reviewing and overseeing the implementation of the Terms of Reference of the Working Group
 - reviewing, approving and overseeing the implementation of the work plan (including the budget) of the Working Group
 - monitoring the process to be followed to develop or revise a normative document
 - providing advice or support in response to requests by the process lead
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- Process Supervisor**
- supervise the process and support the working group in reaching its goals
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- Liaison person/s**
- keep the FSC Board of Directors (BoD) and the Policy and Standards Committee (PSC) closely informed about the process
 - give advice to the WG on timely alignment to relevant processes within the FSC Normative Framework
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Selection criteria for Working Group members

Members of the WG are selected according to the criteria defined below:

Technical Skills

- Understanding of and support for FSC's mission and vision
- Up-to-date knowledge of and experience with FSC's systems and procedures
- Knowledge and experience in standard setting processes of other sustainability schemes, in particular, other ISEAL members
- Ability to review and comment on documents submitted in the working language(s) agreed for the WG
- Balance of geographical regions. Ideally, the composition between chambers and regions would be:
 - A. Economic chamber: member from boreal forests and tropical forests.
 - B. Social chamber: preference for indigenous peoples' representative.
 - C. Environmental chamber: member from a region with IFLs not yet represented in the WG.

Soft Skills

- Working together in teams
- Clarity in expression (verbal/written)
- Resolving conflicts
- Demonstrating resilience
- Working systematically and planning

Contribution

- Looking for solutions
- Delivering a number of quality deliverables

Engagement

- Actively participating
- Representing a broad set of views within a chamber
- Demonstrating judgment on conduct and confidentiality
- Respecting timelines and rules of engagement set for the process

Structure and accountabilities

Starting time/period

Appointed WG members are expected to adhere to the rules and regulations of this ToR and WG members shall sign a cooperation agreement with FSC upon appointment.

Term Starting time/period: September 2023

Completion time/period

The term of WG members ends with the submission of the final draft of the deliverables presented in the 'outcomes of the process' (see section 1) to the Board of Directors, after the Policy Steering Group's review and recommendation for approval.

Term Completion time/period: March 2026

Structure of WG and its reporting line

The WG is accountable to FSC International. Please see the Annex 2 for the structure and the reporting line of the working bodies involved in the process.

Workplan and time commitment

Workplan

WG members are expected to donate sufficient time to thoroughly fulfil their duties as outlined in the work plan presented in Annex 3. The timetable and the detailed work plan will be updated as necessary.

Communication

The WG will conduct most of its work via e-mail or similar means of electronic communication (e.g. MS Teams, Go-to meeting, Zoom conference calls), and through one-on-one calls with the Process lead when required. Similarly, face-to-face meetings will be planned if needed and wherever possible.

Meetings

The Process lead will strive to select meeting dates and venues that allow for full participation of all WG members.

Four to five online calls are envisioned in Q3 and Q4 of 2023 during the development of draft 1-0 of the Procedure and request for endorsement prior to the pilot testing phase. In 2024 additional online calls (1-3) may be organized during pilot testing phase for the WG to provide input and recommendations, if needed. In 2025, 4-5 calls will be organized to provide input in the review of the pilot testing phase, development of draft 2-0 of the Procedure, and request for the WG to endorse it prior to submission for decision-making.

Expenses and remunerations

Rumeration

FSC is an international not-for-profit membership organization with limited funding. Participation in the WG takes place on a voluntary non-paid basis.

Traveling and accomodation

No traveling is expected for this WG.

Confidentiality and conflict of interest

Confidentiality

WG members shall sign a confidentiality and non-disclosure agreement with FSC at the beginning of their work. Per default, non-attributable content of discussions and papers prepared by or presented to the WG is not considered confidential, unless otherwise specified by FSC.

Conflict of Interest

WG members are expected to declare any conflicts of interest, where they arise. This will cause the person(s) to be excused from the discussion and to abstain from participating in decision-making.

Language

The working language of the WG is English. All drafts for public consultation, as well as other documents, as requested and as possible, will be translated into Spanish and French. Documents may also be translated into other languages if requested by the WG, depending on resource availability.

3. OPERATING RULES

Deliberations and decision making

Within the WG decisions are taken by the six WG members.

For the WG to meet and deliberate, there must be quorum, defined as a minimum of 3 members and at least one representing each chamber.

All working group members participate in each point of decision-making. If any of the member(s) is not present for a decision, then a provisional decision may be made, subject to participation by the absent member(s). Quorum is required for any provisional decisions, and full participation is preferred.

The WG members shall strive and make every effort possible to take decisions by consensus (see Annex 1 Terms and Definition). If consensus cannot be achieved, outstanding concerns shall be documented and presented to the FSC Board of Directors in the final report that accompanies the document presented for decision.

The process lead, FSC staff, Policy Steering Group, liaison persons and any other supportive personnel shall not participate in any decision-making.

If the WG members are not able to agree on a final draft within six (6) months after the final round of public consultation, the Policy Steering Group shall take a decision on how to move forward with the process.

ANNEX 1 TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

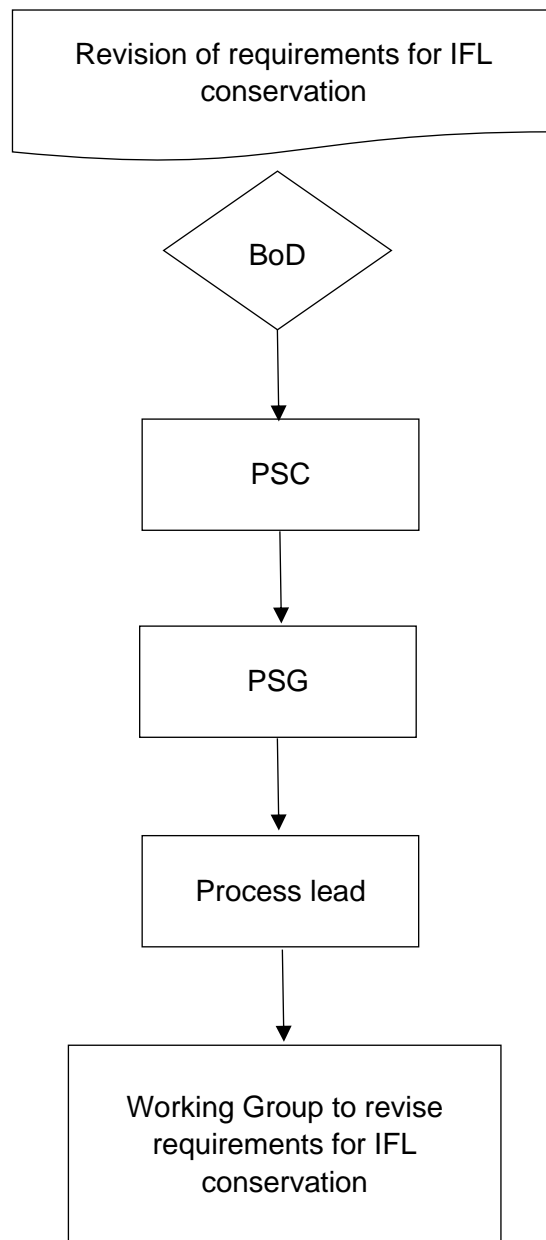
For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions included in FSC-STD-01-002 FSC Glossary of Terms, and the following apply:

Consensus: general agreement, characterized by the absence of sustained opposition to substantial issues by any important part of the concerned interests.

NOTE: Consensus should be the result of a process seeking to take into account the views of interested parties, particularly those directly affected, and to reconcile any conflicting arguments. It need not imply unanimity (adapted from ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004).

The Policy Steering Group composed of the FSC Director General, the Policy Directors, and selected members of the FSC Global Leadership Forum

ANNEX 2: ORGANOGRAM



ANNEX 3: WORK PLAN AND ESTIMATED TIMELINES

Nr.	Tasks and Activities	Lead	2023				2024				2025				2026			
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1	Development of Review Report	PSU																
2	Decision on Normative Framework Schedule	PSU																
3	Conceptual Phase	ENG																
4	Engagement activities with key stakeholders and members	ENG																
5	Process ToR	PSU																
6	Decision on the process ToR	PSU																
7	Decision on working group composition	PSU																
8	Development Procedure Draft 1-0	PSU and WG																
9	Endorsement of Procedure Draft 1-0	WG																

Nr.	Tasks and Activities	Lead	2023				2024				2025				2026			
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
10	Piloting Procedure by SDGs in key countries	FSC																
11	Review of pilot results	PSU																
12	Development of Procedure Draft 2-0	PSU and WG																
13	Public consultation Draft 2-0	PSU																
14	Final draft incorporating feedback	PSU and WG																
15	Endorsement of final draft Procedure	WG																
16	Submission to PSC for recommended approval	PSU																
17	Submission to BoD for approval	PSU																
18	Publication	PSU																
19	Implementation	FSC																



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