

48/2025

A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR FOREST LANDSCAPE-LEVEL ENGAGEMENT AND IMPACT

Merged | Policy Motion

	Proposed By	Seconded By	Seconded By
Name	Caroline Duhesme	Alan Smith	Thankappannair Rajalayam Manoharan
Organization / Individual	ATIBT - Congo	Smith, Alan, Dr.	Manoharan, TR, Dr
Chamber / Subchamber	Economic / South	Social / North	Environmental / South

Policy Motion (Motion text / High-level action request):

Note from the Secretariat: This motion was accepted by the Motions Committee.

The motion was merged with motion 44 on 19 September, 2025. You will find the original motion at the bottom of this page, in the background documents.

The General Assembly requests FSC to develop a **strategic and operational framework** for engagement and impact **at the forest landscape level**, complementary to but independent from the FMU approach.

? This framework shall:

Provide a **strategic vision** for FSC's role at the landscape level, recognizing that forest resilience, biodiversity conservation, climate action, and the protection of HCVs (including IFLs) require coordinated approaches beyond FMUs.

Be voluntary, creating no new obligations for FMU certificate holders, and independent from the FMU approach.

Be made available to stakeholders as an **optional module**, inspired by FSC's Ecosystem Services Procedure (FSC-PRO-30-006) in spirit and positioning.

Ensure that **additional costs are covered by external financing** (donors, development banks, climate funds, etc.), not by FMUs or FSC members.

Remain **complementary** to, and **independent** from, the **FMU approach**.

? This framework should:

Involve **governments, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, landowners, forest managers, companies and civil society** in shared governance structures to define and implement land-use priorities.

Be implemented progressively through **pilot projects**, generating lessons, tools and financing models before wider rollout.

Allow for different forms of **recognition or assurance** (verification, project recognition, procedures, or optional landscape certification), depending on feasibility and demand.

Recognition **pathways** (such as certification, verification or monitoring) will be determined based on pilot results, feasibility, costs, and funder's requirements.

Mobilize and connect to **ecosystem services markets** (carbon, water, biodiversity, restoration) to help create a credible business case.

Deliver **social and economic benefits**, by supporting smallholders, Indigenous Peoples, and marginalized communities, and by promoting opportunities such as ecotourism, non-timber forest products, and access to finance for ecosystem services.

Integrate **knowledge and lessons learned**, drawing on HCV and IFL conservation, forest restoration, science, and past member proposals to expand FSC's impact beyond FMUs.

Contribute to **FSC's global strategy**, especially "**Growing our Reach**", and support climate, biodiversity, and social equity objectives.

☂ Act as an **umbrella framework**, supporting and complementing other motions (e.g. M45 on IFLs, M46 on restoration, M41 on contractors, and M47/54 on climate & ES).

?? The elaboration of this strategic framework shall follow a phased process that minimizes cost and risk for FSC:

1. Preparation of a **low-cost feasibility package**.
2. Selection of a **small portfolio (3–5) of pilot landscapes** to test governance and financing models.
3. **Independent evaluation** and lessons learned, before any decision on expansion.

Background Information and Key Documents:

FSC has been highly effective in promoting responsible forest management at the **FMU level**, but many of today's most urgent challenges – **climate change, biodiversity loss, deforestation, ecosystem fragmentation, and social inequality** – extend beyond the boundaries of single concessions. Addressing these systemic issues requires a **landscape-level approach** that engages multiple land uses, jurisdictions, and stakeholders.

This motion builds on lessons from previous debates on Intact Forest Landscapes (IFLs) and from ecosystem services procedures, recognizing that FMUs alone cannot ensure the protection of forest ecological integrity or deliver large-scale impacts. It proposes that FSC act as a **platform for collective action**, creating an enabling framework where governments, local and Indigenous communities, landowners, companies and NGOs collaborate on common goals.

The approach would be **voluntary and phased**: starting with **pilot landscapes** in regions where FSC is already strong (tropical concessions, restoration areas, mixed-use landscapes). These pilots will test governance models, financing mechanisms, and monitoring systems for outcomes on climate, biodiversity, HCVs (including IFLs), and community rights.

Importantly, this is **not a new mandatory certification system**. Instead, it is an **evolving framework**, offering recognition and assurance at the landscape level. Landscape certification could become an option in the future, but the initial focus is on **flexibility, innovation, and credibility** – ensuring that FSC remains relevant, attracts new constituencies and funding, and strengthens its global impact.

By enabling FSC to operate both at FMU and at landscape scale, this motion creates the conditions for FSC to act as a true leader in addressing the **global forest crisis**, while also supporting and complementing other motions (M45 on IFLs, M46 on restoration, M41 on contractors, and M47/54 on climate and ecosystem services).

The motion aligns with FSC Global Strategy 2021–2026 (Transforming Markets, Catalyzing Change; Goals 1.4 and 3.1).

[48-2025_Landscape_Certification_Framework_for_Integrated_Ecosystem_Management_V1-1_20250424053954.pdf](#)

[48-2025_Final_feasibility-assessment_ENG.pdf](#)