

SCS Generic Interim Standard for Natural Forest and Plantation Forest Management Certification under the Forest Stewardship Council

A. INTRODUCTION

This document contains the Interim Standard used by SCS Global Services for conducting forest certification evaluations in countries or regions that have no duly approved FSC Forest Stewardship Standard. The scope of these standards includes both natural and plantation forests.

This standard was updated in December 2014 to take into account stakeholder comments regarding conversion and minimum conservation area. As a result, the Global North and Global South interim standards were retired and a single version created.

B. STANDARD USE

Conformance with this generic standard shall be determined by evaluating observed performance at the Forest Management Unit (FMU) level against each indicator of the standard, and in comparison with any performance threshold(s) specified for the indicator. The indicators here apply to all forests covered by the scope of the standard, including SLIMFs, unless otherwise specified. The default size for small SLIMFs is ≤ 100 ha. There are exceptions made in the standard for both small and low intensity SLIMFs. All forests larger than 100 ha or that do not meet the definition of a SLIMF shall be treated as a 'Large Forest Management Enterprise' (FME) in the SCS interim standard, unless they are in a country where the definition of a SLIMF FMU is greater than 100 ha. See FSC-STD-01-003a for countries for which the definition of a small SLIMF is greater than 100 ha.

In the process of adapting this standard for the assessment of a particular forest operation, it may be restructured in order to improve its implementation on the ground or to ease stakeholder interpretation of the standard, but only if pre-approved by the SCS Director of Forest Management Certification. Restructuring or adapting this standard shall not affect the requirements for conformance and certification decision making. If a complaint or appeal is filed, the complete standard shall be considered definitive. Verifiers, examples, and notes are intended to provide the SCS evaluation team with guidance on seeking evidence of conformance or non-conformance to a given indicator.

PRINCIPLE #1: COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS AND FSC PRINCIPLES

Forest management shall respect all applicable laws of the country in which they occur, and international treaties and agreements to which the country is a signatory, and comply with all FSC Principles and Criteria.

C1.1. Forest management shall respect all national and local laws and administrative requirements.

Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
1.1.1. The staff shall be aware of relevant requirements of legislation and their responsibilities.	Verifiers: Interviews with and information supplied by regulatory authorities, other stakeholders, and forest managers. SLIMF guidance: FME knows what legislation requires.		
1.1.2. For large Forest Management Enterprises (FME): FME shall maintain an up-to-date register of all pertinent statutes and bodies of regulations and make this register available to forest managers.	Verifiers: See Annex 1 and 2 for examples of pertinent laws and regulations.		
1.1.3. FME shall comply with all national, state/provincial and local environmental, labour and forestry laws (all laws applicable to FME).	SLIMF guidance: Field observation and documentation available show that legislation is being complied with in the field.		
1.1.4. Discovered non compliances with legislation shall be recorded.			
1.1.5. Corrective actions shall be implemented in case that any non-			

compliance is identified.			
C1.2. All applicable and legally prescribed fees, royalties, taxes and other charges shall be paid.			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
1.2.1. The FME shall demonstrate evidence that payments of taxes, royalties, and other charges are made on time.	Verifiers: Invoices, tax returns, receipts. Interviews with and information supplied by regulatory authorities and other stakeholders.		
1.2.2. The FME shall maintain up-to-date records of all payments and make these available to the SCS auditing team.	Internal financial audit records.		
1.2.3. In the case of payment or accounting discrepancies, the FME shall maintain records of the discrepancies.			
1.2.4. In the case of payment or accounting discrepancies, the FME shall demonstrate evidence that efforts are implemented to resolve them.	Verifiers: Interviews with and information supplied by regulatory authorities and other stakeholders.		
C1.3. In signatory countries, the provisions of all binding international agreements such as CITES, ILO Conventions, ITTA, and Convention on Biological Diversity, shall be respected.			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
1.3.1. The FME shall comply with the intentions of the international agreements that the country or nation has ratified (see Annex 2).	Note: Applicable international conventions are covered within national legislation as well as other parts of the standard.		
1.3.2. The FME's forest managers and field technicians shall have access to and understand the applicable international agreements and how these are respected in the forest	Verifiers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ FME has a register or compendium of applicable international agreements ■ Said register or compendium is available in offices or field sites. ■ Interviews with forest 		

management.	managers and other stakeholders		
C1.4. Conflicts between laws, regulations and the FSC Principles and Criteria shall be evaluated for the purposes of certification, on a case-by-case basis, by the certifiers and by the involved or affected parties.			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
1.4.1. Perceived conflicts between applicable national/ local laws and the present standard shall be identified and recorded by the FME.			
1.4.2. Any conflicts identified in 1.4.1 shall be resolved through consultation between appropriate regulatory bodies, the FSC National Office (if available), SCS, and the FME as necessary.	Note: While consultation may not occur between all of these parties, the design and objective of consultation can be used to demonstrate conformance to this indicator.		
C1.5. Forest management areas should be protected from illegal harvesting, settlement and other unauthorized activities.			
1.5.1. Large FMEs: FME shall have a monitoring system with formal documented periodic inspections for the prevention and detection of illegal harvesting, settlement and other unauthorized activities. For SLIMF: SLIMF managers shall ensure that the FMU is monitored periodically to prevent and detect illegal harvesting, settlement, and other unauthorized activities.	Verifiers: Applicability note: The portion of the indicator applicable to large FMEs applies to FMUs over 100 ha. The portion of the indicator applicable to SLIMFs is for FMUs ≤100 ha. Due to their size, low intensity SLIMFs >100 ha are subject to the large FME portion of the indicator.		
1.5.2. Preventive measures shall be taken to decrease poaching and illegal timber extraction.			
1.5.3. The FME shall take	Note: Certain hunting,		

all reasonable legal measures to prevent illegal and inappropriate usage of the forest area or its natural resources.	trapping, collecting, and settlements are among some activities that may be illegal.		
1.5.4. Illegal harvest, settlements and other unauthorized usage of the forest shall be reported to the responsible authorities.	Note: Authorities may include police, regional forestry agencies, biosecurity, etc.		
C1.6. Forest managers shall demonstrate a long-term commitment to adhere to the FSC Principles and Criteria.			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
1.6.1. FME shall have a publicly available policy or statement committing the organization to adhere to the FSC requirements within the certified forest area.	Verifiers: FME webpage, public summary of FMP		
1.6.2. FME shall not implement activities that blatantly conflict with the FSC P&C on forest areas outside of the FMU under assessment on which it has direct or indirect involvement.	Verifiers: FME conforms to FSC-POL-01-004 <i>Policy for the Association of Organizations with FSC</i> on non-certified FMUs. Definitions from FSC-POL-01-004: Direct involvement: Situations in which the associated organization or individual is firsthand responsible for the unacceptable activities. Indirect involvement: Situations in which the associated organization or individual, with a minimum ownership or voting power of 51%, is involved as a parent or sister company, subsidiary,		

	shareholder or Board of Directors to an organization directly involved in unacceptable activities. Indirect involvement also includes activities performed by subcontractors when acting on behalf of the associated organization or individual.		
1.6.3. FME shall disclose information on all forest areas over which it has direct or indirect involvement to demonstrate compliance with current FSC policies on partial certification and on excision of areas from the scope of the certificate.	Verifiers: FME conforms to FSC-POL-20-002 <i>Partial Certification of Large Ownerships</i> for excised portions of the FMU and for non-certified FMUs. See definitions from 1.6.2.		
1.6.4. FME staff and contractors shall be informed about FSC requirements and FME shall control how these requirements are upheld.	Verifiers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contracts contain clear and appropriate language that requires contractors to comply with the FSC P&C. ■ Interviews with FME staff and other stakeholders indicate that staff possess a working knowledge of the how FSC P&C are respected in daily operations. ■ Copies of the FSC P&C or this standard are made available to staff and contractors. 		

PRINCIPLE #2: TENURE AND USE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Long-term tenure and use rights to the land and forest resources shall be clearly defined, documented and legally established.

C2.1 Clear evidence of long-term forest use rights to the land (e.g. land title, customary rights, or lease agreements) shall be demonstrated.

Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
2.1.1. FME shall possess	Verifiers:		

<p>legal documents proving its legal rights of ownership or long term rights to manage the FMU.</p>	<p>Legal use rights may be associated with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Authenticated copies of land titles of the FMU(s) ■ fee-simple ownership ■ long-term or renewable lease rights (at least one rotation) ■ long-term or renewable exclusive management agreements (at least one rotation) ■ other mechanisms allocating long-term or renewable management rights and responsibilities to the forest manager 		
<p>2.1.2. Property borders shall be marked or otherwise clearly delineated (e.g. follow natural boundaries).</p>			
<p>C2.2. Local communities with legal or customary tenure or use rights shall maintain control, to the extent necessary to protect their rights or resources, over forest operations unless they delegate control with free and informed consent to other agencies.</p>			
<p>Indicators</p>	<p>Verifiers, Examples, and Notes</p>	<p>Evaluation Team Notes</p>	<p>Conformance (C, NC or NA)</p>
<p>2.2.1. FME shall identify and document local communities and/or other stakeholders with recognized legal or customary tenure or use rights within the FMU.</p>	<p>Examples of legal or customary tenure or use-rights may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -public rights of way -established easements -collection of non-timber forest products -hiking, fishing, hunting, or other recreation -firewood collection -visitation of culturally significant sites, such as religious shrines 		
<p>2.2.2. All duly recognized legal or customary tenure or use rights to the FMU of all local communities and/or other stakeholders</p>	<p>Note: FME should provide local communities control over forest operations to the extent necessary to protect their duly recognized rights to</p>		

shall be respected in forest management planning and implementation, in accordance with national legislation or agreements established with such communities/ stakeholders.	the FMU.		
2.2.3. For large FMEs: Areas associated with the rights identified in indicator 2.2.1 shall be included on maps of the FMU.	Verifiers: Maps of the FMU		
2.2.4. When communities have delegated control of their legal rights or customary tenure or use in whole or in part, this shall be confirmed by documented agreements and interviews with representatives of local communities, with evidence of their free and informed consent.	Verifiers: Written agreements Interviews with stakeholders		
C2.3. Appropriate mechanisms shall be employed to resolve disputes over tenure claims and use rights. The circumstances and status of any outstanding disputes will be explicitly considered in the certification evaluation. Disputes of substantial magnitude involving a significant number of interests will normally disqualify an operation from being certified.			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
2.3.1. FME shall use mechanisms for resolving disputes over tenure claims and use rights that respectfully involve the disputants and are consistent in process.	Verifiers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Records, agreements or other relevant documents that detail past and current disputes over tenure claims and use rights. ■ Documented procedures to resolve disputes over tenure claims and use rights. Note: Acceptable mechanisms may include independent courts and third-party		

	mediation.		
2.3.2 FME shall not be involved in outstanding disputes of substantial magnitude over tenure or use rights on the FMU that involve a significant number of interests.	<p>Note: A dispute of a substantial magnitude is a dispute that prevents the FME from securing duly recognized rights to the forest resource on the FMU or from respecting duly recognized rights to the FMU of other parties; that leads to potential impacts to the disputant(s) that are irreversible or cannot be mitigated; and are related to meeting the FSC standards and policies.</p> <p>The magnitude of a dispute may be assessed by considering the scale at a landscape level associated with the opinion of a majority of community representatives and/or the time period over which the dispute has been in place.</p> <p>Verifiers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Interviews with forest managers and consultation with representatives of local communities. ■ Complete records of history of disputes. 		
2.3.3. Every reasonable effort shall be made to resolve disputes over tenure or use rights through consultation aimed at achieving settlement, agreement or consent.	<p>Verifiers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Complete records of history of disputes. ■ Records of legal proceedings. ■ Interviews with stakeholders indicate that disputes have been resolved or are in the process of being resolved. 		

PRINCIPLE #3: INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' RIGHTS

The legal and customary rights of indigenous peoples to own, use and manage their lands, territories, and resources shall be recognized and respected.

3.1. Indigenous peoples shall control forest management on their lands and territories unless they delegate control with free and informed consent to other agencies.

Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
3.1.1. The identity, location and population of all indigenous peoples, including migratory groups, living in the vicinity of the FMU are documented by the FME.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Documentation on the rights of indigenous peoples to the FMU; Interviews with indigenous groups and representatives, and relevant government agencies. 		
3.1.2. The communities concerned have identified themselves as indigenous.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Interviews with indigenous peoples and/or representatives 		
3.1.3. All rights and claims to lands, territories or customary rights within the FMU are documented and/or clearly mapped.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Records and other pertinent documents of current and past disputes over tenure claims and use rights are maintained. ■ Agreements and mechanisms for dispute resolution over tenure claims and use rights are documented. 		
3.1.4. Rights identified in terms of Indicator 3.1.3 are respected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Interviews with indigenous peoples and/or representatives ■ Evidence of compliance with agreements confirmed in the field, by interviews with indigenous peoples and other interested parties, and/or documented evidence. 		
3.1.5 Forest management operations do not take place in areas identified in Indicator 3.1.3 above,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 		

without clear evidence of the free and informed consent of the indigenous or traditional peoples claiming such land, territory or customary rights.			
3.2. Forest management shall not threaten or diminish, either directly or indirectly, the resources or tenure rights of indigenous peoples.			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
3.2.1. The FME shall identify and document any impact of management activities on the rights and resources of indigenous communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Relevant documentation ■ Resources and rights are identified in the field 		
3.2.2. As appropriate, opportunities are provided to indigenous to participate in management planning, research, and monitoring of forest areas associated with their rights and resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Interviews with indigenous peoples and/or their representatives 		
3.2.3. The FME shall solicit, through effective consultation mechanisms, the opinions and perspectives of indigenous peoples potentially affected by management activities. The results of this consultation shall be documented, including any actions taken to reasonably accommodate any concerns of indigenous peoples.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Records of communications between the parties are maintained and available to auditors. 		
3.3. Sites of special cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance to indigenous peoples shall be clearly identified in cooperation with such peoples, and recognized and protected by forest managers.			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
3.3.1. The FME, with the participation of indigenous communities, shall identify	<p>Examples of these sites may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ceremonial sites, burial 		

sites of special cultural, archaeological, ecological, economic or religious significance.	grounds - Hunting, fishing, trapping or gathering sites/zones - Areas used for gathering of materials for important cultural uses		
3.3.2. The FMP shall contain policies for the protection of identified sites of special significance of indigenous peoples in 3.3.1. Identified sites shall be included in operational maps or in the field as appropriate.	Applicability note: National or local laws may protect the confidentiality of these sites.		
3.3.3. Field workers shall be appropriately trained in the procedures employed for the protection of sites of special significance to indigenous peoples.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Interviews with personnel in the field ■ Evidence of trainings 		
3.3.4. The discovery of new sites of potential archaeological interest shall be communicated to relevant authorities and any restrictions on these sites imposed by these authorities shall be respected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Interviews with relevant authorities; ■ Evidence of protection measures implemented in the field. 		
3.4. Indigenous peoples shall be compensated for the application of their traditional knowledge regarding the use of forest species or management systems in forest operations. This compensation shall be formally agreed upon with their free and informed consent before forest operations commence.			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
3.4.1. Indigenous peoples shall be duly informed of the intention and nature of any uses of their traditional knowledge and/or intellectual property by the FME. The FME shall not use traditional knowledge or intellectual property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Interviews with indigenous peoples and their representatives <p><i>NOTE: Some indigenous knowledge and intellectual property may be in the public domain and not subject to the requirements of C3.4.</i></p>		

until the indigenous peoples have agreed to do so with evidence of their free, prior, and informed consent.			
3.4.2. If traditional knowledge or intellectual property is used for the economic benefit of the FME (or any other organization that has an agreement with the FME), then compensation is agreed upon prior to such use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Inspection of the terms of the agreement; ■ Interview with stakeholders 		

PRINCIPLE #4: COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND WORKER'S RIGHTS

Forest management operations shall maintain or enhance the long-term social and economic well-being of forest workers and local communities.

C4.1. The communities within, or adjacent to, the forest management area should be given opportunities for employment, training, and other services.

Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
4.1.1. Qualified people in local communities are given equal or preferential opportunities in employment and contracting.	Example: Employment and contractual opportunities offered locally before they are offered outside the region.		
4.1.2. The FME contributes to or directly develops training programs designed to enhance the capabilities and qualifications of local workers to meet the FME's long-term staffing requirements.	SLIMF guidance: SLIMF managers stay up to date on regional forest management issues. SLIMF managers and workers receive training as needed to fill gaps in capabilities and qualifications.		
4.1.3. The FME gives preference to local vendors of equipment and miscellaneous services, subject to cost and availability considerations.	Examples may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ timber being offered to local processors before being sold out of the region ■ utilization of local banks, insurance companies, etc. 		

<p>4.1.4. FME shall implement policies and procedures to make qualifications, skills, and experience the basis for recruitment, placement, training and advancement of staff at all levels.</p>	<p>Verifiers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Employment policies & procedures. ■ Interviews with staff and labour organisations. <p>Guidance: No evidence of discrimination based on race, colour, ethnicity, culture, gender, age, religion, political opinion, nationality or social origin.</p>		
<p>4.1.5. The FME shall ensure that employees and contractors are paid a fair wage and other benefits, which meet or exceed all legal requirements and those provided in comparable occupations in the same region.</p>	<p>Verifiers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Records of payment compared to census data, salary surveys, etc. ■ Interviews with forest managers, workers, contractors, and labour representatives/ stakeholders. <p>Note: Benefits may include social security payment, pension, accommodation, food, etc.</p>		
<p>C4.2. Forest management should meet or exceed all applicable laws and/or regulations covering health and safety of employees and their families.</p>			
<p>Indicators</p>	<p>Verifiers, Examples, and Notes</p>	<p>Evaluation Team Notes</p>	<p>Conformance (C, NC or NA)</p>
<p>4.2.1. Employees, including contractors, shall be aware of and shall implement safe work practices.</p>	<p>Verifiers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Interviews with workers and contractors ■ Guidelines/ regulations are readily available. 		
<p>4.2.2. FME shall maintain written guidelines and policies for workplace health and safety that comply with national minimum requirements.</p> <p>For large FMEs, at a minimum, the following topics shall be addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Personal protective equipment (PPE) 	<p>Note: Guidelines, manuals and policies by government agencies, health departments, NGOs, the ILO, and other organizations qualify as written guidelines as long as the FME addresses any required topics and health & safety issues for all occupational tasks.</p>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Inspection, maintenance, and replacement of PPE ■ Occupational health & safety ■ Accident & injury prevention ■ Emergency procedures for accidents, fires, oil/chemical spills, and impacted logged trees. ■ First AID 			
<p>4.2.3. Workers shall be provided with safety equipment relevant to their occupational tasks, consistent with the ILO Code of Practice on Safety and Health in Forestry and/or national occupational health & safety regulations.</p>	<p>Verifiers: Observation of use of PPE and other safety equipment in the field.</p> <p>Note: Health and safety equipment are not limited to those cited in indicator 4.2.3 and may depend on the task at hand. For example, on-site fueling stations and maintenance facilities may require different PPE, such as respirators and HazMat suits.</p>		
<p>4.2.4. The vehicles, tools, and harvesting equipment of the FME and its contractors shall be adapted to forestry work, including safety devices.</p>	<p>Verifiers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Forest machinery is equipped with crash bars and/or other safety devices. ■ Chainsaws have chain-brakes and/or other safety devices. 		
<p>4.2.5. FME shall conduct regular checks to ensure that all safety procedures are observed in the field, and periodically inspect or test all equipment for safety and performance.</p>	<p>Verifiers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Inspection records ■ Inspection of equipment in the field ■ Interviews with workers 		
<p>4.2.6. For large FMEs: FME shall maintain a register of accidents (including those among the contractors working on the FMU) and</p>	<p>Verifiers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Accident/ incident records ■ Updated procedures or policies ■ Training records 		

document steps taken to minimize risk of further accidents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Interviews with staff and contractors 		
4.2.7. Where located and provided on the FMU, worker accommodation and nutrition comply, at a minimum, with the ILO Code of Practice on Safety and Health in Forestry.	<p>Verifiers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Interviews with managers and workers ■ Inspection of facilities 		
4.2.8. There is assured compensation benefits for affected workers and their family members in case of accidents.	<p>Verifiers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Documented compensation protocol ■ Evidence of compensation insurance policy, where applicable ■ Records of payments kept 		
4.2.9. No staff, contractors or their family members on-site shall be engaged in debt bondage or other forms of forced labor.	<p>Verifiers:</p> <p>Interviews with forest managers, workers, family members at logging camps, labour representatives.</p>		
4.2.10. No workers under the age of [#] shall be employed in the forest.	<p>Note: National legislation may set higher minimum ages. ILO Convention 138 sets minimum age between 14 and 18, depending on the terms of ratification of each country. Default minimum age is 15 if no guidance can be found.</p>		
4.2.11. No workers under the age of 18 should be employed for operations when the task has high occupational and health risk.	<p>Guidance: Young people under the age of 18 should not be employed in potentially hazardous activities such as pesticide application, harvesting, heavy work, and work at night; unless there is special provision for safety or traditional community circumstances exist that can be supported by national/ local laws or common practice.</p>		
4.2.12. Indicators under criterion 4.2 are also			

applicable for workers' family members in case they are present at the operational sites and logging camps.			
C4.3. The rights of workers to organize and voluntarily negotiate with their employers shall be guaranteed as outlined in Conventions 87 and 98 of the International Labour Organization (ILO).			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
4.3.1. All workers shall be able to form and/or join a trade union of their choice without fear of intimidation or reprisal. This will at a minimum will comply with ILO Convention No. 87, where applicable.	Verifiers: Interviews with forest managers, workers, and labor representatives. Applicability note: ILO		
4.3.2. Collective bargaining with representative trade unions shall be carried out in good faith and with best efforts to come to an agreement. This will at a minimum comply with ILO Convention No. 98, where applicable.	Convention 87 applies to both public and private organizations, while Convention 98 is inapplicable to government organizations. Government agencies may be covered under national or regional legislation.		
4.3.3. The FME shall have documented procedures to: a) investigate objectively and transparently the issues and discrepancies raised by workers and / or their organizations; and b) conduct conflict resolution.	Verifiers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Interviews with forest managers, workers, and labor representatives. ■ Management plans ■ SOPs Note: National legislation or processes may be cited if they comply with this indicator.		
C4.4. Management planning and operations shall incorporate the results of evaluations of social impact. Consultations shall be maintained with people and groups (both men and women) directly affected by management operations.			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
4.4.1. FME shall conduct a social impact assessment that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identifies affected groups; ■ Includes consultation with 	Verifiers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Records of stakeholder communication; ■ Stakeholder lists; ■ Documented results of 		

<p>affected groups (both men and women);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identifies main impacts of management activities on those groups in cooperation with them; and ■ Identifies any areas of special economic, ecological, cultural or spiritual value of affected groups not already covered in Principles 3 & 9. 	<p>social impact assessment;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Interviews with affected stakeholder groups <p>Note: For an area to be considered of special value there should be broad support from stakeholder groups and/or evidence of its historical importance should be presented. Multiple independent sources should be considered.</p>		
<p>4.4.2. The results of social impact assessment are incorporated into management decisions, including the provision of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Measures to reduce or mitigate identified negative impacts in 4.4.1; ■ Measures to consider areas of special economic, ecological, cultural or spiritual value in management activities not covered in Principles 3 & 9; and ■ Regular contact with affected groups to monitor the effectiveness of implemented measures. 	<p>Verifiers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Documented results of social impact assessment; ■ FMP or site-level plans 		
<p>4.4.3. FME shall maintain a system to receive and document stakeholder concerns, as well as its response.</p>	<p>Verifiers: Records of stakeholder communications and FME's response.</p> <p>Note: Stakeholder concerns include grievances covered in C4.5.</p>		
<p><i>For FMUs meeting SLIMF</i></p>	<p>Applicability note:</p>		

<p><i>requirements, only the following indicator(s) of this criterion apply; the following indicator(s) are not to be used for assessing non-SLIMF operations:</i></p>	<p>This applies to both small and low intensity SLIMFs.</p>		
<p>4.4.4. The FME shall maintain an up-to-date list of representatives of neighbouring properties or communities that could be affected during and after the implementation of forest management activities.</p>	<p>Verifiers: List of stakeholders</p>		
<p>4.4.5. The FME maintains regular communication with neighbors and other stakeholders of local communities. As appropriate, the FME's policies and activities are sensitive to the interests and expectations of these interested parties.</p>	<p>Verifiers: Interviews with neighbors and other stakeholders.</p>		
<p>C4.5. Appropriate mechanisms shall be employed for resolving grievances and for providing fair compensation in the case of loss or damage affecting the legal or customary rights, property, resources, or livelihoods of local peoples. Measures shall be taken to avoid such loss or damage.</p>			
<p>Indicators</p>	<p>Verifiers, Examples, and Notes</p>	<p>Evaluation Team Notes</p>	<p>Conformance (C, NC or NA)</p>
<p>4.5.1. FME shall make all reasonable efforts to avoid losses and damages affecting local peoples, and in resolving grievances related to legal rights, damage compensation and negative impacts.</p>			
<p>4.5.2. In the event of a grievance or dispute, FME shall implement documented dispute resolution procedures that require it to, at a minimum: a) keep a record of all</p>	<p>Note: This indicator refers to FSC-STD-20-001 V3-0, part 22</p> <p>Verifiers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Documented procedures ■ Records related to grievance investigation and 		

<p>complaints made known to them relating to the FME's compliance with FSC requirements; b) make these records available to SCS upon request; c) conduct an investigation on any claims or disputes to identify the root cause; d) take appropriate action with respect to such complaints and any deficiencies found in FME's forest management system that affect compliance with the requirements for FSC certification; and e) document the actions taken to resolve grievance or dispute</p>	<p>process</p>		
<p>4.5.3. Fair compensation or reasonable mitigation is provided to local people, communities or adjacent landowners for substantiated damage or loss of income caused by the FME.</p>	<p>Intent: Damage may be to crops, game, trees, land, other managed resources, and impairment of essential environmental functions (for example, water quality). The intent of this Indicator is not to provide compensation for a justified business decision, such as selling product for a higher value or purchasing goods and services at a better price, given relative equal quality.</p>		

PRINCIPLE #5: BENEFITS FROM THE FOREST

Forest management operations shall encourage the efficient use of the forest's multiple products and services to ensure economic viability and a wide range of environmental and social benefits.

C5.1. Forest management should strive toward economic viability, while taking into account the full environmental, social, and operational costs of production, and ensuring the investments necessary to maintain the ecological productivity of the forest.

Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
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<p>5.1.1. The FME shall have sufficient financial capital and human resources to implement the management plan, over the long run (at least one rotation in the case of plantations).</p>	<p>Verifiers: Financial planning documents and projections</p>		
<p>5.1.2. The FME shall conduct a long-term financial projection (e.g., budget) that includes income and environmental, social, and operational costs. The assumptions included in the budget or financial model must be duly substantiated.</p>			
<p>5.1.3. The FME shall make adequate investments of capital, machinery and human resources so as to maintain or restore the productive capacity, ecological integrity and socio-economic profile of the FMU.</p>			
<p>5.1.4. Commercial (income generating) activities are financially viable, given short and medium-term market conditions and costs.</p>	<p>Verifiers: Annual or semi-annual balance sheets or other records that show the costs of management activities conducted, as well as the income received.</p>		
<p>5.1.5. If the FME has received external funding for certification, the FME shall: 1) Make available to SCS all information about the external funding, including any payment schedules, time limits, and applicable interest rates.</p>	<p>Applicability: Indicators 5.1.5 and 5.1.6 are only applicable if the FME has received external funding to finance the direct costs of certification. The direct costs of certification may include fees payable to the certification body, FSC IC, the FSC National Office or ASI Gmbh, as applicable.</p>		

<p>2) Implement a documented plan to reduce dependency on external funding over a defined period if the financiers have imposed interest, time limits or any other restriction that could impact the economic viability of the FME.</p>			
<p>5.1.6. An exception shall be made to the second point of 5.1.5 when the interested parties present documented evidence that their financial agreement permits continued conformance to indicators 5.1.1, 5.1.2, and 5.1.3 and that the FME has sufficient funds to adhere to any payment schedule.</p>	<p>Guidance: The “interested parties” in this indicator may include the FME, the provider(s) of the external funding, investors in the FME, etc.</p>		
<p>C5.2. Forest management and marketing operations should encourage the optimal use and local processing of the forest’s diversity of products.</p>			
<p>Indicators</p>	<p>Verifiers, Examples, and Notes</p>	<p>Evaluation Team Notes</p>	<p>Conformance (C, NC or NA)</p>
<p>5.2.1. Management and marketing policies, as well as field-level decisions, systematically assure that commercial forest products are sold for their highest and best uses.</p>	<p>Verifiers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Interviews with FME log buyers and local stakeholders ■ List of FSC product classes ■ Investigation of technological capabilities of local mills 		
<p>5.2.2. The FME strives to diversify the mix of commercial products recovered from the forest and marketed.</p>	<p>Examples may include: When financially and technically viable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ New products are explored and developed for common but lesser used species or harvesting residues; ■ FME commercializes non-timber forest products (NTFPs); or 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The FME commercializes environmental services, such as the protection of watersheds that serve hydroelectric dams or forest carbon offset projects. 		
5.2.3. The FME has a demonstrated track record of favoring or encouraging local processing of wood and other forest products as far as it is in accordance with national legislation.			
C5.3. Forest management should minimize waste associated with harvesting and on-site processing operations and avoid damage to other forest resources.			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
5.3.1. Management practices are employed to minimize the loss and/or waste of harvested forest products.	Guidance: "Waste" consists of damage or underutilization of harvested products, except where portions of harvested material need to be left on site to maintain woody debris, nutrient cycling, or other ecological functions (see Criterion 6.3).		
5.3.2. Harvest practices are managed to protect residual trees and other forest resources, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> residual trees and regeneration are not significantly damaged to the extent that health, growth, or values are noticeably affected; and damage to NTFPs is minimized during management activities. 			
5.3.3. Log landings or other forest product staging areas are kept to a minimum practicable number and size, and are	Guidance: The size and location of log landings should be based on impacts to sensitive ecosystems, proximity to the		

located so as to minimize adverse environmental impacts and loss of productive forest area.	transportation network, and the rate at which logs at the landing can be transported to their next location.		
5.3.4. Where on-site processing takes place, the footprint of the milling facility is kept to the smallest practicable size; the processing facilities are located in the most environmentally benign locales as well as in locations where losses to productive forest area are minimized.	<p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The FME locates charcoal kilns or portable sawmills only after evaluating the environmental impacts to the selected sites (see Criterion 6.1). 		
C5.4 Forest management should strive to strengthen and diversify the local economy, avoiding dependence on a single forest product.			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
5.4.1. The FME demonstrates knowledge of the operation’s effect on the local economy as it relates to existing and potential markets for a variety of timber and non-timber forest products and services.	<p>Applicability: The capacity of forest management to affect the local economy is dependent on the scope and scale of operation. Large, highly productive ownerships have a greater capacity to affect the local economy and should thus explore more thoroughly the range of diversification opportunities than should a smaller, less productive operation.</p> <p>Intent: It is expected that the FME will explore a range of products or services, or act in cooperation with others in pursuing niche markets, if feasible. However, an actual diversified or value-added operation is not required, especially if it is financially infeasible.</p>		

	<p>SLIMF Guidance: The capacity of forest management to affect the local economy is dependent on the scope and scale of operation. Large, highly productive ownerships as well as group certificates with landowners operating within proximity of one another may have a greater capacity to affect the local economy and should thus explore more thoroughly the range of diversification opportunities than should a smaller, less intensive operation.</p>		
<p>5.4.2. The FME strives to diversify the economic use of the forest for a variety of timber and non-timber forest products and services.</p>	<p>Intent: Economic diversification shall be evaluated in terms of its ecological impacts and shall not impede maintaining forest composition, structure, function, and other requirements present in this Standard. Developing new markets shall also be consistent with management objectives.</p> <p>Guidance: Diversification of economic uses may include but is not limited to: recreation; ecotourism; hunting; fishing; specialty products and lesser-used species of trees, grades of logs, and lumber; NTFPs; and emerging markets in new commodities such as water in its value to provide in-stream water flows.</p>		
<p>C5.5 Forest management operations shall recognize, maintain, and, where appropriate, enhance the value of forest services and resources such as watersheds and fisheries.</p>			

Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
5.5.1. The FME shall identify the full range of forest services associated with the FMU including: municipal watersheds, commercial and recreational fisheries (or the supply of water to downstream fisheries), visual quality, contributions to regional biodiversity, recreation, tourism, and any other services.	Verifiers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ FMP ■ Interviews with FME personnel and stakeholders 		
5.5.2. Forest management activities are designed and implemented, spatially and temporally, with due consideration to the impacts on the forest services identified in 5.5.1.			
5.5.3. The FME engages in regular dialogue with stakeholders and advocates of forest services that are subject to impact from forest operations.			
C5.6 The rate of harvest of forest products shall not exceed levels that can be permanently sustained.			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
5.6.1. For natural forest management operations, the annual allowable cut (AAC) of forest products, either by area or volume, shall be established by a combination of empirical data and published literature, based on conservative, well-documented growth and yield estimates to ensure	Verifiers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Growth and yield data ■ Stand table projections ■ Management plan Applicability note: Short rotation crops, such Christmas tree farms established on forest soils prior to November 1994 may be certified as part of natural forest management certificates if the area used for		

<p>that the rate of harvest does not exceed the calculated rates of long-term growth.</p>	<p>the farm amounts to a limited portion of the FMU (generally <5% of the FMU). If the primary purpose of the FMU is</p>		
<p>5.6.2. For plantation forest management, the growth and harvest rates (for thinning and final cuts), shall be based on well-documented information and/or field trials, and be consistent with the observed behaviour of the species at the national or regional level.</p>	<p>to produce Christmas trees or other short rotation crops, then these may be treated as plantations and subject to Principle 10. Christmas tree farms and other short rotation crops are subject to all of the requirements of the standard, including Criterion 5.6. See FSC-DIS-01-001 and Sustainable Forest Management: Support to Forest Stewardship Council D 1.1(June 2010) for more information.5.6.1 is applicable to natural/ semi-natural forest management. 5.6.2 is applicable to plantation forest management.</p>		
<p>5.6.3. For large FMEs: Average annual harvest levels, over rolling periods of no more than 10 years, do not exceed the calculated AAC.</p> <p>For SLIMF: On SLIMF forests, harvest levels and rates do not exceed growth rates over successive harvests, contribute directly to achieving desired future conditions as defined in the forest management plans, and do not diminish the long term ecological integrity and productivity of the site.</p>	<p>Verifiers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Harvest records ■ Comparison of records of harvested volume by species (or species groups) with the AAC established for the species (or species groups). <p>Guidance: The portion of the indicator applicable for large FMEs applies to FMUs over 100 ha. The portion of the indicator applicable for SLIMF is for FMUs <100 ha or that meet the definition of a low intensity SLIMF.</p>		
<p>5.6.4. Harvest levels shall</p>	<p>Verifiers:</p>		

<p>be set such that inventories of desired species increase over time, unless it is substantiated that current inventories (measured in average standing volume per hectare) exceed optimal levels.</p>	<p>Stocking data (diameter classes, stand density, etc.)</p> <p>Applicability: Where there is evidence that optimum growth and stocking levels have been or are achieved given management objectives (i.e., plantation forest management), conformance to this indicator may be demonstrated.</p>		
<p>5.6.5. For operations harvesting NTFPs, management strategies incorporate the best available monitoring and inventory data to calculate a conservative growth and harvest rates.</p>	<p>Examples of NTFPs may include: Greenery, game, seeds, flowers, berries, mushrooms, and fish.</p> <p>Note: Christmas trees are classified as short rotation crops under FSC and do not meet the definition of an NTFP.</p>		
<p>5.6.6. For timber investment management programs: If growth projections are used to make claims on the rate of financial return, the FME shall include a visible declaration on all material that carries the FSC or certification body trademarks regarding the responsibility of financial claims (e.g., “FSC and SCS are not responsible for and do not endorse any financial claims on returns on investments”).</p>	<p>See FSC-STD-50-001 (V1-2), section 9.</p> <p>Guidance: A timber investment organization is a forest management project established in a natural or plantation forest (e.g., a TIMO or REIT), where the FME uses funds from various investors to achieve management objectives, usually in exchange for returns on investment within a specified timeframe.</p>		

PRINCIPLE #6: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Forest management shall conserve biological diversity and its associated values, water resources, soils, and unique and fragile ecosystems and landscapes, and, by so doing, maintain the ecological

functions and the integrity of the forest.

C6.1. Assessments of environmental impacts shall be completed appropriate to the scale, intensity of forest management and the uniqueness of the affected resources and adequately integrated into management systems. Assessments shall include landscape level considerations as well as the impacts of on-site processing facilities. Environmental impacts shall be assessed prior to commencement of site disturbing operations.

Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
<p>6.1.1. FME conducts site-level environmental impact assessments prior to commencement of site disturbing activities, scaled to the size and complexity of operations. Where required by national legislation, an official Environmental Impact Assessment report shall be carried out and properly integrated into projects, plans and programs.</p>	<p>Guidance: At a minimum, FME should consider impacts to soil, forest community development & succession, water resources, fauna, and sensitive features.</p>		
<p>6.1.2. FME conducts landscape-level environmental impact assessments in which the cumulative effects of forest operations are considered.</p>	<p>Guidance: FME may consider impacts to watershed processes, age-class distribution across the FMU, migratory fauna, etc.</p>		
<p>6.1.3. FME modifies planned management activities to reduce or mitigate identified negative Impacts in 6.1.1 and 6.1.2.</p>	<p>Examples of field-level decisions taken in response to this indicator may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ FME does not conduct new clear-cut harvests immediately adjacent to previous clear-cut harvests (either on or off the FMU) unless these previous harvests have regeneration and stocking of sufficient size and density. ■ Harvesting is timed in a specific watershed as to reduce the cumulative effects of all site-disturbing activities. 		

<p><i>For FMUs meeting SLIMF requirements, only the following indicator(s) of this criterion apply; the indicator(s) are not to be used for assessing non-SLIMF operations:</i></p>	<p>Guidance: This applies to both small and low intensity SLIMFs.</p>		
<p>6.1.4. FME demonstrates knowledge of possible negative impacts of its activities and implements measures to minimize or mitigate them. Where required by national legislation, an official Environmental Impact Assessment report shall be carried out and properly integrated into projects, plans and programs</p>			
<p>C6.2. Safeguards shall exist which protect rare, threatened and endangered species and their habitats (e.g., nesting and feeding areas). Conservation zones and protection areas shall be established, appropriate to the scale and intensity of forest management and the uniqueness of the affected resources. Inappropriate hunting, fishing, trapping and collecting shall be controlled.</p>			
<p>Indicators</p>	<p>Verifiers, Examples, and Notes</p>	<p>Evaluation Team Notes</p>	<p>Conformance (C, NC or NA)</p>
<p>6.2.1. Using the best information available and the results of field surveys, the FME shall assess the potential presence of rare, threatened or endangered (RTE) species and their habitats within the FMU (e.g., nesting and feeding areas).</p>			
<p>6.2.2. FME shall establish, appropriate to the scale and intensity of the operation, conservation zones and/or other adequate protection measures for RTE species and their habitats.</p>	<p>Guidance: The areas assigned for conservation and protection should be located in areas where they can offer a maximum contribution to the biodiversity conservation.</p>		
<p>6.2.3. FME shall demarcate</p>			

RTE conservation zones on maps, and when appropriate and it does not interfere with conservation objectives, in the field.			
6.2.4. Operations in the conservation zones shall be conducted so that the conservation values are not harmed or endangered in any way.			
6.2.5. FME shall not harvest species that are included in Appendix I of CITES (<i>also applicable to SLIMF</i>).			
6.2.6. FME shall have adequate control over and minimize illegal, unauthorized and/or inappropriate activities, such as hunting, fishing, trapping, harvesting of NTFPs or the collecting of RTE species (<i>also applicable to SLIMF</i>).	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fences are installed to control grazing when appropriate. ■ Established hunting or gathering seasons are respected in order to allow for reproduction. 		
<i>For FMUs meeting SLIMF requirements, only 6.2.5, 6.2.6, and the following indicator(s) of this criterion apply; the following indicator(s) are not to be used for assessing non-SLIMF operations:</i>			
6.2.7. Where information exists on RTE species and their habitats, the FME uses this information to map and protect these resources.			
6.2.8. The use of fire is controlled within the FMU and the FME helps in its prevention and control in contiguous areas.			
C6.3. Ecological functions and values shall be maintained intact, enhanced, or restored, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Forest regeneration and succession. b) Genetic, species, and ecosystem diversity. 			

c) Natural cycles that affect the productivity of the forest ecosystem.			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
6.3.1. The FME shall document the ecological and silvicultural justification of the forest management system based on government regulations or policies, inventory data specific to the forest, and/or technical publications.	Applicability: This indicator applies to all forest types.		
6.3.2. In natural/ semi-natural forests, management prescriptions shall maintain, increase or restore natural forest composition and structure.	Note: Composition and structure may refer to number and diversity of species, size classes, and structural elements (e.g., snags, vines, downed woody debris). Applicability: This indicator is applicable to prescriptions developed for even-aged, uneven-aged, salvage harvests, intermediate treatments and other management systems of natural and semi-natural forests.		
6.3.3. In natural/ semi-natural forests, the FME preferably works in favor of natural regeneration; young stands, either planted or naturally established, are well-stocked with desired species, vigorous and on the trajectory to healthy merchantable stands.	Applicability: This indicator is applicable to natural and semi-natural forests.		
6.3.4. The FME designs and implements harvests over time and space with consideration of forest ecological functions, and the integrity and connectivity of wildlife habitats.	Guidance: Large FMEs are expected to be able to make more contributions to habitat and connectivity for fauna. For SLIMFs, this may depend on proximity to other forestland or protected areas.		

	For all forest types, vertical and horizontal complexity and structural elements (e.g., snags, downed woody debris) should be carefully considered depending on wildlife habitat objectives and forest ecological functions.		
6.3.5. The FME assesses the risk of, prioritizes, and, as warranted, develops and implements a strategy to prevent or control invasive species.	<p>Note: When the FME can demonstrate evidence (i.e., in the field or testimony of expert stakeholders) that no invasive species are present and that the risk of invasive species is low, this indicator may be inapplicable.</p> <p>If an exotic species is not invasive or has become naturalized, control measures may be limited to those sufficient to maintain native flora and fauna.</p>		
6.3.6. In applicable situations, the FME identifies and applies site-specific fuels management practices, based on: (1) natural or anthropogenic fire regimes, (2) risk of wildfire, (3) potential economic losses, (4) public safety, and (5) applicable laws and regulations.	Intent: This Indicator applies to forest types that are fire-adapted at risk of wildfire or to forest types that rarely burn naturally under threat of human-set fires.		
C6.4 Representative samples of existing ecosystems within the landscape shall be protected in their natural state and recorded on maps, appropriate to the scale and intensity of operations and the uniqueness of the affected resources.			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
6.4.1. For large FMEs: FME shall leave representative samples of existing rare and/or endangered ecosystems (RSEs) for natural succession in their	<p>Note: RSE = representative sample ecosystem.</p> <p>Verifiers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ FMP ■ Protected area maps 		

<p>natural state covering at least 5% of the total forest area. Conservation areas and RSEs located inside the FMU comprise a minimum of 10% of the FMU.</p> <p>For SLIMF FMEs: FME shall protect representative samples of existing rare and/or endangered ecosystems in their natural state.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Maps of FMU ■ HCV assessment results 		
<p>6.4.2. Selection of regional RSEs to be preserved as required in 6.4.1 shall be based on the identification of key ecological areas (i.e., based on plant community distribution, soil types, etc) identified through consultation with environmental stakeholders, local government and scientific authorities.</p>			
<p>6.4.3. Management activities within RSEs are limited to low impact activities compatible with the protected RSE objectives, except under the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) harvesting activities only where they are necessary to restore or create conditions to meet the objectives of the protected RSE, or to mitigate conditions that interfere with achieving the RSE objectives; or b) road-building only where it is documented 			

<p>that it will contribute to minimizing the overall environmental impacts within the FMU and will not jeopardize the purpose for which the RSE was designated.</p>			
<p>6.4.4. For large FMEs: The RSE assessment (Indicator 6.4.1) is periodically reviewed and if necessary updated (at a minimum every 10 years) in order to determine if the need for RSEs has changed; the designation of RSEs is revised according to indicator 6.4.2.</p>	<p>Applicability: Not applicable to SLIMF.</p>		
<p>C6.5. Written guidelines shall be prepared and implemented to control erosion; minimize forest damage during harvesting, road construction, and all other mechanical disturbances; and to protect water resources.</p>			
<p>Indicators</p>	<p>Verifiers, Examples, and Notes</p>	<p>Evaluation Team Notes</p>	<p>Conformance (C, NC or NA)</p>
<p>6.5.1. The FME shall have written guidelines that cover all technical specifications required in this Criterion.</p>	<p>Note: The written guidelines should address all indicators of Criterion 6.5. Where regional or state manuals cover this criterion, they may be cited.</p>		
<p>6.5.2. Forest operations meet or exceed Best Management Practices (BMPs) that address components of the Criterion where the operation takes place.</p>	<p>Intent: BMPs for water quality, erosion control, protection of forest resources during harvesting, road construction, and all other mechanical disturbances provide a foundational minimum for compliance with this Criterion.</p> <p>BMPs include both voluntary and mandatory state and regional BMPs, as well as analogous terms used in certain states (e.g., Site Level Guidelines).</p> <p>Isolated and minor situations of</p>		

	<p>non-compliance with BMPs may or may not result in a finding of nonconformance with the Indicator.</p>		
<p>6.5.3. Management activities including site preparation, harvest prescriptions, techniques, timing, and equipment are selected and used to protect soil and water resources and to avoid erosion, landslides, and significant soil disturbance. Logging and other activities that significantly increase the risk of landslides are excluded in areas where risk of landslides is high. The following actions are addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Slash is concentrated only as much as necessary to achieve the goals of site preparation and the reduction of fuels to moderate or low levels of fire hazard. ■ Disturbance of topsoil is limited to the minimum necessary to achieve successful regeneration of species native to the site. ■ Rutting, compaction, and erosion are minimized. ■ Soil erosion is not accelerated. ■ Burning is only done when consistent with natural disturbance regimes. ■ Natural ground cover disturbance is minimized to the extent necessary to achieve regeneration 	<p>Intent: This Indicator includes soil productivity, function, and habitat (including the leaf litter layer and fine woody debris) in all stands, management systems, and harvest objectives.</p> <p>Guidance: Attention to this Indicator is expected to increase with the amount and frequency of woody material removed from the site (e.g., biomass removals and whole tree harvests).</p> <p>Decisions are made based on objective data regarding slope, erosion-hazard rating, potential for soil compaction, rutting, and risk of landslides.</p>		

<p>objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Whole tree harvesting on any site over multiple rotations is only done when research indicates soil productivity will not be harmed. ■ Techniques and equipment that minimize impacts to vegetation, soil, and water resources are used whenever feasible. 			
<p>6.5.4. The transportation system, including design and placement of permanent and temporary haul roads, skid trails, recreational trails, water crossings and landings, is designed, constructed, maintained, and/or reconstructed to reduce short and long-term environmental impacts, habitat fragmentation, soil and water disturbance and cumulative adverse effects, while allowing for customary uses and use rights. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ access to all roads and trails (temporary and permanent), including recreational trails, and off-road travel, is controlled, as possible, to minimize ecological impacts; ■ road density is minimized; ■ erosion is minimized; ■ sediment discharge to streams is minimized; ■ there is free upstream and downstream passage for aquatic organisms; ■ impacts of transportation 	<p>Guidance: Control measures that reduces ecological impacts may include but are not limited to: roads without a weather resistant surface are used only during periods of weather when conditions are favorable to minimize road damage, surface erosion, and sediment transport; if necessary to minimize ecological impacts, access is restricted on roads not immediately necessary for management purposes; posted or monitored enforcement.</p> <p>Examples for evaluating adequacy of the transportation system may include but are not limited to: roads constructed on slopes in excess of 60% are made with full bench cuts or minimal side cast; for decommissioned roads, bridges and culverts are removed, water bars are installed; slopes are recontoured or revegetated, and ecologically functional drainage patterns are established; landings are located on ecologically suitable sites and the size is minimized</p>		

<p>systems on wildlife habitat and migration corridors are minimized;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ area converted to roads, landings and skid trails is minimized; ■ habitat fragmentation is minimized; ■ unneeded roads are closed and rehabilitated. 	<p>and the number of landings is optimized to minimize overall disturbance to the site; landings are seeded, mulched, or covered with slash after use; Riparian Management Zone crossings are kept to a minimum; stream crossings are installed at an angle that causes least ecological disturbance; water diversion structures are used according to locally applicable guidelines. As part of watershed assessments, habitats for salmonids and other threatened and endangered aquatic species are identified. If shown to be necessary, road density is reduced in such habitats and/or mitigated within the watershed.</p> <p>Cooperative transportation planning with agencies, such as watershed management councils, is used to minimize negative cumulative impacts across the landscape.</p> <p>The FME should design culverts and take other steps to ensure fish passage in order to maintain or enhance the biodiversity of the stream, although it is understood that there may be some situations where free upstream and downstream passage is not possible.</p>		
<p>6.5.5. In consultation with appropriate expertise, the FME implements written Riparian Management Zone</p>	<p>Guidance: Appropriate expertise may include hydrologists, geologists, and state forest agencies.</p>		

<p>(RMZ) buffer management guidelines that are adequate for preventing environmental impact, and include protecting and restoring water quality, hydrologic conditions in rivers and stream corridors, wetlands, vernal pools, seeps and springs, lake and pond shorelines, and other hydrologically sensitive areas. The guidelines include vegetative buffer widths and protection measures that are acceptable within those buffers.</p>	<p>The focus of this Indicator is on stream and water quality protection, and also involves riparian management zones and stream management zones.</p> <p>RMZ buffer width may vary depending on the width of stream or river, seasonal water flow, sensitivity of soils, presence of fish and other macrofauna, dead wood retention objectives, and other factors.</p>		
<p>C6.6. Management systems shall promote the development and adoption of environmentally friendly non chemical methods of pest management and strive to avoid the use of chemical pesticides. World Health Organization Type 1A and 1B and chlorinated hydrocarbon pesticides; pesticides that are persistent, toxic or whose derivatives remain biologically active and accumulate in the food chain beyond their intended use; as well as any pesticides banned by international agreement, shall be prohibited. If chemicals are used, proper equipment and training shall be provided to minimize health and environmental risks.</p>			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
<p>6.6.1. All chemical pesticide use in nurseries, FMUs or processing facilities occurs within the context of an integrated pest management program; pesticides are only used when non-chemical management has been proven ineffective or cost-prohibitive.</p>	<p>Verifiers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Silvicultural prescriptions are selected and designed to minimize the dependence on chemical pesticides. ■ The FMU can demonstrate evidence of reduction or elimination of the use of chemical pesticides over time. 		
<p>6.6.2. If the FME uses chemical pesticides, the FME and its contractors shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Have a complete list of chemical pesticides used; ■ Maintain records of all pesticides used, including the name of the product, 			

<p>active ingredient(s), location and method of application, total quantity applied, and the dates of application;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Comply with all safety regulations during the transport, manipulation, application, and storage of chemical pesticides; ■ Where required by law, field personnel shall be properly licensed to apply chemical pesticides; ■ Use appropriate equipment and gear to assure safe application; <p>Provide adequate supervision and training to personnel and contractors related to the transport, storage, manipulation, and application of chemical pesticides.</p>			
<p>6.6.3. The FME shall not use highly hazardous chemical pesticides as defined by the FSC (FSC-POL-30-601), those prohibited in the country, pesticides classified as Type 1A or 1B by the World Health Organization (WHO) or pesticides composed of hydrocarbons or chlorine. Exceptions are made when the FSC has permitted a formal derogation to the FME in the applicable territory. In such cases, the FME shall follow the terms of the approved derogation.</p>	<p>Note: See FSC-GUI-30-001 for a list of FSC-prohibited chemicals.</p> <p>If FME is an applicant for certification and is in nonconformance to this indicator and wishes to file a derogation request, rather than discontinue use of prohibited chemical, it may submit its derogation request to SCS prior to being awarded certification. If FSC IC denies the derogation request, the FME shall not use the prohibited chemical.</p>		
<p>C6.7. Chemicals, containers, liquid and solid non organic wastes including fuel and oil shall be disposed of in an environmentally appropriate manner at off site locations.</p>			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)

6.7.1. Chemical, container, liquid and solid non-organic waste shall be disposed in an environmentally appropriate and legal manner at off-site locations, whether from forest operations or processing facilities.			
6.7.2. Efforts shall be taken to control and minimize disposal of all types of waste in the forest including garbage left from visitors or trespassers.			
6.7.3. The FME shall implement contingency plans and procedures for prevention and cleanup following spills or other accidents involving chemical pesticides, oils, fuels, and other chemicals.	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Vehicle and chainsaw maintenance is conducted as necessary to prevent leaks. ■ Workers are trained in how to respond to a chemical spill. 		
6.7.4. As much as possible, the FME uses fuels, lubricants, and other chemicals that have fewer negative environmental impacts.	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Biodegradable oil should be preferred, for chainsaws and hydraulic oil, in forest machinery. 		
C6.8. Use of biological control agents shall be documented, minimized, monitored and strictly controlled in accordance with national laws and internationally accepted scientific protocols. Use of genetically modified organisms shall be prohibited.			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
6.8.1. There shall be no use (defined as commercial use) of genetically modified organisms within the FMU.	Note: Non-conformance to this Indicator constitutes a <i>Major Failure</i> and precludes award of certification until appropriately corrected.		
6.8.2 All use of biological control agents takes place within the context of an integrated pest management program that documents, minimizes, monitors, and strictly			

controls their application.			
6.8.3. Use of biological control agents takes place only where demonstrably necessary and only under strict protocols in compliance with applicable laws and regulations.			
C6.9. The use of exotic species shall be carefully controlled and actively monitored to avoid adverse ecological impacts.			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
6.9.1. Exotic species (tree species as well as other flora and fauna) are introduced into the FMU only after active investigation demonstrates that they are not invasive and government approval is received, where required	Note: See C6.3 for invasive, exotic species control. See C6.10 for conversion to plantations.		
6.9.2. Exotic species used are monitored to evaluate potential adverse ecological impacts.			
6.9.3. If adverse ecological impacts are identified, control measures are implemented.			
C6.10. Forest conversion to plantations or non-forest land uses shall not occur, except in circumstances where conversion:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) entails a very limited portion of the forest management unit; and b) does not occur on high conservation value forest areas; and c) will enable clear, substantial, additional, secure, long term conservation benefits across the forest management unit. 			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
6.10.1. FME shall not convert forests to plantations or non-forest land uses, except where the conversion meets the conditions of 6.10.2 – 6.10.4 below.			
6.10.2. If conversion			

occurs, the area affected shall not exceed 0.5% of the area of the FMU in any one year, nor affect a total of more than 5% of the area of the Management Unit.			
6.10.3. If conversion occurs, the forest manager shall demonstrate that any conversion produces clear, substantial, additional, secure, long-term conservation benefits across the forest management unit.			
6.10.4. If the conversion occurs, it shall not occur on high conservation value forest areas.			
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PRINCIPLE #7: MANAGEMENT PLAN

A management plan -- appropriate to the scale and intensity of the operations -- shall be written, implemented, and kept up to date. The long-term objectives of management, and the means of achieving them, shall be clearly stated.

7.1. The management plan and supporting documents shall provide:

- a) Management objectives.
- b) Description of the forest resources to be managed, environmental limitations, land use and ownership status, socio-economic conditions, and a profile of adjacent lands.
- c) Description of silvicultural and/or other management system, based on the ecology of the forest in question and information gathered through resource inventories.
- d) Rationale for rate of annual harvest and species selection.
- e) Provisions for monitoring of forest growth and dynamics.
- f) Environmental safeguards based on environmental assessments.
- g) Plans for the identification and protection of rare, threatened and endangered species.
- h) Maps describing the forest resource base including protected areas, planned management activities and land ownership.
- i) Description and justification of harvesting techniques and equipment to be used.

Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
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<p>7.1.1. FME shall have a valid forest management plan (FMP) prepared according to national legislation and a written description of the management objectives (a, e). The FMP's content shall address the rest of the indicators of C7.1.</p>	<p>Note on Criterion 7.1: A management plan may consist of a series of documents, including data stored digitally, but preferably has one overarching document that address the components of this criterion.</p>		
<p>7.1.2. A general description of the land use and ownership history of the FMU and adjacent lands, any rights held by others to resources on the FMU, and the socio-economic context for management.</p>			
<p>7.1.3. Description of the physical aspects of the forest management area (e.g. features of topography, geomorphology, geology, hydrology, soils, tree species, vegetation, etc.),</p>			
<p>7.1.4. A stand level description of the forest resources including area, site type/forest type, soil type, species, age class distribution, height, site class, average diameter (dbh) and volume.</p>			
<p>7.1.5. The management recommendations and procedures of the silvicultural system are clearly stated. This must include a description and justification of the management system and species selection, including types of silvicultural systems and how these systems conform to C5.6 over successive rotations.</p>	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Selection criteria of the trees to be extracted. ■ The method of marking the trees to be extracted. ■ Methods to grant regeneration; ■ Specification of the category of personnel responsible / in charge with the operations/interventions in progress. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summaries for the total forest area including total area (ha), forest cover percentage, area by site types/forest type, age class distribution, total annual increment and average volume per hectare. 		
7.1.6. Procedures for monitoring consistent with C8.2.	Note: Procedures may be scaled to the scale and intensity of operations.		
7.1.7. Description of measures to reduce or mitigate negative environmental impacts or risks.	Note: This may include adherence to BMPs, fire prevention and control measures, guidelines for salvage harvests, etc.		
7.1.8. General description of measures implemented to ensure conservation of protected areas; RTE species and their habitats; forest services (C5.5); and HCVF resources and measures to maintain/ enhance them,			
7.1.9. Maps describing the forest resource base including protected areas, planned management activities and ownership.	Guidance: Maps should be of sufficient detail to orient management activities and avoid negative environmental impacts		
7.1.10. Description and justification of harvesting techniques and equipment to be used.			
C7.2. The management plan shall be periodically revised to incorporate the results of monitoring or new scientific and technical information, as well as to respond to changing environmental, social and economic circumstances.			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
7.2.1. Revision or adjustments of the FMP and/or its supporting documents shall occur in a timely manner, with a revision period of not more than 10 years.			

7.2.2. The FME shall incorporate the results of monitoring or new scientific or technical information (e.g., silvicultural, environmental, social, and economic conditions) in the revision or adjustment of the FMP, appropriate to the scale and intensity of operations.			
7.3.3. FMP revisions shall follow national procedures.			
C7.3. Forest workers shall receive adequate training and supervision to ensure proper implementation of the management plan.			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
7.3.1. Workers are qualified to properly implement the FMP; all forest workers are provided with sufficient guidance and supervision to adequately implement their respective components of the FMP.	Verifiers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ FMP, harvesting operation plan and other activities' plans are available for staff and used in everyday work. ■ Interviews with FME staff ■ Records of training ■ Staff and contractor evaluations ■ Observation of supervisory personnel in the field. 		
7.3.2. For large FMEs: There is a documented protocol by which forest workers (including contractors) are duly trained as to their role in implementing the FMP.	Examples: Training required for the implementation of the FMP many include proper felling techniques, chainsaw maintenance, flora and fauna identification, emergency procedures, required national or local licenses or certificates for practicing forestry or logging, etc.		
7.3.4. Records are maintained as to when each forest worker received training in the implementation of the FMP.			

<p>7.3.5. The FME shall demonstrate compliance with and implementation of the FMP in field operations.</p>	<p>Guidance: Harvest prescriptions are carried out as planned. Minor changes to operational plans during operations are consistent with the conservation and long-term viability of the forest resource.</p>		
<p>C7.4. While respecting the confidentiality of information, forest managers shall make publicly available a summary of the primary elements of the management plan, including those listed in Criterion 7.1.</p>			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
<p>7.4.1. While respecting landowner confidentiality, the FMP or a summary of the FMP that outlines the elements of the plan described in Criterion 7.1 is available to the public either at no charge or a nominal fee.</p>	<p>Guidance: See Criterion 8.5 for more information on respecting landowner confidentiality and what is acceptable to provide in a public summary. Limited elements of the plan may be excluded to protect the security of environmentally sensitive and/or proprietary information.</p> <p>When possible, the FME should post a summary of the management plan on their website, but at a minimum this summary is made available upon request.</p>		
<p>7.4.2. The FME shall update the public summary of the FMP as necessary, or, at a minimum, during full revisions of the FMP.</p>			

PRINCIPLE #8: MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT

Monitoring shall be conducted -- appropriate to the scale and intensity of forest management -- to assess the condition of the forest, yields of forest products, chain of custody, management activities and their social and environmental impacts.

C8.1. The frequency and intensity of monitoring should be determined by the scale and intensity of

forest management operations as well as the relative complexity and fragility of the affected environment. Monitoring procedures should be consistent and replicable over time to allow comparison of results and assessment of change.			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
8.1.1. Consistent with the scale and intensity of operations, the FME shall implement shall conduct consistent and replicable documented procedures for the elements mentioned in C8.2 and chain of custody (C8.3).	Applicability note: Where these indicators cross-reference Criteria with SLIMF indicators, the monitoring protocol can be consistent with SLIMF requirements of those Criteria..		
8.1.2. The FME shall demonstrate that monitoring protocols have been implemented consistently over time.	Verifiers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Monitoring records or reports ■ Journal entries or log books ■ Analyses of data ■ Interviews with FEM staff and stakeholders, especially for SLIMF 		
C8.2. Forest management should include the research and data collection needed to monitor, at a minimum, the following indicators:			
a) Yield of all forest products harvested. b) Growth rates, regeneration and condition of the forest. c) Composition and observed changes in the flora and fauna. d) Environmental and social impacts of harvesting and other operations. e) Costs, productivity, and efficiency of forest management.			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
8.2.1. FME shall record the yield of all harvested forest products (a).	Applicability note: Where these indicators cross-reference Criteria with SLIMF indicators, the monitoring protocol can be consistent with SLIMF requirements of those Criteria.		
8.2.2. FME shall ensure that monitoring protocols are implemented to detect changes in growth rates, regeneration, species composition, and age classes of forest resources (b, c).			

8.2.3. FME shall ensure that monitoring protocols are implemented to detect environmental changes affecting flora, fauna, soil and water resources, and protected and HCV areas (c. d).	Examples: Erosion, road system, pest outbreaks, invasive species, wildlife, fish, RTE species, game species, etc.		
8.2.4. FME shall ensure that monitoring protocols are implemented to track its conformance to C4.2 and C4.4.			
8.2.5. FME shall ensure that monitoring protocols are implemented to track costs, productivity, and efficiency of completed management activities.			
C8.3. Documentation shall be provided by the forest manager to enable monitoring and certifying organizations to trace each forest product from its origin, a process known as the "chain of custody."			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
8.3.1. The FME shall have documented procedures for the tracking of certified products per SCS' COC indicators for FMEs .	Applicability Note: While evaluating conformance to 8.3.1, SCS auditor shall also evaluate <i>SCS Chain of Custody Indicators for Forest Management Enterprises</i> .		
8.3.2. The FME shall implement consistently the COC procedures defined in indicator 8.3.1.			
C8.4. The results of monitoring shall be incorporated into the implementation and revision of the management plan.			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
8.4.1. The FME shall incorporate the results of monitoring of C8.2 into the revision of the FMP.			
8.4.2. Where monitoring results indicate that management objectives are			

not being met, FME shall modify its implementation of the management plan.			
C8.5. While respecting the confidentiality of information, forest managers shall make publicly available a summary of the results of monitoring indicators, including those listed in Criterion 8.2.			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
8.5.1. While protecting FME confidentiality, either full monitoring results or an up-to-date summary of the most recent monitoring information is maintained, covering the Indicators listed in Criterion 8.2, and is available to the public, free or at a nominal price, upon request.	Guidance: Information that is considered confidential can be presented in such a way as to protect its confidentiality, including data on production, inventory, growth, costs, and other information deemed to provide a competitive advantage or proprietary in nature. This information can be represented in the public summary as trends, percentages, or in terms of their relation to the goals and limits outlined in the FMP.		
8.5.2. The FME shall update the public summary of monitoring results as necessary, or, at a minimum, during full revisions of the FMP.			

PRINCIPLE #9: MAINTENANCE OF HIGH CONSERVATION VALUE FORESTS

Management activities in high conservation value forests shall maintain or enhance the attributes, which define such forests. Decisions regarding high conservation value forests shall always be considered in the context of a precautionary approach.

C9.1. Assessment to determine the presence of the attributes consistent with High Conservation Value Forests will be completed, appropriate to scale and intensity of forest management.

Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
9.1.1. The FME shall conduct an evaluation to identify High Conservation Values (HCV) attributes present in the FMU. This evaluation, at a minimum, shall include:	The presence or absence of the six HCV types should be documented in the HCV assessment for both large and SLIMF FMEs. HCV 1. Forest areas		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consultation of regional or national conservation databases and maps; ■ Consultation of the national HCVF toolkit, if it exists, or the first and third parts of the international toolkit for HCV presence (see HCVF Toolkit by WWF)¹; ■ Consideration of forest inventory data and observations from field workers, contractors or consultants of the FME; ■ Interviews with biologist and scientific experts, local communities, and other stakeholders; ■ Identification and documentation of possible threats to HCVs. 	<p>containing globally, regionally or nationally significant concentrations of biodiversity values (e.g., endemism, endangered species, refugia).</p> <p>HCV 2. Forest areas containing globally, regionally or nationally significant large landscape level forests, contained within, or containing the management unit, where viable populations of most if not all naturally occurring species exist in natural patterns of distribution and abundance.</p> <p>HCV 3. Forest areas that are in or contain rare, threatened or endangered ecosystems.</p> <p>HCV 4. Forest areas that provide basic services of nature in critical situations (e.g., watershed protection, erosion control)</p> <p>HCV 5. Forest areas fundamental to meeting basic needs of local communities (e.g., subsistence, health).</p> <p>HCV 6. Forest areas critical to local communities' traditional cultural identity (areas of cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance identified in cooperation with such local communities).</p>		
<p>9.1.2. The FME shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide a written 			

¹ *HCVF Toolkit: Guidance for High Conservation Value Forests assessment*
(http://www.panda.org/what_we_do/how_we_work/conservation/forests/tools/hcvf_toolkit/)

<p>evaluation for HCVs that includes the elements of 9.1.1 and proposals to protect these HCVs;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide a technical explanation for the HCVs identified and the recommendations presented for the protection of these attributes; and ■ Demonstrate that actions are being taken to protect and/or reduce threats to HCVs that stem from the FME’s management activities. 			
<p><i>For FMUs meeting SLIMF requirements, only the following indicator(s) of this criterion apply; the indicator(s) are not to be used for assessing non-SLIMF operations:</i></p>			
<p>9.1.3. The FME shall consult environmental stakeholders, databases, government officials or researchers to identify HCVs. If there are HVCs present, the FME shall take all reasonable action to protect these values and/or reduce threats to them.</p>			
<p>9.1.4. The FME shall consult the national/ regional HCVF toolkit if it exists, other relevant regional information to identify potential HCVs. If there is not national/ regional toolkit, the FME should consult the first and third parts of the international toolkit for HCV</p>	<p>Applicability note for 9.1.1 applies.</p>		

presence (see footnote for large FMEs at 9.1.1).			
C9.2. The consultative portion of the certification process must place emphasis on the identified conservation attributes, and options for the maintenance thereof.			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
9.2.1. The results of stakeholder consultation related to HCVs shall specify clearly the conservation values that were identified, as well as the proposed strategies for their maintenance, enhancement or reduction of threats. Large FMEs shall document this consultation.			
9.2.2. The FME shall maintain a list of all of pertinent stakeholders that the certifier can interview related to HCVFs.			
9.2.3. The results of stakeholder consultation shall indicate that the FME consistently considers and protects areas of HCV.			
C9.3. The management plan shall include and implement specific measures that ensure the maintenance and/or enhancement of the applicable conservation attributes consistent with the precautionary approach. These measures shall be specifically included in the publicly available management plan summary.			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
9.3.1. The FME, in the management plan and its public summary, shall describe the conservation values of each area of HCV identified in the FMU, as well as the actions taken to maintain and/or enhance these values.			
9.3.1. The FME shall update the HCV public summary, at a minimum, with HCV re-			

evaluations conducted under indicator 9.4.4.			
9.3.3. The FME shall provide evidence in the field that it implements measures to maintain and/or enhance HCVs, consistent with a precautionary approach.			
C9.4. Annual monitoring shall be conducted to assess the effectiveness of the measures employed to maintain or enhance the applicable conservation attributes.			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
9.4.1. Measurable monitoring indicators, including qualitative and quantitative, are developed and presented in the HCV section of the FMP.	<p>Examples: FME has qualitative indicators for monitoring unauthorized activities in an unmanaged, protected HCVF, such as searching for evidence of intrusion (illegal harvesting, unauthorized trails/ roads, vandalism, etc).</p> <p>Guidance: These measurable monitoring indicators should focus on threats to HCV, as well as the measures taken to maintain or enhance them.</p>		
9.4.2. Consistent with the scale of and intensity of operations, annual or periodic monitoring is conducted that focuses on the effectiveness by which HCV management and protection measures are maintaining and/or enhancing the pertinent conservation attributes according to the indicators developed in 9.4.1.	SLIMF guidance: Monitoring may be more informal, but sufficient enough to detect any threats to HCVs. When a threat is detected, monitoring activities may increase with frequency until the threat can be diminished.		
9.4.3. The results of HCV monitoring are used			

adaptively in modifying HCV management and protection policies, as well in revising the FMP.			
9.4.4. The HCV assessment is reevaluated every 10-15 years to ensure that any new HCV values are detected and that previously identified HCVs are being maintained and/or enhanced in the long-term.			

PRINCIPLE # 10: PLANTATIONS

Plantations shall be planned and managed in accordance with Principles and Criteria 1 - 9, and Principle 10 and its Criteria. While plantations can provide an array of social and economic benefits, and can contribute to satisfying the world's needs for forest products, they should complement the management of, reduce pressures on, and promote the restoration and conservation of natural forests.

C10.1. The management objectives of the plantation, including natural forest conservation and restoration objectives, shall be explicitly stated in the management plan, and clearly demonstrated in the implementation of the plan.

Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
10.1.1. FMP for plantations shall include silvicultural and socioeconomic objectives, as well as for conservation and restoration of natural forests.			
10.1.2. FME shall demonstrate evidence of implementation of the objectives identified in 10.1.1 and their associated policies in forest management activities and/or administrative actions.			

C10.2. The design and layout of plantations should promote the protection, restoration and conservation of natural forests, and not increase pressures on natural forests. Wildlife corridors, streamside zones and a mosaic of stands of different ages and rotation periods shall be used in the

layout of the plantation, consistent with the scale of the operation. The scale and layout of plantation blocks shall be consistent with the patterns of forest stands found within the natural landscape.

Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
10.2.1. For non-SLIMF and 'low intensity' SLIMF: The scale and layout of existing and new plantation blocks are consistent with the patterns of natural forest stands within the landscape.	Examples of patterns may include contours, soil types, water courses, slope, etc		
10.2.2. The FME shall design plantations to include stands with a diversity of age classes and rotation periods.			
10.2.3. The FME identifies and conserves all areas of natural vegetation within the FMU.			
10.2.4. The FME protects, maintains, and enhances natural vegetation and wildlife corridors in accordance to Criterion 6.3.			
10.2.5. Buffer zones of natural vegetation are maintained or established along watercourses in accordance to C6.5.			

C10.3. Diversity in the composition of plantations is preferred, so as to enhance economic, ecological and social stability. Such diversity may include the size and spatial distribution of management units within the landscape, number and genetic composition of species, age classes and structures.

Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
10.3.1. The FME shall employ a variety of species, provenances, and/or clones to achieve optimal economic, ecological and social stability.			
10.3.2. The FME shall introduce diversity to established and new	Note: other structural components may include non-competing natural		

<p>plantations in accordance to indicators 10.2.2 and 10.3.1, and through practices such as: cut blocks of different size and shape, and maintenance of volunteer (naturally established) seedlings and other structural components within plantation stands.</p>	<p>vegetation, snags, and dead wood. Guidance: Where a large, contiguous even-aged tract of plantation has been established in a landscape unit (e.g., watershed), the FME should implement measures to diversify the tract in accordance to indicator 10.2.2. and/or 10.3.1. The introduction of diversity measures should help reduce and mitigate the cumulative negative environmental effects of plantation management.</p> <p>The definition of a large, contiguous even-aged tract of plantation may range from 25 ha to over 100 ha.</p> <p>Size may also be dependent on the scale of the forest resources to be managed. For example, plantations established for the production NTFPs, contiguous even-aged tracts may be considered smaller.</p>		
<p>C10.4. The selection of species for planting shall be based on their overall suitability for the site and their appropriateness to the management objectives. In order to enhance the conservation of biological diversity, native species are preferred over exotic species in the establishment of plantations and the restoration of degraded ecosystems. Exotic species, which shall be used only when their performance is greater than that of native species, shall be carefully monitored to detect unusual mortality, disease, or insect outbreaks and adverse ecological impacts.</p>			
<p>Indicators</p>	<p>Verifiers, Examples, and Notes</p>	<p>Evaluation Team Notes</p>	<p>Conformance (C, NC or NA)</p>
<p>10.4.1. Plantation species shall be selected based on suitability to site conditions (soils, topography and climate) and management objectives.</p>			

10.4.2. Where exotic species have been selected, the FME shall explicitly justify this choice demonstrating that their performance is greater than that of native species.			
10.4.3. No species shall be planted on a large scale until local trials and/or experience have shown that they are ecologically well-adapted to the site and those invasive characteristics, if any, can be controlled.			
10.4.4. When exotic species are used the specific measures to prevent spontaneous regeneration outside plantation areas, unusual mortality, disease, insect outbreaks or other adverse environmental impacts shall be documented .			
10.4.5. The FME shall maintain records that demonstrate the sources of seeds, clones, provenances or other vegetative material used in plantation stands.			
C10.5. A proportion of the overall forest management area, appropriate to the scale of the plantation, shall be managed so as to restore the site to a natural forest cover.			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
10.5.1. Consistent with C6.4, Representative samples of existing natural ecosystems are being protected or restored in their natural state.	Guidance: For most plantations, areas of unmanaged natural or semi-natural forests and natural vegetation may fulfill this requirement.		
C10.6. Measures shall be taken to maintain or improve soil structure, fertility, and biological activity.			

The techniques and rate of harvesting, road and trail construction and maintenance, and the choice of species shall not result in long term soil degradation or adverse impacts on water quality, quantity or substantial deviation from stream course drainage patterns.			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
10.6.1. Explicit measures shall be taken to maintain or enhance the soil in terms of structure, fertility and biological activity.			
10.6.2. The FME shall implement BMPs established in C6.5 to minimize impacts to soil and water resources.			
10.6.3. Where degradation and/or other negative impacts to soil and water resources have occurred on the FMU, the FME shall implement measures to mitigate such impacts.			
C10.7. Measures shall be taken to prevent and minimize outbreaks of pests, diseases, fire and invasive plant introductions. Integrated pest management shall form an essential part of the management plan, with primary reliance on prevention and biological control methods rather than chemical pesticides and fertilizers. Plantation management should make every effort to move away from chemical pesticides and fertilizers, including their use in nurseries. The use of chemicals is also covered in Criteria 6.6 and 6.7.			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
10.7.1. If chemical pesticides and fertilizers are used or included as a management option in the management plan, an integrated pest management plan shall exist that identifies pests, determines acceptable injury or action thresholds, chemical use, if applicable, and alternative methods of addressing pests (see indicator 7.1.7).			

10.7.2. Measures shall be taken in the forest to prevent outbreaks of pests, disease, and invasive plant introductions.			
10.7.3. FME shall implement a strategy to minimize the use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers over time and space.	Note: this applies to plantations; and to nurseries located within the FMU or to those under control of the FME.		
10.7.4. FME shall implement a program to prevent and control fire on plantations within the FMU.			
C10.8 Appropriate to the scale and diversity of the operation, monitoring of plantations shall include regular assessment of potential on-site and off-site ecological and social impacts, (e.g. natural regeneration, effects on water resources and soil fertility, and impacts on local welfare and social well-being), in addition to those elements addressed in Principles 8, 6 and 4. No species should be planted on a large scale until local trials and/or experience have shown that they are ecologically well-adapted to the site, are not invasive, and do not have significant negative ecological impacts on other ecosystems. Special attention will be paid to social issues of land acquisition for plantations, especially the protection of local rights of ownership, use or access.			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
10.8.1. Monitoring of the impacts of plantations, both on and off-site, shall be conducted in the same manner as the monitoring of natural forests, in accordance with Principles 4, 6, and 8.			
C10.9 Plantations established in areas converted from natural forests after November 1994 normally shall not qualify for certification. Certification may be allowed in circumstances where sufficient evidence is submitted to the certification body that the manager/owner is not responsible directly or indirectly of such conversion.			
Indicators	Verifiers, Examples, and Notes	Evaluation Team Notes	Conformance (C, NC or NA)
10.9.1. Accurate data is compiled on the first year of establishment of all plantation areas, including on any conversions since			

1994.			
10.9.2. Areas converted from natural forest to plantation since November 1994 are not certified, except where the FME provides clear and sufficient evidence that it was not directly or indirectly responsible for the conversion.			

ANNEX 1. High Conservation Value Matrix

The following table can be used to compile information on High Conservation Value Forests and/or attributes. The FME can use the matrix as self-evaluation tool and can add guiding questions, etc. Information included in the matrix is not exhaustive. Use of the matrix does not guarantee conformance to Principle 9 during a given evaluation.

Guiding questions	Sources of information	FME response/ comments from experts and stakeholders	FME strategies for the maintenance and/or enhancement of identified HCVs
HCV1. Areas containing globally, regionally or nationally significant concentrations of biodiversity values (e.g. endemism, endangered species, refugia) ■ HCV 1 includes RTE species and endemic species			
1.1. Does the FMU lie within, adjacent to, or contain a conservation area: a) designated by an international authority, b) legally designated or proposed by relevant federal/provincial/territorial legislative body, or c) identified in regional land use plans or conservation plans?	<i>Global:</i> CITES, UICN <i>National:</i> <i>Regional/ local:</i> <i>FME:</i> Forest inventory, biological surveys, transects	Are there any HCV1 attributes in the FMU? What are they? Comments from experts and stakeholders:	Comments from experts and stakeholders:
1.2. Does the FMU contain any areas with	<i>Global:</i> <i>National:</i>	Are there any HCV1 attributes in the FMU?	

significant concentrations of RTE species, endemic species (restricted geographic range) and/or natural communities that are significant at a regional scale?	<i>Regional/ local:</i> <i>FME:</i>	What are they? Comments from experts and stakeholders:	Comments from experts and stakeholders:
HCV2. Globally, regionally or nationally significant large landscape-level areas where viable populations of most if not all naturally occurring species exist in natural patterns of distribution and abundance.			
2.1. Does the FMU constitute or form part of a globally, nationally or regionally significant forest landscape that includes viable populations of most or all native species in natural patterns of distribution and abundance?	<i>Global:</i> <i>National:</i> <i>Regional/ local:</i> <i>FME:</i>	Are there any HCV2 attributes in the FMU? What are they? Comments from experts and stakeholders:	Comments from experts and stakeholders:
2.2. How would regional biodiversity be affected if the natural characteristics of the FMU were altered significantly?	<i>Global:</i> <i>National:</i> <i>Regional/ local:</i> <i>FME:</i>	Are there any HCV2 attributes in the FMU? What are they? Comments from experts and stakeholders:	Comments from experts and stakeholders:
HCV3. Areas that are in or contain rare, threatened or endangered ecosystems.			
3.1. Does the FMU contain any areas of primary forest?	<i>Global:</i> <i>National:</i> <i>Regional/ local:</i> <i>FME:</i>	Are there any HCV3 attributes in the FMU? What are they? Comments from experts and stakeholders:	Comments from experts and stakeholders:
3.2. Does the FMU contain any rare, threatened or endangered ecosystems?	<i>Global:</i> <i>National:</i> <i>Regional/ local:</i> <i>FME:</i>	Are there any HCV3 attributes in the FMU? What are they? Comments from experts and stakeholders:	Comments from experts and stakeholders:
HCV4. Areas that provide basic ecosystem services in critical situations (e.g. watershed protection, erosion control).			

4.1. Is any part of the FMU managed to protect or provide water sources for human consumption?	<i>Global:</i> <i>National:</i> <i>Regional/ local:</i> <i>FME:</i>	Are there any HCV4 attributes in the FMU? What are they? Comments from experts and stakeholders:	Comments from experts and stakeholders:
4.2. Does any portion of the FMU contain floodplains, wetlands, marshes or swamps that are critical in controlling water flow or water quality?	<i>Global:</i> <i>National:</i> <i>Regional/ local:</i> <i>FME:</i>	Are there any HCV4 attributes in the FMU? What are they? Comments from experts and stakeholders:	Comments from experts and stakeholders:
4.3. Is part of the FMU critical for controlling erosion, landslides or avalanches that threaten local communities?	<i>Global:</i> <i>National:</i> <i>Regional/ local:</i> <i>FME:</i>	Are there any HCV4 attributes in the FMU? What are they? Comments from experts and stakeholders:	Comments from experts and stakeholders:
HCV5. Areas fundamental to meeting basic needs of local communities (e.g. subsistence, health). ■ HCV5 includes forest areas that local people use to obtain resources critical to their survival, such as food and medicinal plants for which no viable alternative exists. Forest uses such as recreational hunting and commercial or illegal logging are not basic human needs.			
5.1. Is a portion of the FMU fundamental to satisfying the needs of any local community?	<i>Global:</i> <i>National:</i> <i>Regional/ local:</i> <i>FME:</i>	Are there any HCV5 attributes in the FMU? What are they? Comments from experts and stakeholders:	Comments from experts and stakeholders:
HCV6. Areas critical to local communities' traditional cultural identity (areas of cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance identified in cooperation with such local communities).			
6.1. Are there any areas of cultural, economic or religious importance to local indigenous, tribal or traditional communities?	<i>Global:</i> <i>National:</i> <i>Regional/ local:</i> <i>FME:</i>	Are there any HCV6 attributes in the FMU? What are they? Comments from experts and stakeholders:	Comments from experts and stakeholders:

ANNEX 2. Regulations applicable to forest management in the Global South

INSERT NATIONAL/LOCAL LAWS

ANNEX 3. List of Multilateral Environmental Agreements and ILO Conventions

INSERT international agreements and ILO Conventions

ANNEX 4. List of Endangered Species

See the IUCN Red list website <http://www.iucnredlist.org> for a list of RTE species in the Global South.

See the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) <http://www.cites.org> for any species that may be protected under CITES in Belize. On Date, there were at least (#) genera of trees native to the Global South listed on Appendices I, II and III.

ANNEX 5. Glossary

Words in the P&C are used as defined in most standard English language dictionaries. The precise meaning and local interpretation of certain phrases (such as local communities) should be decided in the local context by forest managers and certifiers. In this document, the words below are understood as follows:

Biological diversity: The variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are a part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems.

Biological diversity values: The intrinsic, ecological, genetic, social, economic, scientific, educational, cultural, recreational and aesthetic values of biological diversity and its components.

Biological control agents: Living organisms used to eliminate or regulate the population of other living organisms.

Chain of custody: The channel through which products are distributed from their origin in the forest to their end-use.

Chemicals: The range of fertilizers, insecticides, fungicides, and hormones which are used in forest management.

Customary rights: Rights which result from a long series of habitual or customary actions, constantly repeated, which have, by such repetition and by uninterrupted acquiescence, acquired the force of a law within a geographical or sociological unit.

Ecosystem: A community of all plants and animals and their physical environment, functioning together as an interdependent unit.

Endangered species: Any species which is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

Exotic species: An introduced species not native or endemic to the area in question.

Forest integrity: The composition, dynamics, functions and structural attributes of a natural forest.

Forest Management Enterprise (FME): The people or entities responsible for the operational management of the forest resource and of the enterprise, as well as the management system and structure, and the planning and field operations. Synonymous with Forest Management Organization (FMO).

Forest Management Unit (FMU): The forested area that falls under the scope of an FSC forest management certificate.

Genetically modified organisms: Biological organisms which have been induced by various means to consist of genetic structural changes.

Indigenous lands and territories: The total environment of the lands, air, water, sea, sea-ice, flora and fauna, and other resources which indigenous peoples have traditionally owned or otherwise occupied or used.

Indigenous peoples: "The existing descendants of the peoples who inhabited the present territory of a country wholly or partially at the time when persons of a different culture or ethnic origin arrived there from other parts of the world, overcame them and, by conquest, settlement, or other means reduced them to a non-dominant or colonial situation; who today live more in conformity with their particular social, economic and cultural customs and traditions than with the institutions of the country of which they now form a part, under State structure which incorporates mainly the national, social and cultural characteristics of other segments of the population which are predominant." (Working definition adopted by the UN Working Group on Indigenous Peoples).

High Conservation Value Forests: High Conservation Value Forests are those that possess one or more of the following attributes:

- a) forest areas containing globally, regionally or nationally significant: concentrations of biodiversity values (e.g. endemism, endangered species, refugia); and/or large landscape level forests, contained within, or containing the management unit, where viable populations of most if not all naturally occurring species exist in natural patterns of distribution and abundance
- b) forest areas that are in or contain rare, threatened or endangered ecosystems
- c) forest areas that provide basic services of nature in critical situations (e.g. watershed protection, erosion control)
- d) forest areas fundamental to meeting basic needs of local communities (e.g. subsistence, health) and/or critical to local communities' traditional cultural identity (areas of cultural, ecological, economic

or religious significance identified in cooperation with such local communities).

Landscape: A geographical mosaic composed of interacting ecosystems resulting from the influence of geological, topographical, soil, climatic, biotic and human interactions in a given area.

Local laws: Includes all legal norms given by organisms of government whose jurisdiction is less than the national level, such as departmental, municipal and customary norms.

Long term: The time-scale of the forest owner or manager as manifested by the objectives of the management plan, the rate of harvesting, and the commitment to maintain permanent forest cover. The length of time involved will vary according to the context and ecological conditions, and will be a function of how long it takes a given ecosystem to recover its natural structure and composition following harvesting or disturbance, or to produce mature or primary conditions.

Native species: A species that occurs naturally in the region; endemic to the area.

Natural cycles: Nutrient and mineral cycling as a result of interactions between soils, water, plants, and animals in forest environments that affect the ecological productivity of a given site.

Natural Forest: Forest areas where many of the principal characteristics and key elements of native ecosystems such as complexity, structure and diversity are present, as defined by FSC approved national and regional standards of forest management.

Non-timber forest products: All forest products except timber, including other materials obtained from trees such as resins and leaves, as well as any other plant and animal products.

Other forest types: Forest areas that do not fit the criteria for plantation or natural forests and which are defined more specifically by FSC-approved national and regional standards of forest stewardship.

Plantation: Forest areas lacking most of the principal characteristics and key elements of native ecosystems as defined by FSC-approved national and regional standards of forest stewardship, which result from the human activities of either planting, sowing or intensive silvicultural treatments.

Principle: An essential rule or element; in FSC's case, of forest stewardship.

Restoration: The act of modifying a habitat or ecosystem to introduce or reintroduce components and characteristics appropriate to the site both ecologically and historically.

Serai stage: a temporary community of vegetation, defined by the dominant species, which indicates the successional phase of the ecosystem

Short rotation coppice systems ~ harvest systems, which are typically perpetuated long-term, and in which only a few characteristics of an indigenous ecosystem remain.

Silviculture: The art of producing and tending a forest by manipulating its establishment, composition and growth to best fulfill the objectives of the owner. This may, or may not, include timber production.

Succession: Progressive changes in species composition and forest community structure caused by natural processes (nonhuman) over time.

Tenure: Socially defined agreements held by individuals or groups, recognized by legal statutes or customary practice, regarding the "bundle of rights and duties" of ownership, holding, access and/or usage of a particular land unit or the associated resources there within (such as individual trees, plant species, water, minerals, etc).

Threatened species: Any species which is likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

Use rights: Rights for the use of forest resources that can be defined by local custom, mutual agreements, or prescribed by other entities holding access rights. These rights may restrict the use of particular resources to specific levels of consumption or particular harvesting techniques.