

## New interpretations of the FSC normative framework (June 2015)

### Forest Management

- **Interpretation on FSC-STD-01-001**

<https://ic.fsc.org/fsc-std-01-001-principles-and-criteria.441-10.htm>

#### Question:

a) Can a SLIMF owner or group scheme meet set-aside requirements outside the Management Unit (MU)?

b) If so, does a SLIMF owner or group scheme providing financial and other assistance to existing conservation areas within the landscape, constitute compliance with criterion 6.4?

#### Answer

a) Yes, if there are insufficient or no representative samples areas within the MU, and under the following conditions:

- The MU is smaller than 50 ha;
- The Organization shall identify rare and threatened species and their habitats in the MU. When they exist although are insufficient in size, measures for their survival and viability shall be identified and put in place.
- The outside area is in the same forest landscape;
- Sites to be conserved outside of the MU are representative samples of existing ecosystems.
- The outside area is not commercially harvested and is under a legal protection status, OR there is a binding contract between the Organization and the owner of the outside area to:
  - Protect the area in its natural stage;
  - Mark the boundaries of the area in the field and on maps;
  - Allow certification bodies to access area for inspection.

b) Financial assistance does not constitute compliance with the requirements of criterion 6.4. Other examples of conservation efforts may be presented to PSU for evaluation on a case by case basis.

**Normative Reference:** FSC-STD-01-001 V4

**Requirement(s):** Criterion 6.4



- **Interpretation on FSC-STD-01-002**

<https://ic.fsc.org/fsc-std-01-002-fsc-glossary-of-terms.441-1.htm>

**Question**

A certificate holder applies a chemical, recently listed by FSC as 'highly' hazardous pesticide, to lakes and rarely to streams to control invasive species.

- a) Are water bodies included in the scope of an FM certificate?
- b) Does the scale of the waterbody influence this?

**Answer**

a) Water bodies contribute to the management objectives and therefore, applying the definition of Management Unit (MU), water bodies within or adjacent to the spatial area(s) submitted for certification under legal title or management control of, or operated by or on behalf of The Organization are in the scope of the certificate.

b) The definition of water body in the International Generic Indicators (FSC-STD-60-004 V1-0 EN) does not make distinctions based on the scale. See definition below.

Water bodies (including water courses): Seasonal, temporary, and permanent brooks, creeks, streams, rivers, ponds, and lakes. Water bodies include riparian or wetland systems, lakes, swamps, bogs and springs.

**Normative Reference:** FSC-STD-01-002

**Requirement(s):** Section 2

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**Question**

Shall nurseries that do not physically fall within the geographical boundaries of the Management Unit (MU), but are owned and operated by the certificate holder be evaluated against the P&C and thus be subject to evaluation?

**Answer**

No, PSU has received the mandate from the Policy and Standards Committee to develop a new advice note on nurseries. The advice note will define criteria for the material entering in the MU regardless of the situation of the nursery.

Until the new advice note has been developed, only nurseries within or adjacent to the MU are subject to evaluation.



**Normative Reference:** FSC-STD-01-002

**Requirement(s):** Section 2

- **Interpretation on FSC-STD-30-001**

<https://ic.fsc.org/fsc-std-30-001-indicator-and-thresholds-for-the-identification-of-highly-hazardous-pesticides.441-36.htm>

**Question:**

According to FSC requirements, after the update of the FSC highly hazardous pesticides list (HHP list), when a certificate holder identifies the need to use a new listed pesticide, they must either discontinue the use or submit a derogation application within 6 months. Does the company need to submit an application for derogation within the 6 month or do the company has to get an approval for the use of the pesticide within 6 months?

**Answer**

FSC requests companies to submit applications for new listed pesticides within 6 months. If the application has been submitted on time and is complete, the use of the HHP by the company is temporarily permitted until a decision has been made.

Note: After the last update of the list in March 2015, the FSC Board of Directors is granting an extended application period until 30 June 2016 for new listed pesticides. The extension will provide a smooth transition to the requirements of the revised standard and sufficient time to allow the establishment of 'National Integrated Pest Management Advisory Groups' to carry out national evaluation processes of derogation applications.

**Normative Reference:** FSC-STD-30-001

**Requirement(s):** Deadlines

- **Interpretation on FSC-PRO-20-003**

<https://ic.fsc.org/fsc-pro-20-003-transfer-of-fsc-certificates-and-license-agreements.441-27.htm>

**Question:**

According to FSC-PRO-20-003 criterion 2.1, FSC certificates can only be transferred once within the 5-year's period of validity of a certificate. Is it allowed to transfer a certificate two times in five years, when the second time is due to CAB accreditation termination?

**Answer**

Yes, we consider this to be an extraordinary transfer. Negative impacts on certificate holders should be minimized when the certification body has stopped working in the country.



Therefore criterion 2.1 does not apply for such a transfer. However, all other requirements in FSC-PRO-20-003 are fully applicable.

**Normative Reference:** FSC-PRO-20-003

**Requirement(s):** 2.1

### **Chain of custody**

- **Interpretation on FSC-STD-40-004**

<https://ic.fsc.org/fsc-std-40-004-coc-certification.441-15.htm>

#### **Question:**

Do FSC claims need to be spelled in sales documents as they are spelled in the COC standard FSC-STD-40-004?

#### **Answer**

The standard is not prescriptive about how the FSC claims should be spelled in sales documents. Therefore, only the 'FSC' acronym needs to be written in capital letters in FSC claims. The certified content specification (e.g. 100%, Mix Credit, Recycled 85%) may be spelled in lower case and/ or upper case (e.g. both FSC Mix Credit and FSC MIX CREDIT).

**Normative Reference:** FSC-STD-40-004

**Requirement(s):** Definition FSC claim

- **Interpretation on FSC-STD-20-001**

<https://ic.fsc.org/fsc-std-20-001-accreditation.441-5.htm>

#### **Question:**

According to Clause 16.3 the certification body should ensure that no client is evaluated by the same lead auditor on more than 3 consecutive audits. What happens if it is not possible or feasible to rotate the lead auditor after 3 consecutive audits?

#### **Answer**

The certification body shall provide a justification why it was not possible or feasible to rotate the auditor and shall demonstrate how an impartial and objective evidence based audit is ensured.

**Normative Reference:** FSC-STD-20-001

**Requirement(s):** Clause 16.3



Note: All valid FSC Standards Interpretations are published on the FSC website:  
<https://ic.fsc.org/interpretations-of-the-normative-framework.441.htm>