

**FOREST MANAGEMENT
STANDARD
IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE
– FSC® FRANCE –**

PREAMBLE

FSC® Responsible Forest Management Certification is based on 10 main principles that cover the three principal functions of the forest: environmental, social and economic. These principles, broken down into criteria, apply to and must be checked for any forest in the world. This international framework is one of the strengths of the FSC system, ensuring its credibility. However, forest and forestry issues naturally differ enormously from one country and one ecosystem to another. The FSC standard for responsible forest management sets out the issues for Metropolitan France in the form of indicators that serve as a checklist for auditing procedures, another pillar of FSC certification.

As it is the case with any norm, this standard has a specific form and terminology linked to its function. A tool offered to forest managers, the primary users of forest certification, must however have a logical form rooted in their everyday experience, if they are to understand and adopt it. FSC France has worked closely with certified managers and applicants, and with experienced auditors, to identify the best way of presenting the requirements of the standard.

The present implementation guide is the result of this work. It sets out the requirements of the standard following the logic of a conventional forest management plan. Links to the French regulatory framework and current good professional practices are provided so that managers can easily identify specific FSC certification requirements.

FSC France hopes that this guide will provide real support for forest managers in the implementation of certification. This tool is yours. Use it, comment on it and, taking into account your feedback, we will improve it step by step.










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HOW TO USE THIS IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE?

STRUCTURE OF THE GUIDE

The guide is in the form of a conventional forest management document. Various topics have been identified, which have been brought together and are dealt with in colour-coded chapters.

CHAPTER 1: KNOWING MY FOREST

All the information that manager needs to plan his management strategy is brought together at this stage (field surveys, regulatory analysis, the best available information for dealing with all the environmental, economic and socio-cultural issues).

CHAPTER 2: MANAGING MY FOREST AND PRODUCING WOOD

When the management unit has been described and the management objectives set, the manager implements the actions defined in the management document, adapting them in line with the environmental and socio-cultural issues he has identified.

CHAPTER 3: COMMUNICATING

Stakeholder consultation is a key element of FSC certification, the basis for constructive dialogue. Communication with the general public helps in building a good image of forest management, as well as preventing and limiting conflicts.


CHAPTER 4: MONITORING MY MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Where the results of a management strategy are concerned, it is essential to introduce a system that monitors both the operational implementation of management activities and changes in the forest itself. This makes it possible to adapt management methods and so ensure that the results are in line with the set objectives.

CHAPTER 5: CERTIFYING MY FOREST

The process of certification, from definition of the certification perimeter to external auditing, is explained in this chapter.

Each chapter is divided into thematic fact sheets organized under the same headings (see overleaf).

Cross-references are indicated by specifying the number of the sheet concerned and the chapter to which it belongs (**colour code of the chapter + chapter number on the pictogram, for example:**  SHEET 1).

THE PLACE OF THIS GUIDE IN THE FSC REGULATORY SYSTEM

The purpose of this guide is to facilitate understanding and interpretation of the FSC requirements which the manager must be familiar with and implement in order to obtain ANNEX 1 certification. However, it is not in itself a regulatory document and is not opposable to and cannot replace the FSC National Forest Stewardship Standard and the other regulations that form the basis for assessments conducted during audits.

A MATTER OF TERMINOLOGY

The term "Management Unit" is defined in SHEET 2, and will be designated by the acronym MU in the various fact sheets.

The term "Manager" is used in this guide to designate the person in charge of forest management at the MU level regardless of his/her status (owner, expert, cooperative or other).

The acronym HCV for High Conservation Value is used regularly in this guide FACT SHEET 6.

STRUCTURE OF A FACT SHEET

UNDERSTANDING FSC REQUIREMENTS



WHAT IS THE AIM OF THESE REQUIREMENTS?

An introductory paragraph explains the environmental, social or economic relevance of the FSC requirements.



WHAT DO I NEED?

This section identifies what the manager will need to gather in the way of information and documentation in order to meet the requirements.



WHAT DO I ALREADY HAVE? WHAT IS LACKING?

Because of current management practices or regulatory requirements, managers will already be in possession of information that is useful in meeting the requirements of the FSC system.

However, this information is sometimes not sufficient to meet the requirements. The additional data required is then clearly identified.



LINK WITH PRINCIPLES/CRITERIA/INDICATORS OF THE FSC FM STANDARD

Each thematic fact sheet may refer to one or more principles, criteria or indicators of the forest management frame of reference. These links are explained in this paragraph (when all the indicators of a criterion are concerned, only that criterion is cited).



THE RIGHT QUESTIONS TO ASK ONESELF IN ORDER TO MEET THE FSC REQUIREMENTS

This part gives the manager a quick and practical overview of the questions he needs to ask himself in order to satisfy the FSC requirements and prepare for his external audit



EXAMPLES OF DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE AND MEANS OF FIELD VERIFICATION

This list is not exhaustive but gives a good idea of the type of information and documents that the auditor may request during the external audit.

TAKING THINGS FURTHER



FSC RESOURCES

This guide cannot contain all the tools necessary for certification implementation. This section therefore provides links to online standards, policies, toolkits or annexes available on the FSC France website.

EXTERNAL RESOURCES

A number of sources of information can be consulted to supplement FSC resources. The bibliography is, of course, not exhaustive.