

Transferring Annex C of the IGIs into National Forest Stewardship Standards: Frequently Asked Questions

Introduction

The frequently asked questions in this document explain the options open to standard development groups (SDGs) for the inclusion of the requirements of Annex C of the International Generic Indicators (IGIs; [FSC-STD-60-004](#)) into national forest stewardship standards during the transfer process. These apply equally to FSC-accredited certification bodies in the development of interim national standards.

Annex C of the IGIs specifies the additional requirements for FSC certificate holders when they intend to make FSC claims to access markets for ecosystem services. These claims rely on demonstrating the positive impacts that FSC forest management has on ecosystem services, and are intended to enable improved access to payments from ecosystem services markets.

References

The following documents are relevant when applying this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2 *FSC Principles and Criteria*

FSC-STD-01-002 *FSC Glossary of Terms*

FSC-STD-50-001 *Requirements for Use of the FSC Trademarks by Certificate Holders*

FSC-STD-60-004 V1-0 *International Generic Indicators (IGI)*

FSC-PRO-30-002 *Demonstrating the Impact of Forest Stewardship on Ecosystem Services* (under development)

FSC-PRO-60-006 V2-0 *Development and Transfer of National Forest Stewardship Standards to the FSC Principles and Criteria Version 5-1*

FSC-PRO-60-007 *Structure, Content and Development of Interim National Standards* (under development)

FSC-GUI-60-005 *Maintaining and Enhancing Ecosystem Services* (under development)

Frequently asked questions

1. Is it compulsory to incorporate Annex C from the IGIs into national forest stewardship standards?

Adopting or adapting Annex C requirements into national forest stewardship standards is required if the standard is intended to allow certificate holders to make FSC claims regarding the maintenance and/or enhancement of ecosystem services as the basis for improved market access to payments for ecosystem services.

2. When should Annex C be incorporated into national forest stewardship standards?

In order to optimize resources, SDGs should take advantage of the transfer process and proactively begin to incorporate Annex C into national forest stewardship standards while transferring to the *FSC Principles and Criteria Version 5-2*.

3. How should Annex C be incorporated into national forest stewardship standards?

Part I. General Indicators of Annex C should be included as an Annex entitled 'Additional Requirements for Ecosystem Services', so that there is a consistent point of reference for these requirements.

Regarding *Part II. Management Indicators* of Annex C, if an SDG considers that these management indicators are good practices and should be requirements for all certificate holders, it can choose to include any or all of them in the body of the national forest stewardship standard. Any indicators included would then become compulsory for every certificate holder.

An SDG may drop management indicators from Annex C if it believes they are already covered by other indicators in the body of the National Forest Stewardship Standard.

Alternatively, an SDG can include *Part II. Management Indicators* of Annex C in the Annex entitled 'Additional Requirements for Ecosystem Services' along with *Part 1. General Indicators*. Management indicators in this Annex would apply only to those certificate holders wishing to make FSC claims regarding the maintenance and/or enhancement of ecosystem services.

For more information, please refer to Section 6 of FSC-PRO-60-006.

4. Can Annex C be adapted to national contexts?

If an SDG does not have many resources, or does not want to invest much time on Annex C at present, the SDG should **adopt** the content of Annex C (i.e. copy and paste it into the National Forest Stewardship Standard).

An SDG can also **adapt** the content of Annex C to national contexts. Similar to the adaptation of the IGIs, the requirements of Annex C can be adapted to local circumstances as deemed necessary by the SDG.

Credible FSC claims regarding the maintenance and/or enhancement of ecosystem services are built on more than just Annex C; safeguards in the IGIs related to free, prior and informed consent, dispute resolution, legal tenure and environmental values are all equally important. SDGs should be aware that adapting or dropping requirements related to these safeguards, or requirements directly referencing ecosystem services, may have an impact on the credibility of FSC claims regarding the maintenance and/or enhancement of ecosystem services. During the transfer process, the Ecosystem Services Programme will be supporting the Forest Management Programme in reviewing draft National Forest Stewardship Standards, particularly to ensure that Annex C safeguards have been kept in.

5. Do the additional requirements in Annex C need to be included for all ecosystem services?

As part of the adaptation process explained in the previous questions, an SDG can include requirements from Annex C for only some listed ecosystem services into the National Forest Stewardship Standard. However, this would limit the range of FSC claims regarding the maintenance and/or enhancement of ecosystem services that certificate holders can make, and the ecosystem services markets they could reach. Therefore, it is recommended that SDGs include requirements related to all ecosystem services into National Forest Stewardship Standards.

It is possible to adapt the requirements for some ecosystem services to national contexts, and simply adopt (copy and paste) others for which the SDG does not have much experience. This would keep the possibility open for certificate holders to make FSC claims regarding the maintenance and/or enhancement of ecosystem services for any of the five ecosystem services included in Annex C.

It is important to highlight that the general indicators included in Annex C (*Part I.*), as well as the management indicators that apply to all ecosystem services (*Part II. A*), must be included in the National Forest Stewardship Standard, even if some ecosystem services are left out.

6. What happens if a national forest stewardship standard does not include ecosystem services requirements from Annex C?

If a national forest stewardship standard does not incorporate the requirements in Annex C, certificate holders in the country will not be able to make FSC claims to access ecosystem services markets.

In order for these certificate holders to be able to make FSC claims regarding the maintenance and/or enhancement of ecosystem services, there are two options:

- The national forest stewardship standard in the country is formally revised to incorporate Annex C requirements.

- The certification bodies in the country develop an interim national standard that adopts Annex C. This content would be later included in the national forest stewardship standard during its next revision. This would be done following FSC-PRO-60-007, which is under development.

7. When can ecosystem services market tools start being used?

Incorporating the requirements from Annex C into national forest stewardship standards is a precondition for certificate holders in a country to make FSC claims regarding the maintenance and/or enhancement of ecosystem services, in order to approach ecosystem services markets or use other market tools under development by FSC.

The first step for certificate holders, in order to be able to use these tools, is to comply with the requirements in the annex '*Additional Requirements for Ecosystem Services*', included in their applicable and approved National Forest Stewardship Standard. The next step is for certificate holders to demonstrate the positive impact that their forest management activities have in the maintenance and/or enhancement of different ecosystem services.

The methodology to demonstrate these impacts will be defined in the procedure FSC-PRO-30-002 entitled '*Demonstrating the Impact of Forest Stewardship on Ecosystem Services*'. In addition to this, FSC is developing a framework and specific FSC claims regarding the maintenance and/or enhancement of ecosystem services that certificate holders will be able to make. This content will be included in FSC-STD-50-001 and will clarify which FSC claims regarding the maintenance and/or enhancement of ecosystem services can be used, and how.