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Introduction

A key purpose of the Rainforest Alliance is to recognize good forest managers through credible independent certification of forestry practices. The Rainforest Alliance is a certification body accredited by the Forest Stewardship Council™¹. The purpose of these standards is to provide forest managers, landowners, forest industry, scientists, environmentalists and the general public with information on the aspects of forest management operations that Rainforest Alliance evaluates to make certification decisions in the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC®) certification system. These standards have been developed for South Africa and Swaziland based upon the Rainforest Alliance Generic standards which have been approved by the FSC (through the Accreditation Services International). The scope of the current standard is South Africa and Swaziland (all forests types and geographic areas). The current interim standards have been specifically adapted by Rainforest Alliance to apply to South Africa and Swaziland and will be continuously up-dated based on stakeholder input and field trials to this version. The principles, criteria and indicator in this document are applicable for assessing all forest management operations (FMEs) with wood production as a major (though not exclusive) objective.

Background

Forests can be managed for many different objectives and products. Such management can occur in natural forests or plantations, for timber or non-timber forest products, include mechanized or manual harvesting, and managed by a large industrial operation or a local community or landowner cooperative. Many combinations are possible. A critical question has been - how to evaluate the wide range of ecological, socioeconomic and silviculture impacts of forest management activities in a clear and consistent fashion, based on a combination of scientific research and practical experience?

In 1991, the SmartWood program of the Rainforest Alliance Program put forth the *first* set of global standards for forest management certification, entitled “Generic Guidelines for Assessing Natural Forest Management” applicable at the forest or operational level for forest operations. In 1991, SmartWood also distributed the first region-specific guidelines for management of natural forests in Indonesia. In 1993, SmartWood distributed the draft “Generic Guidelines for Assessing Forest Plantations” and revised guidelines for natural forest management. The initial Working Group for developing the first FSC Principles and Criteria in 1991-1993 was co-chaired by the SmartWood Director. In 1998, after seven years of application and “learning by doing” through forest assessments and audits, SmartWood conducted a major revision of its standard for assessing forest management in both natural forests and tree plantations. Revisions since then have occurred in 2000 and 2004. Since 1993, each set of our standards has been reviewed by FSC staff, the international body that has accredited Rainforest Alliance as a forest management and chain of custody certifier.

These standards were developed in consultation with the staff and representatives of Rainforest Alliance worldwide, as well as other professional foresters, ecologists, social scientists and forest practitioners. Rainforest Alliance representatives have in-depth field experience developing region-specific forest certification standards, some going back as far as 1989 (Indonesia, California). We developed these standards to be in accord with FSC requirements as well as other forest management and biological conservation guidelines issued by the World Conservation Union (IUCN) and the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO). We have also drawn on work of our Network partners (Imaflora in Brazil and NEPCon in Denmark, Scandinavia, Russia and Eastern Europe), Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR),

¹ Rainforest Alliance is an FSC accredited certifier FSC® A000520

International Labor Organization (ILO), many scientists, forest industry, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and FSC regional standards working groups. We would like to acknowledge the significant contributions made by these and other international, national and local organizations, and the many forestry operations (certified and uncertified), foresters, loggers, and local stakeholders who have critiqued past versions of the Rainforest Alliance standards and provided suggestions for improvement.

Regional Standards Development

FSC working groups around the world are developing country- or region-specific forest certification standards. Rainforest Alliance fully supports, encourages and participates wherever possible in such processes. Our experience is that the regional standard setting process is vital. Regional standard setting is an excellent way of engaging the public in important, broad ranging discussions on the future of forests and human communities. In other words, the regional standards setting process should not be seen just as a technical standards setting process, but also as a process of outreach on the topic of sustainable forest management.

As part of the FSC process, regional standards are developed by a regional working group, field-tested, revised and approved by the regional working group, and then submitted to the FSC's international headquarters for approval. The final product, if approved, is an "FSC accredited standard". Once accredited, all FSC-approved certifiers (like Rainforest Alliance) must use the endorsed regional standard as the fundamental starting point for FSC certification in that country/region. Certifiers may choose to be more rigorous than the regional standard, but they cannot be less rigorous.

In all countries or regions not covered by an FSC accredited forest stewardship standard, Rainforest Alliance will develop a locally adapted or interim standard for use in evaluating forest management operations in that designated geographic area. The adapted standard is developed from the RA generic standard with modification to certification indicators to take into account the national context (e.g. legal requirements, environmental, social and economic perspectives). This draft will be translated to the official language of the country in which the FME to be evaluated is located and is submitted for consultation at least 30 days prior to the start of fieldwork for a full assessment. Distribution to key stakeholders occurs via the Internet (email and posted on the RA website), mailings and face to face meetings.

Operations certified under a previous FSC or Rainforest Alliance standard have a minimum of one year to meet any newly endorsed FSC regional standard.

Rainforest Alliance have also used other sources as basis for and inspiration for developing the indicators and verifiers of the Interim Standard. Among the documents that have been reviewed and considered in developing this Interim Standard are:

- FSC-STD-01-001 (version 4-0) FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship
- FSC-STD-20-002 (version 3-0) Structure, content and local adaptation of certification body generic Forest Stewardship Standards.
- FSC-POL-30-401 FSC certification and ILO conventions.
- FSC-STD-01-003 SLIMF Eligibility Criteria
- Rainforest Alliance Generic Standards for Assessing Forest Management", Rainforest Alliance, March 2012/January 2008

- Rainforest Alliance Global Non Timber Forest Product Certification Addendum, Rainforest Alliance 2012

Rainforest Alliance Standards Structure

The Rainforest Alliance generic standards are based directly on the FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship (FSC-STD-01-001) and include specific generic indicators for each criterion to create a global Rainforest Alliance standard. These indicators are the starting point from which region-specific “Rainforest Alliance Interim Standards” are developed for use in the forest by forest auditors to evaluate the sustainability of forest management practices and impacts of candidate FME.

The standards are divided into the following ten principles:

- 1.0 Compliance with Laws and FSC Principles
- 2.0 Tenure and Use Rights & Responsibilities
- 3.0 Indigenous Peoples’ Rights
- 4.0 Community Relations and Workers’ Rights
- 5.0 Benefits from the Forest
- 6.0 Environmental Impact
- 7.0 Management Plan
- 8.0 Monitoring and Assessment
- 9.0 Maintenance of High Conservation Value Forests
- 10.0 Plantations

In the standard, each FSC principle and its associated criteria is stated, along with the Rainforest Alliance indicators. All criteria in all principles must be evaluated in every assessment; unless certain principles are deemed not applicable by Rainforest Alliance auditors (e.g. Principle 10 will not be applicable if there are no plantations).

Indicators for Small and Large FMEs

As required under FSC policy Rainforest Alliance has developed indicators for certain criteria² that are specific to certain sizes of operations. Clear quantitative definitions for small versus large FMEs are included in regionalized Rainforest Alliance Interim Standards. Where these Rainforest Alliance regional thresholds are not established, large FME should be considered those larger than 50,000 ha. Small FME definition is determined by FSC regional thresholds set for small and low intensity managed forests (SLIMF) which have been set either globally by FSC (100 ha) or by FSC National Initiatives.

Public Input and Comment on Rainforest Alliance Standard and Certification Processes

The certification process has both public and private aspects. Certification assessments are not public documents unless specifically required by law (e.g. for some public forests) or approved for public distribution by the certified operation. However, three public documents are available for each and every certified FME:

1. A public stakeholder consultation document that announces each certification assessment at least 45 days prior to field work;
2. The certification standard used; and,

² Criteria 6.1, 6.2, 6.4, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5, 9.1, 10.5 and 10.8.

3. A public certification summary that is produced with the results of each separate forest certification.

The public stakeholder consultation document informs the public about the assessment at least 45 days prior to it taking place. This document is distributed publicly prior to or during an assessment. The document is typically distributed by hand delivery, FAX, mail, or email and is posted to the Rainforest Alliance web site at www.rainforest-alliance.org. The specific Rainforest Alliance standard for each assessment is also publicly available before and during the assessment and is a part of the public record for every forest certification. The public certification summary is produced as a final step of the certification process and is available only after an operation has been approved for certification. For public certification summaries visit the FSC certified organization website at <http://info.fsc.org/>, or contact Rainforest Alliance, RA Cert Africa, P. O. Box 30677- 00100, Nairobi. Tel: +254 (0) 20 7224884, Sjembe@ra.org. We strongly encourage you to give us your input, either positive or negative, on our candidate or certified operations, certification standards, or certification procedures.

Contents

A Scope

This standard shall be the basis for FSC forest management certification of forest management enterprises in Southern Africa.

B Standard effective date

This standard shall be effective from [enter date]

C References

- FSC-STD-01-001 v. 4.0 FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship
- FSC-STD-01-002 (v1-0) FSC Glossary of Terms

D Terms and definitions

See annex A for glossary.

Acronyms:

FME: Forest management enterprise

FSC: Forest Stewardship Council

HCVF: High conservation value forests

RA: Rainforest Alliance

SLIMF: Small and Low Intensity Managed Forests

Rainforest Alliance Interim Standard for Assessing Forest Management in Southern Africa

FSC 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.

FSC Criterion 1.1: Forest management shall respect all national and local laws and administrative requirements.

1.1.1: There is no evidence of outstanding claims of non-compliance with national and local laws and administrative requirements related to forest management.

1.1.2 Forest managers demonstrate awareness of relevant codes of practice, guidelines or agreements

1.1.3 There is no evidence of non-compliance with relevant codes of practice, guidelines or agreements.

FSC Criterion 1.2: All applicable and legally prescribed fees, royalties, taxes and other charges shall be paid.

1.2.1 Forest managers can provide evidence that applicable fees, royalties, taxes and other applicable charges have been paid

FSC Criterion 1.3: In signatory countries, the provisions of all binding international agreements such as CITES, ILO Conventions, ITTA, and Convention on Biological Diversity, shall be respected.

1.3.1 Forest managers respect CITES provisions.

1.3.2 Forest managers implement appropriate controls to ensure that ILO provisions appropriate to their region are respected. Implementation of the following ILO conventions is a minimum requirement for certification: 29, 87, 97, 98, 100, 105, 111, 131, 138, 141, 142, 143, 155, 169, 182, ILO Code of Practice on Safety and Health in Forest Work, Recommendation 135, Minimum Wage Fixing Recommendation, 1970

1.3.3 No child labor is used

1.3.4 National minimum wage provisions are adhered to.

1.3.5 There is no forced labor or debt bondage.

1.3.6 Forest managers ensure that implications of ITTA provisions appropriate to their region are respected.

1.3.7 Forest managers ensure that provisions of the Convention on

Biological Diversity applicable in their region are respected.

1.3.8 Forest managers implement appropriate controls to ensure that other appropriate international agreements are respected.

FSC Criterion 1.4: 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 the involved or affected parties.

1.4.1 Conflicts between laws, regulations and the FSC Principles and Criteria are identified by the forest managers, and brought to the attention of the inspection team.

FSC Criterion 1.5: Forest management areas should be protected from illegal harvesting, settlement and other unauthorized activities.

1.5.1 The forest management unit is protected from harvesting activities and other activities not controlled by forest managers or local people with use rights (e.g. settlement, illegal harvesting, poaching).

1.5.2 Systems to monitor and prevent unauthorized activities are in place.

1.5.3 Managers have taken measures to stop illegal or unauthorized uses of the forest.

FSC Criterion 1.6: Forest managers shall demonstrate a long-term commitment to adhere to the FSC Principles and Criteria.

1.6.1 Forest managers shall provide a documented statement declaring their long-term commitment to comply with FSC Principles and Criteria.

1.6.2 Forest managers shall declare any areas under their control but not included within the scope of the certification evaluation.

FSC 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.

FSC Criterion 2.1: Clear evidence of long-term forest use rights to the land (e.g. land title, customary rights, or lease agreements) shall be demonstrated.

2.1.1 Legal ownership or tenure can be proved and is not subject to dispute.

2.1.2 A map is available clearly showing legal boundaries.

2.1.3 Land is dedicated to long term forest management.

2.1.4 Communities have clear, credible and officially recognized evidence, endorsed by the communities themselves, of collective ownership and control of the lands they customarily own or otherwise occupy and use.

FSC Criterion 2.2: 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.

2.2.1 All legal or customary tenure or use rights to the forest resource of all local communities are clearly documented and mapped by the forest managers.

2.2.2 All legal or customary tenure or use rights to the forest resource of all local communities are recognized and respected in forest management planning and practice.

2.2.3 Forest managers provide local communities control over forest operations to the extent necessary to protect their rights and resources.

FSC Criterion 2.3: 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.

2.3.1 Mechanisms exist for resolution of disputes between the forest managers and the local community over claims relating to tenure and/or use rights

2.3.2 Mechanisms for dispute resolution are respected in the event of any dispute between local communities and forest managers regarding tenure claims and use rights.

2.3.3 Management policy and operational procedures exist which require that, in case of a dispute or disagreement between the local community and the forest managers concerning land rights, forestry operations which prejudice the future enjoyment of such rights by the community are halted until the dispute is resolved.

2.3.4 Forest managers provide access to forest resources for local communities without legal or customary land rights, where such access does not prejudice the achievement of management objectives.

2.3.5 There is no evidence of any unresolved dispute of substantial magnitude involving a significant number of interests regarding tenure and use rights

FSC 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.

FSC Criterion 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.

3.1.1 The identity, location and population of all indigenous and traditional peoples including migratory groups living in the vicinity of the management area are documented by the forest managers.

3.1.2 All claims to lands, territories or customary rights within the management area are documented and clearly mapped.

3.1.3 The communities concerned have identified themselves as indigenous or tribal

3.1.4 Forest management operations do not take place in areas identified in indicator 3.1.2 above, without clear evidence of the free and informed consent of the indigenous or traditional peoples claiming such land, territory or customary rights.

FSC Criterion 3.2 Forest management shall not threaten or diminish, either directly or indirectly, the resources or tenure rights of indigenous peoples

3.2.1: Before a forestry operation under outside management commences near an indigenous people's lands, any potential shared boundaries of the community's lands must have been physically demarcated under the supervision of the community.

3.2.2 The forestry management operation shall document any potential threats, direct or indirect, to the resources or rights of such indigenous peoples (e.g. disturbance to water resources and wildlife).

3.2.3 The forestry management operation shall have documented policies and procedures to prevent any encroachment, or direct or indirect threat to the resources or rights of such indigenous peoples.

3.2.4 Traditional access for subsistence uses and traditional activities is granted

FSC Criterion 3.3

Sites of special cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance to indigenous peoples shall be clearly identified in co-operation with such peoples, and recognized and protected by forest managers.

3.3.1 Policies and procedures for the identification, recording and mapping of sites of archaeological, religious, historical or other cultural sensitivity prior to the commencement of forest management activities in the forest management area as a whole are documented and have been implemented.

3.3.2 The policies and procedures include the involvement of Indigenous peoples in the identification of such areas

3.3.3 Policies and procedures for the identification and protection of such sites during management operations (e.g. harvesting, road building, etc) are documented and implemented.

3.3.4 Policies and procedures for the appropriate protection or management of identified sites are documented and implemented

3.3.5 All plans for the protection or management of such sites are subject to the full and informed consent of representatives of indigenous peoples.

FSC Criterion 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.

3.4.1 Managers have recorded all known applications of traditional knowledge (e.g. regarding the use of forest species or management systems) in the forest operations.

3.4.2 Local communities have been informed of all such applications, including the potential commercial benefits of such applications to the forest management enterprise.

3.4.3 Local communities are fairly compensated for any such applications, in accordance with prior agreements.

FSC 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.

FSC Criterion 4.1: The communities within, or adjacent to, the forest management area should be given opportunities for employment, training, and other services.

4.1.1: Local and forest-dependent people have equal access to employment and training opportunities.

4.1.2 Appropriate to the size, type and location of the forest management enterprise, members of local communities are provided with access to basic services (e.g. health and education).

4.1.3 Workers are not discriminated in hiring, advancement, dismissal, remuneration and employment related social security

4.1.4 Wages or income of self-employed or contractors are at least as high as those in comparable occupations in the same region and in no case lower than the established minimum wage.

FSC Criterion 4.2: Forest management should meet or exceed all applicable laws and/or regulations covering health and safety of employees and their families.

4.2.1: Managers are familiar with relevant health and safety guidelines and regulations.

4.2.2: Managers have assessed the risk to workers of particular tasks and equipment, and take all reasonable measures to reduce or eliminate such risks.

4.2.3 Safety training is carried out, relevant to the tasks of workers and the equipment used.

4.2.4 Workers are provided with safety equipment, relevant to the tasks of workers, the equipment used and consistent with ILO Code of Practice on Safety and Health in Forestry.

4.2.5 Managers take measures to ensure that workers use any safety equipment that is provided.

4.2.6 Managers implement an accident reporting system that includes all work related accidents and deaths of employees, their causes, corrective action taken to prevent similar accidents in future.

4.2.7 There is assured compensation benefits in case of accidents.

4.2.8: Health and safety measures comply with national minimum requirements.

4.2.9 Where workers stay in camps, conditions for accommodation and nutrition comply at least with ILO Code of Practice on Safety and Health in Forestry.

FSC Criterion 4.3: 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 Labor Organization (ILO).

4.3.1 Employment conditions comply with International Labor Organization convention 87. *This Convention relates to the rights of workers to: freedom of association and protection of the right to organize.*

4.3.2 Employment conditions comply with International Labor Organization convention 98. *This Convention relates to the rights of workers to: organize and bargain collectively.*

FSC Criterion 4.4: Management planning and operations shall incorporate the results of evaluations of social impact. Consultations shall be maintained with people and groups directly affected by management operations.

4.4.1 There are systems in place that provide an evaluation of the social impact, appropriate to the size and intensity of their operations that:

- identifies affected groups
- includes consultation with affected groups
- identifies the main impacts of the operation on those groups
- specifies measures to ameliorate identified negative impacts
- provides for regular contact with affected groups to monitor effectiveness of measures.

4.4.2 Results of social impact evaluation are incorporated into management decisions.

4.4.3 Forest managers implement a system for ongoing consultation with local people and interest groups (both men and women).

FSC Criterion 4.5: 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.

4.5.1 Mechanisms for resolving grievances are documented and implemented.

4.5.2 Mechanisms exist and are implemented for providing fair compensation to local people where their legal or customary rights, property, resources or livelihoods have been damaged.

4.5.3 Inadvertent damage to indigenous and traditional resources on, or near, indigenous and traditional lands shall be compensated as agreed with the indigenous and traditional communities themselves.

4.5.4 Mechanisms exist to resolve conflicts through consultation aiming at achieving agreement or consent, avoiding damage to property, resources, rights, and livelihoods.

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.

FSC Criterion 5.1: 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.

5.1.1 There is a work plan and budget for the forest management enterprise showing expected costs and revenues for at least the current financial year.

5.1.2 The income predicted in the annual budget is consistent with the expected rate of harvest of forest products (see 5.6).

5.1.3 The income predicted in the annual budget is consistent with product values comparable to regional or national norms,

5.1.4 The annual budget incorporates stumpage, royalties or rents as required.

5.1.5 The annual budget specifies any costs associated with implementation of the social and environmental commitments identified in Principles 4 and 6.

FSC Criterion 5.2: Forest management and marketing operations should encourage the optimal use and local processing of the forest's diversity of products.

5.2.1: Forest managers make a proportion of their production available to local enterprises, such as small-scale industries and processing operations, unless there is an over-riding reason preventing this. (see 5.4 below for related indicators)

FSC Criterion 5.3: Forest management should minimize waste associated with harvesting and on-site processing operations and avoid damage to other forest resources.

5.3.1 There is no excessive damage to residual stands of trees during and after harvesting.

5.3.2 Timber is extracted and processed promptly after felling in order to minimize waste.

5.3.3 The choice of on-site processing machinery includes an evaluation of the need to minimize timber waste and site damage

FSC Criterion 5.4: Forest management should strive to strengthen and diversify the local economy, avoiding dependence on a single forest product.

5.4.1 There is an evaluation of the range of the forest's potential products and services, including 'lesser known' timber species, Non Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) and opportunities for forest recreation.

5.4.2 Managers are aware of the role of these products and services in the local economy (whether as trade goods or for subsistence).

5.4.3 Managers have assessed the possibility of utilization of lesser known species and NTFPs on their own account or by local enterprises.

5.4.4 Managers encourage the utilization of lesser known species and NTFPs by local enterprises where this does not jeopardize other management objectives.

FSC Criterion 5.5 Forest management operations shall recognize, maintain, and, where appropriate, enhance the value of forest services and resources such as watersheds and fisheries.

5.5.1 Forest managers have information on the downstream uses of water from the forest watershed.

(see Criterion 6.5b for norms with respect to maintenance of water resources and fisheries)

5.5.2 Forest managers have information on the fisheries above, in and below the forest watershed.

(see Criterion 6.5b for indicators with respect to maintenance of water resources and fisheries)

**Management plans and operations include maintenance and enhancement of watershed and fishery values identified.*

FSC Criterion 5.6: The rate of harvest of forest products shall not exceed levels which can be permanently sustained.

5.6.1 The silvicultural system on which management is based is clearly stated.

5.6.2 The expected level of harvesting on an annual basis, and in the long term (over more than one rotation) is clearly stated.

5.6.3 The expected level of harvesting is clearly justified in terms of the permanently sustainable yield of the forest products on which the management plan is based.

5.6.4 All assumptions regarding regeneration, growth, abundance, quality and size distribution of the main commercial species are explicit, and in line with the best available data for the locality from relevant research and/or inventories.

5.6.5 The expected level of harvesting in the long term does not exceed local or regional expectations of sustainable yield, taking into account any special silvicultural treatments that have been applied.

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.

FSC Criterion 6.1: Assessment 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

6.1.1 A system is specified which ensures that an appropriate assessment of environmental impact is made before commencement of any site-disturbing operations.

The system:

- is appropriate to the scale and intensity of the forest management
- takes account of landscape level considerations
- is appropriate to the uniqueness of the affected resources

6.1.2 There is a system to ensure that results of the impact assessment are taken account of in subsequent operations.

FSC Criterion 6.2a

Safeguards shall exist which protect rare, threatened and endangered species and their habitats (e.g., nesting and feeding areas).

FSC Criterion 6.2a: Safeguards shall exist which protect rare, threatened and endangered species and their habitats (e.g., nesting and feeding areas).

6.2.1 The likely presence of rare, threatened and endangered species and their habitats (e.g. nesting and feeding areas) has been assessed on the basis of the best available information

6.2.2 Areas containing or likely to contain such species or are identified and marked on maps.

6.2.3 Procedures are documented and implemented to safeguard such species and their habitats.

FSC Criterion 6.2b: Conservation zones and protection areas shall be established, appropriate to the scale and intensity of forest management and the uniqueness of the affected resources.

6.2.4 Areas of special regional importance for biodiversity are identified on maps, and protected from harvesting and other site disturbance.

6.2.5 At least 10% of the forest area is designated as a conservation zone, identified on maps, and managed with biodiversity as a major objective.

6.2.6 At least half of this area (i.e. 5% of the total forest area) is designated as a protected area, identified on maps, and is fully protected from commercial harvesting.

6.2.7 Selection of conservation zones and protected areas is justified in terms of their potential to maximize their contribution to the maintenance or enhancement of biodiversity

6.2.8 The protected area includes examples of all existing ecosystems within the forest area.

6.2.9 The movement of key plant and animal species between reserved and harvested areas is encouraged by retaining corridors of uncut forest based on stream sides with links up slopes and across ridges to connecting any large patches of forest which will not be harvested.

FSC Criterion 6.2c: Inappropriate hunting, fishing, trapping and collecting shall be controlled.

6.2.10 Systems for controlling hunting, fishing, trapping and collecting of animals or plants are documented.

6.2.11 Systems are in place to prevent hunting or trapping of protected species.

FSC Criterion 6.3: Ecological functions and values shall be maintained intact, enhanced, or restored, including:

- a. Forest regeneration and succession.**
- b. Genetic, species, and ecosystem diversity.**
- c. Natural cycles that affect the productivity of the forest ecosystem.**

6.3.1 The silvicultural system adopted is appropriate to the ecology of the forest

6.3.2 Systems which use small clearfell areas, selective felling and create varied age class have been considered.

6.3.3 Forestry operations must, if appropriate to the silvicultural system, aim for a mixture of compartments differing in size, shape, species, and date of planting and felling, in harmony with the landscape

6.3.4 The scale of felling (e.g. coupe size) is commensurate with the natural dynamics of the forest type and the area under consideration (unless clearly justified silvicultural reasons are given).

6.3.5 Management of the forest area as a whole is designed to ensure that the full complement of tree species regenerates successfully in the forest area over the duration of the rotation.

6.3.6 Selective felling and thinning regimes are designed to maintain genotypic diversity.

6.3.7 Biodiversity is routinely maintained by the retention of marginal habitats e.g. streamside vegetation, vegetation on rocky outcrops, swamps and heaths.

6.3.8 Standing and fallen dead wood habitats are retained.

FSC Criterion 6.4: 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.

6.4.1 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. (See also 6.2.8)

FSC Criterion 6.5a: Written guidelines shall be prepared and implemented to: control erosion; minimize damage during road construction, and all other mechanical disturbances;

6.5.1 There is written guidance or policies and procedures for new road building, road maintenance and other mechanical disturbance

6.5.2 Guidance, Policies and procedures include the following norms for the design and building of new roads:

- New roads are planned in advance on topographical maps showing existing streams
- Roads are fitted to the topography so that a minimum of alterations to the natural features will occur
- Wherever possible roads are located on natural benches, ridges and flatter slopes
- Road construction in steep, narrow valleys, slip-prone or other unstable areas, natural drainage channels and stream sides is minimized
- Roads are not be aligned through environmentally sensitive areas
- Embankments and cuttings are stabilized to resist erosion
- Drains and culverts are designed to minimize erosion

6.5.3 Machinery operators receive adequate training and are aware of the requirements with respect to protection of water resources.

FSC Criterion 6.5b: Written guidelines shall be prepared and implemented to: protect water resources.

6.5.4 Policies and procedures for the design and building of new roads include the following norms with respect to protection of water resources, which are implemented:

- Stream crossings are planned before operations begin and shown on relevant maps
- The number of stream crossings is minimized
- Stream crossings are at right angles to the stream
- Valley bottom roads and tracks are kept as far back from the stream as possible
- Culverts are designed so they do not obstruct the migration of fish, create fast water velocities or stream beds unsuitable for fish
- Drains do not drain into natural watercourses. Where this is unavoidable, regularly emptied silt traps are installed.

6.5.5 New roads are not constructed in streambeds. Existing roads in streambeds are closed and replacements are constructed.

6.5.6 Buffer zones in which harvesting does not take place are established around all permanent watercourses.

6.5.7 There is no evidence of siltation or other damage to water sources.

FSC Criterion 6.5c: Written guidelines shall be prepared and implemented to: minimise forest damage during harvesting,

6.5.8 There are written policies and procedures to minimize forest damage during harvesting and extraction.

6.5.9 Policies and procedures include the following norms, which are implemented:

- Protected areas are physically demarcated, at least temporarily, before any forest operations start on nearby land
- Harvesting machinery must not enter streams except at designated and designed stream crossings
- Lop and top may not be pushed into streams
- Extraction is stopped when soils are saturated
- The use of brash mats is specified, where appropriate

6.5.10 Harvesting techniques are designed to minimize erosion and run off.

6.5.11 Harvesting and extraction methods are designed to minimize damage to residual trees and regeneration.

6.5.12: New harvesting and extraction machinery is selected taking into account the need to minimize damage to soils, residual trees and regeneration.

6.5.13 Workers receive appropriate training in harvesting and extraction methods.

FSC Criterion 6.6 a: 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.

6.6.1 Documented pest, disease and weed control strategies are available.

6.6.2 Procedures are in place to record all use of synthetic chemicals by the forest management enterprise

Records of chemical use include:

- a) Name of the product
- b) Location of the site treated;
- c) Area of the site treated;
- d) Method of application;
- e) Date chemical use started;
- f) Date chemical use finished;
- g) Total quantity of the chemical used;

6.6.3 Chemicals are only used when absolutely necessary to achieve defined management aims.

6.6.4 Synthetic chemicals are only used where there is no known non-chemical alternative not entailing excessive cost.

6.6.5 A procedure is in place to record the most appropriate non- chemical alternative which was considered and rejected prior to use of the synthetic chemical, together with the justification for use of the chemical rather than the non-chemical alternative.

6.6.6 Chemicals are used only in minimum effective quantities, with strict observation of controls and regulations.

FSC Criterion 6.6b: World Health Organisation 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.

6.6.7 The use or storage of these chemical on certified units is prohibited.

6.6.8 The use or storage of seed and seedling dressings based on mercurial, organophosphate and organochlorine compounds (including Gamma HCH, Lindane and BHC), or other long-lasting chemicals which can accumulate in food chains or the ecosystem is prohibited.

6.6.9 Chemicals classified as Highly Hazardous by FSC (Annex 7) shall not be used unless derogation has been approved by FSC.

FSC Criterion 6.6c: If chemicals are used, proper equipment and training shall be provided to minimize health and environmental risks.

6.6.10 Training and appropriate equipment are provided to all operators.

6.6.11 Fuel tanks and stores are located so that spillages from damage, defects or refueling will not enter watercourses.

6.6.12: All equipment for the transport, storage and application of chemicals must be maintained in a safe and leak-proof condition.

6.6.13 Application of chemicals within 10m of watercourses and 30m around reservoirs and lakes is prohibited.

6.6.14 Application if heavy rain is expected, during wet weather, on frozen snow-covered ground or ground which has baked dry during a drought is prohibited.

6.6.15 Soaking of seedlings treated with chemicals in drains or watercourses prior to planting is prohibited.

FSC Criterion 6.7 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.

6.7.1 Off-site locations have been identified for the disposal of chemicals, containers, liquid and solid non-organic waste in an environmentally appropriate manner.

6.7.2 There is a system in place for taking waste to the appropriate locations for disposal.

6.7.3 Disposal does not take place in watercourses or lakes or by burying.

6.7.4 There is no evidence of waste left in the forest.

FSC Criterion 6.8: 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.

6.8.1 There is a procedure in place for the documentation and monitoring of all use of biological control agents.

6.8.2 Biological control agents are used only when absolutely necessary to achieve defined management aims as part of integrated pest management system (use of naturally occurring organisms is permitted).

6.8.3 There is no use of genetically modified organisms by the forest management enterprise.

FSC Criterion 6.9: The use of exotic species shall be carefully controlled and actively monitored to avoid adverse ecological impacts.

6.9.1 All use of exotic species is documented and justified.

6.9.2 Exotic species used are monitored to evaluate potential adverse ecological impacts.

6.9.3 In the event that adverse ecological impacts are identified control actions are implemented.

FSC Criterion 6.10: Forest conversion to plantations or non-forest land uses shall not occur, except in circumstances where conversion:

- 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.

6.10.1 Forest conversion to plantations or non-forest land uses shall not occur, except in circumstances where conversion:

- 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.

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.

FSC Criterion 7.1a: The management plan and supporting documents shall provide: Management objectives.

7.1.1: There is a clear statement of the objectives of forest management

FSC Criterion 7.1b (i): The management plan and supporting documents shall provide a description of the forest resources to be managed and environmental limitations.

7.1.2 There is a clear description of the area under management control.

7.1.3 There is a description of the physical aspects of the management area (e.g. topography, soils, geology, and water resources), appropriate to the extent and intensity of the management program.

7.1.4 There is a clear description of any areas under management control which are excluded from harvesting, for whatever reasons

7.1.5 Areas that have been harvested in the past are known, and are marked as such on maps.

7.1.6 There is an evaluation of the timber resource (inventory), sufficient in detail and rigor to justify the planned harvesting for the full rotation, and to demonstrate convincingly that yields will be permanently sustainable in successive rotations.

(see also Criterion 5.6)

FSC Criterion 7.1b (ii): The management plan and supporting documents shall provide a description of land use and ownership status, socio-economic conditions, and a profile of adjacent lands.

7.1.7 There is a description of the land use and ownership status. (and see 2.2, 3.1, 3.3, 4.4)

7.1.8 There is a description of the socio-economic context for management.

7.1.9 There is a description of adjacent land use.

FSC Criterion 7.1c: The management plan and supporting documents shall provide a description of the silvicultural and/or other management system, based on the ecology of the forest in question and information gathered through resource inventories

7.1.10: The silvicultural system on which management is based is clearly stated and justified in terms of the ecology of the forest.

7.1.11: The management prescriptions and procedures required to implement the silvicultural system are clearly stated, as, for example:

- Identification and marking of trees to be retained for future extraction, as seed sources, or to maintain biodiversity;
- Selection criteria of trees for felling;
- Method of marking trees or area selected for felling
- Method of ensuring regeneration;

FSC Criterion 7.1d: The management plan and supporting documents shall provide rationale for rate of annual harvest and species selection

7.1.12 The management plan and supporting documents shall provide rationale for rate of annual harvest and species selection.

FSC Criterion 7.1e: The management plan and supporting documents shall provide provisions for monitoring of forest growth and dynamics.

7.1.13 Procedures for monitoring forest regeneration and growth are documented and implemented.

FSC Criterion 7.1f: The management plan and supporting documents shall provide: Environmental safeguards based on environmental assessments.

7.1.14 The need for fire management and control has been evaluated and is documented.

7.1.15 Environmental safeguards based on environmental assessments are implemented.

FSC Criterion 7.1g: The management plan and supporting documents shall provide: Plans for the identification and protection of rare, threatened and endangered species.

7.1.16: The management plan and supporting documents shall provide plans for the identification and protection of rare threatened and endangered species

FSC Criterion 7.1h: The management plan and supporting documents shall provide: Maps describing the forest resource base including protected areas, planned management activities and land ownership.

7.1.17 There are maps showing the forest resource base including protected areas.

7.1.18 There are maps showing land ownership are accessible, clear and usable.

7.1.19 There are maps showing planned management in the short term (5-10 years) and longer term (20 years or more).

FSC Criterion 7.2: 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.

7.2.1 There is a system in place for the regular revision and updating of the management plan

7.2.2 Managers are aware of relevant research being undertaken or planned in the area, e.g. concerning forest management, timber production and biology/ecology.

7.2.3 There is a system to review management in relation to socio-economic conditions and trends.

7.2.4 There is evidence that significant findings of such research, as well as the results of monitoring by the forest management enterprise, are incorporated into updated policies, plans and procedures.

FSC Criterion 7.3: Forest workers shall receive adequate training and supervision to ensure proper implementation of the management plan.

7.3.1 Managers and supervisors shall have qualification, training or experience appropriate to the scale and intensity of the operation sufficient to enable them to plan and organize forest operations and other elements of the management plan

7.3.2 All workers receive training relevant to their tasks and responsibilities.

7.3.3 There are records of training provided to forest workers.

7.3.4 Appropriate to the scale and intensity of the operation there is a policy for training, qualifications, and recruitment that includes skill and experience the basis for recruitment, placement, training and advancement of staff at all levels

FSC Criterion 7.4: 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 above

7.4.1 A summary of management activities is available to all interested parties, within the accepted norms of commercial confidentiality.

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.

FSC Criterion 8.1: 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.

8.1.1 There is a system for monitoring the impacts of forest operations.

8.1.2 The frequency and expense of monitoring is appropriate to the scale and intensity of forest management operations as well as the relative complexity and fragility of the affected environment.

8.1.3 Procedures are consistent and replicable over time to allow comparison and assessment of change.

8.1.4 Monitoring records are maintained in a well-ordered, up-to-date and accessible form.

FSC Criterion 8.2 a: Forest management should include the research and data collection needed to monitor: Yield of all forest products harvested.

8.2.1 Yields of all forest products harvested are recorded.

FSC Criterion 8.2 b: Forest management should include the research and data collection needed to monitor: Growth rates, regeneration and condition of the forest.

8.2.2 Where reliable information on regeneration or growth rates of commercial species is not known, there is an appropriate program in place to collect detailed information for future management.

8.2.3 The condition of the forest (presence of pests, diseases, evidence of soil compaction, erosion etc) is regularly monitored and reviewed.

FSC Criterion 8.2 c: Forest management should include the research and data collection needed to monitor: The composition and observed changes in the flora and fauna

8.2.4 Conservation areas (see 6.2) are regularly monitored to ensure that there is no evidence of deterioration or disturbance.

8.2.5 Forest managers provide for appropriate monitoring of the effects of forestry operations on plant and animal species, including aquatic habitats (names, abundance, distribution, habitat requirements, biology, ecology, behavior), commensurate with the extent and intensity of the forest management, and the rarity and fragility of the forest ecosystem and known species within it.

FSC Criterion 8.2 d: Forest management should include the research and data collection needed to monitor: Environmental and social impacts of harvesting and other operations.

8.2.6 There are regular meetings with representatives of local communities, at which any concerns regarding the impacts (social or environmental) are recorded.

8.2.7 Monitoring programs are designed, documented and implemented to collect data related to any concerns raised by the local community. Such data might relate to: water quality, seasonal water flow, fish populations, wildlife populations, etc.

FSC Criterion 8.2 e: Forest management should include the research and data collection needed to monitor: Costs, productivity, and efficiency of forest management.

8.2.8 There are clear accounts for the forest enterprise.

8.2.9 There is an evaluation of the productivity and efficiency of the forest management enterprise.

FSC Criterion 8.3: 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."

8.3.1 Forest products that are to be sold as certified are readily identifiable as originating from the evaluated forest. This may be achieved through physical marking of the timber, a system of paper control, daily or weekly production records, or a combination of these and similar techniques.

8.3.2 The forest management enterprise maintains control of the chain of custody of the timber up to the point of sale.

8.3.3 Invoices issued for certified timber sales specify:

- The source of the certified timber,
- the date of sale,
- the quantity of certified timber sold,
- the specifications (species, dimensions, quality) of certified timber sold,
- the point at which the buyer shall take control of the chain of custody of the certified timber ,
- certificate code,
- correspond to details on delivery documents

FSC Criterion 8.4

The results of monitoring shall be incorporated into the implementation and revision of the management plan.

8.4.1 There is a system that demonstrates how the results of monitoring are incorporated into the revision of management plans.

8.4.2 There is evidence to demonstrate that proposed changes to management are implemented.

FSC Criterion 8.5: 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.

8.5.1 Forest managers agree to make the results and/or a summary of the monitoring program available to all interested parties, within the accepted norms of commercial confidentiality.

PRINCIPLE 9 : MAINTENANCE OF HIGH CONSERVATION VALUE FORESTS

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

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 Cupertino with such local communities).

FSC Criterion 9.1: 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.

9.1.1 Forest managers are able to provide a definition of High Conservation Value Forest for their region.

9.1.2 Forest managers have assessed whether High Conservation Value Forests is present in the area under their control.

9.1.3 Areas identified as High Conservation Value Forests are marked on maps.

FSC Criteria 9.2

The consultative portion of the certification process must place emphasis on the identified conservation attributes, and options for the maintenance thereof.

9.2.1 Forest managers shall consult with relevant stakeholders on the identification of High Conservation Values and management options for any High Conservation attributes identified.

FSC Criterion 9.3: 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.

9.3.1 Specific protection measures are implemented for identified High Conservation Value areas and/or attributes.

9.3.2 The identified protection measures adopt a precautionary approach.

9.3.3 The identified protection measures are included in the publicly available management plan.

FSC Criteria 9.4: Annual monitoring shall be conducted to assess the effectiveness of the measures employed to maintain or enhance the applicable conservation attributes.

9.4.1 A program of at least annual monitoring, appropriate to the size and vulnerability of the conservation attributes, is documented and implemented.

FSC 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.

FSC Criterion 10.1: 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.

10.1.1 Natural forest conservation and restoration are explicitly included within the objectives of plantation management.

10.1.2 Strategies and procedures for achieving these objectives are clearly documented in the management plan, and are effectively implemented.

FSC Criterion 10.2a: The design and layout of plantations should promote the protection, restoration and conservation of natural forests, and not increase pressures on natural forests.

10.2.1 Plantation management is designed to maintain or enhance characteristics of adjacent natural forest

FSC Criterion 10.2b: 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.

10.2.2 Policies and procedures are implemented which ensure that:

- a mosaic of stand ages and rotations are created and maintained;
- wildlife corridors are provided;
- where there are corridors of natural vegetation by Stream sides or in gullies these are protected from planting and harvesting operations, and developed into streamside reserved areas;

(see 6.2 and 6.3 for other indicators)

FSC Criterion 10.2c: The scale and layout of plantation blocks shall be consistent with the patterns of forest stands found within the natural landscape

10.2.3 Both general siting and internal design of plantations are in harmony with the landscape of the area.

FSC Criterion 10.3: 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.

10.3.1 Management planning includes evaluation of economic, ecological and social stability.

10.3.2 Management promotes diversity of plantation size and distribution in the landscape.

10.3.3 Management makes provision for the use of a variety of tree species and provenances or other plants.

10.3.4 Management makes provision for age and structural diversity of plantation in the landscape

FSC Criterion 10.4: 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

10.4.1 There is a clear justification for the choice of species and genotypes chosen for the plantation, which takes into account the objectives of the plantation, and the climate, geology and soils at the planting sites.

10.4.2 Where an exotic species has been selected this choice must be explicitly justified. The best alternative native species must have been identified, and reasons be given for its rejection.

10.4.3 Before any exotic species is planted an assessment must have been carried out as to the risk that it will become invasive in the surrounding area. Invasive exotics are not planted.

10.4.4 Invasive exotics are not planted.

(See 8.2b for monitoring norms)

FSC Criterion 10.5: A proportion of the overall forest management area, appropriate to the scale of the plantation and to be determined in regional standards, shall be managed so as to restore the site to a natural forest cover.

10.5.1 Consistent with Criterion 6.2b, at least 10% of the area of the plantation must be managed to enhance its natural characteristics and with biodiversity as a major objective.

10.5.2 Consistent with Criterion 6.2b, at least 5% of the area of the plantation must be managed to restore the area ultimately to a natural forest cover.

FSC Criterion 10.6: 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.

10.6.1 Means to protect soils are explicitly detailed in management plans or supporting documents

10.6.2 Plans and procedures for reforestation after harvesting are designed to minimize exposure of bare soil, and to ensure that trees are re-established as rapidly as possible.

10.6.3 There is no evidence of site degradation in the field.
See also 6.5b and 6.5c

FSC Criterion 10.7: Measures shall be taken to prevent and minimise 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 fertilisers. Plantation management should make every effort to move away from chemical pesticides and fertilisers, including their use in nurseries. The use of chemicals is also covered in Criteria 6.6 and 6.7.

10.7.1 There is a documented integrated pest management strategy.
(see 6.6a, b and c for further indicators related to chemical use)

10.7.2 The need for fire management and control has been properly evaluated and is documented (see 7.1f).

10.7.3 Measures are taken to control or eradicate exotic invasive plants.

10.7.4 There is a strategy to minimize use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers in plantations and nurseries.

FSC Criterion 10.8: 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.

10.8.1 There is no large scale planting of species that have not been shown to be appropriate to the site on the basis of local trials or experience.

10.8.2 Plantations are not established on sites of important or sensitive ecosystems; areas of high or unique biological diversity; planned conservation or protection areas or where there are possible adverse effects on an important water catchment area.

10.8.3 All new plantations or new plantings greater than 5 000 ha are subject to a formal environmental and social impact assessment.
(See Criterion 4.4 for related indicators)

FSC Criterion 10.9: 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 for such conversion.

10.9.1 The plantation is not established on land converted from natural forest after November 1st 1994 (but see 6.10 and 10.9), unless there is clear evidence that the current owner(s) and manager(s) were not directly or indirectly responsible for the conversion.

Annex 1 List of national and local forest and related laws and administrative requirements which apply in Southern Africa.

South Africa:

Plantation forestry activities come under the following State Legislation:

- Agricultural Pest Act 36 of 1983
- Alienation of Land Act 68 of 1981
- Animals Protection Act 71 of 1962
- Apportionment of Damages Act 34 of 1956
- Assessment of Damages Act 9 of 1969
- Atmospheric Pollution Prevention Act 45 of 1965
- Aviation Act 74 of 1962
- Basic Conditions of Employment Act (1997)
- Black Administration Act 38 of 1927
- Black Communities Development Act 4 of 1984
- Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act 130 of 1993
- Competition Act 89 of 1998
- Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act 43 of 1983
- Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996
- Conventional Penalties Act 15 of 1962
- Criminal Procedure Act 51 of 1977
- Development Facilitation Act 67 of 1995
- Electronic Communications and Transactions Act 25 of 2002
- Employment Equity Act (Act 55 of 1998)
- Environment Conservation Act (Act 79 of 1992)
- Expropriation Act 63 of 1975
- Extension of Security of Tenure Act (1997)
- Fertilizers, Farmfeeds, Agricultural Remedies, and Stock Control Remedies Act 36 of 1947
- Forest Act 122 of 1984
- Formalities in respect of Leases of Land Act 18 of 1969
- Further Education and Training Act (Act 98 of 1998)
- Game Theft Act 105 of 1991
- Genetically Modified Organisms Act 15 of 1997
- Hazardous Substances Act 15 of 1973
- Health Act 63 of 1977
- Housing Act 4 of 1996
- Income Tax Act 58 of 1962
- International Health Regulations Act 28 of 1974
- KwaZulu Natal Animal Protection Act 4 of 1987
- KwaZulu Natal Health Act 4 of 2000
- KwaZulu Natal Heritage Act 10 of 1997
- KwaZulu Natal Igonyama Trust Act 3 of 1994
- KwaZulu Natal Land Affairs Act 11 of 1992
- KwaZulu Natal Nature Conservation Act 29 of 1992
- KwaZulu Natal Planning and Development Act 5 of 1998
- Labour Relations Act (Act 66 of 1995)
- Labour Relations Amendment Acts (Act 42 of 1996 & Act 127 of 1998)
- Land Affairs Act 101 of 1987

- Land Reform (Labour Tenants) Act (1996)
- Land Survey Act 8 of 1997
- Local Government Transitional Act 209 of 1993
- Medicines and Related Substances Control Act 109 of 1965
- Minerals Act 50 of 1991
- Mountain Catchment Areas Act 63 of 1970
- Mpumalanga Nature Conservation Act 10 of 1998
- National Building Regulations and Building Standards Act 103 of 1977
- National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998)
- National Forests Act (Act 84 of 1998)
- National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999)
- National Monuments Act 28 of 1969
- National Parks Act 57 of 1976
- National Roads Act 54 of 1971
- National Road Traffic Act 93 of 1996
- National Veld and Forest Fires Act (Act 101 of 1998)
- National Water Act (Act 35 of 1998)
- Occupational Health and Safety act (Act 85 of 1993)
- Petroleum Products Act 120 of 1977
- Physical Planning Act 88 of 1967
- Plant Breeders' Rights Act 15 of 1976
- Plant Improvement Act 53 of 1976
- Prescription Act 68 of 1969
- Prevention of Illegal Eviction from Unlawful Occupation of Land Act 19 of 1998
- Private Security Industry Regulation Act 56 of 2001
- Promotion of Access to information Act 2 of 2000
- Promotion of Administrative Justice Act 3 of 2000
- Protected Disclosures Act 26 of 2000
- Rental Housing Act 50 of 1999
- Restitution of Land Rights Act (Act 22 of 1994)
- Road Accident Fund Commission Act 71 of 1998
- Road Transportation Act 74 of 1977
- Skills Development Act (Act 97 of 1998)
- South African National Roads Agency Ltd & National Roads Act 7 of 1998
- South African Weather Services Act 8 of 2001
- Trespass Act 6 of 1959
- Unemployment Insurance Act 63 of 2001
- Water Act 54 of 1956
- Water Services Act 108 of 1997
- Wattle Bark Industry Act 23 of 1960
- World Heritage Convention Act 49 of 1999

Ordinances, Bills and other sources

- Local Authorities Ordinance 25 of 1974 (Natal)
- Nature Conservation Ordinance 15 of 1974 (Natal)
- Nature Conservation Ordinance 12 of 1983 (Transvaal)
- Prevention of Environmental Pollution Ordinance 21 of 1981 (Natal)
- Town Planning Ordinance 27 of 1949 (Natal)
- Town Planning and Township Ordinance 15 of 1986 (Transvaal)
- Umsekeli Municipal Support Services Ordinance 20 of 1941 (Natal)

- Communal Land Rights Bill, 2002
- Minerals and Petroleum Resources Development Bill, 2002.
- Local Authority Bylaws
- Common Law
- Case Law
- Guidelines for Forest Engineering Practices in S. Africa (FESA, 1999)
- Environmental Guidelines for Commercial Plantations in S.A. (FIEC, 2nd ed. 2002)
- Wattle Control – PPRI Handbook no. 3 (1993)
- Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Management of Plantations (DWAF, 1997)
- Cable Yarding Safety and Operating Handbook (FESA)

Swaziland

Forestry, Agriculture and Environment:

- The Environmental Management Act, No. 5 of 2002.
- Swaziland Environmental Authority Act, No. 15 of 1992
- Environmental Audit, Assessment and Review Regulations, 2000
- National Trust Commission Act of 1972
- Swaziland Waste Regulations, 2000
- Ozone Depleting Substances Regulations, 2003
- Forests Preservation Act, No. 14 of 1910
- Private Forest Act No. 3 of 1951
- Grass Fire Act No. 44 of 1955
- Plant Control Act No. 8 of 1981
- Seeds and Plant Varieties Act No. 7 of 2000
- The Cattle Routes Act, No. 15 of 1918
- Animal Diseases Act No. 7 of 1965
- Wild Birds Protection Act No. 45 of 1914
- Protection of Fresh Water Fish Act No. 75 of 1937
- Fresh Water Fish Regulations No. 75 of 1937 (1)
- Game Control Act No. 37 of 1947
- Game Act of 1953
- Game (Amendment) Act of 1991
- Temporary Protection of Game No. 51 of 1953 (2)
- Variation of Closed Season No. 51 of 1953 (3)
- Flora Protection Act No. 51 of 1953
- Natural Resources Act No. 71 of 1951
- The Natural Resources (Public Stream Banks) Regulations No. 71 of 1951 (1)
- Water Act No. 7 of 2003
- Purification of Industry Water and Effluent Regulations No. 25 of 1967 (1)
- Control of Tree Planting Act No. 7 of 1972
- National Fire Services Order, No. 14 of 1975
- Wattle Bark Control Act of 1960
- The Swazi Administration Act of 1950
- Water Pollution Control Regulations 1991 (under Section 5(1)(a) of Swaziland Authority Act)
- Factory, Machinery and Construction Work Act 1972

Cultural and social:

- The Draft Constitution of Swaziland

- The Employment Act, No. 5 of 1980 (amended 1997)
- The Industrial Relations Act of 2000
- Workmen's Compensation Act 1983
- Workmen's Compensation Regulations 1983
- Industrial Court (Workmen's Compensation) Rules 1984 (Under section 48 of the Workmen's Compensation Act) replaced by Industrial Relations Act 2000
- Regulations of Wages 2005 (replacement of Wages Act 1964)
- Public Health Act 1969 replaced by Public Health Bill 1999
- Safeguarding of Swazi Areas Act, No. 39 of 1910
- Definition of Swazi Areas Act, No. of 1916
- Swazi land Settlement Act, No. 2 of 1946.
- The Swazi Administration Order, No. 6 of 1998
- Taxation Laws Amendment Act No. 27 of 1997
- Swazi Nation Act of 1961
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2001

Annex 2a): List of the multilateral environmental agreements and ILO Conventions that are ratified in Southern Africa

i) The following ILO Conventions have been ratified in South Africa:

C2 Unemployment Convention, 1919
C19 Equality of Treatment (Accident Compensation) Convention, 1925 C26 Minimum Wage-Fixing Machinery Convention, 1928
C27 Marking of Weight (Packages Transported by Vessels) Convention, 1929 C29 Forced Labour Convention, 1930
C42 Workmen's Compensation (Occupational Diseases) Convention (Revised), 1934
C45 Underground Work (Women) Convention, 1935
C63 Convention concerning Statistics of Wages and Hours of Work, 1938 C80 Final Articles Revision Convention, 1946
C87 Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948
C89 Night Work (Women) Convention (Revised), 1948
C98 Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 C100 Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951
C105 Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957
C111 Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 C116 Final Articles Revision Convention, 1961
C138 Minimum Age Convention, 1973
C144 Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 C155 Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981
C176 Safety and Health in Mines Convention, 1995 C182 Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999

ii) The following ILO Conventions have been ratified in Swaziland:

C11 Right of Association (Agriculture) Convention, 1921
C12 Workmen's Compensation (Agriculture) Convention, 1921 C14 Weekly Rest (Industry) Convention, 1921
C19 Equality of Treatment (Accident Compensation) Convention, 1925 C26 Minimum Wage-Fixing Machinery Convention, 1928
C29 Forced Labour Convention, 1930
C45 Underground Work (Women) Convention, 1935 C50 Recruiting of Indigenous Workers Convention, 1936
C64 Contracts of Employment (Indigenous Workers) Convention, 1939
C65 Penal Sanctions (Indigenous Workers) Convention, 1939 C81 Labour Inspection Convention, 1947
C86 Contracts of Employment (Indigenous Workers) Convention, 1947
C87 Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948
C89 Night Work (Women) Convention (Revised), 1948
C90 Night Work of Young Persons (Industry) Convention (Revised), 1948 C94 Labour Clauses (Public Contracts) Convention, 1949
C95 Protection of Wages Convention, 1949

C96 Fee-Charging Employment Agencies Convention (Revised), 1949 C98 Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 C99 Minimum Wage Fixing Machinery (Agriculture) Convention, 1951 C100 Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951
C101 Holidays with Pay (Agriculture) Convention, 1952
C104 Abolition of Penal Sanctions (Indigenous Workers) Convention, 1955 C105 Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957
C111 Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 C123 Minimum Age (Underground Work) Convention, 1965
C131 Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970 C138 Minimum Age Convention, 1973
C144 Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 C160 Labour Statistics Convention, 1985
C182 Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999
(See <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/index.htm> for more information)

Annex 3. List of officially endangered species in Southern Africa

NO.	Scientific name	Common trade name
Appendix I		
1	<i>Abies guatemalensis</i>	Guatemalan fir
2	<i>Araucaria araucana</i>	Monkey-puzzle tree
3	<i>Dalbergia nigra</i>	Brazilian Rosewood
4	<i>Fitzroya cupressoides</i>	Alerce
5	<i>Pilgerodendron uviferum</i>	
6	<i>Podocarpus parlatorei</i>	Parlatore's Podocarp
Appendix II		
1	<i>Aquilaria spp</i>	Agarwood
2	<i>Aniba roseodora</i>	
3	<i>Bulnesia sarmientoi</i>	Vera, palo santo, ibiocaí
4	<i>Caesalpinia echinata</i>	Brazilwood, Pau-Brasil, Pau de Pernambuco and Ibirapitanga
5	<i>Caryocar costaricense</i>	Ajillo
6	<i>Gonystylus spp.</i>	Ramin
7	<i>Guaiacum spp.</i>	Lignum-vitae/Tree of life
8	<i>Gyrinops spp.</i>	Agarwood
9	<i>Oreomunnea pterocarpa</i>	Gavilaan
10	<i>Pericopsis elata</i>	Afromosia
11	<i>Platymiscium pleiostachyum</i>	Quira macawood
12	<i>Prunus africana</i>	African cherry
13	<i>Pterocarpus santalinus</i>	Red Sandalwood
14	<i>Swietenia humilis</i>	Honduras Mahogany
15	<i>Swietenia macrophylla</i>	Big-leaf Mahogany
16	<i>Swietenia mahagoni</i>	Caribbean mahogany
17	<i>Taxus: chinensis</i>	Chinese Yew
18	<i>T. cuspidate</i>	Japanese Yew
19	<i>T. fuana</i>	Tibetan Yew
20	<i>T. sumatrana</i>	Sumatran Yew
21	<i>T. wallichiana</i>	Himalayan Yew
Appendix III		
1	<i>Cedrela odorata</i>	Cigarbox Cedar
2	<i>Dalbergia retusa</i>	Cocobolo
3	<i>Dalbergia stevensonii</i>	
4	<i>Dipteryx panamensis</i>	Almendro

5	<i>Magnolia liliifera var. obovata</i>	Safan, Champak
7	<i>Podocarpus nerifolius</i>	Yellow Wood
8	<i>Tetracentron sinense</i>	Tetracentrons
9	<i>Dalbergia tucurensis</i>	Yucatan Rosewood, Panama
10	<i>Fraxinus mandshurica</i>	Manchurian Ash
11	<i>Quercus mongolica</i>	Mongolian Oak

Annex 4: Glossary of terms³

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. (see Convention on Biological Diversity, 1992)

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

Biological diversity values: The intrinsic, ecological, genetic, social, economic, scientific, educational, cultural, recreational and aesthetic values of biological diversity and its components. (see Convention on Biological Diversity, 1992)

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.

Criterion (pl. Criteria): A means of judging whether or not a Principle (of forest stewardship) has been fulfilled.

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/manager: The people 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.

Forest management unit (FMU): a clearly defined forest area with mapped boundaries, managed by a single managerial body to a set of explicit objectives which are expressed in a self-contained multi-year management plan.

³ from FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship FSC-STD-0120-0015 (February 2000(draft 2-0) and FSC glossary of terms, FSC-STD-01-002 (draft 1-0)

Forest stewardship: forest management which, in conformity with the FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship, is environmentally responsible, socially beneficial, and economically viable.

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

Indicator: a quantitative or qualitative variable which can be measured or described, and which provides a means of judging whether a forest management unit complies with the requirements of an FSC Criterion. Indicators and the associated thresholds thereby define the requirements for responsible forest management at the level of the forest management unit and are the primary basis of forest evaluation.

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. (Draft Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: Part VI)

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.

Precautionary approach: Tool for the implementation of the precautionary principle.

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

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

SLIMF (small or low intensity managed forest): a forest management unit which meets specific FSC requirements related to size and/or intensity of timber harvesting, and can therefore be evaluated by certification bodies using streamlined evaluation procedures. The applicable FSC requirements are defined in *FSC-STD-01-003 SLIMF Eligibility Criteria*.

Stakeholder: individuals and organizations with a legitimate interest in the goods and services provided by an FMU; and those with an interest in the environmental and social effects of an FMU's activities, products and services. They include: those individuals and organizations which exercise statutory environmental control over the FMU; local people; employees; investors and insurers; customers and consumers; environmental interest and consumer groups and the general public [modified from Upton and Bass, 1995].

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

Annex 5: Summary of the Rainforest Alliance Certification Assessment Process⁴

The certification assessment process begins with a candidate operation submitting an application to Rainforest Alliance. Based upon a review of the application, the scope of the area to be certified and discussions with the candidate, Rainforest Alliance will propose a certification process that includes either a preassessment followed by a main assessment, or goes directly to a main assessment. Every candidate operation is assigned a Rainforest Alliance task manager who will liaise with the assessment lead auditor and the candidate to schedule and perform the evaluations.

Rainforest Alliance auditors are provided with detailed guidance on the certification process, including pre-assessment briefings (either in person or by telephone) and access to a written Rainforest Alliance handbook for forest assessment. The purpose of these briefings and the manual is to ensure that a consistent and thorough certification process is followed.

In addition to following the Rainforest Alliance procedures outlined in our forest evaluation handbook, there are three other ways in which we ensure accuracy and fairness in our certifications:

1. The assessment must involve individuals who are familiar with the particular region and type of forest management operation under evaluation. It is Rainforest Alliance policy to involve local specialists in all assessments.
2. Team members must be familiar with Rainforest Alliance certification procedures. Each Rainforest Alliance certification assessment has a designated lead auditor who must have participated in a formal Rainforest Alliance auditor-training course or previously participated in other Rainforest Alliance forest management assessments or audits.
3. The assessment must use region-specific standards (i.e. accredited FSC standard or a “regionalized” Rainforest Alliance Interim Standard, based on this Rainforest Alliance Generic Standard).

Team Selection and Planning – Rainforest Alliance selects a qualified lead auditor and other team members to participate in the assessment. The lead auditor’s first task is to ensure that all team members understand the scope and intent of the assessment process. Responsibility for evaluation of different sections (i.e. specific criteria and indicators) of the standard are assigned to different team members, depending on their particular training and expertise. All team members can provide input into any principle, but lead responsibility is assigned for data collection, analysis and writing for each criterion and indicator.

Stakeholder notification: At least 45 days prior to forest evaluation, Rainforest Alliance notifies stakeholders of the pending assessment and requests stakeholders’ observations or comments with regard to the operations conformance with the certification standard.

Fieldwork and Data Collection – Evaluation of conformance with the standard is based upon data collection by the auditors through review of FME management documentation, interviews with staff and stakeholders, and field observations and measurements. The team organizes opening meetings with the FME staff to review the assessment scope and procedures and certification standards. Documentation review and interview with FME staff begin immediately.

⁴ For detailed information about procedures, contact our headquarters or regional offices through www.rainforest-alliance.org.

The assessment process then moves quickly to the field phase. Inspections are made to sites chosen by Rainforest Alliance auditors based on a comprehensive review of the candidate FME's forest holdings and management activities, discussions with interested/affected parties, and identification of critical issues or challenging sites. Site visits occur in the forest, at processing facilities, and in surrounding communities. Visits emphasize management activities of all types and phases and different biological or physical conditions.

Team members meet independently with stakeholders. All assessments solicit and incorporate input (confidential and/or open) from directly affected and/or knowledgeable stakeholders, including local communities, adjoining landowners, local forest industry, environmental organizations, government agencies, and scientific researchers. During these consultations, assessment team members explain the assessment process, solicit opinions, and gather impressions about the field performance of the operation being assessed.

Data Analysis and Decision making – Throughout the assessment the team meets independently to discuss progress in gathering information, and discuss preliminary findings. The assessment team works in a consensus fashion to analyze information and evidence gathered, evaluate conformance and reach agreement on their findings as to the certification of the candidate operation.

The assessment team evaluates performance by the FME at the indicator level of the standard. Any non-conformances are analyzed and classified as either minor or major. A nonconformance is considered major if it results in a fundamental failure to achieve the objective of the relevant criterion in the standard. Conversely, a nonconformance is considered minor if the impacts are limited in scale, prompt corrective action has been taken to ensure it will not be repeated and it does not result in a fundamental failure to achieve the objective of the relevant criterion. For each area of nonconformance identified, the assessment team develops a Nonconformity Report (NCR) which is classified as follows:

- **Major Nonconformity Report (NCR)** is issued to document a major nonconformance with an indicator(s)/criterion that the candidate FME must correct before Rainforest Alliance certification is granted;
- **Nonconformity Report (NCR)** is issued to document a minor nonconformance that candidate FME must correct by a specific deadline (i.e. short term - usually within one year) during the renewable five-year certification period (which is the standard FSC certification contract period); and,
- **Observation** is a very minor problem or the early stages of a problem which do not of itself constitute a non-conformance, but which the auditor considers may lead to a future non-conformance if not addressed by the client. An observation may be a warning signal on a particular issue that, if not addressed, could turn into a nonconformance in the future.

Report Write-up – following the forest evaluation, the team prepares the certification assessment report. This report follows a standardized format and includes detailed findings of performance and proposes pre-conditions (major nonconformances),NCRs or observations.

Review of Assessment Report by Candidate Operation, Independent Peer Reviewers and Rainforest Alliance Report Review – the candidate operation, at least one peer reviewer, and Rainforest Alliance regional staff, review each certification assessment report.

Certification Decision – Once the above steps are completed, the applicable Rainforest Alliance regional office coordinates a certification decision process. If a certification decision is to approve certification, a five-year certification contract will be executed which requires annual on-site audits. If an operation is not approved, the certification decision will establish what must be done in order for the operation to achieve certified status in the future.