

2007

# UKWAS for Smaller Woods

Actions required for making the UKWAS Standard more accessible for managers of small and/or low intensity managed (SLIM) woodlands

## The Small Woods Task Group's Final Report to the UKWAS Steering Group

November 2007

Small Woods Task Group  
Final Report to Steering Group  
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# Summary of Recommendations

## **Scale and intensity:**

- The current UKWAS 'small woodland' category should be expanded to 'small and / or low intensity managed woodland' ('SLIM woodland')
- The current size definition of a 'small woodland' as an individual wood of 100ha or under should be retained
- A 'low intensity managed woodland' should be defined by adopting the FSC criteria for defining low intensity
- When revising the UKWAS text, opportunities should be taken to better cater for small woods, especially for 'very small' woods (<10 ha).

## **Text reduction and adaptation:**

- The UKWAS text should be adapted by making only those alterations necessary to fulfil the FSC's requirements for the minimum set of FSC Criteria
- A separate SLIM woodland version of the UKWAS standard should be prepared and released in pdf format on the UKWAS website
- A Drafting Group has been established to take this work forward.

## **Provision of advice & guidance on certification:**

- A "SLIM Woodland Toolkit" should be established on the UKWAS website to include:
  - A reduced SLIM woodland version of UKWAS standard in pdf format
  - A 'Users' Guide' for SLIM woodland managers to sit at a level between the UKWAS leaflet and the standard: acting as an introduction it should aim to demystify certification but remain at a general rather than detailed level
  - Advice on interpretation of the standard for different situations through provision of case studies, examples of management plans for different sizes and levels of intensity, example clauses, the role of the Interpretation Panel, etc.

**Recommended actions – other parties:**

- A consultancy should be commissioned to the brief on pages 13 to 14 of this report so as to identify actions which other parties might take in support of SLIM woodland owners and managers
- Meanwhile the following actions should be taken:
  - FSC UK and PEFC UK should be asked to consider having the UK designated as of low risk status so as to allow non-certified timber better market access
  - All CBs operating in the UK should be invited to join UKWAS as Associate Members and to nominate a joint representative to attend UKWAS Steering Group meetings (in a non-voting capacity) to improve linkages and liaison.

# 1. Background and terms of reference

Throughout the development of the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS), all the stakeholders have been keen to minimise the burden of certification for owners and managers of smaller woodlands in particular. However, there remains a widespread perception that the standard is a barrier to certification.

Having concluded the first revision of the UKWAS standard in 2006, the UKWAS Steering Group decided to look closely at how to make certification to the standard more accessible for owners and managers of small woodlands or those managed in a low intensity manner. This task was a condition of the approval of the UKWAS standard by the Forest Stewardship Council and identified by the Steering Group as a key priority for 2007. A Small Woods Task Group (SWTG) was established and asked to report to the Steering Group.

The SWTG held an initial meeting in March and drafted Terms of Reference which were approved by the Steering Group on 12th April 2007:

- to make the standard more accessible to managers of small and / or low intensity managed (SLIM) woodlands
- to identify ways to increase uptake of certification by SLIM woodland managers by identifying actions that other stakeholders might take forward
- to fulfil the requirement of FSC Condition 2.

The SWTG met again in May and June and submitted an initial report to the Steering Group in September for their feedback prior to preparing a final report at a meeting in October. This final report to the Steering Group sets out the SWTG's recommendations and it reports actions which are already being progressed.

It was noted that FSC Condition 2 must be closed out by October 31<sup>st</sup> 2008 at the latest but that the Steering Group wishes to complete the work more speedily than this.

## 2. Scope for action

At the initial meeting the scope for action and the options were considered.

It was recognised that whilst the UKWAS Steering Group had an important role to play in simplifying the standard for small and / or low intensity (SLIM) woodland managers, its restricted scope of activity meant it could only play a limited role and that it was necessary to identify what actions might be taken by other parties such as the certification schemes, the certification bodies and government bodies. It was agreed that the Task Group's work would include preparing a set of recommendations on what actions other parties could take to ease the process for SLIM woodland managers.

### **Existing provision in the UKWAS standard**

The UKWAS standard defines a 'small wood' as 'an individual wood of 100 ha or under in size'. The same 'Requirements' and 'Guidance' (i.e. the indicators) apply to all woodlands. However, special provision is made for small woodlands through the 'Means of Verification': when appropriate these have been set at a level better suited to smaller and less intensively managed operations by requiring a lower burden of proof in comparison to larger woodlands.

### **Meeting the requirements of the certification schemes**

The UKWAS standard setting procedures were developed to ensure continuing alignment with the requirements of the FSC and PEFC forest certification schemes. The Task Group recognises that this limits the scope for radical action.

#### FSC requirements

There are specific FSC requirements for 'small and / or low intensity managed forests' (SLIMFs). The UKWAS standard has been approved by FSC International subject to six conditions - Condition 2 concerns SLIMFs. However, the UKWAS standard only makes special provision for "small woodlands" and there is no definition of a "low intensity managed forest".

#### **FSC Condition 2**

The FSC approval of the second edition of UKWAS was effective from 1st November 2006 and subject to a number of Conditions including: "Within 24 months following the accreditation of this standard, FSC-UK shall develop alternative indicators which require special provision when applied to small and/or low intensity managed forests to establish full compliance with Clause 4.3 of FSC-STD-20-002."

The following FSC documents provide the parameters within which the Task Group must operate:

- FSC-STD-20-002 (Version 2-1) EN - FSC Standard - Structure and Content of Forest Stewardship Standards. (See Annex 3)

Section 4 covers scale and intensity of forest management and requires that the standard shall be cost effective and practicable for use in small-scale and low intensity forest management units. Clause 4.3 gives a minimum list of the FSC Criteria for which special provision must be made when applied to small and/or low intensity managed forests.

- FSC-STD-01-003 (Version 1-0) EN - FSC Standard - SLIMF Eligibility Criteria. (See Annex 3)
- FSC-GUI-60-100 – FSC Guidance – Guidance on the Interpretation of FSC Principles & Criteria to take account of scale and intensity. (See Annex 3)

This additional guidance has just been approved by FSC and is intended to help national standard writing groups to develop standards that are more appropriate to the needs of small and low intensity forest management units, and which use simpler language and include realistic requirements, whilst retaining the rigour of FSC certification.

Other relevant documents that informed the process are listed in Annex 2.

The Task Group noted that it needed to consider how each UKWAS Requirement and Guidance (as both form the FSC indicator) might be adapted for small woodlands or dropped altogether and whether a separate SLIM woodland version of the UKWAS standard should be produced which only includes applicable indicators. However, there was concern that details and nuances in the full standard which had been developed through long discussion might be lost in any adaptation exercise and that this would pose a real challenge to ensure consistency.

#### PEFC requirements

There are no specific PEFC requirements for small or low intensity managed woodlands. The UKWAS standard has been approved by the PEFC Council.

### 3. Options and actions – UKWAS Steering Group

At an early stage, it was agreed that for smaller owners the three main issues were time, cost and complexity with time and cost being the over-riding concerns. For example in England the break point is often determined by the cost of certification on the one hand balanced against the value of FC England's Woodland Management Grant on the other.

Actions that the Steering Group might take to reduce complexity are considered in this section. Options for other partners including the FC are dealt with in the next section.

The following potential action areas were identified for discussion:

- Modifying the UKWAS standard
- Providing advice / guidance on certification.

#### Modifying the UKWAS standard

Scale and Intensity:

- Small woods in UKWAS are currently defined as those under 100ha. Under FSC rules for SLIMF eligibility criteria (see FSC-STD-01-003 in Annex 3) there is scope for forest management units of up to 1,000 ha providing there is broad support from national stakeholders
- It was also noted that there is sufficient flexibility for an additional category to be introduced e.g. for very small woods of less than 10 ha. It is also understood that FSC is currently preparing new proposals for the certification of very small woodlands and that the UKWAS Steering Group will be invited to put forward its views at the appropriate time
- Under FSC rules for SLIMF eligibility criteria (see FSC-STD-01-003 in Annex 3) there is scope for forest management units to be classed as SLIMF based on the rate of timber harvesting when:
  - a) the rate of harvesting is less than 20% of the mean annual increment (MAI)<sup>1</sup> within the total production forest area of the unit, AND
  - b) EITHER the annual harvest from the total production forest area is less than 5,000 cubic metres,
  - c) OR the *average* annual harvest from the total production forest is less than 5,000 m<sup>3</sup> / year during the period of validity of the certificate as verified by harvest reports and surveillance audits.

Low intensity was thought to be an important issue and likely to account for many UK woodlands, whether currently classed as 'small' or not. After considerable discussion on the FSC SLIMF criteria for intensity, it was agreed that despite initial doubts they are clear, appropriate, useful and applicable in the UK situation.

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<sup>1</sup> Where Forest Management Unit-specific estimates of mean annual increment are unavailable or impractical regional estimates of growth rates for specific forest types may be used.

There was discussion on how many non-FC woodlands would fall into the SLIM woodland category but there was not thought to be any reliable way of determining this. It was thought certain to cover the majority of private woodland ownerships and maybe in excess of 70% of them.

It was noted that under FSC rules there are reduced auditing requirements in place for SLIMFs; an audit and one follow up inspection would be required during the five year currency of a certificate rather than the normal annual inspections. Therefore, this would be a major benefit for SLIM woodland owners.

It was agreed that the current definition of 'small woodlands' would be retained as those under 100ha but that when revising the text it will be important to take advantage of opportunities to better cater for small woods, especially for 'very small' woods (<10 ha).

**Summary Recommendation:**

- ***The current UKWAS 'small woodland' category should be expanded to 'small and / or low intensity managed woodland'***
- ***The current size definition of a 'small woodland' as an individual wood of 100ha or under should be retained***
- ***A 'low intensity managed woodland' should be defined by adopting the FSC criteria for defining low intensity\****
- ***When revising the UKWAS text opportunities should be taken to better cater for small woods, especially for 'very small' woods (<10 ha).***

*\* FSC rules for SLIMF eligibility criteria (see FSC-STD-01-003 in Annex 3) provide for forest management units to be classed as low intensity based on the rate of timber harvesting when:*

- a) the rate of harvesting is less than 20% of the mean annual increment (MAI)<sup>1</sup> within the total production forest area of the unit, AND*
- b) EITHER the annual harvest from the total production forest area is less than 5,000 cubic metres,*
- c) OR the average annual harvest from the total production forest is less than 5,000 m<sup>3</sup> / year during the period of validity of the certificate as verified by harvest reports and surveillance audits.*

Text reduction and adaptation:

- FSC-STD-20-002 is the FSC Standard on the Structure and Content of Forest Stewardship Standards. Section 4 (see FSC-STD-20-002 in Annex 3) covers scale and intensity of forest management and requires that the standard shall be cost effective and practicable for use in small-scale and low intensity forest management units.
- Additional guidance on the interpretation of FSC Principles and Criteria to take account of scale and intensity has just been approved by FSC as FSC-GUI-60-100 (see Annex 3). This guidance is intended to help national standard writing groups to develop standards that are more appropriate to the needs of small and low intensity forest management units, and which use simpler language and include realistic requirements, whilst retaining the rigour of FSC certification. It also allows for the production of a separate version of the standard including only those parts that apply to SLIMFs as a 'shorter, more appropriate document'. *[FSC-UK has proposed that a small woodlands version of the UKWAS standard is drafted.]*
- Under FSC rules (see FSC-STD-20-002 in Annex 3) there is scope for small and / or low intensity managed forests to be made exempt from some indicators (in UKWAS these are the Requirements and Guidance) or for alternative indicators and / or means of verification to be

developed. It is a requirement that alternative indicators are developed for SLIMFs for 'at least' the FSC 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.

The UKWAS standard has been cross-checked with each of the minimum fifteen FSC Criteria:

- Alternative UKWAS Means of Verification (classed as verifiers by FSC) have been developed for some of these FSC Criteria but the FSC requirement relates specifically to UKWAS Requirements and Guidance (classed as Indicators by FSC)
- There are general references to SLIMF (e.g. 'scale and intensity') in some UKWAS Requirements and Guidance but these are understood to be insufficient to meet FSC's requirement.

Therefore to satisfy FSC's Condition 2, as a minimum the text has to be adapted by deleting or amending the current UKWAS Requirements and / or Guidance (as both form the FSC indicator) for the minimum set of FSC Criteria. However, it was generally agreed that simply satisfying the FSC Condition 2 at a minimum level is unlikely to contribute significantly to bringing further woodlands into certification. The Task Group therefore considered whether there are opportunities for further adaptation beyond FSC's minimum requirement which would make a material difference. The Task Group considered:

- Whether some existing UKWAS Requirements and / or Guidance beyond the minimum set of FSC Criteria do not apply to small woodlands and should be dropped or amended
- Whether a separate version of the UKWAS standard should be produced which only includes the text applicable to small woodlands and if so in what format.

It was agreed that action should be restricted to making those alterations necessary to fulfil the FSC's requirements for the minimum set of FSC Criteria as going beyond this would be too great a task and of questionable value to woodland managers.

A Drafting Group has been established to take forward the revision. To ensure an efficient approach, worked examples will be sent to FSC International to check that they are in line with FSC requirements. When undertaking the revision, it was noted that careful heed will need to be paid to tracking knock-on changes and ensuring consistency with the full UKWAS standard.

For reasons of cost and value for money, it was agreed that a separate SLIM woodland version of the UKWAS standard should be restricted to a pdf format available for download from the UKWAS website.

***Summary Recommendation:***

- ***The UKWAS text should be adapted by making only those alterations necessary to fulfil the FSC's requirements for the minimum set of FSC Criteria***
- ***A separate SLIM woodland version of the UKWAS standard should be prepared and released in pdf format on the UKWAS website***
- ***A Drafting Group has been established to take this work forward.***

### **Process for revising UKWAS**

The process would be for the Task Group to develop an initial draft for submission to the UKWAS Steering Group for their further input and feedback. Once a version has been produced that can be agreed by the Steering Group this will need to be sent out as a Consultation Draft to stakeholders.

The UKWAS Standard Setting Process rules allow the Steering Group to adopt a 'fast track' process for adapting the standard for use in limited applications such as small and/or low intensity managed forest areas. In considering what process to adopt, the Steering Group shall take account of the requirements of the certification schemes – it is understood from FSC-UK that a minimum 30 day consultation period is required. Following this period, comments would be addressed as appropriate and a final version submitted to FSC Accreditation Services International to assess whether their Condition has been addressed.

### Provision of advice / guidance on certification

The Task Group considered that better engagement with SLIM woodland managers was necessary and the Steering Group could best do this through providing advice and guidance. The UKWAS website already does this in a limited way but thought was given to the sort of additional advice and guidance which UKWAS might usefully provide.

### ***Summary Recommendation:***

***A "SLIM Woodland Toolkit" should be established on the UKWAS website to include:***

- ***A reduced SLIM woodland version of UKWAS standard in pdf format***
- ***A 'Users' Guide' for SLIM woodland managers to sit at a level between the UKWAS leaflet and the standard: acting as an introduction it should aim to demystify certification but remain at a general rather than detailed level***
- ***Advice on interpretation of the standard for different situations through provision of case studies, examples of management plans for different sizes and levels of intensity, example clauses, the role of the Interpretation Panel, etc.***

## 4. Recommended actions – other parties

Four groups in addition to the UKWAS Steering Group which are in a position to take actions to help increase the uptake of certification were identified – Government, certification organisations, owners & managers and consumers.

Following discussion an initial list of actions that could be taken forward by each group was compiled:

### Government

The Forestry Commission, NI Forest Service and other government departments / agencies play a key role in regulating and promoting woodland management. It was agreed that it was important to maximise the degree of alignment between the regulatory and grant requirements and conformance checking with those of the UKWAS standard and the FSC and PEFC process requirements.

### Certification organisations

These include the certification schemes (FSC and PEFC) and certification bodies (auditors) and group managers.

Certification schemes – it was agreed that the Steering Group should prepare and submit to each a critical analysis of their scheme's SLIM woodland processes. Thoughts on this should be clearer once the Task Group and Steering Group have direct experience of implementing SLIM woodland revisions. Meanwhile, FSC UK and PEFC UK should be asked to consider having the UK designated as of low risk status so as to allow non-certified timber better market access.

Certification bodies and group managers – it was agreed that the Steering Group should make recommendations to CBs and group managers on measures they could take to encourage uptake of SLIM woodland certification.

It was also agreed as important that the CBs should be more closely involved with the UKWAS Steering Group's work by inviting all CBs operating in the UK to join UKWAS as Associate Members and to invite the CBs to nominate a representative to attend UKWAS Steering Group meetings (in a non-voting capacity) to improve linkages and liaison.

### Owners and managers

These include owners / managers, woodland initiatives and representative bodies such as ConFor, CLA, ICF and SWA. It was agreed that there is a clear promotional and informing role for the representative bodies to play in supporting their own memberships. The potential for larger woodland managers including the Woodland Trust, the large estates and the FC to outreach to smaller owners was noted.

## Customers

It was agreed that the retailers had a duty to source their timber products responsibly and promote them to their customers so providing a market for responsibly produced timber.

There was agreed to be a lack of information available to assist the discussions. To remedy this, expert advice along the lines of the following brief will be obtained from consultants with the necessary expertise. The work is divided into three separate tasks:

### **Task 1**

#### **An holistic mapping of the regulatory and certification processes to identify opportunities for regulatory alignment and other points for intervention**

This shall include:

- Mapping the regulatory process (or 'chain') and identifying the requirements in each UK country
- Mapping the certification process (or 'chain')
- Identifying the bodies (owners/managers, FC/NIFS, FSC/PEFC, certification bodies, group managers, etc) responsible for each step in these processes
- Identifying the effectiveness of the current arrangements for each step (strong, medium, and weak) overlaps, conflicts, etc
- Identifying opportunities for simplification and alignment and the bodies which are best placed to act
- Evaluating the potential benefits of these actions for SLIM woodland owners and managers.

***Clear conclusions should be drawn with recommended actions identified, described and prioritised.***

## **Task 2**

### **The identification and assessment of applicability of other possible routes to market for timber from SLIM woodlands**

These shall include:

- The FSC's Controlled Wood Standard process which allows timber from FSC approved Low Risk Zones to be supplied to FSC certified processors and manufacturers
- The PEFC Council's measures for use of wood from non-controversial sources
- The requirements of the UK Government timber procurement policy (especially in relation to CPET requirements relating to 'Category B' evidence) and those of the devolved administrations and of regional and local government across the UK
- Any other available mechanisms or likely future options.

These options could result in a dramatic reduction in the costs and bureaucracy necessary for SLIM woodland managers to gain market access but there is concern that it could result in several parallel systems so adding to confusion.

***Clear conclusions shall be drawn by identifying those mechanisms which could provide a benefit to SLIM woodland owners in the UK and by describing and evaluating the potential benefit.***

## **Task 3**

### **Blue sky thinking**

There is some frustration that the UKWAS Steering Group's scope for action is limited by certification scheme requirements which may prevent UKWAS doing something genuinely useful in support of SLIM woodland owners and managers. Therefore, at the end of the SWTG's work, it is planned to make comment to FSC International and the PEFC Council on how their SLIM woodland measures might be adapted and improved.

***Clear advice shall be given on how the UKWAS Steering Group or others could make certification more accessible for SLIM woodland owners / managers if they were unconstrained by FSC or PEFC requirements e.g. through the use of 'certified contractors'.***

# Annex 1

## UKWAS Small Woods Task Group

### **SWTG Membership**

Chair: Peter Wilson, Executive Chairman, UKWAS

Secretary: Fiona Angier, Secretary, UKWAS

Members / participants:

Sandy Greig (Sandwood Enterprise – consultant to FC England)

Andy Grundy (Heartwoods)

Gus Hellier (Soil Association)

Steve Hunt, Rebecca Isted, Simon Pryor (FC England)

Gordon Pfetscher (Woodland Trust)

Richard Robertson (FSC-UK)

Mike Seville (CLA)

Richard Siddons (FC Wales)

Judy Walker (Small Woods Association)

Willie Walker (PEFC UK)

Mike Wood (RSPB)

### **Meeting schedule**

Scoping meeting – 13<sup>th</sup> March 2007 (Edinburgh)

Further meetings – 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2007 (Crewe), 30<sup>th</sup> June 2007 (Crewe) and 4<sup>th</sup> October 2007 (Crewe).

### Key documents and guidance

FSC Standards (see [www.fsc.org](http://www.fsc.org))

- FSC-STD-20-002 (Version 2-1) EN - FSC Standard - Structure and Content of Forest Stewardship Standards.
- FSC-STD-01-003 (Version 1-0) EN - FSC Standard - SLIMF Eligibility Criteria.

FSC Guidance (see [www.fsc.org](http://www.fsc.org))

- FSC-GUI-60-100 – FSC Guidance – Guidance on the Interpretation of FSC Principles & Criteria to take account of scale and intensity.

Various documents are also available on [www.fsc.org/slimf](http://www.fsc.org/slimf)

Other documents (see [www.ukwas.org.uk](http://www.ukwas.org.uk)???)

- Proforest - FC Certification Pilot Project – commissioned by FC England (September 2005)
- Soil Association – Results of the SLIMF Field Trial (December 2003)
- Soil Association – Woodmark / UKWAS SLIMF Forest Certification Standard (October 2003)
- John Samuel - Proposed Methods to ease access to Certification for Small Woodland Owners - commissioned by the UKWAS Support Unit (September 2002).

## FSC requirements

Extract from: FSC-STD-20-002 (Version 2-1) EN - FSC Standard - Structure and Content of Forest Stewardship Standards.

### 4 Scale and intensity of forest management<sup>2</sup>

4.1 The standard shall be cost effective and practical for use in small-scale and low intensity forest management units.

4.2 Small and/or low intensity managed forests may be made exempt from some indicators which are applicable to other forests, and/or alternative indicators may be developed for application to small and/or low intensity managed forests. In such cases this shall be clearly indicated in the standard.

EXAMPLE:

**Criterion**

**Indicator 4.1.1a (applicable to FMUs more than 200ha in area):**

**Means of verification:**

**Indicator 4.1.1b (applicable to FMUs less than 200ha in area):**

**Means of verification:**

4.3 Alternative indicators and associated means of verification (as described in paragraph 4.2 above) may be developed for any criterion, but shall be developed for at least the following FSC Criteria which require special provision when applied to small and/or low intensity managed forests: FSC 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.

4.4 The standard shall include clear guidance as to the category of forest management units to which any exemptions or alternative indicators apply.

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<sup>2</sup> Additional guidance is being prepared by the FSC International Centre to facilitate the development of standards applicable to small and low intensity managed forests.

**NOTE 9:** Standards may identify the forest management units that are eligible for modified indicators or means of verification by simple size classifications (e.g. 'applicable to FMUs less than 200 ha') or by proxies for size or intensity (e.g. 'applicable to woodlot licensees', 'applicable to operations harvesting less than x cubic metres per year).

**NOTE 10:** the defined categories of small and/or low intensity managed forests to which special indicators apply may be different to the categories of SLIMFS that are eligible for streamlined certification procedures (see *FSC-STD-01-003 SLIMF Eligibility Criteria*).

4.5 Indicators shall apply to all forests covered by the scope of the standard, including smaller or lower intensity managed forests, unless otherwise specified.

**Extract from: FSC-STD-01-003 (Version 1-0) EN - FSC Standard - SLIMF Eligibility Criteria.**

## **1 SLIMF Eligibility Criteria**

1.1 A forest management unit shall qualify as a 'SLIMF' if it is either a 'small' forest management unit (as defined in this standard) OR managed as a 'low intensity' forest management unit (as defined in this standard).

### **2 'Small' forest management units**

2.1 Forest management units may be classed as SLIMF units when they are 100 ha. or smaller in area or when they meet the requirements specified in 2.2 below.

2.2 Forest Management Units of up to 1,000 ha. in area may be classed as SLIMF units when this is formally proposed by the FSC-accredited national initiative for the country concerned, or in countries in which there is no FSC-accredited national initiative when this has the demonstrated broad support of national stakeholders in the country concerned.<sup>3</sup> Classifications proposed by certification bodies shall be superseded by any subsequent classification approved by the FSC-accredited national initiative for the country concerned.

2.3 FSC-STD-01-003 SLIMF Eligibility Criteria - addendum provides the definitive list of countries for which the definition of 'small' is larger than 100 ha.

2.4 Forest Management Units that do not qualify as 'small' may qualify as SLIMF units if they meet the requirements specified in section 3, below.

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<sup>3</sup> Broad support is currently defined as "Agreement characterised by a wide and strong majority in favour of a proposal. In terms of voting this is defined as a two thirds majority based on a quorum of 50% of the eligible votes cast" (draft 1-0 FSC-STD-60-006). The definition applied to this standard STD-01-003 shall be the definition developed during further consultation of FSC-STD-60-006, including any further changes.

### 3 Low intensity forest management units

3.1 Forest management units may be classed as SLIMF units when:

- a) the rate of harvesting is less than 20% of the mean annual increment (MAI)<sup>4</sup> within the total production forest area of the unit, AND
- b) EITHER the annual harvest from the total production forest area is less than 5,000 cubic metres,
- c) OR the *average* annual harvest from the total production forest is less than 5,000 m<sup>3</sup> / year during the period of validity of the certificate as verified by harvest reports and surveillance audits.

3.2 Forest management units from which non-timber forest products (NTFPs) are collected or harvested shall be evaluated as 'low intensity' on the basis of the timber harvest rate. A forest management unit consisting of natural forest in which only NTFPs are harvested would, therefore, qualify as a 'low intensity' FMU.

3.3 Plantations of non-timber forest products (e.g. oil palm plantations, cocoa plantations) shall not be considered low intensity forest management units within the meaning of this standard.

3.4 FSC-accredited national initiatives may develop additional criteria, and/or specify a lower threshold to define 'low intensity' more appropriately for their region. FSC-STD-01-003 SLIMF Eligibility Criteria - addendum provides the definitive list of countries for which the definition of 'low intensity' differs from that defined in 3.1 above.

**Extract from: FSC-GUI-60-100 Guidance on the Interpretation of FSC Principles and Criteria to take account of scale and intensity (consultation draft)**

### 3 FSC Policy on Interpreting FSC Principles and Criteria to take account of Scale and Intensity

The development of an FSC standard which takes account of scale and intensity shall be carried out according to *FSC-STD-20-002 Structure and Content of Forest Stewardship Standards (version 1.0)*.

Several of the FSC Principles and Criteria make specific reference to their interpretation being 'according to [the] size and scale' of the operation. Annex 1 of this document provides guidance on how to do this via the development of specific indicators and verifiers. Additional guidance is provided for other criteria that might also require interpretation for different sizes or scales of forest operations.

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<sup>4</sup> Where FMU-specific estimates of mean annual increment are unavailable or impractical regional estimates of growth rates for specific forest types may be used.

Where appropriate, examples of indicators and verifiers suitable for small and/or low intensity operations are provided. These are only examples. Standards working groups should use a wording which is appropriate to the category of forest and type of user groups in their country or region.

Additional guidance on the development of national or regional standards is available in:

- *FSC-STD-30-006 Process for Developing Forest Stewardship Standards (draft version available)*
- *Developing Forest Stewardship Standards: A Survival Guide. (Hannah Scrase and Anders Lindhe, 2001).*
- The 'Pathfinder' tool: "Hierarchical framework for the formulation of sustainable forest management standards" available at <http://www.piec.org/pathfinder/>

#### **4 Using this Document: FSC National Initiatives, National and sub-national (regional) standards drafting committees.**

This guidance should be used together with:

*FSC-STD-20-002 Structure and Content of Forest Stewardship Standards V1.0*

*FSC-STD-30-006 Process for Developing Forest Stewardship Standards (draft version available)*

As described in *FSC-STD-20-002 paragraph 4*, (see Box 2) NIs are required to define categories of small or low intensity operations which are eligible for modified indicators or verifiers within their country or region. For example, they may wish to:

- a. define a series of size categories (eg. >10ha, 100-1000 ha, ),
- b. identify operations by harvesting activity where there is a clear and known correlation with harvesting intensity (eg. NTFP extraction only, watershed management only, recreation only), or
- c. specify harvesting intensities to which specific indicators and verifiers apply (eg. Harvesting timber at  $\leq 20\%$  of Mean Annual Increment (MAI) within the production forest area, and  $\leq 5000\text{m}^3$  / year total harvest.)

National Initiatives are not required to use the categories defined in the SLIMF eligibility criteria for 'small' and 'low intensity'. The SLIMF eligibility criteria are designed to determine the eligibility for application of SLIMF streamlined certification procedures by a certification body. However, standards writing groups may choose to use the same categories where appropriate.

National Initiatives are not required to develop a separate standard for low intensity or small-scale forests. However, where appropriate, NIs may produce for their own use a *separate version* relating to their approved FM standard, which only includes the parts of the standard that apply to these operations. By this means, small and low intensity operations may receive a shorter, more appropriate document. However, note that for accreditation purposes FSC International will only receive the full version of the standard with all the indicators and verifiers shown and certification bodies will use only this for evaluation purposes.

Where there are existing accredited National or Sub-national (Regional) Standards each National Initiative may determine one of two options:

- a. certification bodies are permitted to interpret the accredited national/regional standard for scale and intensity, using categories defined by the NI; *or*
- b. certification bodies must continue to use the existing endorsed national standard without further interpretation.

This choice should not be made on a case-by-case basis but take the form of a single decision with regard to all cases and all certification bodies, and communicated in writing to all Certification Bodies.