



Forest Stewardship Council®





**Working Group
to revise the Procedures for The
Development and Approval of FSC National
Risk Assessments (FSC PRO-60-002) and
National Risk Assessment Framework (FSC
PRO-60-002a)**

Terms of Reference and Operating rules
March 2021



WORKING GROUP SUMMARY	
Type of Working Group:	Chamber balanced members and technical experts
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Working language:	English (other languages may be supported as needed)

PROJECT SUMMARY	
Project Title:	Revision of the FSC Controlled Wood Procedures for The Development and Approval of FSC National Risk Assessments (FSC PRO-60-002 V3-0) and National Risk Assessment Framework (FSC PRO-60-002a V1-0)
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PROJECT INFORMATION

1 Introduction

The FSC Global Strategic Plan 2021-2026 (GSP) requires FSC drive the attractiveness, usability, and viability of certification for its potential users – forest managers, primary producers, retailers, and consumers. At the same time, system credibility and integrity must be ensured.

Controlled wood enters the FSC system through two paths, viz. through controlled wood in FM certification (CW-FM) which involves material that is verified at the forest level and therefore subject to a more rigorous verification system, and controlled wood obtained from suppliers through the less rigorous risk-based verification (CW in Chain of Custody certification, CW-CoC).

The Strategy for FSC Mix products and controlled wood, valid since 29 April 2019, was developed to optimize the role of FSC Mix products and controlled wood in realizing the overall strategic goals of FSC. The strategy specifies the ultimate objective of increasing FSC-certified area and FSC impact in uncertified areas, which will lead (over time) to a reduction of the FSC system's reliance on FSC Mix products and the controlled wood used to produce them.

In the context of CW-CoC, one of the actions considered in this strategy to accomplish its main objective is the implementation of an effective system which includes thorough and objective data driven risk assessments and reliable control measures (CMs) to address the risks related to the five controlled wood categories of unacceptable sources (illegally harvested wood; violation of traditional and human rights; forests in which high conservation values are threatened by management activities; forests being converted to plantations or non-forest use; and forests in which GMOs are planted).

In this sense, it is fundamental to ensure that the revision process of the FSC Procedures for *The Development and Approval of FSC National Risk Assessments* (FSC PRO-60-002) and *National Risk Assessment Framework* (FSC PRO-60-002a) considers the review of the purpose and potential of risk assessments in the FSC system in line with the strategy, but considering also other elements identified as a result of the revision process.

2 Background of the Project

The validity of the FSC Controlled Wood Procedures for The Development and Approval of FSC National Risk Assessments (FSC PRO-60-002 V3-0) and National Risk Assessment Framework (FSC PRO-60-002a V1-0) ended on 31 December 2019. A regular review was developed between August and September 2019 to check the need for a revision of these procedures. Additionally, content and process reviews during the development of the 22 national risk assessments (NRAs) and 38 centralized national risk assessments (CNRAs), identified several aspects that need to be revised e.g. lack of clarity in the scope, process, methodology for assessment of each category of unacceptable sources, etc. Stakeholders provided additional feedback, including:

- Feedback during public consultations expressing concern/need for clarification on both procedures.

- Comments and suggestions from FSC network partners during the process of development of risk assessments and at the 2019 FSC Global Staff Meeting.
- Requests for clarification from certification bodies via email throughout the process.

With all these inputs, between October and December 2019, PSU developed a proposal for the revision of these procedures, which was (*approved by the FSC Board of Directors in February 2020*).

The main rationale for revising these documents is to define the purpose (or purposes) of the future risk assessments as per Strategy for FSC Mix products and Controlled Wood, as well as to have effective procedures that facilitate the development of these assessments. It is expected that having effective, clear and impact-oriented procedures will lead to a higher quality and consistency of future FSC risk assessments and lead to an increased credibility of the FSC system.

The revision process will involve the establishment of a chamber balanced **Working Group (WG)** with the objective of revising these documents in line with the objectives of the Strategy for FSC Mix products and Controlled Wood.

3 Setup of the project

In the context of this project, FSC will establish a chamber balanced **Working Group (WG) consisting of six FSC members and three technical experts** to advise and provide content related input to the revision process and to deliver on the tasks and responsibilities outlined in these Terms of Reference (TOR). The WG would consist of:

- **Chamber balanced FSC members (CBM)** - Six selected FSC members with expert knowledge or experience in one or more of the following subjects, equally representing the perspectives of their chambers:
 - a) Legality in the forestry sector, assessed based on demonstrated experience and/or education and/or relevant licenses;
 - b) Rights of indigenous peoples and/or traditional peoples, including conflicts pertaining to these rights and consultation/mediation;
 - c) Conflict timber, labor rights in the forestry sector, assessed based on demonstrated experiences and/or education and/or relevant licenses;
 - d) Presence, distribution and/or threats to environmental values (with a focus on forest ecosystems) confirmed by conservation experience, and/or education and/or relevant licenses;
 - e) Forest management practices, forest conversion, GMO (trees) etc.

It is preferred that applicants have a good understanding and familiarity with available international and national data sources relevant to controlled wood categories of unacceptable sources as well as a good understanding/experience in application of risk-based solutions and in monitoring and evaluations systems.

Within the WG decisions are taken by the chamber balanced FSC members, in consensus (see Glossary) between the three chambers.

- **Technical experts (TE)** – Three selected technical experts comprising of:
 - a) Experience in design and/or implementation of risk evaluation systems/processes (not necessarily related to forestry), or
 - b) Research scientists/academicians or highly qualified specialists with experience/expertise in one or more of the following subjects: forest management, legality in the forestry sector, traditional and human rights, rights of indigenous peoples and/or traditional peoples, labor rights, conflict timber, HCVs, forest conversion, GMOs (trees), or
 - c) Extensive auditing experience in the forestry sector.

Technical experts are invited to participate in the Working Group discussions as resource persons and to provide input based on technical knowhow. Technical experts shall have voice in the WG discussions, but no formal vote in its decision-making processes.

Applications to be part of the chamber balanced FSC members group is open only to FSC members, but for technical experts, applications are open for all interested and qualified experts. When applying, candidates who are FSC members shall identify the chamber they represent (economic, environmental, or social).

In addition, the following bodies are involved in the project, established in line with FSC-PRO-01-001 V3-1:

A **Project Supervisor**, appointed by the FSC Policy Operations Director, to supervise the project.

A **Coordinator**, appointed by the FSC Policy Operations Director for setting up, administering, and managing the process and the WG and the Consultative Forum. The Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that the WG operates in accordance with its terms of reference and applicable procedures. The coordinator will draft the procedures based on the outcomes of the revision process and in close cooperation with the WG members.

A **Policy Steering Group (PSG)**, provides oversight on all phases of the process until the final decision by the FSC Board of Directors.

A **Consultative Forum** is a self-selecting group of interested/affected members, certificate holders, certification bodies and other stakeholders interested in providing input into the process as follows:

- Prior to WG meetings, provide topics and papers to be discussed by the WG.
- Provide advice to the WG in specific aspects when required.

A **Facilitator**, to support the Working Group in running successful conference calls and face to face meetings.

WORKING GROUP INFORMATION

4 Objective

During the revision process of FSC -PRO-60-002 and FSC PRO-60-002a, The WG needs to consider the purpose and potential of risk assessments in the FSC system in line with the Strategy for FSC Mix products and controlled wood, the FSC Global Strategic Plan 2021-2026, existing normative documents, and other parallel revision processes. Furthermore, the Working Group shall as minimum focus on the aspects identified for the revision of both procedures in Annex 2.

The WG shall also ensure the alignment of the National Risk Assessment Framework with FSC forest management certification requirements on topics of high relevance such as: forest conversion, commercial logging in IFLs, indigenous and traditional people's rights, etc. The same applies to other topics relevant to FSC including salvage timber, submerged timber, exceptions on exceptional climatic events like wind damage, floods, etc., sustainable intensification, impact analysis and monitoring framework, SIR, Policy of Association (ongoing work in FSC), FSC Pesticides Policy, FSC Policy on Conversion (currently under development), and alignment with landscape-based approaches. Furthermore, FSC-PRO-60-002a V1-0 needs to be brought in line with the Risk Based Approaches guidance (FSC-GUI-60-010 V1-0 and FSC-PRO-60-010 V1-0).

The technical experts are expected to provide guidance/advise for the revision of both FSC-PRO-60-002 and FSC-PRO-60-002a.

5 Tasks and responsibilities of the Working Group

CBMs and TEs shall work together throughout the process, discussing issues and interacting with each other as a group within and outside of meetings as necessary and/or as required by the coordinator.

Additionally, WG members shall:

- Agree on a Chairperson for the Working Group;
- Analyze, discuss, and negotiate the requirements of the documents regarding the need for revision, as defined by this TOR and the CW Strategy;
- Present proposals for the development of the drafts;
- Provide detailed technical input into the development of draft versions through emails, calls and meetings, including, where required, expert knowledge or access to peer reviewed literature to enable the WG to develop suitable requirements;
- Assist the coordinator in drafting specific sections of the document which lie within their area of expertise, as well as for potentially contentious sections.
- Participate in stakeholder outreach and information-sharing forums, as needed;
- Seek active and thorough engagement within FSC chambers, across all regions; ensuring that the views/approaches are representative of all chambers;
- Review and respond to comments received during public consultation;
- Recommend when a draft is ready for public consultation;
- Recommend the final draft for submission to the PSC and make appropriate changes based on PSC recommendations;

- Provide input into the final revision report to the FSC Board of Directors.

6 Selection of Working Group members

A call for expressions of interest (supported by CVs) will be launched to the public for identifying the candidates for stakeholders and technical experts.

Members of the WG will be selected by the Policy Steering Group according to the following criteria:

- a) Requirements considered in section 3 (Setup of the project);
- b) Up-to-date knowledge and experience of FSC's systems and procedures;
- c) Understanding of the potential impact of a normative document on the FSC system;
- d) Understanding of and support for FSC's mission and vision;
- e) Desire to seek and reach consensus on identified issues;
- f) Ability to review and comment on documents submitted in the working language(s) agreed for the WG;
- g) Track record on successful Working Groups is an asset;
- h) Gender balance and balance of geographical regions;

Applicants who are not selected to the Working Group may apply to participate in the Consultative Forum.

7 Structure and Accountabilities

The WG consists of nine members: six FSC members (chamber balanced) and three technical experts.

The term of WG members ends with the approval of the revised version of both procedures by the Board of Directors.

Appointed WG members are expected to adhere to the rules and regulations of this TOR and are expected to donate enough time to thoroughly fulfil their duties.

Appointed WG members shall sign a service and confidentiality agreement with FSC upon appointment.

The WG is accountable to FSC.

8 Work plan and time commitment

The WG will be established after the approval of this TOR. The expected start-date for the Working Group is June 2021, with a targeted completion by June 2023.

Annex 3 shows a diagram with the revision process for both procedures, in which can be observed the meetings that have been planned. Furthermore, an overall estimated timetable is provided in Annex 4. The timetable and the detailed work plan will be updated as necessary.

The WG will conduct most of its work via e-mail or similar means of electronic communication (e.g. Microsoft Teams conference calls). We envision the following meetings (summarized in Table 1 below):

Kick off meeting: In this meeting the WG will meet each other, become familiar with the processes, and make decisions regarding precise distribution of topics and work. This is a one-time meeting which all WG members are required to attend. Expect 1 hour of preparation, and 4 hours of meeting.

Face-to-face meeting: Under normal circumstances, this would be an in-person meeting. Given the circumstances around COVID 19, we have replaced this with a multi-day digital meeting wherein the WG can workshop and decide on particular issues and prepare content for drafting in the next version of the procedures for public consultation. The number of WG members needed for these meetings will depend on the exact working arrangement decided on by the WG. Quorum is required for decisions. This meeting will span 3 days and will happen 3-4 times. Expect 8 hours of preparation, and 4 hours of meeting per day.

Working meeting: This monthly meeting will cover regular check-ins, updates, and explanations as determined to be necessary by the WG. This meeting not planned to be held in months containing one of the preceding meetings, nor when a draft of the procedures is being publicly consulted. The number of WG members needed for these meetings will depend on the exact working arrangement decided on by the WG. Quorum is required for decisions. Expect 3 hours of preparation and 4 hours of meeting.

Sign off meeting: In this meeting the WG will meet to settle any outstanding issues and sign off on the drafts before they are presented to the PSC and later the FSC Board of Directors for approval. This is a one-time meeting which all WG members are required to attend. Expect 3 hours of preparation and 4 hours meeting.

Where required, the WG members can re-organize themselves into sub-groups for better time utilization. The precise distribution of work will be determined by the WG before the first Face-to-face meeting and may be revised during the revision process. As such, the time commitment indicated here should be considered indicative only and is not the final amount.

Table 1. Summary of planned meetings 2021-2023

Meeting type	Prep.	Days	Hr./day	Iterations	Total
Kick off	1	1	4	1	5
Face-to-face	8	3	4	3-4	60-80
Working	3	1	4	11	77
Sign off	3	1	6	1	9
					151-171 Meeting hrs per person

9 Expenses and Remuneration

FSC is an international not-for-profit membership organization with limited funding.

Participation in the WG takes place on a voluntary non-paid basis. However, FSC agrees to negotiate a stipend for the participation in the WG discussions, if needed.

If required, FSC covers reasonable travel and accommodation expenses, as well as meals and public transportation, related to the work plan upon submission of the respective invoices and receipts, and if expenses are agreed upon in advance.

10 Confidentiality and conflict of interest

Working Group members shall sign a confidentiality and non-disclosure agreement with FSC at the beginning of their work.

Per default, non-attributable content of discussions and papers prepared by or presented to the WG is not considered confidential, unless otherwise specified.

The WG operates according to Chatham House Rules. So, while members of the WG have full authority to share the non-confidential substance of discussions and papers, they shall not report or attribute neither the comments of individuals nor their affiliations outside of meetings, whether conducted face to face or virtual.

Members are expected to declare any conflicts of interest, where they arise. This will cause the person(s) to be excused from the discussion and to abstain from participating in decision-making.

11 Language

The working language of the WG is English. Language support to Spanish is provided on request.

All drafts for public consultation, as well as other documents, as requested and as possible, shall be translated into Spanish. Documents may also be translated into other languages if requested by the Working Group and depending on resource availability.

OPERATING RULES

12 Deliberations and Decision Making

Within the WG decisions are taken by the chamber balanced FSC members.

For the WG to meet and deliberate, there must be quorum, defined as a minimum of **4 FSC members and at least one representing each chamber**. The Coordinator will strive to select meeting dates and venues that allow for full participation of all Working Group members.

NOTE: a neutral facilitator will be appointed for each WG meeting to support the WG in running a successful meeting.

All chamber balanced FSC members must participate in each point of decision-making. If these member(s) are not present for a decision, then a provisional decision may be made,

subject to participation by the absent member(s). Quorum is required for any provisional decisions, and full participation is preferred.

The FSC members shall strive and make every effort possible to take decisions by consensus (see Glossary).

If consensus cannot be achieved, outstanding concerns shall be documented by the coordinator and presented to the PSC. The PSC will review the options available and make a recommendation to the FSC Board of Directors in the final report that accompanies the document presented for decision.

The technical experts, coordinator, FSC staff, Policy Steering Group members, liaison persons and any other supportive personnel shall not participate in any decision-making. However, any concerns expressed by technical experts or FSC staff will be recorded and reported.

If the chamber balanced FSC members are not able to agree on a final draft within six (6) months after the final round of public consultation, the Policy Steering Group shall take a decision on how to move forward with the process.

13 Effective WG meetings

- Established solid foundation at the start (objectives, roles, timetable, etc.).
- Agreed meeting protocols.
- Detailed agendas provided before and at meetings; meeting materials provided well in advance of meetings whenever possible to ensure that members have enough time to review.
- Clear decision-making structures, e.g., use of decision-making matrix based on criteria that need to be considered and scenario-testing.
- Simple, logical discussion format, e.g., commencing with clarifying the issue(s) the requirement is meant to address before starting to comment on the specific requirement.
- Regular, ongoing temperature checks on points-of-agreement.
- Decision point, end of day and end of meeting summaries.
- Refine work plan during the first meeting to guide process.
- Use of PSU and technical experts in drafting the documents to support WG's role and task.
- Decision on use of sub-groups, break-out groups in meetings, etc.
- Temperature check from chamber balanced FSC members' group before a final draft is recommended to the FSC Board for approval.
- When impasse issues arise that cannot be resolved by the WG, they will be addressed through the consultative process, with options and perspectives circulated for consultation. The WG will then work to resolve the issues based on comments received. If the issue is highly technical in nature, additional research/investigation on that issue might also be called upon to provide additional information for making informed decisions.
- Straw poll of the WG before going to decision-making.

14 Effective communications and representation of stakeholders

WG members are expected to consult with interested stakeholders to ensure a wide range of views are sought.

To support stakeholder engagement, the Coordinator will also:

- Implement a communications strategy to ensure ongoing and meaningful stakeholder engagement.
- Proactively push communication towards those who self-declare their interest, or otherwise may be impacted by the procedures, via email news briefs to the self-selecting Consultative Forum as well as the FSC mailing lists (Network Partners, members, Accreditation Forum, CB Forum, etc.), and via FSC network newsletter, FSC members' portal, and FSC website.
- Make available for all interested parties:
 - Background documentation and references
 - WG agendas
 - WG minutes (non-attributable)
 - Signed off internal documents and drafts of the WG
 - Attributable comments of stakeholders on draft documents (unless requested otherwise in writing)
- Use tracking/document handling software tools to facilitate dialogue amongst stakeholders as part of the consultation process.
- Seek FSC-related forum to provide updates and solicit input on the documents, for example at the General Assembly 2021, Network Partner meetings, regional FSC meetings, global staff meetings, CB meetings, etc.

Annex 1: Glossary

For the purpose of this document, the terms and definitions given in *FSC-STD-01-002 FSC Glossary of Terms*, and the following apply:

Chairperson: A Working Group member, chosen by the other members, to act as a contact point and spokesperson for the Working Group. He/she brings together the shared concerns, suggestions and recommendations of the Working Group members and shares them with the other actors involved in the project.

Chamber balanced WG: A group of selected stakeholders with professional experience in the field of question, to advise and provide content related input to the development or revision of a FSC normative document, equally representing the perspectives of the social, environmental and economic chambers (and Southern and Northern perspectives in case of a Sub-chamber balanced WG).

Chatham House Rule: "When a meeting, or part thereof, is held under the Chatham House Rule, participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed". The Chatham House Rule has the aim to encourage openness and the sharing of information at meetings.

Consensus: General agreement, characterized by the absence of sustained opposition to substantial issues by any important part of the concerned interests.

NOTE: Consensus should be the result of a process seeking to consider the views of interested parties, particularly those directly affected, and to reconcile any conflicting arguments. It need not imply unanimity (adapted from ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004).

Technical consultation: Targeted internal consultation to receive feedback on an FSC normative document during the drafting or re-drafting stage before the document is released for public consultation.

Technical experts: Selected experts with professional experience in the field of question, to advise and provide content related input to the development or revision process of an FSC normative document.

Annex 2: Main aspects to be considered for the revision of FSC-PRO-60-002 V3-0 and FSC-PRO-60-002a V1-0

Items to be revised	Justification/concern
FSC-PRO-60-002 V3-0 The Development and Approval of FSC National Risk Assessments	
Part I: Development of a National Risk Assessment	
Section 1: Scope of a National Risk Assessment	The procedure is focused only on NRAs. Due to this reason, some particularities applicable only to CNRAs are missing in the normative framework and have only been addressed in the PSU-PRO-10-002 V1-0 (The Development and Approval of FSC CNRAs).
Section 3: Proposal to develop a National Risk Assessment, clause 3.1; and Section 4: Drafting a National Risk Assessment, clause 4.4	<p>The number of technical reviews and maximum working days that are needed after the delivery of the final draft but before the approval is not specified in the procedure.</p> <p>In practice, it takes on average three rounds of technical reviews before the document is ready for approval by PSU Director. By not considering this, it affects the timeline set for development and approval of risk assessments.</p>
Section 4, clause 4.1	<p>The template provided in Annex C (National Risk Assessment template) needs to be modified/improved and have one single template applicable for all risk assessments.</p> <p>During the development process of risk assessments, we have received several complaints/comments from public consultation regarding the fact that documents are very long (in some cases even more than 400 pages) and it is difficult to understand which are the main identified risks, the structure of the assessment, or to understand the methodology applied for each of the categories (especially in the case of category 2, where applied methodologies for the assessments can vary between NRAs and CNRAs).</p>
Section 5: Stakeholder consultation	
Clause 5.5	The list of information sent to stakeholders for public consultation needs to be revised (following the justification provided above in clause 4.1), in order to provide all necessary information to facilitate stakeholder's understanding on the identified risks and encourage feedback.
Clause 5.7	<p>The means that must be used for informing stakeholders about public consultation in the case of CNRAs are not indicated.</p> <p>Stakeholders have stated that the means of international consultation are not enough to reach to all relevant stakeholders, thus resulting in very low levels of participation or no feedback at all.</p>
Clause 5.10	<p>The time deadline for providing a response to stakeholder feedback in the case of CNRAs is not indicated.</p> <p>By setting a deadline, we could make sure that a timely response is provided to stakeholders.</p>
Clause 5.12	<p>The consultation report requirements do not expressly include describing which indicators had their risk designations changed due to consultation feedback.</p> <p>It makes tracking modifications/amendments challenging, especially in cases where several stakeholder comments have been received.</p>

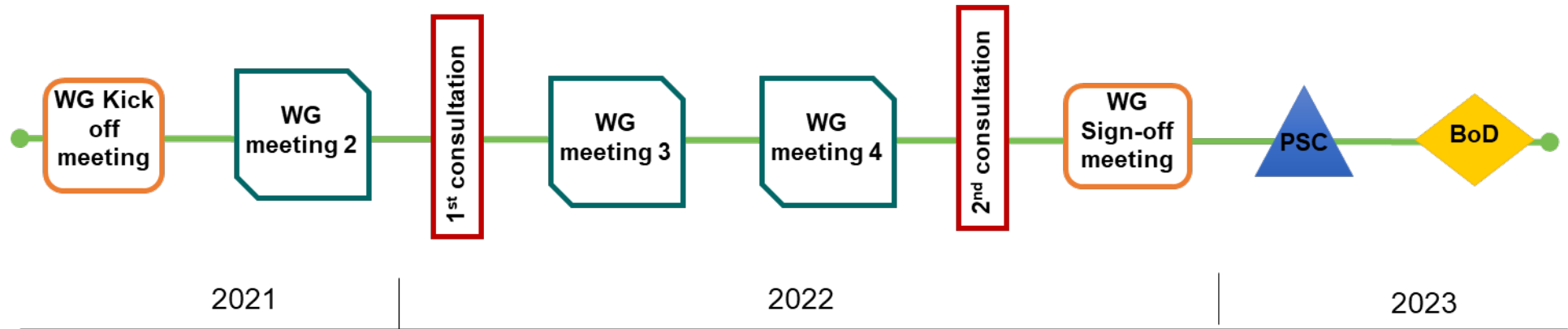
Items to be revised	Justification/concern
Part II Evaluation and Approval of a National Risk Assessment	
Section 7: Evaluation of a National Risk Assessment, clause 7.2 b)	<p>It is not clear what is the purpose of the impact analysis, and whether it is only for internal use or not. Furthermore, a template for the development of the impact analysis for NRAs is missing in the Annexes.</p> <p>Currently, the impact analysis has been done based on criteria set by each NRA-WG as there is no guidance on the main contents and structure. As a result, there are differences between documents.</p>
Section 8: Approval of a National Risk Assessment, clause 8.1	<p>It is stated that within thirty days after receiving the final draft the PSU Director will decide on the approval of the risk assessment.</p> <p>In practice, it usually takes between three to four months because there are on average three rounds of technical reviews done by PSU and improvements to the document by consultants/NRA-WGs.</p>
Part III Maintenance of a National Risk Assessment	
Section 10: Review and revision of a National Risk Assessment	The procedure is ambiguous regarding the cycle for revision of risk assessments. It indicates that updates shall be implemented according to needs and at least every 5 years, but it does not specify if this also applies for revision.
PRO-60-002a V1-0 National Risk Assessment Framework	
B Scope	<p>The framework does not specify which are the non-timber forest products (NTFPs) considered relevant in FSC risk assessments, and whether they are only valid for percentage and credit system (NTFPs derived from trees and bamboo).</p> <p>This has caused confusion in consultants, NRA-WGs, consulted experts, and other stakeholders (during public consultation) when identifying risks/proposing CMs/providing feedback especially on categories 1, 2 and 3.</p>
E Terms and definitions	<p>There are some important and relevant terms and definitions missing in this section for the five controlled wood categories. For example, in category 2, the term “traditional rights” is not defined clearly and does not appear in the FSC Glossary of Terms. The term itself does appear in an interpretation (30-010_08), but its definition is not clear.</p> <p>The lack of clarity on this term has brought confusion in consultants and NRA-WGs when having to assess indicators 1.13 Customary rights, 2.3 Indigenous and traditional peoples’ rights, 3.5 Community needs and 3.6 Cultural values.</p> <p>Other terms such as “conflict” and “significant” are also missing.</p>
Part I: General process requirements	
Section 2: NRA development process	
Subsection 2.2: Gathering of information	Some of the recommended sources of information per category are outdated. The framework does not indicate which are the minimum sources of information for each indicator, which has caused limitations when assessing some indicators where available sources are limited (e.g. indicators 1.18 Offshore trading and transfer pricing, 1.20 CITES, 5.1 Commercial use of GMOs).
Subsection 2.3: Determination of scale for homogeneous risk designation	Table for ‘Sources of legal timber’ was often not properly filled in and utilized due to lack of meaningful connection to the rest of the assessment (particularly categories 1 and 3).

Items to be revised	Justification/concern
Subsection 2.4: Designation of risk	<p>The framework does not consider how other international mechanisms (e.g. FLEGT VPA), multilateral funding investments schemes (e.g. World Bank aided projects), and third-party certification schemes (e.g. PEFC) can impact FSC risk assessments.</p> <p>In some cases (especially in category 1), consultants/NRA-WGs have proposed to use the outcomes of such mechanisms as the main evidence for low risk designation without clarifying if all requirements of the indicators of the FSC risk assessment are covered.</p> <p>It is not explicitly indicated in the framework that a demonstrable attempt should be made to reach out to (an) expert(s) before applying the precautionary approach.</p> <p>The fact that expert consultation is mandatory only for some indicators does not mean that it is not required for other indicators when available sources of information are limited.</p>
Subsection 2.4, clause 2.4.8	<p>The minimum requirements for qualifications of experts to be involved in risk assessments processes and the establishment of CMs (Annex A) do not indicate specific requirements for categories 4 and 5. In the case of category 4, the procedure only requires knowledge of forest management practices within the area under assessment, and for category 5 no specific knowledge is required.</p> <p>In practice, data availability to assess these categories has in several cases been limited, and expert knowledge has been used as one of the main evidences.</p>
Subsections 2.3 and 2.4	<p>It is not clear how and in which situations to use scale, intensity and risk (SIR) analysis to determine the functional scale and risk designation.</p>
Subsection 2.5 Establishment of Control Measures	<p>The organizations shall have and implement adequate CMs to either avoid or to mitigate specified risk related to origin and/or risk related to mixing with non-eligible inputs in the supply chain (in line with STD-40-005 V3-1 (Requirements for Sourcing FSC Controlled Wood)). Neither the standard nor the framework define what are the parameters for 'avoiding sourcing' in FSC risk assessments. Furthermore, establishment and purpose of CMs, and accepted level/likelihood of risk mitigation is missing.</p>
Subsection 2.5, clause 2.5.2	<p>Examples on how to develop CMs when specified risk is designated due to existing conflict between controlled wood requirements and applicable legislation are missing.</p> <p>Not having guidance on how to develop CMs for this and other cases has resulted in ineffective CMs or no CMs at all in the case of CNRAs (because consultants are not required to develop recommended CMs).</p>
Part II: Specific process requirements for assessing the five controlled wood categories	
Subsections 3.1, 4.1, 5.1, 6.1 and 7.1: Scope	<p>It is not clear if the scope for the five controlled wood categories covers all forest management activities (including those prior to and after harvesting). For example, the scope of category 2 covers processing and trading activities. In the case of category 1, definition of "illegally harvested wood" and its focus on "harvest" contradicts the intention of other indicators (see 1.10, 1.11 context and considerations) to cover activities before and after harvesting.</p> <p>Only in the case of category 1 the scope indicates when the indicator shall be considered as not applicable, while for the rest of categories are not clear. For example, in several cases consultants/NRA-WGs, as well as stakeholders (during public consultation), have asked if</p>

Items to be revised	Justification/concern
	indicator 4.1 is not applicable for forest plantations, taking into consideration that this category focuses on conversion from natural forest to forest plantations or non-forest uses.
Tables 1, 2, 3.2, 4 and 5: Requirements for the assessment of each category	<p>Revise the relevance of the existing questions and consider any additional questions. Revise the voluntary nature of these questions.</p> <p>In practice, the questions provided in the column 'Context and considerations' have been used only sporadically to guide the assessment development. This harmed the rigor and comparability of the risk assessments.</p>
Section 3: Controlled Wood Category 1: Illegally harvested wood	
Table 1. Requirements for legality assessment	<p>There are indicators where the requirements are not provided in detail, or the context and considerations are not specific enough to understand the risks related to those legal requirements. For example, indicators 1.5, 1.7, 1.8, 1.13, 1.14, 1.15, 1.19, 1.20 and 1.21 have no indications on what the probable risks are.</p> <p>Furthermore, there is an overlap on the requirements covered by several indicators for legality assessment. For example, in the case of indicators 1.1 Land tenure and management rights and 1.2 Concession licenses, the right to manage a forest can fall into the assessment of both indicators.</p>
Section 4: Controlled Wood Category 2: Wood harvested in violation of traditional and human rights	
Subsection 4.5: Designation of risk	<p>The methodology applied for assessing evidences and determining risk designations is not always the same for all risk assessments. CNRAs contain risk indications for each assessed source of information which then contribute to the overall risk designation of the indicator. In the case of NRAs, NRA-WGs can choose to make a general assessment of sources (without using risk indications), like the other categories.</p> <p>Stakeholders have complained about these differences and the lack of clarity in the methodology.</p>
Section 5: Controlled Wood Category 3: Wood from forests in which high conservation values are threatened by management activities	
Subsection 5.1: Scope	<p>It is unclear if all high conservation values (HCVs) should be assessed in a risk assessment, or only those related to forests or should it also include HCVs that are adjacent to forests.</p> <p>Revise the Annex 2 HCV assessment guidance.</p> <p>The 'Methodology for conducting the CNRA for Controlled Wood Category 3 – High Conservation Values' is currently used only as a guidance, but in practice most of the provided information is crucial for HCVs identification and threats assessment (e.g. definition of HCV subcategories).</p> <p>The link provided in the second Note of the clause 5.1.1 to access to the 'Common guidance for identification of HCVs' is outdated.</p> <p>In relation to the last Note provided in this subsection, revise the minimum requirements for consultations to be considered relevant for the assessment of HCVs 5 and 6.</p> <p>Public consultation does not contain specific questions for stakeholders to provide their feedback on the identification of these HCVs, and the absence of feedback could just be because no relevant stakeholders for this topic participated during consultation. Also, for the case of targeted consultation, the procedure should</p>

Items to be revised	Justification/concern
	indicate which are considered right stakeholders to be consulted for the assessment of these HCVs.
Subsection 5.3: Gathering of information, clauses 5.3.1, 5.3.2 and 5.3.3	Consider characterizing minimum necessary elements an HCV FM National Framework should have to be considered as a basis on the assessment of category 3 of an FSC risk assessment; and clarify if it is possible to develop a specific HCV Framework for controlled wood.
Subsection 5.5: Designation of risk, clause 5.5.1 a)	<p>Revise the method for applying indicator 3.0 to assess data availability for HCV identification and threats assessment within the framework.</p> <p>It leads to confusion if indicators 3.1 to 3.6 can still be assessed when indicator 3.0 is designated as 'specified risk'.</p>
Table 3.2 Requirements for HCV assessment	<p>The list of threats provided for each HCV in column 'Context and considerations' does not cover all HCV subcategories. For example, threats for barriers from destructive fire (HCV4 subcategory) are not provided.</p> <p>Revise the relevance of 'low risk' threshold (16) for indicator 3.3 HCV3.</p> <p>There have been concerns about the sufficiency of meeting Aichi targets as truly enough to demonstrate low risk for this indicator.</p>
Section 6: Controlled Wood Category 4: Wood from forests being converted to plantations or non-forest use	
Subsection 6.5: Designation of risk	<p>It is not clear in the framework if both description and enforcement assessment of legal requirements, and spatial analysis are always needed for assessing this category.</p> <p>There is ambiguity regarding the use of material from land that was cleared for legally permitted infrastructure activities (non-forest related) (e.g. railway lines, roads, electricity lines, etc.), and a lack of risk thresholds to assess these cases.</p>
Table 4: Requirements for the assessment of conversion	<p>Revise the role of forests converted for legally defined ecological enhancement purposes.</p> <p>Consultants and NRA-WGs expressed concern over such conversion being considered unacceptable in this category.</p>
Section 7: Controlled Wood Category 5: Wood from forests in which genetically modified trees are planted	
Subsection 7.5: Designation of risk	The two Notes provided in this section need to be revised and updated accordingly: regarding countries that have commercially released GM trees, countries most involved in GM engineering and research; as well as most commonly used species for GM trees.

Annex 3: Revision process diagram



Annex 4: Estimated Timeline

Activity ↓ Time →	2021												2022												2023					
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J
Establish WG and CF																														
1st round of revision:																														
• WG kick off meeting																														
• 2nd WG meeting																														
1st public consultation/analysis																														
2nd round of revision:																														
• 3rd WG meeting																														
• 4th WG meeting																														
2nd public consultation/analysis																														
Final revision:																														
• WG sign off meeting																														
Submission to PSC																														
Final amendments																														
Decision making by FSC BoD																														
Publication																														

Key	
	Ongoing process, digital communication, occasional calls/meetings as needed
	Planned meetings