

ADVICE-20-007-xx

Draft 1-0

## Deforestation-free products from FSC certified management units

**Normative reference** FSC-POL-20-003 *FSC Policy on the Excision of Areas from the Scope of Certification*.  
 FSC-STD-01-001 V5-3 *FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship*.  
 FSC-STD-60-004 V2-1 *International Generic Indicators*.  
 This advice note supersedes the following advice notes in FSC-DIR-20-007 *FSC Directive on Forest Management Evaluations*:  
 ADVICE-20-007-09 *Clearance of encroaching forest*  
 ADVICE-20-007-10 *Conversion of plantation to non-forest land*  
 ADVICE-20-007-11 *Products of land clearance*

**Approval date** XXXX by XXX

**Effective date** 1 June 2024

**Scope** This Advice Note applies to Forest Management certificate holders and Forest Management accredited certification bodies

### Terms and Definitions

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**Background** With the approval of <FSC-POL-01-007 Policy to Address Conversion>, FSC reaffirmed its commitment to contribute to global initiatives aimed to end deforestation and to promote conservation, restoration and restitution.

FSC forest products sourced from an FSC certified management unit generally meet or exceed regulations for deforestation-free products.

Specifically, FSC surpasses the European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) by explicitly prohibiting conversion to any non-forest land use, extending beyond restrictions solely to agriculture, and includes stricter requirements addressing degradation.

Differences arise in the following scenarios:

- The FSC definition of conversion does not explicitly cover non-human induced deforestation. However, FSC is an effective measure to prevent it, for instance, by requiring The Organization to assess risks and implement activities to reduce potential negative impacts from natural hazards.
- Principle 6 of <FSC-STD-01-001 FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship> allows minimal conversion when it:

a) affects a very limited portion of the management unit, and

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- b) is producing clear, substantial, additional, secure long-term, conservation and social benefits in the management unit, and
  - c) does not threaten High Conservation Values, nor any sites or resources necessary to maintain or enhance those High Conservation Values.

Conversion to agricultural use does not typically produce clear, substantial, additional, secure, long-term conservation and social benefits in the management unit (MU) and therefore, this exception should not create a breach with EUDR requirements.

- Transformation of plantations not on sites directly converted from natural forest to non-forest land use is not regulated under Criterion 6.9 of <FSC-STD-01-001 FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship>.
- For situations where there are requirements of the FSC Forest Stewardship Standard that are not met for reasons beyond the control of the forest manager in a very limited portion of the management unit, <FSC-POL-20-003 FSC Policy on the Excision of Areas from the Scope of Certification> does not explicitly prohibit the sale of forest products as FSC certified.

FSC has developed this advice note to align with the intention of the Policy to Address Conversion and close potential gaps between FSC Forest Management requirements and the EUDR, and with this to ensure that all forest products sourced from FSC certified management units are deforestation-free.

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**Version history**    **V1-0: Approved xx xx xx**

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**Advice**

1. In case of conversion of natural forests to plantations or to non-forest land use, or transformation of plantations to non-forest land-use, in conformance with Criterion 6.9 of <FSC-STD-01-001 FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship>, The Organization shall not sell forest products resulting from these activities as FSC certified.

NOTE: This advice includes the transformation of any plantations, extending beyond those on sites directly converted from natural forest.

2. In case of conversion of natural forests or High Conservation Value Areas to plantations or to non-forest land use, or transformation of plantations to non-forest land-use, for reasons beyond the control of the forest manager, The Organization shall not sell forest products resulting from these activities as FSC certified.