

UPDATE ON THE TRANSFER OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL FSC® STANDARD

BACKGROUND

In 2013 the FSC released the revised Principles and Criteria followed in 2014 by a set of International Generic Indicators (IGIs). The purpose of the indicators is to make FSC certification more consistent across different countries. The new FSC standard and IGI's use very different language, have some substantive changes in emphasis and are a lot more prescriptive regarding process. South Africa has embarked on the process of adapting the SA National FSC Standard to the new Principles and Criteria. The process is being led and coordinated by the National Standards Development Group (SDG-SA).

During the transfer, FSC requires that each of the International Generic Indicators (IGI) is compared to the existing national indicators and the best option chosen. If an IGI is modified or not used, justification has to be provided.

The transfer process is an opportunity to develop a South African FSC Standard that is more responsive to the South African plantation forestry context and allows fair access to certification by growers at all scales.

INNOVATIVE RISK-BASED APPROACH

The basis of the transfer process adopted by the SDG is an assessment of impacts of plantation forestry on the environmental asset base. By analysing the factors that drive these impacts and considering their relative importance to plantation forestry in South Africa, we can select indicators that fit our context.

This approach will also ensure that indicators reflect risk, so that low impact and small-scale operations are fairly assessed. This will be a big step towards ensuring that FSC certification is more accessible to smallholders. The risk-based approach adopted by the SDG is consistent with shifts in the FSC's global strategy and emphasis.

CONSULTATIVE PROCESS

The SDG is committed to the principle of knowledge co-development and to active engagement of FSC stakeholders. SDG-SA comprises six people, two each from the economic, social and environmental chambers. There has already been extensive and focused consultation with specialists and interest groups to compile a draft set of indicators. In mid December we will be embarking on six months of broader consultation. While this may seem like a long period, this is a crucial part of the process and we strongly encourage you to review and comment on drafts of the transferred National Standard. The phasing and time frames for feedback on the draft Standard are shown in the time line on the next page

Key Steps In The National FSC Standard Transfer Process

Date	SDG Workshops and Draft Preparation	Research and Consultation
— 2014		
Aug	SDG Workshop 1: Define process	
Nov	Complete Transfer Plan and submit to FSC	
— 2015		
Feb	Develop Transfer Template	SDG NEWS - SA Forestry
Mar	SDG Workshop 2: Principles 1 – 4 transfer	Principle 3- Indigenous People
April		Principle 4- National Minimum Wage
May	SDG Workshop 3: Refine approach, begin P5-10 transfer	WWF Forestry Stakeholder Workshop on Escapees in the Western Cape: 4 May
June	Risk Assessment Framework: P5-10	
July	Refine indicators P1-4	
Aug		WWF Briefing on Transfer process: 18 Aug
Oct	SDG Workshop 4: Final steps -Draft 1 Standard	FSA Environmental Management Committee 27 Oct
Nov		SDG NEWS - Email communication
Dec	Draft 1 Standard Published for Comment	Draft 1 Broad Consultation: 15 Dec - 28 Feb
— 2016		
Jan	SDG Meeting with FSC PSU	
Feb		
March	Draft 2 Standard: 30 March	
April	Draft 3 Standard: 31 April	Field Testing
May		Draft 3 Broad Consultation: 1 May- 30 June
June		
July	Revise and finalise Standard for submission to FSC PSU: 8 July	
Aug	PSU review of SA Draft Standard	SDG NEWS: Updates on approval process
??	Approved SA Standard	Notification of stakeholders