

Terms of Reference

REVISION OF CHAIN OF CUSTODY STANDARDS

FSC-STD-40-004 V4-0 / FSC-STD-20-011 V5-0

PROCESS SUMMARY

Process Title:	Revision of Chain of Custody Standards
Process Type:	Hybrid
Scope:	Revision
Type of Working Group:	Expert working group
# of Working Group members:	5 working group members + 9 auxiliary working group members
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1. Background and Introduction

The Terms of Reference (ToR) of the process guides the revision of requirements and are informed by the conceptual phase and stakeholder input.

Revisions to the Chain of Custody (CoC) Standards (FSC-STD-40-004, FSC-STD-40-007, FSC-STD-40-003 and FSC-PRO-40-003 and the associated accreditation standard FSC-STD-20-011) have been triggered due to updated requirements in line with recent FSC policy and regulatory changes. These updates aim to address identified integrity risks and fulfill mandates from General Assembly Motions 28/2020, 50/2021, 51/2021, and 55/2021. The FSC Secretariat will explore both normative and non-normative methods to implement these.

Furthermore, at the 90th FSC Board Meeting (BM90) in November 2021, the FSC Board of Directors (BoD) tasked the FSC Secretariat to explore the feasibility, challenges and opportunities to incorporate the revisions of FSC-STD-40-003 and the FSC-STD-40-007 standards into the planned revision of the FSC-STD-40-004 Chain of Custody Standard, with the goal of consolidating all three (3) standards into one (1) single streamlined document.

FSC CoC Standards specify the requirements which apply to all CoC-certified and applicant organizations with respect to sourcing, processing, labelling, and sale of forest-based products as FSC-certified. FSC certification of management systems is designed to provide a credible assurance that products that are sold with an FSC claim originate from well-managed forests, controlled sources, reclaimed materials, or a mixture of these. FSC CoC certification thereby facilitates the transparent flow of goods made from such materials through the supply chain.

1.1. Key objectives

In the context of this revision, the Working Group shall¹:

For FSC-STD-40-004 Chain of Custody Certification

- 1) Update and expand the Terms & Definitions section, and ensure those from recent normative requirements (e.g., FSC-STD-40-004a, FSC-STD-01-004, FSC-PRO-30-011, FSC-PRO-60-006b) are incorporated.
- 2) Revise and clarify the FSC Core Labour Requirements (CLR) and related workers' rights requirements and ensure Member Motions (50/2021 and 51/2021) are incorporated.
- 3) Revise and clarify requirements for 'Outsourcing' (e.g. Section 13 of V3-1), and expand these to include the service provision concept;
- 4) Incorporate all relevant normative documents that are currently published separately to the main Standard (e.g., Advice Notes and Interpretations identified in [Annex 3](#));
- 5) Support the implementation of Member Motions 28/2020 and 55/2021;
- 6) Explore the feasibility of incorporating the results of pilot project Cross-border Credit/ Percentage System into standard requirements;
- 7) Explore the feasibility of incorporating other topics included in Conceptual Phase Report (e.g. FSC claims, digital initiatives, restructure of normative requirements).

¹ The working group is responsible to provide input to the revision process, not for drafting the requirements. Drafting is the responsibility of the FSC Secretariat (see Table 3 of this document).

For FSC-STD-40-003 & FSC-PRO-40-003 Chain of Custody Group and Multisite Certification

- 1) Explore and identify the most feasible approach for the revision of eligibility criteria for group certification;
- 2) Align and incorporate group and multisite requirements with the main CoC standard requirements (FSC-STD-40-004).

For FSC-STD-40-007 Sourcing Reclaimed Material for use in FSC Product Groups or FSC Certified Projects

- 1) Explore the feasibility of including new circularity concepts (e.g., take-back and leasing models);
- 2) Research and determine the feasibility of recognising salvaged wood and urban waste wood as eligible inputs within the scope of certification;
- 3) Develop guidance document for material inspection and classification, auditing and the implementation of circularity models;
- 4) Align and incorporate group and multisite requirements with the main CoC standard requirements (FSC-STD-40-004).

For FSC-STD-20-011 V5-0 Chain of Custody Evaluations

- 1) Revise the sampling methodology for evaluation of group and multisite certification and increasing the sample size for evaluation on a risk-based approach;
- 2) Identify and explore the most feasible methodology for risk-based approaches for CoC evaluations considering different scenarios;
- 3) Align the accreditation requirements with the final changes in CoC Standard (FSC-STD-40-004 V4-0);
- 4) Incorporate all relevant normative documents that are currently published separately to the main Standard (e.g., Advice Notes and Interpretations identified in [Annex 3](#));
- 5) Explore the feasibility of incorporating other topics included in Conceptual Phase Report.

1.2. Intended outcomes from the implementation of the requirements

Table 1 provides the key intended outcomes for the revision, with details on the monitoring of these outcomes provided in [Annex 4](#).

Table 1 - Outcomes of the requirements

Outcomes	Description of the outcomes
Requirements are streamlined to be comprehensive, relevant, clear and concise for stakeholders.	Stakeholder feedback confirms that: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the requirements cover all topics identified for review in the Key Objectives;• the requirements are considered relevant by stakeholders and are clearly indicated so that stakeholders know which requirements apply to them;• the requirements are easy to understand resulting in less requests for interpretations or initiation of accelerated processes;

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- the requirements are concise with relevant normative references (e.g., Interpretations and Advice Notes) incorporated wherever possible;
 - the requirements are easy to use when applied, facilitated by helpful communications on any changes to format (i.e., modular approach).
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Revised requirements work to address most challenging requirements identified by Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)

In addition to general changes to address the complexity of requirements, the top three (3) sections identified by SMEs as ‘most challenging’ are revised to better consider these stakeholders:

1. FSC Material and Products records (Section 4, FSC-STD-40-004 V3-1)
2. Outsourcing (Section 13, FSC-STD-40-004 V3-1)
3. Core Labour Requirements (Section 7, FSC-STD-40-004 V3-1)

For implementation, non-normative guidance, materials, and/or trainings may be created to support these stakeholders.

Requirements are aligned with other requirements in the FSC Normative Framework and relevant local / national / international legislation and/or regulations

Requirements align with other requirements in the FSC Normative Framework and with existing relevant legislation and/or regulation to support system integrity and maintain value of certification for stakeholders.

This alignment includes, but is not limited to:

1. Accreditation requirements (e.g. Deutsche Akkreditierungsstelle (DAkkS))
 2. Labour rights requirements (e.g., ILO Declaration on Fundamental Rights at Work 1998 (amended 2022))
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Requirements incorporate an enhanced ‘risk-based’ approach

With due consideration to maintenance of system integrity and the general accreditation requirements, revision of both certification and evaluation requirements will consider the various dimensions of risk, such as activity, product type, geographical location, and species; building on existing risk-based approaches that have been developed e.g., FSC-ADVICE-40-004-20, to create an enhanced ‘risk-based’ approach.

This is applicable to all requirements, with the following identified as key areas:

1. Outsourcing (Section 13, FSC-STD-40-004 V3-1)
 2. Core Labour Requirements (Section 7, FSC-STD-40-004 V3-1)
 3. Evaluation (General, Group and Multi-site)
-

1.3. Process type and process steps

Table 2 provides an overview of the process types used in this revision, together with the decision-making bodies and implementation dates.

The CoC revision (including all the aforementioned standards) is classified as a hybrid process, following a 'regular' type of process (according to FSC-PRO-01-001 V4-0), with additional provision made at the BM90 that the Board of Directors (BoD) would be the decision-maker.

Table 2 – Key process steps in chronological order.

PHASE	KEY STEP / ASPECT	HYBRID
Review / New requirements	New Requirements Report <i>or</i>	FSC staff
	Review Report	FSC staff
Conceptual	Consultation	Public
	Process ToR	Process Lead
	Deciding on the ToR	Director General
Working Group	Working group composition	Experts
	Deciding on working group composition	Director General
Drafting	Drafting	Process lead
	Consultation	Public
Testing	Testing	Desk, field, or pilot testing
Final decision	Final decision	Board of Directors
Implementation	Publication date	6 months prior to effective date
	Effective date	1 st January/ 1 st July
	Transition end date	18 months after effective date

2. Establishing the working group

The expert working group (WG) consists of individuals with relevant knowledge or professional experience in the field of question who provide input to the process during the drafting phase. As this revision process is hybrid, but mainly follows the requirements of a 'regular' process, the WG is required to comprise of experts from more than one stakeholder group. However, with the revision encompassing multiple normative documents, including environmental (circularity) as well as social (core labour requirements) topics, the choice of WG members will have to ensure representation from a wide array of stakeholders.

2.1. Organizational set up of the process

As specified in FSC-PRO-01-001 V4-0, the WG will be composed of experts with relevant knowledge or professional experience in the field of question, and from more than one stakeholder group. Annex 2: Working Group Structure presents the envisaged structure of the WG, which consists of:

- One (1) 'core working group': 5 members focusing on FSC-STD-40-004, FSC-STD-20-011, and the overall approach to the revision process;
- Three (3) 'auxiliary working groups': 3 members in each group, tasked with a specific workstream:
 1. FSC-STD-40-003;
 2. FSC-STD-40-007; and
 3. Workers' Rights.

NOTE 1: FSC has established three (3) "sounding boards". Each will act as a consultative forum for a specific workstream – Accreditation, Circularity and Workers' Rights.

NOTE 2: Each auxiliary working group will have an FSC Secretariat staff member to oversee the activities and act as a liaison with the 'core working group'.

Table 3 outlines the roles and responsibilities of the different bodies of the WG.

Table 3 - Roles and responsibilities of the relevant working group bodies

Working group body	Roles and responsibilities
The Process Lead shall:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) establish and execute the working group work plan; b) design the structure and scope of the meetings; c) organize and coordinate working group meetings and other technical meetings; d) provide the working group with relevant materials; e) prepare, coordinate field and desk tests; f) monitor adherence of the working group to the terms of reference; and g) report on working group performance and quality of deliverables to FSC management and the FSC Board of Directors.
The Core Working Group shall:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) provide input on the contents of the requirements; NOTE: the Technical Coordinator is responsible for drafting the requirements. b) review results of consultations; c) on request, review and provide input on the proposals from auxiliary working groups;

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- d) adhere to the process terms of reference (ToR), including timelines and the collaboration rules; and
 - e) recommend, object to or abstain from the draft which is submitted for consultation or for its approval.
-

The Auxiliary Working Group shall:

- a) provide input on the contents of the specific requirements;
 - b) review results of consultations;
 - c) seek advice on the requirements from the core working group;
 - d) adhere to the process terms of reference, including timelines and the collaboration rules; and
 - e) recommend, object to or abstain from the draft which is submitted for consultation or for its approval.
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Technical Coordinator

- a) provides support to the process lead to ensure working group content specific deliberations and deliverables correspond to the scope of the terms of reference (ToR);
 - b) review (editorial) and draft the requirements;
 - c) ensures consistency with the FSC drafting procedure and within the FSC normative framework, for both, existing documents and ongoing processes;
 - d) makes technical recommendations and provides references for the working group;
 - e) represent FSC International, e.g., by providing inputs to the working group discussions, ensuring alignment with other ongoing processes within FSC; and
 - f) supports the process lead in the targeted outreach to specific user groups, as necessary.
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Policy Steering Group (PSG)

- a) provides input to approvals related to the implementation of the FSC-PRO-01-001 and as per delegation by the Director General (DG);
 - b) provides direction on strategic questions that may impact certification uptake or cause major reactions by stakeholders, certification bodies (CBs) or certificate holders (CHs);
 - c) monitors and supervises the connectivity of policy work with other work areas in order to ensure alignment and integrity of processes
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Process Supervisor

- a) supervises the process and supports the working group in reaching its goals, i.e., its key objectives and intended outcomes.
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Facilitator

- a) facilitates the working group in running successful conference calls and in-person meetings.
-

BoD liaison person

- a) informs the FSC BoD about the process, as required; and
 - b) ensures that participants in the process receive and understand the Board's overall strategic guidance towards a specific issue.
-

2.2. Selection criteria for working group members

Members of all working groups will be chosen based on following criteria:

- a) Technical skills: knowledge of chain of custody certification, up-to-date knowledge of the FSC system, other certification system or expert knowledge, etc.

NOTE: depending on the workstream, expertise in other certification schemes and/or regulations is an advantage.

- b) Soft skills: working together in teams, clarity of expression, culturally appropriate behaviour.
- c) Contribution: solution-driven, delivering a number of quality deliverables, providing inputs on time and in the requested format.
- d) Engagement: engaging constituency, actively participating, demonstrating judgement on conduct.

NOTE: The process lead will consider past performance of applicants in the evaluation of candidates.

2.3. Approval of the selected working group members and allocation of stipends

The Director General decides on the members of the working group and on the allocation of stipends, unless specified otherwise (see Table 2 above).

2.4. Role of observers

Observers can be invited by the process lead to attend working group sessions but may only contribute to the discussions when agreed by the majority of working group members and cannot make decisions.

2.5. Workplan and time commitment

Workplan

WG members are expected to donate sufficient time to thoroughly fulfil their duties as outlined in the work plan presented in [Annex 1](#) below. The timetable and the detailed work plan shall be updated as necessary.

Communication

The working group will conduct most of its work via e-mail or similar means of electronic communication (e.g., MS Teams, teams meeting, etc.), and through one-on-one calls with the process lead when required. Similarly, in-person meetings will be planned.

Meetings

The process lead will strive to select meeting dates and venues that allow for full participation of all working group and auxiliary working group members. The proposed frequency, format, and type of meeting is listed below:

Core Working Group

- In person kick-off meeting Q2 2025
- Regular meeting: at minimum monthly meetings via Teams/Zoom
- In-person meeting 1 month after 1st consultation, tentatively November 2025
- In-person meeting 1 month after 2nd consultation, tentatively April 2026

Auxiliary Working Groups

- In person/online kick-off meeting Q2 2025

- Regular meeting: at minimum monthly meetings via Teams/Zoom
- In-person/Online meeting 1 month after 1st consultation, tentatively November 2025
- In-person/Online meeting 1 month after 2nd consultation, tentatively April 2026

NOTE: The regularity and format of any of the aforementioned meetings may be amended in future, with agreement from the working group members.

2.6. Expenses and remunerations

Rumeration

FSC is an international not-for-profit membership organization with limited funding. Participation in the WG takes place on a voluntary non-paid basis. If required, a stipend can be granted by FSC on a case-by-case basis and on request for those participants that do not have alternative income or sponsoring means for their time input.

Traveling and accomodation

If required, FSC will cover reasonable travel and accommodation expenses related to the work plan upon submission of the respective invoices and receipts, and if expenses are agreed upon in advance.

2.7. Confidentiality and conflict of interest

Confidentiality

WG 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 working group is not considered confidential, unless otherwise specified by FSC.

Conflict of Interest

WG 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.

2.8. Language

The working language of the working group shall be English.

FSC provides translation support, as necessary, to facilitate the participation of non-English speaking WG members.

3. Operating rules

3.1. Expectations of appointed working group members

Appointed working group members are expected to adhere to the rules and regulations of this ToR and working group members shall sign a cooperation agreement with FSC upon appointment.

Term starting time/period: Q1 2025

3.2. The term of working group members

The term of working group members ends with the approval of the final draft set of requirements by the BoD.

Term Completion time/period: 31 December 2026

3.3. Accountability of the working group

The working group is accountable to FSC International. Working group members may be asked to leave the group by the Director General, if they are not fulfilling their duties properly.

3.4. Deliberations and decision-making

Formal decision-making responsibility of the working group is to recommend when drafts are ready for consultation and to recommend that the final draft requirements are ready for submission to the decision-making body.

All working group members shall participate in each point of decision-making. If any of the member(s) is 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 member participation is preferred. For the core working group to convene and deliberate, a quorum of at least 3 of 5 is required. For an auxiliary working group to convene and deliberate, a quorum of at least 2 of 3 is required.

The working group shall strive and make every effort possible to take decisions by consensus. If consensus cannot be achieved, outstanding concerns should be documented and presented to the Director General in the process evaluation form that accompanies the document presented for decision.

The process lead, FSC Staff, Policy Steering Group members and any other supportive personnel shall not participate in any decision-making relevant to the tasks and responsibilities of the working group as outlined in Section 2.

If the working group is not able to agree on a final draft within three (3) months after presenting the revised draft requirements following the final round of consultation, as provided in the timeline in [Annex 1](#), the Director General shall take a decision on how to move forward with the process.

The working group members acknowledge that the terms of reference, are governed by [<FSC-PRO-01-001 V4-0 – The Development and Revision of FSC Requirements>](#), in relation to the revision of the process in question. The procedure is a normative document which defines the process to develop, review, revise and withdraw international FSC requirements. As a result, the working group member shall be bound by all procedural rules as specified in FSC-PRO-01-001.

ANNEX 1: WORK PLAN AND ESTIMATED TIMELINES

NOTE: An estimated timetable is provided below. The timetable and the detailed work plan will be updated as necessary.

Table 4 Estimated timeline of the process

Nr.	Phase	Key Steps	2024	2025												2026												2027
			Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
1.	Working group	Call for application																										
		WG meetings																										
2.	Drafting	Drafting																										
		1 st Consultation																										
		2 nd Consultation																										
3.	Testing	Testing																										
4.	Final decision	Final decision																										
5.	Implementation	Publication date																										

ANNEX 2: WORKING GROUP STRUCTURE

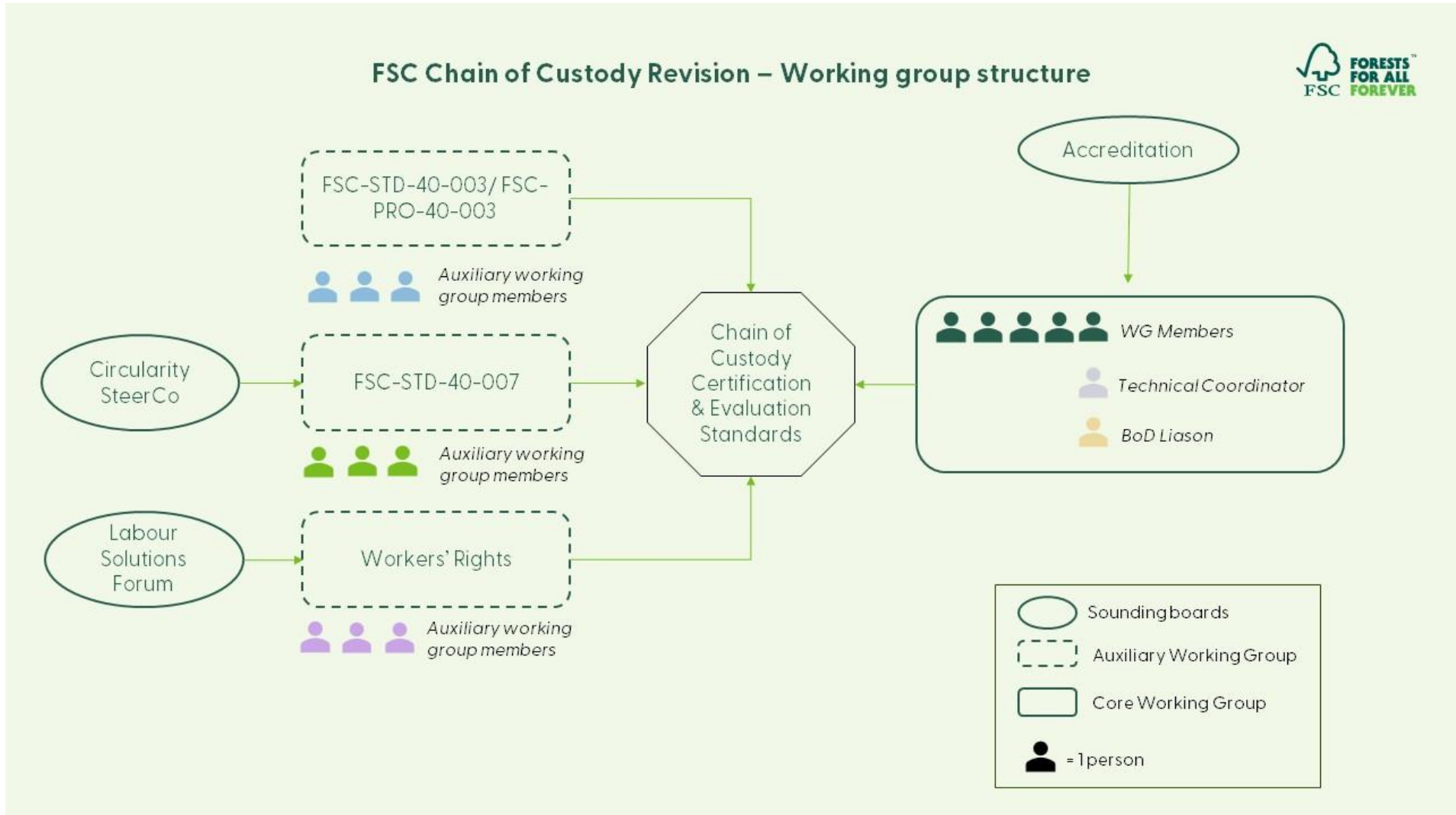


Figure 1 Core and Auxiliary Working Group Structure.

Table 5 Responsibilities and decision making of each working group

Working Group	Scope of Work	Feedback Loop	Decision-Making on Scope of Work (with Quorum)
Core	FSC-STD-40-004, FSC-STD-20-011, and the overall approach to the revision process	Sounding Board	Core Members Minimum 3 of 5
Auxiliary 1	FSC-STD-40-003	Core (on request)	'Auxiliary 1' Members Minimum 2 of 3
Auxiliary 2	FSC-STD-40-007	Sounding Board, Core (on request)	'Auxiliary 2' Members Minimum 2 of 3
Auxiliary 3	Workers' Rights	Sounding Board, Core (on request)	'Auxiliary 3' Members Minimum 2 of 3

ANNEX 3: LIST OF ADVICE NOTES AND INTERPRETATIONS TO BE INCORPORATED IN THE REVISION

Table 6 provides the Interpretations and Advice Notes that currently exist with reference Clauses in FSC-STD-40-004, FSC-STD-20-011, FSC-STD,40-003 and FSC-STD-40-007. These have been initially reviewed by FSC Secretariat, with those prioritized for inclusion in the revision under 'Priority'. Others 'to be considered' are also indicated, with those that are specific and therefore work more effectively as standalone references, listed under 'Keep as stand-alone'.

The final agreed status on the below normative documents to be incorporated is the decision of the working group members, with any documents published subsequent to the publication of the ToR to also be considered.

Table 6 List of Advice Notes and Interpretations of Chain of Custody standards to be reviewed for incorporation during the revision.

FSC-STD-40-004			
Section	Priority	For consideration	Keep as stand-alone
Scope	INT-STD-40-004_30 INT-STD-40-004_58		INT-STD-40-004_20 INT-STD-40-004_49
1	ADVICE-40-004-18 (V2-0) INT-STD-40-004_35	ADVICE-40-004-24 INT-STD-40-004_61	INT-STD-04-004_66 INT-STD-40-004_42 INT-STD-40-004_43
2		INT-STD-40-004_59	INT-STD-40-004_53 INT-STD-40-004_37 INT-STD-40-004_10
4	INT-STD-40-004_50		
5	ADVICE-40-004-17 INT-STD-40-004_52 INT-STD-40-004_16	INT-STD-40-004_08 INT-STD-40-004_32	INT-STD-40-004_12 INT-STD-40-004_08 INT-STD-40-004_44 INT-STD-40-004_07 INT-STD-40-004_24 INT-STD-40-004_17 INT-STD-40-004_56

			INT-STD-40-004_46
6			INT-STD-40-004_57
8		INT-STD-40-004_40 INT-STD-40-004_69	INT-STD-40-004_23 INT-STD-40-004_05 INT-STD-40-004_38 INT-STD-40-004_41
11			INT-STD-40-004_13 INT-STD-40-004_48 INT-STD-40-004_45
12	ADVICE-40-004-15 INT-STD-40-004_11 INT-STD-40-004_63		
13	ADVICE-40-004-23 (V2-0) ADVICE-40-004-16 INT-STD-40-004_04	INT-STD-40-004_64 INT-STD-40-004_54 INT-STD-40-004_62	INT-STD-40-004_01
14			INT-STD-40-004_55
15			INT-STD-40-004_34
Annex C	INT-STD-40-004_67		
Annex E		INT-STD-40-004_47	INT-STD-40-004_51 INT-STD-40-004_21 INT-STD-40-004_02 INT-STD-40-004_65
Various Sections	ADVICE-40-004-25 ADVICE-40-004-26 ADVICE-40-004-27	ADVICE-40-004-20 (V2-0)	
FSC-STD-20-011			
Section	Priority	For consideration	Keep as stand-alone

Section E			INT-STD-20-011_15
1	INT-STD-20-011_14		
2	INT-STD-20-011_12 INT-STD-20-011_13 INT-STD-20-011_28	INT-STD-20-011_02 INT-STD-20-011_34 INT-STD-20-011_35	INT-STD-20-011_37 INT-STD-20-011_30
3		ADVICE-20-011-12	ADVICE-20-011-14
6		ADVICE-20-011-11	INT-STD-20-011_39 INT-STD-20-011_33 INT-STD-20-011_40 INT-STD-20-011_22
7	INT-STD-20-011_26		ADVICE-20-011-13 INT-STD-20-011_27
8		INT-STD-20-011_11	
9	ADVICE-20-011-16		INT-STD-20-011_03
10			INT-STD-20-011_31
11		INT-STD-20-011_36 ADVICE-20-011-17	
12	INT-STD-20-011_38 INT-STD-20-011_24 INT-STD-20-011_25		
13	ADVICE-20-011-19	ADVICE-20-011-20	INT-STD-20-011_29 INT-STD-20-011_29
FSC-STD-40-003			
Section	Priority	For consideration	Keep as stand-alone
3	INT-STD-40-003_01		INT-STD-40-003_03

5	INT-STD-40-003_02	INT-STD-40-003_04	
FSC-STD-40-007			
Section	Priority	For consideration	Keep as stand-alone
3	INT-STD-40-007_01		
4		INT-STD-40-007_03	

ANNEX 4: MONITORING CRITERIA FOR INTENDED OUTCOMES

Table 7 Monitoring criteria for intended outcomes for the revision process.

Outcome	Description	Monitoring (Indicators)
<p>Requirements are streamlined to be comprehensive, relevant, clear and concise for stakeholders.</p>	<p>Stakeholder feedback confirms that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the requirements cover all topics identified for review in the Key Objectives; • the requirements are considered relevant by stakeholders and are clearly indicated so that stakeholders know which requirements apply to them; • the requirements are easy to understand resulting in less requests for interpretations or initiation of accelerated processes; • the requirements are concise with relevant normative references (e.g., Interpretations and Advice Notes) incorporated wherever possible; • the requirements are easy to use when applied, facilitated by helpful communications on any changes to format (i.e. modular approach). 	<p>This outcome will be considered met if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stakeholder feedback i.e. responses to consultation questions, during the final drafting phase results in 50% or more with positive reaction to questions covering 'comprehensive, relevant, clear and concise', with consideration for different stakeholder types and FSC membership. • all prioritized normative documents which were previously published separate to the main standard are incorporated, with those identified as 'for consideration' or 'Keep as stand-alone' also incorporated where possible. This will result in fewer normative documents remaining in the relevant Directives and Interpretation documents. • communications to support the implementation of requirements receive positive feedback from stakeholders. • the usability of the requirements receives positive feedback in testing prior to publication, and stakeholder feedback collected after publication also confirms the requirements are 'easy to use' when compared with previous versions.

Revised requirements work to address most challenging requirements identified by Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)

In addition to general changes to address the complexity of requirements, the top three (3) sections identified by SMEs as ‘most challenging’ are revised to better consider these stakeholders:

1. FSC Material and Products records
(Section 4, FSC-STD-40-004 V3-1)
2. Outsourcing
(Section 13, FSC-STD-40-004 V3-1)
3. Core Labour Requirements
(Section 7, FSC-STD-40-004 V3-1)

For implementation, non-normative guidance, materials, and/or trainings may be created to support these stakeholders.

This outcome will be considered met if:

- the 3 sections highlighted as most challenging are revised, and stakeholder feedback i.e. responses to consultation questions, during the final drafting phase results in 50% or more with positive reaction from stakeholders identified as SMEs, to the questions covering the reduction of complexity in the highlighted sections; and
- on publication of any non-normative guidance/materials and/or trainings to support the implementation of requirements, positive feedback is received from this stakeholder group.

Requirements are aligned with other requirements in the FSC Normative Framework and relevant local/national/international legislation and/or regulation

Requirements align with other requirements in the FSC Normative Framework and with existing relevant legislation and/or regulation to support system integrity and maintain value of certification for stakeholders.

This alignment includes, but is not limited to:

1. Accreditation requirements (e.g. Deutsche Akkreditierungsstelle (DAkkS))

This outcome will be considered met if:

- relevant internal teams (e.g., System Performance and Regulatory Framework) agree that the revised requirements are in conformity with the applicable regulations and aligned with other FSC normative requirements.

2. Labour rights requirements (e.g. ILO Declaration on Fundamental Rights at Work 1998 (amended 2022))

Requirements incorporate an enhanced 'risk-based' approach

With due consideration to maintenance of system integrity and the general accreditation requirements, revision of both certification and evaluation requirements will consider the various dimensions of risk, such as activity, product type, geographical location, and species; building on existing risk-based approaches that have been developed e.g., FSC-ADVICE-40-004-20, to create enhanced 'risk-based' approach.

This is applicable to all requirements, with the following identified as key areas:

1. Outsourcing
(Section 13, FSC-STD-40-004 V3-1)
2. Core Labour Requirements
(Section 7, FSC-STD-40-004 V3-1)
3. Evaluation (General, Group and Multi-site)

This outcome will be considered met if:

- stakeholder feedback i.e. responses to consultation questions, during the final drafting phase results in 50% or more with positive reaction to questions covering risk-based approach, with consideration for different stakeholder types and FSC membership.



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