



Type of document:	RA Standard
Scope:	China
Status of document:	Approved
Date of this version:	June 2008
Consultation period:	CLOSED
Approval body:	RA SW
Contact person:	Irwan Gunawan
Contact email:	igunawan@ra.org

Title:	Rainforest Alliance/SmartWood Interim Standard for Assessing Forest Management in China
SW document code:	FM-32 - China

© 2007 Published by Rainforest Alliance. No part of this work covered by the publisher's copyright may be reproduced or copied in any form or by any means (graphic, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, recording taping or information or retrieval systems) without the written permission of the publisher.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	2
Background.....	2
Regional Standards Development.....	2
SmartWood Standards Structure.....	3
Indicators for Small and Large FMEs	4
Public Input and Comment on SmartWood Standard and Certification Processes	4
Rainforest Alliance/SmartWood Interim Standard for Assessing Forest Management in China.	6
Annex 1: list of the national and local forest laws and administrative requirements which apply to China.....	28
Annex 2: list of the multilateral environmental agreements and ILO Conventions that China has ratified.....	30
Annex 3: List of endangered species in China.....	31
Annex 4: Glossary of terms.....	32
Annex 5: Summary of the SmartWood Certification Assessment Process	35

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Rainforest Alliance's SmartWood Program is to recognize good forest managers through credible independent certification of forestry practices. The Rainforest Alliance SmartWood Program (hereafter referred to as SmartWood) is a certification body accredited by the Forest Stewardship Council. The purpose of these standards is to provide forest managers, landowners, forest industry, scientists, environmentalists and the general public with information on the aspects of forest management operations that SmartWood evaluates to make certification decisions in the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification system. These standards have been developed for CHINA based upon the Rainforest Alliance/SmartWood Generic standards which have been approved by the FSC (through the Accreditation Services International). The scope of the current standard is CHINA (all forests types and geographic areas). The current interim standards have been specifically adapted by SmartWood to apply to CHINA and will be continuously up-dated based on stakeholder input and field trials to this version. The principles, criteria and indicator in this document are applicable for assessing all forest management operations (FMEs) with wood production as a major (though not exclusive) objective.

Background

Forests can be managed for many different objectives and products. Such management can occur in natural forests or plantations, for timber or non-timber forest products, include mechanized or manual harvesting, and managed by a large industrial operation or a local community or landowner cooperative. Many combinations are possible. A critical question has been - how to evaluate the wide range of ecological, socioeconomic and silviculture impacts of forest management activities in a clear and consistent fashion, based on a combination of scientific research and practical experience?

In 1991, the SmartWood Program put forth the *first* set of global standards for forest management certification, entitled "Generic Guidelines for Assessing Natural Forest Management" applicable at the forest or operational level for forest operations. In 1991, SmartWood also distributed the first region-specific guidelines for management of natural forests in Indonesia. In 1993, SmartWood distributed the draft "Generic Guidelines for Assessing Forest Plantations" and revised guidelines for natural forest management. The initial Working Group for developing the first FSC Principles and Criteria in 1991-1993 was co-chaired by the SmartWood Director. In 1998, after seven years of application and "learning by doing" through forest assessments and audits, SmartWood conducted a major revision of its standard for assessing forest management in both natural forests and tree plantations. Revisions since then have occurred in 2000 and 2004. Since 1993, each set of our standards has been reviewed by FSC staff, the international body that has accredited SmartWood as a forest management and chain of custody certifier.

These SmartWood standards were developed in consultation with our staff and representatives of the SmartWood Program worldwide, as well as other professional foresters, ecologists, social scientists and forest practitioners. SmartWood representatives have in-depth field experience developing region-specific forest certification standards, some going back as far as 1989 (Indonesia, California). We developed these standards to be in accord with FSC requirements as well as other forest management and biological conservation guidelines issued by the World Conservation Union (IUCN) and the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO). We have also drawn on work of our SmartWood Network partners (Imaflora in Brazil and NEPCon in Denmark, Scandinavia, Russia and Eastern Europe), Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), International Labor Organization (ILO), many scientists, forest industry, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and FSC regional standards working groups. We would like to acknowledge the significant contributions made by these and other international, national and local organizations, and the many forestry operations (certified and uncertified), foresters, loggers, and local stakeholders who have critiqued past versions of the SmartWood standards and provided suggestions for improvement.

Regional Standards Development

FSC working groups around the world are developing country- or region-specific forest certification standards. SmartWood fully supports, encourages and participates wherever possible in such processes. Our experience is that the regional standard setting process is vital. Regional standard setting is an excellent way of engaging the public in important, broad ranging discussions on the future of forests and human communities. In other words, the regional standards setting process should not be seen just as a technical standards setting process, but also as a process of outreach on the topic of sustainable forest management.

As part of the FSC process, regional standards are developed by a regional working group, field-tested, revised and approved by the regional working group, and then submitted to the FSC's international headquarters for approval. The final product, if approved, is an "FSC accredited standard". Once accredited, all FSC-approved certifiers (like SmartWood) must use the endorsed regional standard as the fundamental starting point for FSC certification in that country/region. Certifiers may choose to be more rigorous than the regional standard, but they cannot be less rigorous.

In all countries or regions not covered by an FSC accredited forest stewardship standard, SmartWood will develop a locally adapted or interim standard for use in evaluating forest management operations in that designated geographic area. The adapted standard is developed from the SW generic standard with modification to certification indicators to take into account the national context (e.g. legal requirements, environmental, social and economic perspectives). This draft will be translated to the official language of the country in which the FME to be evaluated is located and is submitted for consultation at least 30 days prior to the start of fieldwork for a full assessment. Distribution to key stakeholders occurs via the Internet (email and posted on the SW website), mailings and face to face meetings.

Operations certified under a previous FSC or SmartWood standard have a minimum of one year to meet any newly endorsed FSC regional standard.

SmartWood have also used other sources as basis for and inspiration for developing the indicators and verifiers of the Interim Standard. Among the documents that have been reviewed and considered in developing this Interim Standard are:

- FSC-STD-01-001 (version 4-0) FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship
- FSC-STD-20-003 (version 2-1) Local adaptation of certification body generic Forest Stewardship Standards.
- FSC-STD-20-002 (version 2-1) Structure and Content of Forest Stewardship Standards
- FSC-POL-30-401 FSC certification and ILO conventions.
- FSC-STD-01-003 SLIMF Eligibility Criteria
- RA/SmartWood Generic Standards for Assessing Forest Management", Rainforest Alliance, January 2008
- SmartWood Generic Guidelines for Assessing the Management of Non-Timber Forest Products, Rainforest Alliance, January 2000.
- SmartWood Non-Timber Forest Products Certification Standards Addendum, Rainforest Alliance, November 2002.

SmartWood Standards Structure

The SmartWood generic standards are based directly on the FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship (**FSC-STD-01-001**) and include specific generic indicators for each criterion to create a global SmartWood standard. These indicators are the starting point from which region-specific "SmartWood Interim Standards" are developed for use in the forest by forest assessors to evaluate the sustainability of forest management practices and impacts of candidate FME.

The standards are divided into the following ten principles:

- 1.0 Compliance with Laws and FSC Principles
- 2.0 Tenure and Use Rights & Responsibilities
- 3.0 Indigenous Peoples' Rights
- 4.0 Community Relations and Workers' Rights
- 5.0 Benefits from the Forest
- 6.0 Environmental Impact
- 7.0 Management Plan
- 8.0 Monitoring and Assessment
- 9.0 Maintenance of High Conservation Value Forests

10.0 Plantations

In the standard, each FSC principle and its associated criteria is stated, along with the SmartWood indicators. All criteria in all principles must be evaluated in every assessment; unless certain principles are deemed not applicable by SmartWood auditors (e.g. Principle 10 will not be applicable if there are no plantations).

Indicators for Small and Large FMEs

As required under FSC policy SmartWood has developed indicators for certain criteria ¹ that are specific to certain sizes of operations. Clear quantitative definitions for small versus large FMEs are included in regionalized SmartWood Interim Standards. Where these SmartWood regional thresholds are not established, large FME should be considered those larger than 50,000 ha. Small FME definition is determined by FSC regional thresholds set for small and low intensity managed forests (SLIMF) which have been set either globally by FSC (100 ha) or by FSC National Initiatives.

Public Input and Comment on SmartWood Standard and Certification Processes

The certification process has both public and private aspects. Certification assessments are not public documents unless specifically required by law (e.g. for some public forests) or approved for public distribution by the certified operation. However, three public documents are available for each and every certified FME:

- A public stakeholder consultation document that announces each certification assessment at least 30 days prior to field work;
- The certification standard used; and,
- A public certification summary that is produced with the results of each separate forest certification.

The public stakeholder consultation document informs the public about the assessment at least 30 days prior to it taking place. This document is distributed publicly prior to or during an assessment. The document is typically distributed by hand delivery, FAX, mail, or email. The specific SmartWood standard for each assessment is also publicly available before and during the assessment and is a part of the public record for every forest certification. The public certification summary is produced as a final step of the certification process and is available only after an operation has been approved for certification.

For copies of any of the above documents, visit our website at www.smartwood.org or contact SmartWood Asia Pacific Regional Office (Rainforest Alliance's SmartWood Program, Jl. Ciung Wanara No.1x, Lingkungan Kerta Sari, Kelurahan Panjer, Denpasar Selatan, 80225 Bali, Indonesia. Tel: +62 361 224 356; Fax: +62 361 235 875; Email: asia_pacific@ra.org). **We strongly encourage you to give us your input, either positive or negative, on our candidate or certified operations, certification standards, or certification procedures.**

¹ 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.

CONTENTS

A Scope

This standard shall be the basis for FSC forest management certification of forest management enterprises in China.

B Standard effective date

This standard shall be effective from 01 May 2008.

C References

FSC-STD-01-001 v. 4.0 FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship

FSC-STD-01-002 (draft 1-0) FSC Glossary of Terms

D Terms and definitions

See annex A for glossary.

Acronyms:

FME: Forest management enterprise

FSC: Forest Stewardship Council

HCVF: High conservation value forests

RA: Rainforest Alliance

SLIMF: Small and Low Intensity Managed Forests

SW: SmartWood

RAINFOREST ALLIANCE/SMARTWOOD INTERIM STANDARD FOR ASSESSING FOREST MANAGEMENT IN CHINA.

PRINCIPLE #1: COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS AND FSC PRINCIPLES

Forest management shall respect all applicable laws of the country in which they occur, and international treaties and agreements to which the country is a signatory, and comply with all FSC Principles and Criteria.

1.1 Forest management shall respect all national and local laws and administrative requirements.

- 1.1.1 FME shall demonstrate a record of compliance with relevant federal, provincial/state, and local laws and regulations.
- 1.1.2 FME shall have texts of existing relevant national laws available in the forest management unit. Relevant laws are listed in Annex 1. (CH 3.1.1.1)
- 1.1.3 Managers and workers of the forest management unit demonstrate adequate knowledge of the national laws and regulations. (CH 3.1.1.3)
- 1.1.4 Measures shall be taken to correct any instances of law violations and records kept. (CH 3.1.1.4)

1.2 All applicable and legally prescribed fees, royalties, taxes and other charges shall be paid.

- 1.2.1 FME shall be up-to-date in payment of applicable fees, taxes, timber rights or leases, royalties, etc.
- 1.2.2 Where FME is not up-to-date on payments, a plan for completing all payments shall have been agreed to with the relevant institution.
- 1.2.3 Managers of the FMU shall be well informed of the tax that should be paid to the government. (CH 3.1.2.1)

1.3 In signatory countries, the provisions of all binding international agreements such as CITES, ILO Conventions, ITTA, and Convention on Biological Diversity, shall be respected.

- 1.3.1 FME shall be aware of and understand the legal and administrative obligations with respect to relevant international agreements to which China is a signatory. These are listed in Annex 2.
- 1.3.2 FME operations shall meet the intent of applicable conventions including CITES, Convention on Biological Diversity and ILO conventions (29, 87, 98, 100, 105, 111, 138, 182 and other binding conventions).

1.4 Conflicts between laws, regulations and the FSC Principles and Criteria shall be evaluated for the purposes of certification, on a case-by-case basis, by the certifiers and the involved or affected parties.

- 1.4.1 Conflicts between laws, FSC P&C and international treaties or conventions shall be identified by FME.
- 1.4.2 FME SHOULD work in conjunction with the appropriate regulatory bodies and other parties to resolve conflicts between laws/regulations and FSC Principles or Criteria.

1.5 Forest management areas should be protected from illegal harvesting, settlement and other unauthorised activities.

- 1.5.1 The forest management unit(s) shall be protected from unauthorized harvesting activities and other activities not controlled by forest manager or local people with use rights.
- 1.5.2 For **large** operations, a system shall exist for documenting and reporting to the appropriate authority instances of illegal harvesting, settlement, occupation or other unauthorized activities.
- 1.5.3 FME has in place adequate personnel and surveillance resources to control such activities. (SGS 1.5.2)

1.6 Forest managers shall demonstrate a long-term commitment to adhere to the FSC Principles and Criteria.

- 1.6.1 For **large** operations, FME shall have a publicly available policy or statement committing the organization to adhere to the FSC certification standards on the forest under assessment.

- 1.6.2 FME shall not implement activities that blatantly conflict with the FSC P&C on forest areas outside of the forest area under assessment.
- 1.6.3 FME shall disclose information on all forest areas over which the FME has some degree of management responsibility to demonstrate compliance with current FSC policies on partial certification and on excision of areas from the scope of certification.

PRINCIPLE #2: TENURE AND USE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Long-term tenure and use rights to the land and forest resources shall be clearly defined, documented and legally established.

2.1 Clear evidence of long-term forest use rights to the land (e.g. land title, customary rights, or lease agreements) shall be demonstrated.

- 2.1.1 FME shall have documented evidence of legal, long term (at least one rotation length or harvest cycle) rights to manage the lands and to utilize the forest resources for which certification are sought.
- 2.1.2 FME shall have clear, documented evidence of the license to manage the forestland for which certification is sought issued by the responsible agencies (such as the people's government above the county level or the forestry administration department authorized by the State Council). There shall be clear definitions concerning the rights to use the forest and forest products. (CH 3.2.1.1)
- 2.1.3 There shall be clear boundaries for the forest management unit and boundaries should be marked on maps. (CH 3.2.1.3)

2.2 Local communities with legal or customary tenure or use rights shall maintain control, to the extent necessary to protect their rights or resources, over forest operations unless they delegate control with free and informed consent to other agencies.

- 2.2.1 All legal or customary tenure or use rights to the forest resource of all local communities shall be clearly documented and mapped by the forest managers.
- 2.2.2 FME shall provide evidence that free and informed consent to management activities affecting use rights has been given by local communities or affected parties.
- 2.2.3 FME planning processes shall include participation of local communities or parties with legal or customary tenure or use rights.
- 2.2.4 Where communities have delegated control of their legal or customary use rights, or part thereof, this can be confirmed by documented agreements and/or interviews with representatives of the local communities. (SGS 2.2.3)
- 2.2.5 FME shall respect and maintain the conventional or permitted rights of local people to enter or make use of the forest, under the condition of not damaging the integrity of the ecological system and without hindering the FME from reaching its operation target.
- 2.2.6 In the case of local communities' with rights to conduct natural resource operations, there should be contracts and/or agreements signed by both parties. (CH 3.3.4.2)

2.3 Appropriate mechanisms shall be employed to resolve disputes over tenure claims and use rights. The circumstances and status of any outstanding disputes will be explicitly considered in the certification evaluation. Disputes of substantial magnitude involving a significant number of interests will normally disqualify an operation from being certified.

- 2.3.1 FME shall use mechanisms for resolving disputes over tenure claims and use rights that respectfully involve the disputants and are consistent in process.
- 2.3.2 FME should not be involved in outstanding disputes of substantial magnitude on the candidate forest area that involve a significant number of interests.
- 2.3.3 FME shall demonstrate significant progress achieved to resolve major disputes.
- 2.3.4 Resolution of conflicts of ownership and use rights regarding the forest and forest products should conform to the requirements of the *Resolution to Conflicts of Ownership of Forest Trees and Forestland*. (CH 3.2.2.1)
- 2.3.5 FME shall maintain a record of disputes and the status of their resolution, including evidence related to the dispute and documentation of steps taken to resolve the dispute. (SGS 2.3.2)

PRINCIPLE #3: INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' RIGHTS

The legal and customary rights of indigenous peoples to own, use and manage their lands, territories, and resources shall be recognized and respected.

The FSC working definition of indigenous peoples is "The existing descendants of the peoples who inhabited the present territory of a country wholly or partially at the time when persons of a different culture or ethnic origin arrived there from other parts of the world, overcame them and, by conquest, settlement, or other means reduced them to a non-dominant or colonial situation; who today live more in conformity with their particular social, economic and cultural customs and traditions than with the institutions of the country of which they now form a part, under State structure which incorporates mainly the national, social and cultural characteristics of other segments of the population which are predominant."

In China there exist ethnic minorities and/or ethnic groups other than the predominant Han ethnic group, which should be evaluated within this standard as per the spirit of FSC Principle 3 for indigenous peoples. These ethnic groups, to be identified within any SmartWood certification assessment, would be considered to have "rights which result from a long series of habitual or customary actions, constantly repeated, which have, by such repetition and by uninterrupted acquiescence, acquired the force of a law within a geographical or sociological unit."

3.1 Indigenous peoples shall control forest management on their lands and territories unless they delegate control with free and informed consent to other agencies.

- 3.1.1 FME shall identify Indigenous peoples with customary/traditional rights to forest resources (timber and non-timber) where indigenous people have established customary or legal rights to the land or forest resources and their entitlements formally recognized in written agreements. Specific areas should be marked on maps.
- 3.1.2 No forest management operations shall take place in areas identified under 3.1.1 above, without clear evidence of free and informed consent of the indigenous peoples claiming such land, territories or customary rights. .
- 3.1.3 Agreements with indigenous groups shall be honored.

3.2 Forest management shall not threaten or diminish, either directly or indirectly, the resources or tenure rights of indigenous peoples.

- 3.2.1 There shall be no evidence or indication that the FME threatens the rights and resources of indigenous peoples.
- 3.2.2 FME shall respect and maintain the conventional and/or legal rights of indigenous people to enter or make use of the forest and its resources. (CH 3.3.6.1)
- 3.2.3 Indigenous peoples are explicitly informed of any impacts that forest management may have on their resources or tenure rights. (SGS 3.2.2)

3.3 Sites of special cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance to indigenous peoples shall be clearly identified in co-operation with such peoples, and recognised and protected by forest managers.

- 3.3.1 Special sites of indigenous cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance shall be documented in management planning documents. They should be identified on maps or in the forest.
- 3.3.2 Policies and procedures shall include the involvement of indigenous people, or specialists they designate, in the identification of special sites.
- 3.3.3 Special sites should be identified in management/operational plans.
- 3.3.4 Special sites shall be protected during forest operations.

3.4 Indigenous peoples shall be compensated for the application of their traditional knowledge regarding the use of forest species or management systems in forest operations. This compensation shall be formally agreed upon with their free and informed consent before forest operations commence.

- 3.4.1 Written or verbal agreements on terms of compensation shall exist when there is use of traditional knowledge for commercial purposes.
- 3.4.2 Compensation systems for the use of traditional knowledge shall be in place prior to commencement of forest operations which affect indigenous interests.
- 3.4.3 All agreed compensation is paid. (SGS 3.4.4)

PRINCIPLE #4: COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND WORKER'S RIGHTS

Forest management operations shall maintain or enhance the long-term social and economic well being of forest workers and local communities.

4.1 The communities within, or adjacent to, the forest management area should be given opportunities for employment, training, and other services.

- 4.1.1 Local communities and residents shall be given equal or preferential opportunities in forest management activities in terms of employment, training, and provision of supplies to FME, and other benefits or opportunities.
- 4.1.2 In large scale organizations, contracts are awarded through a transparent process on the basis of clear criteria; justification for final selections is documented. (SGS 4.1.2)

4.2 Forest management should meet or exceed all applicable laws and/or regulations covering health and safety of employees and their families.

- 4.2.1 Wages and other benefits (health, retirement, worker's compensation, housing, food) for full-time staff and contractors shall be consistent with (not lower than) prevailing local standards.
- 4.2.2 FME shall implement a program of worker safety.
- 4.2.3 Health and safety measures shall comply with national minimum requirements of the *Labor law of People's Republic of China, Law of the People's Republic of China on Work Safety* and the ILO Code of Practice on Safety and Health in Forestry.
- 4.2.4 Workers (staff and contractors) shall be provided with safety equipment in good working order, appropriate to the tasks of workers and the equipment used (e.g. local norms are important, ideally the following: hard hats, hearing protection, high visibility vests, steel toe boots and chainsaw proof chaps).
- 4.2.5 FME shall maintain up to date records of work-related accidents, and preferably all safety performance.
- 4.2.6 FME policies and practices shall ensure equal treatment of employees in terms of hiring, advancement, dismissal, remuneration and employment related social security.
- 4.2.7 No workers shall be engaged in debt bondage or other forms of forced labor. (SGS 4.1.8)
- 4.2.8 FME has systematically assessed the risk associated with all tasks and equipment and prescribed safety procedures, emergency procedures, provides the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) in a safe and serviceable condition, and where appropriate, key responsibilities. In large scale organizations, this evidence shall be supported by documentation. (SGS 4.2.2, CH 3.3.2.2)
- 4.2.9 All workers have had relevant training in safety procedures, emergency procedures, the proper use of PPE, and where required or appropriate, hold the necessary skills certificates. (SGS 4.2.3)

4.3 The rights of workers to organise and voluntarily negotiate with their employers shall be guaranteed as outlined in Conventions 87 and 98 of the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

- 4.3.1 FMEs, by their actions and policies, shall respect the rights of workers (staff and contractors) to organize or join trade unions and to engage in collective bargaining as outlined in ILO Conventions 87 and 98.
- 4.3.2 The legal rights of forest workers shall be guaranteed and forest workers should be encouraged to participate in the decision making process of the forest operations. (CH 3.3.3.1 and 3.3.3.2)

4.4 Management planning and operations shall incorporate the results of evaluations of social impact. Consultations shall be maintained with people and groups (both men and women) directly affected

by management operations.

- 4.4.1 In conjunction with local stakeholders and other interested parties, the FME shall evaluate socio-economic impacts associated with forest management activities. The evaluation shall be in accordance to the scale and intensity of operations.
- 4.4.2 FME shall demonstrate that input from community participation was considered and/or responded to during management planning and operations.
- 4.4.3 Consultations shall be maintained with people and groups (both men and women) directly affected by management operations.
- 4.4.4 In large scale operations, socio-economic impact evaluations and communications with stakeholders on issues that require action and follow-up should be documented. (SGS 4.4.6)

4.5 Appropriate mechanisms shall be employed for resolving grievances and for providing fair compensation in the case of loss or damage affecting the legal or customary rights, property, resources, or livelihoods of local peoples. Measures shall be taken to avoid such loss or damage.

- 4.5.1 FME shall make all reasonable efforts to avoid losses and damages affecting local peoples, and in resolving grievances related to legal rights, damage compensation and negative impacts.
- 4.5.2 Procedures for consistently and effectively resolving grievances and determining compensation for loss or damage shall be implemented.
- 4.5.3 Consultations should be made with local peoples for the provision for a fair compensation in case the above-mentioned damage takes place. (CH 3.3.7.2)

(Note: See Criterion 2.3 for resolution of land tenure (e.g. property or use rights) challenges.)

PRINCIPLE # 5: BENEFITS FROM THE FOREST

Forest management operations shall encourage the efficient use of the forest's multiple products and services to ensure economic viability and a wide range of environmental and social benefits.

5.1 Forest management should strive toward economic viability, while taking into account the full environmental, social, and operational costs of production, and ensuring the investments necessary to maintain the ecological productivity of the forest.

- 5.1.1 Budgets shall include provision for environmental and social as well as operational costs necessary to maintain certifiable status (e.g. management planning, road maintenance, silvicultural treatments, long-term forest health, growth and yield monitoring, and conservation investments).
- 5.1.2 The income predicted in the operating budgets shall be based upon sound assumptions.

5.2 Forest management and marketing operations should encourage the optimal use and local processing of the forest's diversity of products.

- 5.2.1 FME shall seek the "highest and best use" for individual tree and timber species.
- 5.2.2 FME shall encourage utilization of frequently occurring, lesser known, or less-commonly utilized plant species for commercial and subsistence uses.
- 5.2.3 Non-timber forest products (NTFPs) should be considered during forest use and processing.
- 5.2.4 Local processing shall be emphasised where possible.
- 5.2.5 Diversified management of the FMU should be promoted to include the cultivation, protection, and sustainable use of NTFP's such as fruits, oil-bearing products, food, beverages, medicinal materials, etc. (CH 3.5.2.1 and 3.5.2.2)

5.3 Forest management should minimise waste associated with harvesting and on-site processing operations and avoid damage to other forest resources.

- 5.3.1 Harvesting techniques shall be designed to avoid log breakage, timber degradation and damage to the forest stand and other resources.
- 5.3.2 Waste generated through harvesting operations, on-site processing and extraction shall be minimized.

(Note: See Principle 6 for assessing damage to forest resources)

5.4 Forest management should strive to strengthen and diversify the local economy, avoiding dependence on a single forest product.

- 5.4.1 FME shall foster product diversification and exploration of new markets and products (also Criterion 5.2).
- 5.4.2 FME shall support local value added processing.
- 5.4.3 The utilization of NTFP's by local communities is encouraged. (SGS 5.4.2)

5.5 Forest management operations shall recognise, maintain, and, where appropriate, enhance the value of forest services and resources such as watersheds and fisheries.

- 5.5.1 FME shall protect the full range of forest services associated with the defined forest area including: municipal watersheds, commercial and recreational fisheries (or the supply of water to downstream fisheries), agriculture, visual quality, contributions to regional biodiversity, recreation and tourism.
- 5.5.2 FME shall protect riparian zones along all watercourses, streams, pools, springs and lakes/ponds, consistent with the requirement of national regulations or best management practices.

- 5.5.3 FME should map riparian protection zones that enhance the value of forest services and resources, such as watershed and fisheries.
- 5.5.4 Effective measures shall be taken to minimize the damage caused by human activities to forestland such as farming, afforestation, felling, regeneration, road construction, etc. in order to maintain and enhance the value of forest services. (CH 3.7.2.1)

5.6 The rate of harvest of forest products shall not exceed levels which can be permanently sustained.

- 5.6.1 Appropriate to the scale and intensity of operations, estimates of total periodic timber growth on the defined forest area - by species categories - shall be generated through a combination of empirical data and published literature.
- 5.6.2 Allowable harvest levels shall be based on conservative, well-documented and most current estimates of growth and yield.
- 5.6.3 Harvesting shall be based on a calculated periodic allowable harvest (e.g. annual allowable cut) and actual harvests do not exceed calculated replenishment rates over the long term.
- 5.6.4 Records shall be kept on yield from felling and the felling area. (CH 3.5.6.3)
- 5.6.5 The felling plan and annual felling permit shall be submitted to the forestry administrative department of the upper level for approval. (CH 3.5.6.1)
- 5.6.6 Harvesting of NTFP's shall not exceed their capacity for sustainable development. (CH 3.5.6.5)

PRINCIPLE #6: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Forest management shall conserve biological diversity and its associated values, water resources, soils, and unique and fragile ecosystems and landscapes, and, by so doing, maintain the ecological functions and the integrity of the forest.

6.1 Assessment of environmental impacts shall be completed -- appropriate to the scale, intensity of forest management and the uniqueness of the affected resources -- and adequately integrated into management systems. Assessments shall include landscape level considerations as well as the impacts of on-site processing facilities. Environmental impacts shall be assessed prior to commencement of site-disturbing operations.

- 6.1.1 Environmental assessments shall be completed during management planning.
- 6.1.2 Environmental assessments shall consistently occur prior to site disturbing activities.
- 6.1.3 Environmental impacts of on-site processing facilities shall be controlled (e.g. waste, construction impacts, etc.).
- 6.1.4 Landscape level impacts of forest management (e.g. cumulative effects of forest operations within and nearby the FMU) shall be considered.
- 6.1.5. **Applicable to SLIMF FMEs only** (note: above indicators do not apply). Before initiating any operation, the possible negative environmental impacts shall be identified and the operation is designed to minimize them. Assessments do not need to be documented unless legally required.
- 6.1.6. Adjustment shall be made in accordance with the environmental assessment to reduce the impact caused by forest management. (CH 3.7.1.2)

6.2 Safeguards shall exist which protect rare, threatened and endangered species and their habitats (e.g., nesting and feeding areas). Conservation zones and protection areas shall be established, appropriate to the scale and intensity of forest management and the uniqueness of the affected resources. Inappropriate hunting, fishing, trapping and collecting shall be controlled.

- 6.2.1 The likely presence of rare, threatened or endangered species and their habitats (e.g. nesting and feeding areas) shall be assessed on the basis of the best available information. (An internet link to a list of endangered and threatened species in China is attached in Annex 3.)
- 6.2.2 Timber species on either local and/or international endangered or threatened species lists (e.g. CITES Appendix 2, national lists) shall not be harvested.
- 6.2.3 Appropriate to the scale and intensity of management, conservation zones, protection areas or other protection measures shall be established based on technically sound requirements for the protection of rare, threatened and endangered species and their habitats.
- 6.2.4 Conservation zones should be demarcated on maps, and where feasible, on the ground.
- 6.2.5 Effective procedures shall be implemented during forest operations to protect conservation zones, identified species and their habitats.
- 6.2.6 Hunting, fishing, trapping and NTFP collecting shall be controlled in the forest.
- 6.2.7 **Applicable to SLIMF FMEs only:** (note: indicators 6.2.1 – 6.2.5 do not apply) Where information exists on rare, threatened and endangered species and their habitat, the FME shall use this information to protect these resources.
- 6.2.8 Hunting, trapping and collecting activities shall be consistent with laws and regulations on protection of wildlife. Hunting license and collecting license shall be applied in accordance with the law. (CH 3.6.2.1)
- 6.2.9 Authorized hunting, fishing, grazing and collecting activities are managed to ensure they do not exceed sustainable levels and inappropriate activities are prevented. (SGS 6.2.6)

6.3 Ecological functions and values shall be maintained intact, enhanced, or restored, including:

a) Forest regeneration and succession.

b) Genetic, species, and ecosystem diversity.

c) Natural cycles that affect the productivity of the forest ecosystem.

6.3.1 The forest manager shall have site-specific data or published analyses of local forest ecosystems that provide information on the FMU with regards to:

- regeneration and succession;
- genetic, species and ecosystem diversity; and,
- natural cycles that affect productivity.

6.3.2 Forest management systems shall maintain, enhance or restore ecological functions and values of the FMU based on the data in 6.3.1. Management systems shall include:

- Silvicultural and other management practices which are appropriate for forest ecosystem function, structure, diversity and succession;
- Where appropriate, a program for the restoration of degraded sites; and,
- Natural regeneration, unless data shows that enrichment planting or artificial reforestation will enhance or restore genetic, species or ecosystem diversity.

6.3.3 Management prescriptions should maintain, enhance or restore forest composition (i.e. species numbers and diversity) and structure.

6.3.4 Management shall be designed to ensure that the full complement of tree species regenerates successfully in the forest area over the duration of the rotation.

6.3.5 Standing and fallen dead wood habitats shall be retained, based on local best management practice or documented research.

6.3.6 Native species are preferred in afforestation. Selection of seed for afforestation shall be consistent with the management goal and the principle of planting trees in their ideal environment. (CH 3.5.4.1, CH 3.5.4.2)

6.3.7 Migration of wildlife shall be taken into consideration according to the scale of forest management and wildlife corridors shall be established. (CH 3.5.5.3)

6.3.8 The transfer of forest in the same generation to forest of different ages shall be encouraged and the development of a diversified ecological environment should be established. (CH 3.5.5.5)

6.4 Representative samples of existing ecosystems within the landscape shall be protected in their natural state and recorded on maps, appropriate to the scale and intensity of operations and the uniqueness of the affected resources.

6.4.1 Representative samples of existing ecosystems shall be protected in their natural state, based on the identification of key biological areas and/or consultation with environmental stakeholders, local government and scientific authorities.

6.4.2 In conjunction with experts, restoration and protection activities shall be defined, documented, and implemented in the forest.

6.4.3 **Applicable to SLIMF FMEs only:** (note: above indicators do not apply) Where representative samples of ecosystems are known to exist in the FMU these shall be protected.

6.4.4 Protected area shall be designed to protect rare, threatened and endangered species and their habitats in accordance with real situations. If the protection area cannot be clearly divided, adequate area shall be kept for each forest type. The division of the area shall take into account full consideration of the migration of wildlife in the forest. (CH 3.6.1.2, SGS 6.2.4)

6.5 Written guidelines shall be prepared and implemented to: control erosion; minimise forest damage during harvesting, road construction, and all other mechanical disturbances; and protect water resources.

- 6.5.1 All forest operations with the potential for negative environmental impact (as identified in 6.1) shall have written guidelines defining acceptable practices which are available to forest managers and supervisors. Such operational guidelines shall meet or exceed national or regional best management practices.
- 6.5.2 Maps and/or work plans shall be produced at a scale that allows effective supervision of soil and water resource management and protection activities.
- 6.5.3 Topographic maps should be prepared before logging or road construction occurs.
- 6.5.4 Topographic maps should specify areas suitable for all-weather harvesting or dry-weather only; and indicate locations for extraction (or haul) roads, loading ramps (or log yards), main skid (or snig) trails, drainage structures, buffer zones, and conservation areas.
- 6.5.5 Training shall be given to FME staff and contractors to meet guidance requirements.
- 6.5.6 Road construction, maintenance and closure standards shall be followed in the forest.
- 6.5.7 Forest felling and regeneration shall follow the requirement of *New Measures on Forest Felling* and relevant national rules. Measures shall be taken to reduce degrading of timber in the process of forest felling and production. (CH 3.5.6.4, CH 3.5.8.2)
- 6.5.8 FME shall reduce their negative impact on quality and quantity of water resources, control soil erosion and avoid severe damage to water collecting area of the forest. Riparian buffers shall be built and/or maintained at either sides of riverbanks to conserve water and soil. (CH 3.7.2.2, CH 3.7.2.3)

6.6 Management systems shall promote the development and adoption of environmentally friendly non-chemical methods of pest management and strive to avoid the use of chemical pesticides. World Health Organisation Type 1A and 1B and chlorinated hydrocarbon pesticides; pesticides that are persistent, toxic or whose derivatives remain biologically active and accumulate in the food chain beyond their intended use; as well as any pesticides banned by international agreement, shall be prohibited. If chemicals are used, proper equipment and training shall be provided to minimise health and environmental risks.

- 6.6.1 Forest managers shall employ silvicultural systems, integrated pest management and vegetation control strategies that result in the least adverse environmental impact. Pesticides are used only when non-chemical management practices have been proven ineffective or cost prohibitive.
- 6.6.2 If chemicals are used, the following requirements apply:
 - Pest control measures shall conform to the requirement of *Regulations of People's Republic of China on Forest Pest Control 1989*. (CH 3.8.1.1)
 - A complete inventory of chemicals shall be provided by the FME and detailed inspections of storage areas or other facilities validate that inventory is complete and accurate;
 - Records shall be kept of all chemical used by the FME including name of the product, location and method of application (using proper equipment), total quantity of chemical used and dates of application.
 - Safe handling, application and storage procedures shall be followed; and,
 - Staff and contractors shall receive training in handling, application and storage procedures.
- 6.6.3 Chemicals prohibited by the FSC (FSC-POL-30-601) or those banned in Europe, U.S. and China, or World Health Organization Type 1A or 1B and chlorinated hydrocarbon pesticides shall not be used. The exception is when a formal derogation has been granted by the FSC. In such cases, the FME follows the terms of the approved derogation.
- 6.6.5 Effective measures shall be employed to protect the beneficial organisms in the forest and improve its own pest control capacity. (CH 3.8.1.4, SGS 6.6.3)
- 6.6.6 Organic fertilizer and biological fertilizer shall be used to enhance soil fertility and the use of chemical fertilizer shall be minimized. (CH 3.7.2.4, SGS 6.6.4)

6.7 Chemicals, containers, liquid and solid non-organic wastes including fuel and oil shall be disposed of in an environmentally appropriate manner at off-site locations.

- 6.7.1 Chemical, container, liquid and solid waste shall be disposed of off-site in an environmentally sound and legal manner, whether from forest operations or processing facilities.
- 6.7.2 FME shall ensure that non-organic wastes (oil, tires, containers, etc.), including that generated by contractors, are recycled when possible. (SGS 6.7.1)

6.8 Use of biological control agents shall be documented, minimised, monitored and strictly controlled in accordance with national laws and internationally accepted scientific protocols. Use of genetically modified organisms shall be prohibited.

- 6.8.1 Use of biological control agents shall be documented, minimized, monitored and strictly controlled.
- 6.8.2 Use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) shall be prohibited.
- 6.8.3 If biological control agents are used, documentation justification details: alternative methods of pest or disease control considered, ecological impact evaluation, relevant organizations and regulatory authorities consulted. (SGS 6.8.2)

6.9 The use of exotic species shall be carefully controlled and actively monitored to avoid adverse ecological impacts.

- 6.9.1 Use of exotic species shall be discouraged and carefully controlled, i.e. when used it is for well-justified and specific purposes (e.g. environmental benefit) and monitored for environmental impact.
- 6.9.2 Where exotic species are planted, measures shall occur to prevent spontaneous regeneration outside plantation areas, unusual mortality, disease, insect outbreaks or other adverse environmental impacts.
- 6.9.3 Exotic species will be introduced only under the condition that they have passed quarantine and do no harm to environment and biological diversity. (CH 3.7.4.1)
- 6.9.4 Records shall be kept on the use of exotic species and their ecological impact shall be monitored. (CH 3.7.4.2)

6.10 Forest conversion to plantations or non-forest land uses shall not occur, except in circumstances where conversion:

- a) **Entails a very limited portion of the forest management unit; and,**
 - b) **Does not occur on high conservation value forest areas; and,**
 - c) **Will enable clear, substantial, additional, secure, long-term conservation benefits across the forest management unit.**
- 6.10.1 FME shall not convert forests, or threatened non-forested habitat to plantations or non-forest land uses, except where the conversion meets the conditions of 6.10.2 – 6.10.5.
 - 6.10.2 If conversion occurs, it shall not exceed 5% of the forest management unit over any 5 year period (see FSC-ADV-30-602)
 - 6.10.3 The extent of any conversion should be acceptable to environmental organizations and regulatory agencies.
 - 6.10.4 If conversion occurs, the forest manager shall demonstrate that any conversion produces long term conservation benefits across the FMU.
 - 6.10.5 If the conversion occurs, plantations or non-forest uses shall not replace high conservation value forest, conservation zones, protection areas, or areas retained as representative of existing ecosystems.

PRINCIPLE #7: MANAGEMENT PLAN

A management plan -- appropriate to the scale and intensity of the operations -- shall be written, implemented, and kept up to date. The long-term objectives of management, and the means of achieving them, shall be clearly stated.

7.1 The management plan and supporting documents shall provide:

- a) Management objectives.**
- b) Description of the forest resources to be managed, environmental limitations, land use and ownership status, socio-economic conditions, and a profile of adjacent lands.**
- c) Description of silvicultural and/or other management system, based on the ecology of the forest in question and information gathered through resource inventories.**
- d) Rationale for rate of annual harvest and species selection.**
- e) Provisions for monitoring of forest growth and dynamics.**
- f) Environmental safeguards based on environmental assessments.**
- g) Plans for the identification and protection of rare, threatened and endangered species.**
- h) Maps describing the forest resource base including protected areas, planned management activities and land ownership.**
- i) Description and justification of harvesting techniques and equipment to be used.**

7.1.1 FME Management plan, or appendices or reference documents, shall include presentation of the following components:

- a) Management objectives;
- b) Description of the forest resources to be managed, environmental limitations, land use and ownership status, socioeconomic conditions, and a profile of adjacent lands;
- c) Description of silvicultural and/or other management system, based on the ecology of the forest in question and information gathered through resource inventories;
- d) Description and justification for use of different harvesting techniques and equipment;
- e) Description and justification of forest management prescriptions and their silvicultural and ecological rationale i.e. based on site specific forest data or published analysis of local forest ecology or silviculture;
- f) Rate of harvest of forest products (timber or non-timber, as applicable) and species selection including justification;
- g) Measures for identifying and protecting rare, threatened and endangered species and/or their habitat;
- h) Map(s) describing the forest resource including forest types, watercourses and drains, compartments/blocks, roads, log landings and processing sites, protected areas, unique biological or cultural resources, and other planned management activities;
- i) Environmental safeguards based on environmental assessments (see criterion 6.1);
- j) Plans for monitoring of forest growth, regeneration and dynamics;
- k) Assessment of the profits and risks of forest management (CH 3.4.1.3-10); and,
- l) Plans for diversified forest management and processing of forest products (CH 3.4.1.3-8).

7.1.2 NTFP resources and uses should be inventoried and their management explicitly considered during planning.

7.1.3 Maps that are presented shall be accurate and sufficient to guide forest activities (also see Criterion 6.5).

7.1.4 Management plans or related annual operating or harvesting plan shall be available to staff and used in the forest.

7.1.5 **Applicable to SLIMF FMEs only:** (note: above indicators do not apply) A written management plan exists that includes at least the following:

- a) The objectives of management;
- b) A description of the forest;
- c) How the objectives will be met, harvesting methods and silviculture (clear cuts, selective cuts, thinnings) to ensure sustainability;
- d) Sustainable harvest limits (which must be consistent with FSC criteria 5.6);
- e) Environmental/ social impacts of the plan;
- f) Conservation of rare species and any high conservation values;
- g) Maps of the forest, showing protected areas, planned management and land ownership; and,
- h) Duration of the plan.

7.1.6 Any control of wild animals is based on a written plan and strategy, which describes and justifies objectives, cull targets, control methods and precautions; control is carried out in consultation with all relevant stakeholders. (SGS 7.1.9)

7.2 The management plan shall be periodically revised to incorporate the results of monitoring or new scientific and technical information, as well as to respond to changing environmental, social and economic circumstances.

7.2.1 A technically sound and financially realistic timeframe shall exist for revision/adjustment of the management plan.

7.2.2 Management plan (and/or annual operating plan) revision or adjustments shall occur on timely (no more than 10 years) and consistent basis and adjustments to the management plan shall be put on file.

7.2.3 Management plan revisions shall incorporate the results of monitoring or new scientific and technical information regarding changing silvicultural, environmental, social and economic condition.

7.2.4 Staff positions/members with responsibility for the compilation and revision of the management plan are identified. (SGS 7.2.1)

7.2.5 **Applicable for SLIMF FME-s only** (Note: above indicators do not apply) Management plan shall be reviewed at least every 5 years and updated, if necessary, incorporating the results of monitoring to plan and implement future management.

7.3 Forest workers shall receive adequate training and supervision to ensure proper implementation of the management plan.

7.3.1 Evidence of formal or informal training of forest workers to ensure proper implementation of the management plan shall exist in the forest. **Applicable to all FMEs including SLIMFs.**

7.3.2 For **large** FMEs, a formal training plan for staff and forest workers related to the management plan and its implementation shall be documented.

7.3.3 There shall be technicians to provide forest workers with necessary technical guidance in their fieldwork and to understand clearly how to implement the management plan. (CH 3.4.4.3, CH 3.4.4.3)

7.4 While respecting the confidentiality of information, forest managers shall make publicly available a summary of the primary elements of the management plan, including those listed in Criterion 7.1.

7.4.1 FME shall make publicly available a summary of the management plan including information on elements listed in criterion 7.1..

7.4.2 **Applicable for SLIMF FME-s only** (Note: above indicators do not apply): Upon request, FME shall make available relevant parts of the management plan to stakeholders who are directly affected by the forest management activities of FME (e.g. neighboring landowners).

7.4.3 While respecting the confidentiality of information, forest managers shall give public notice of the primary elements of the up-to-date management plan to local communities and relevant agencies. (CH 3.4.5.1)

PRINCIPLE #8: MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT

Monitoring shall be conducted -- appropriate to the scale and intensity of forest management -- to assess the condition of the forest, yields of forest products, chain of custody, management activities and their social and environmental impacts.

8.1 The frequency and intensity of monitoring should be determined by the scale and intensity of forest management operations as well as the relative complexity and fragility of the affected environment. Monitoring procedures should be consistent and replicable over time to allow comparison of results and assessment of change.

- 8.1.1 A plan and design, based on consistent and replicable procedures, shall exist for periodic monitoring and reporting.
- 8.1.2 The frequency and intensity of monitoring shall be based on the size and complexity of the operation and the fragility of the resources under management.
- 8.1.3 **Applicable to SLIMF FMEs only** (Note: above indicators do not apply): FME shall conduct regular and consistent monitoring in connection with harvesting operations and reforestation.
- 8.1.4 Investigations should be conducted on forest resources and management operations according to the unified arrangement of the forestry administrative department's established forest resources file system. (CH 3.9.1.1)

8.2 Forest management should include the research and data collection needed to monitor, at a minimum, the following indicators:

- a) **Yield of all forest products harvested.**
- b) **Growth rates, regeneration and condition of the forest.**
- c) **Composition and observed changes in the flora and fauna.**
- d) **Environmental and social impacts of harvesting and other operations.**
- e) **Costs, productivity, and efficiency of forest management.**

8.2.1 The monitoring plan shall be technically sound and identify/describe observed changes in terms of:

- Silviculture (growth rates, regeneration, post-harvest waste and forest condition, typically as part of a suitable continuous forest inventory system, etc.);
- Commercial harvest including NTFPs;
- Environment (environmental changes affecting flora, fauna (including pest control cull methods), soil and water resources; outbreak of pests, invasive species, nesting sites for endangered bird species, etc.);
- Socioeconomic aspects (forest management costs, yields of all products, and changes in community and worker relations or conditions, health and safety including accident rates, etc.);
- Contractors' performance and compliance with contract specifications; and,
- Identified high conservation value forest attributes.

8.2.2 Applicable to SLIMF FMEs only (Note: above indicators do not apply): FME shall at a minimum monitor and record information on the following:

- Amount of products harvested;
- Regular monitoring of any identified high conservation values;
- Invasive exotic species;
- Growth and regeneration of managed species;
- Post harvest inspection for erosion and estimate of residual basal area; and,

- Periodic inventory (10 years).

8.3 Documentation shall be provided by the forest manager to enable monitoring and certifying organisations to trace each forest product from its origin, a process known as the "chain of custody."

- 8.3.1 Volume and source data on harvested forest products shall be available (i.e. scaled, inventoried, measured) in the forest, in transport, at intermediate storage yards (e.g. log yards), and processing centers controlled by FME.
- 8.3.2 Sales invoices and other documentation related to the sale of certified products shall include the chain of custody certificate code in the correct format (e.g. SW-FM/COC-XXXX).
- 8.3.3 Certified forest products shall be clearly distinguished from non-certified products through marks or labels, separate documented storage, and accompanying invoices up to the point of sale (i.e. up to the "forest gate").
- 8.3.4 **Applicable to SLIMF FMEs only** (indicators 8.3.1 and 8.3.3. do not apply): Documentation shall be available allowing products to be traced from the forest to the forest gate.
- 8.3.5 Chain-of-Custody shall be followed, recorded and mapped. Documentation of timber and other important forest products shall be provided. (CH 3.9.3.1)

8.4 The results of monitoring shall be incorporated into the implementation and revision of the management plan.

- 8.4.1 FME shall demonstrate that monitoring results are incorporated into revisions of the management plan.

(For SLIMF see criterion 7.2)

8.5 While respecting the confidentiality of information, forest managers shall make publicly available a summary of the results of monitoring indicators, including those listed in Criterion 8.2.

- 8.5.1 For **large** operations, results of monitoring shall be incorporated into summaries and other documents that are publicly available.
- 8.5.2 **Applicable for medium size and SLIMF FMEs only:** (Note: the above indicator does not apply). Upon request, FME shall make available relevant parts of the management plan to stakeholders who are directly affected by the forest management activities of FME (e.g. neighboring landowners).
- 8.5.3 While respecting the confidentiality of information, FME shall make publicly available a summary of the results of monitoring periodically. (CH 3.9.4.1)

PRINCIPLE 9: MAINTENANCE OF HIGH CONSERVATION VALUE FORESTS

Management activities in high conservation value forests shall maintain or enhance the attributes, which define such forests. Decisions regarding high conservation value forests shall always be considered in the context of a precautionary approach.

9.1 Assessment to determine the presence of the attributes consistent with High Conservation Value Forests will be completed, appropriate to scale and intensity of forest management.

9.1.1 FMEs shall have conducted an assessment to identify HCVs. Such an assessment should include:

- Consultation with conservation databases and maps;
- Consideration of primary or secondary data collected during forest inventories on the designated forest area by FME staff, consultants or advisors;
- Interviews with environmental/biological specialists indigenous/local communities, and scientific experts, etc.;
- Documentation of threats to HCVs; and,
- If threats to HCVs or HCVF exist, identification of actions to address the threats.

9.1.2 For large operations, FME shall:

- Produce written HCVF assessment(s) that identify(ies) HCVs or HCVF and proposes strategies to ensure their protection; and,
- Conduct credible, independent, technically qualified review of the HCVF assessment and related recommendations to address HCV threats and protection; and,
- Demonstrate that credible actions are being taken to address HCV/HCVF protection and/or threat reduction.

9.1.3 **Applicable to SLIMF FMEs only:** Consultations shall have occurred with environmental stakeholders, government or scientists to identify HCVs and/or HCVF. If HCVs or HCVF are present, FME shall take all reasonable steps to protect these values and/or reduce threats.

9.2 The consultative portion of the certification process must place emphasis on the identified conservation attributes, and options for the maintenance thereof.

9.2.1 FME consultations with stakeholders shall clearly outline identified conservation attributes as well as proposed strategies for their maintenance or threat reduction. .

9.2.2 For **large** operations, the stakeholder consultation for HCVF strategy development, and actions taken in response to such consultation, shall be documented.

9.3 The management plan shall include and implement specific measures that ensure the maintenance and/or enhancement of the applicable conservation attributes consistent with the precautionary approach. These measures shall be specifically included in the publicly available management plan summary.

9.3.1 If HCVF or HCVs are present, planning documents shall provide site-specific information which describes the measures taken to protect or restore such values.

9.3.2 Measures to protect HCVF values shall be available in public documents or in the FME management plan summary.

9.3.3 When an HCVF has been identified for biological values, management should (SGS 9.3.4):

- maintain natural patterns of distribution and abundance of species;
- maintain natural evolutionary and ecological processes (biotic and abiotic, including disturbances)
- avoid fragmentation; and,
- set aside core areas for strict protection.

9.4 Annual monitoring shall be conducted to assess the effectiveness of the measures employed to maintain or enhance the applicable conservation attributes.

9.4.1 A system for continuous monitoring of HCVF values shall be incorporated into the FME's planning, monitoring and reporting procedures.

9.4.2 Records of monitoring are kept and used, in consultation with acknowledged experts, local and national stakeholders, to adapt future management. (SGS 9.4.2)

PRINCIPLE # 10: PLANTATIONS

Plantations shall be planned and managed in accordance with Principles and Criteria 1 - 9, and Principle 10 and its Criteria. While plantations can provide an array of social and economic benefits, and can contribute to satisfying the world's needs for forest products, they should complement the management of, reduce pressures on, and promote the restoration and conservation of natural forests.

10.1 The management objectives of the plantation, including natural forest conservation and restoration objectives, shall be explicitly stated in the management plan, and clearly demonstrated in the implementation of the plan.

10.1.1 Objectives of tree planting shall be explicit in the management plan, with clear statements regarding the relationship between tree planting and the silviculture, socioeconomic and environmental (i.e. forest conservation and restoration) realities in the region.

10.1.2 Management objectives for conservation of natural forest and restoration shall be described in the management plan.

10.1.3 Management objectives, specifically those related to natural forest conservation and restoration, shall be demonstrated in forest management activities.

10.2 The design and layout of plantations should promote the protection, restoration and conservation of natural forests, and not increase pressures on natural forests. Wildlife corridors, streamside zones and a mosaic of stands of different ages and rotation periods shall be used in the layout of the plantation, consistent with the scale of the operation. The scale and layout of plantation blocks shall be consistent with the patterns of forest stands found within the natural landscape.

10.2.1 FMEs shall demonstrate through action their commitment to protect, restore and conserve key areas of natural forest within the ownership.

10.2.2 Buffer zones along watercourses and around water bodies shall be established according to regional best management practices or local laws and regulations. Buffer zones should be indicated on maps.

10.2.3 FME shall establish wildlife habitat and corridors, suitably located across plantation areas, in consultation with acknowledged experts.

10.2.4 Plantations shall be designed so as to maintain or enhance the visual character of the landscape (i.e. design is based on the scale and intensity of natural patterns of disturbance and planting and harvest regimes within the region).

10.2.5 One or more of the following afforestation measures should be adopted to promote the diversification of standing forest (CH 3.5.5.2):

- Encourage using diversified seeds of trees to establish mixed forest;
- Avoid intensified felling in a short period in the management plan;
- Encourage afforestation of different generations or at different time; and,
- Build up windbreak forest.

10.2.6 The overall afforestation design of the key national forestry development programs shall be consistent with the requirements of existing regulations (*Overall Plan for Afforestation, Assessment Procedures of Afforestation Quality 2004*). (CH 3.5.5.6)

10.3 Diversity in the composition of plantations is preferred, so as to enhance economic, ecological and social stability. Such diversity may include the size and spatial distribution of management units within the landscape, number and genetic composition of species, age classes and structures.

10.3.1 Plantation management shall maintain and/or enhance landscape diversity by varying block size and configuration, species, genetic diversity, age class and structure.

10.3.2 Emphasis should be placed on planting and/or applied research on forest species native to the region.

10.3.3 Maximum clear-cut size is defined according to laws and regulations. Documented justification should be provided where there are potential adverse environmental or socio-economic impacts. (SGS 10.3.2)

(Note: Also see Criteria 6.4 and 6.10.)

10.4 The selection of species for planting shall be based on their overall suitability for the site and their appropriateness to the management objectives. In order to enhance the conservation of biological diversity, native species are preferred over exotic species in the establishment of plantations and the restoration of degraded ecosystems. Exotic species, which shall be used only when their performance is greater than that of native species, shall be carefully monitored to detect unusual mortality, disease, or insect outbreaks and adverse ecological impacts.

10.4.1 Plantation species shall be selected based on suitability to site conditions (soils, topography and climate) and management objectives.

10.4.2 Where exotic species have been selected, the FME shall explicitly justify this choice demonstrating that their performance is greater than that of native species.

10.4.3 No species shall be planted on a large scale until local trials and/or experience have shown that they are ecologically well-adapted to the site and invasive characteristics, if any, can be controlled.

10.4.4 When exotic species are used the specific measures to prevent spontaneous regeneration outside plantation areas, unusual mortality, disease, insect outbreaks or other adverse environmental impacts shall be documented

10.4.5 Introduction, production and management of the seeds and seedlings of the forest trees shall be in line with the requirement of national or local laws and regulations including *Seed Law of People's Republic of China (2000)*, *Measures of Promoting the Use of Improved Variety of Forest Trees (1997)*, *Regulations on Production and Operation license for Seed of Forest Tree (2002)*, *Provisions on Approval and Monitoring of the Quarantine of Introduced Forest Tree Seed, and other Propagating Materials (2003)*, *Regulations of State Forestry, P.R. China on Quality control of Saplings of Forest Tree (2002)* and etc. (CH 3.5.3.1)

10.4.6 Forest enterprises engaging in production and operation of seedling shall have *Production License of Seed of Forest Tree* and *Operation License for Seed of Forest Tree* issued by forestry administrative department above county level. Forest enterprises conduct the production and management in accordance with the requirements and conditions of the license. (CH 3.5.3.2)

10.4.7 The seedlings shall pass the quality test according to the national or local standard before they are transplanted and allocated to other places. (CH 3.5.3.3)

10.4.8 The introduction of seeds, seedlings or other propagating materials (including fruit tree, flowers, Chinese medicinal materials and grass seed for soil conservation) shall follow the *Provisions on Approval and Monitoring of the Quarantine of Introduced Forest Tree, Sapling, Seed and other Propagating Materials (2003)* issued by State Forestry Administration, P.R. China or provincial forestry departments or the forestry departments at autonomous region or municipality level. (CH 3.5.3.4)

10.5 A proportion of the overall forest management area, appropriate to the scale of the plantation and to be determined in regional standards, shall be managed so as to restore the site to a natural forest cover.

10.5.1 Representative samples of existing natural ecosystems shall be protected or restored to their natural state, based on the identification of key biological areas, consultation with stakeholders, local government and scientific authorities. (Note: Also see Criterion 6.4.)

10.5.2 **Applicable to SLIMF FMEs only** (note: above indicator does not apply): Plantation design and management practices shall protect ecological values, especially around conservation features or protected areas.

10.6 Measures shall be taken to maintain or improve soil structure, fertility, and biological activity. The techniques and rate of harvesting, road and trail construction and maintenance, and the choice of species shall not result in long-term soil degradation or adverse impacts on water quality, quantity or substantial deviation from stream course drainage patterns.

10.6.1 Explicit measures shall be taken to maintain or enhance the soil in terms of structure, fertility and biological activity.

10.6.2 Plantation design and management shall not result in soil degradation.

10.6.3 Forest operations shall not degrade water quality or negatively impact local hydrology.

10.6.4 Where negative impacts on soil or water resources is identified, FME shall take steps to reduce or eliminate such impacts.

(Note: also see Criteria 6.1 and 6.5)

10.7 Measures shall be taken to prevent and minimize outbreaks of pests, diseases, fire and invasive plant introductions. Integrated pest management shall form an essential part of the management plan, with primary reliance on prevention and biological control methods rather than chemical pesticides and fertilizers. Plantation management should make every effort to move away from chemical pesticides and fertilizers, including their use in nurseries. The use of chemicals is also covered in Criteria 6.6 and 6.7.

10.7.1 Measures shall be taken in the forest to prevent outbreaks of pests, disease, fire and invasive plant introductions.

10.7.2 A plan should exist for forest fire prevention and control, established on the basis of *Regulations of People's Republic of China on Forest Fire Control (1988)*.

10.7.3 An integrated pest management plan shall exist that identifies pests, determines acceptable injury or action thresholds, and alternative methods of addressing threats.

10.7.4 FME shall have a policy and strategy to minimize use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers.

10.7.5 Fire danger areas shall be carved out into different grades. (CH 3.8.2.2)

10.7.6 Forest fire monitoring and controlling measures should be made and implemented; organizations should be established to take charge of the fire control and fire fighting work. (CH 3.8.2.3 and CH 3.8.2.4)

10.7.7 Statistics and records of forest fires shall be kept. (CH 3.8.2.5).

10.7.8

10.8 Appropriate to the scale and diversity of the operation, monitoring of plantations shall include regular assessment of potential on-site and off-site ecological and social impacts, (e.g. natural regeneration, effects on water resources and soil fertility, and impacts on local welfare and social well-being), in addition to those elements addressed in principles 8, 6 and 4. No species should be planted on a large scale until local trials and/or experience have shown that they are ecologically well-adapted to the site, are not invasive, and do not have significant negative ecological impacts on other ecosystems. Special attention will be paid to social issues of land acquisition for plantations, especially the protection of local rights of ownership, use or access.

10.8.1 Monitoring shall include evaluation of potential onsite and off-site ecological and social impacts of plantation activities. (also see criterion 8.2)

10.8.2 **Applicable to SLIMF FMEs only** (note: above indicator does not apply): FME shall document negative environmental or social impacts and design and implement measures to address the impacts.

10.8.3 The purchase of lands or land leases for plantation establishment shall not adversely impact the community and/or resource use by local people.

(Note: For exotic or invasive species issues, see Criterion 10.4.)

10.9 Plantations established in areas converted from natural forests after November 1994 normally shall not qualify for certification. Certification may be allowed in circumstances where sufficient evidence is submitted to the certification body that the manager/owner is not responsible directly or indirectly of such conversion.

10.9.1 The plantation shall not occupy land converted from natural forest since November 1994, unless clear evidence exists that the current manager/owner was not responsible.

10.9.2 Primary, degraded primary and mature secondary forests, and threatened or endangered ecosystems should not be cleared or converted by current forest managers to create tree plantations.

10.9.3 Where conversions after November 1994 have occurred, steps shall be taken that convincingly compensate for such conversions, based on interviews or other evidence gathered from other stakeholders and interested parties.

(Note: See also Criterion 6.10.)

ANNEX 1: LIST OF THE NATIONAL AND LOCAL FOREST LAWS AND ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS WHICH APPLY TO CHINA.

FOREST AND NATURAL RESOURCES

- Forestry Law of the People's Republic of China (Date of enforcement: April 29, 1998)
- Regulations Concerning the Enforcement of Forestry Law of the People's Republic of China (Date of enforcement: Jan. 29, 2000)
- Regulations Concerning the Prevention of Forest fires (Date of enforcement: Jan. 16, 1988)
- Regulations Concerning the Control of Forest Pests and Diseases (Date of enforcement: Dec. 18, 1989)
- Regulations Concerning Plant Quarantine (Date of enforcement: May 13, 1992)
- Seed Law of the People's Republic of China (Date of enforcement: July 8, 2000)
- Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Wildlife (Date of enforcement: March 1, 1989)
- Regulations Concerning the Enforcement of Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Land Wildlife (Date of enforcement: March 1, 1992)
- Regulations of the People's Republic of China Concerning the Protection of Wild Plants (Date of enforcement: Jan. 1, 1997)
- List of the People's Republic of China Concerning the Protected Wild Animals and Plants (Date of enforcement: Jan. 14, 1989).
- Regulations on Defarming-and-reafforestation (2002)
- Construction Standard for Public Welfare Forest (2001)
- Implementation Measures for Management and Monitoring of National Forest Resources and Capital (Try Out) (1996)
- Measures of Promoting the Use of Improved Variety of Forest Trees (1997)
- Measures on Packaging and Labeling of Forest Tree Seed (2002)
- Regulations on Production and Operation License of Forest Tree Seed (2002)
- Provisions on the Annual Examination of Production and Operation License of Forest Tree Seed (2003)
- New Measures on Forest Felling (1987)
- Regulations on Natural Conservation Area of Forest and Wild Animal Type (1985)
- Procedures on File of Forest Resources (1986)
- Provisions on Approval and Monitoring of the Quarantine of Introduced Forest Tree, Seedling, Seed and other Propagating Materials (2003)
- Interim Procedures of Afforestation Quality Control (2003)
- Assessment Procedures of Afforestation Quality (2004)
- Procedures of Assessment and Approval of Occupying and Requisition of Forestland (2001)
- Provisional Regulations on the Limit of Annual Forest Felling (1985)
- Implementing Rules for the Regulations of People's Republic of China on Protection of New Varieties of Plants. (Forestry Part) (1999)

ECOLOGICAL & ENVIRONMENTAL

- Constitution of the People's Republic of China (Date of enforcement: March 15, 1999)
- Regulations Governing the Administration of Nature Reserves (Date of enforcement: Jan. 1, 1997)
- Environmental Protection Law of the People's Republic of China (Date of enforcement: Dec. 26, 1989)
- Environment Impact Assessment Law of People's Republic of China (2002)
- Environment and Natural Resources Protection Law of People's Republic of China (2001)
- Flood Control Law of P.R. China (1997)
- The Law of the People's Republic of China on Animal Epidemic Prevention (1997)
- Law of the People's Republic of China on the Entry and Exit Animal and Plant Quarantine (1991)
- Law of the People's Republic of China on the Prevention and Control of Water Pollution (Date of enforcement: May 15, 1996)
- Law of the People's Republic of China on the Prevention and Control of Air pollution (Date of enforcement: August 29, 1995)
- Law of the People's Republic of China on the Prevention and Control of Solid Waste Pollution (Date of enforcement: April 1, 1996)
- Law of the People's Republic of China on the Conservation of Water and Soil (Date of enforcement: 1991)
- Sand Control and Prevention Law of P. R. China (2001)
- Water Law of the People's Republic of China (Date of enforcement: July 1, 1988)
- State Regulations Governing Environmental Monitoring (Date of enforcement: July 21, 1983)
- State System for Environmental Monitoring Report (Interim. Date of enforcement: July 21, 1991)

- Ordinance on the Administration of Certificates for the Evaluation of the Influence of Construction Projects on Environment (Date of enforcement: Sept. 2, 1989)
- Regulations on Flood Control of People's Republic of China (1998)

LABORERS

- Chinese Safety Law (2002)
- Labor Law of the People's Republic of China (Date of enforcement: Jan. 1, 1995)
- Opinions of the Ministry of Labor on the Problems Concerning the Implementation of Labor Law of the People's Republic of China (Date of enforcement: August 11, 1995)
- Regulations Concerning the Labor Administration of Foreign-Funded Enterprises (Date of enforcement: August 1, 1995)
- Announcement of the Ministry of Labor on the Enforcement of the Minimum Wage Guarantee System (Date of enforcement: Oct. 8, 1994)
- Trade Union Law of People's Republic of China (1992, revised in 2001)

LAND TENURE

- The Land Administration Law of People's Republic of China
- Law of the People's Republic of China on Chinese-Foreign Contractual Joint Ventures (Date of enforcement: Sept. 20, 1983)
- Law of People's Republic of China on Land Contract in Rural Areas (2002)
- Law of the People's Republic of China on the Land Administration (Date of enforcement: Jan. 1, 1987)
- Article 15, Forestry Law of the People's Republic of China (Date of enforcement: April 29, 1998)
- Regulations Concerning Conflict Resolution of Forest Tree and Forestland Ownership (Date of enforcement: Sept. 26, 1996)
- Procedures on Registration of Ownership of Forest Trees and Forestland (2001)
- Regulations for the Implementation of the Land Administration Law of the People's Republic of China (1999)

ANNEX 2: LIST OF THE MULTILATERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS AND ILO CONVENTIONS THAT CHINA HAS RATIFIED.

- Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)
- Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat
- International Labor Organization Conventions
- International Tropical Timber Agreement
- International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants
- United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
- Convention on Biological Diversity
- Vienna Convention on the Protection of the Ozone Layer

ANNEX 3: LIST OF ENDANGERED SPECIES IN CHINA

List of endangered species can be found by assessing the following internet sites:

<http://www.cnwm.org.cn/wildlife1/wi/ml.htm>

<http://cwca.ysdw.net/article/index.asp>;

ANNEX 4: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Biological diversity: The variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are a part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems. (see Convention on Biological Diversity, 1992)

Biological control agents: Living organisms used to eliminate or regulate the population of other living organisms.

Biological diversity values: The intrinsic, ecological, genetic, social, economic, scientific, educational, cultural, recreational and aesthetic values of biological diversity and its components. (see Convention on Biological Diversity, 1992)

Chain of custody: The channel through which products are distributed from their origin in the forest to their end-use.

Chemicals: The range of fertilizers, insecticides, fungicides, and hormones which are used in forest management.

Criterion (pl. Criteria): A means of judging whether or not a Principle (of forest stewardship) has been fulfilled.

Customary rights: Rights which result from a long series of habitual or customary actions, constantly repeated, which have, by such repetition and by uninterrupted acquiescence, acquired the force of a law within a geographical or sociological unit.

Ecosystem: A community of all plants and animals and their physical environment, functioning together as an interdependent unit.

Endangered species: Any species which is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

Exotic species: An introduced species not native or endemic to the area in question.

Forest integrity: The composition, dynamics, functions and structural attributes of a natural forest.

Forest management/manager: The people responsible for the operational management of the forest resource and of the enterprise, as well as the management system and structure, and the planning and field operations.

Forest management unit (FMU): a clearly defined forest area with mapped boundaries, managed by a single managerial body to a set of explicit objectives which are expressed in a self-contained multi-year management plan.

Forest stewardship: forest management which, in conformity with the FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship, is environmentally responsible, socially beneficial, and economically viable.

Genetically modified organisms: Biological organisms which have been induced by various means to consist of genetic structural changes.

Indicator: a quantitative or qualitative variable which can be measured or described, and which provides a means of judging whether a forest management unit complies with the requirements of an FSC Criterion. Indicators and the associated thresholds thereby define the requirements for responsible forest management at the level of the forest management unit and are the primary basis of forest evaluation.

Indigenous lands and territories: The total environment of the lands, air, water, sea, sea-ice, flora and fauna, and other resources which indigenous peoples have traditionally owned or otherwise occupied or used. (Draft Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: Part VI)

Indigenous peoples: "The existing descendants of the peoples who inhabited the present territory of a country wholly or partially at the time when persons of a different culture or ethnic origin arrived there from other parts of the world, overcame them and, by conquest, settlement, or other means reduced them to a non-dominant or colonial situation; who today live more in conformity with their particular social, economic and cultural customs and traditions than with the institutions of the country of which they now form a part, under State structure which incorporates mainly the national, social and cultural characteristics of other segments of the population which are predominant." (Working definition adopted by the UN Working Group on Indigenous Peoples).

High Conservation Value Forests: High Conservation Value Forests are those that possess one or more of the following attributes:

- a) forest areas containing globally, regionally or nationally significant concentrations of biodiversity values (e.g. endemism, endangered species, refugia); and/or

large landscape level forests, contained within, or containing the management unit, where viable populations of most if not all naturally occurring species exist in natural patterns of distribution and abundance

b) forest areas that are in or contain rare, threatened or endangered ecosystems

c) forest areas that provide basic services of nature in critical situations (e.g. watershed protection, erosion control)

d) forest areas fundamental to meeting basic needs of local communities (e.g. subsistence, health) and/or critical to local communities' traditional cultural identity (areas of cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance identified in cooperation with such local communities).

Landscape: A geographical mosaic composed of interacting ecosystems resulting from the influence of geological, topographical, soil, climatic, biotic and human interactions in a given area.

Local laws: Includes all legal norms given by organisms of government whose jurisdiction is less than the national level, such as departmental, municipal and customary norms.

Long term: The time-scale of the forest owner or manager as manifested by the objectives of the management plan, the rate of harvesting, and the commitment to maintain permanent forest cover. The length of time involved will vary according to the context and ecological conditions, and will be a function of how long it takes a given ecosystem to recover its natural structure and composition following harvesting or disturbance, or to produce mature or primary conditions.

Native species: A species that occurs naturally in the region; endemic to the area.

Natural cycles: Nutrient and mineral cycling as a result of interactions between soils, water, plants, and animals in forest environments that affect the ecological productivity of a given site.

Natural Forest: Forest areas where many of the principal characteristics and key elements of native ecosystems such as complexity, structure and diversity are present, as defined by FSC approved national and regional standards of forest management.

Non-timber forest products: All forest products except timber, including other materials obtained from trees such as resins and leaves, as well as any other plant and animal products.

Other forest types: Forest areas that do not fit the criteria for plantation or natural forests and which are defined more specifically by FSC-approved national and regional standards of forest stewardship.

Plantation: Forest areas lacking most of the principal characteristics and key elements of native ecosystems as defined by FSC-approved national and regional standards of forest stewardship, which result from the human activities of either planting, sowing or intensive silvicultural treatments.

Precautionary approach: Tool for the implementation of the precautionary principle.

Principle: An essential rule or element; in FSC's case, of forest stewardship.

Silviculture: The art of producing and tending a forest by manipulating its establishment, composition and growth to best fulfil the objectives of the owner. This may, or may not, include timber production.

SLIMF (small or low intensity managed forest): a forest management unit which meets specific FSC requirements related to size and/or intensity of timber harvesting, and can therefore be evaluated by certification bodies using streamlined evaluation procedures. The applicable FSC requirements are defined in *FSC-STD-01-003 SLIMF Eligibility Criteria*.

Stakeholder: individuals and organizations with a legitimate interest in the goods and services provided by an FMU; and those with an interest in the environmental and social effects of an FMU's activities, products and services. They include: those individuals and organizations which exercise statutory environmental control over the FMU; local people; employees; investors and insurers; customers and consumers; environmental interest and consumer groups and the general public [modified from Upton and Bass, 1995].

Succession: Progressive changes in species composition and forest community structure caused by natural processes (nonhuman) over time.

Tenure: Socially defined agreements held by individuals or groups, recognized by legal statutes or customary practice, regarding the "bundle of rights and duties" of ownership, holding, access and/or usage of a particular land unit or the associated resources there within (such as individual trees, plant species, water, minerals, etc).

Threatened species: Any species which is likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

Use rights: Rights for the use of forest resources that can be defined by local custom, mutual agreements, or prescribed by other entities holding access rights. These rights may restrict the use of particular resources to specific levels of consumption or particular harvesting techniques

ANNEX 5: SUMMARY OF THE SMARTWOOD CERTIFICATION ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The certification assessment process begins with a candidate operation submitting an application to SmartWood. Based upon a review of the application, the scope of the area to be certified and discussions with the candidate, SmartWood will propose a certification process that includes either a preassessment followed by a main assessment, or goes directly to a main assessment. Every candidate operation is assigned a SmartWood task manager who will liaise with the assessment lead auditor and the candidate to schedule and perform the evaluations.

SmartWood assessors are provided with detailed guidance on the certification process, including pre-assessment briefings (either in person or by telephone) and access to a written SmartWood handbook for forest assessment. The purpose of these briefings and the manual is to ensure that a consistent and thorough certification process is followed.

In addition to following the SmartWood procedures outlined in our forest evaluation handbook, there are three other ways in which we ensure accuracy and fairness in our certifications:

The assessment must involve individuals who are familiar with the particular region and type of forest management operation under evaluation. It is SmartWood policy to involve local specialists in all assessments.

- Team members must be familiar with SmartWood certification procedures. Each SmartWood certification assessment has a designated lead auditor who must have participated in a formal SmartWood assessor-training course or previously participated in other SmartWood forest management assessments or audits.
- The assessment must use region-specific standards (i.e. accredited FSC standard or a “regionalized” SmartWood Interim Standard, based on this SmartWood Generic Standard).

Team Selection and Planning – SmartWood selects a qualified lead auditor and other team members to participate in the assessment. The lead auditor’s first task is to ensure that all team members understand the scope and intent of the assessment process. Responsibility for evaluation of different sections (i.e. specific criteria and indicators) of the standard are assigned to different team members, depending on their particular training and expertise. All team members can provide input into any principle, but lead responsibility is assigned for data collection, analysis and writing for each criterion and indicator.

Stakeholder notification: At least 30 days prior to forest evaluation, SmartWood notifies stakeholders of the pending assessment and requests stakeholders’ observations or comments with regard to the operations compliance with the certification standard.

Fieldwork and Data Collection – Evaluation of conformance with the standard is based upon data collection by the auditors through review of FME management documentation, interviews with staff and stakeholders, and field observations and measurements. The team organizes opening meetings with the FME staff to review the assessment scope and procedures and certification standards. Documentation review and interview with FME staff begin immediately. The assessment process then moves quickly to the field phase. Inspections are made to sites chosen by SmartWood assessors based on a comprehensive review of the candidate FME’s forest holdings and management activities, discussions with interested/affected parties, and identification of critical issues or challenging sites. Site visits occur in the forest, at processing facilities, and in surrounding communities. Visits emphasize management activities of all types and phases and different biological or physical conditions.

Team members meet independently with stakeholders. All assessments solicit and incorporate input (confidential and/or open) from directly affected and/or knowledgeable stakeholders, including local communities, adjoining landowners, local forest industry, environmental organizations, government agencies, and scientific researchers. During these consultations, assessment team members explain the assessment process, solicit opinions, and gather impressions about the field performance of the operation being assessed.

Data Analysis and Decision making – Throughout the assessment the team meets independently to discuss progress in gathering information, and discuss preliminary findings. The assessment team works in a consensus fashion to analyze information and evidence gathered, evaluate conformance and reach agreement on their findings as to the certification of the candidate operation.

The assessment team evaluates performance by the FME at the indicator level of the standard. Any non-conformances are analyzed and classified as either minor or major. A noncompliance is considered major if it results in a fundamental failure to achieve the objective of the relevant criterion in the standard. Conversely, a nonconformance is considered minor if the impacts are limited in scale, prompt corrective action has been taken to ensure it will not be repeated and it does not result in a fundamental failure to achieve the objective of the relevant

criterion. For each area of nonconformance identified, the assessment team develops corrective actions which are classified as follows:

Major Corrective Action Request (CAR) is an improvement addressing major nonconformance that candidate FME must implement before SmartWood certification is granted;

Corrective action request (CAR) is an improvement addressing a minor nonconformance that candidate FME must implement by a specific deadline (i.e. short term - usually within one year) during the renewable five-year certification period (which is the standard FSC certification contract period); and,

Observation is a very minor problem or the early stages of a problem which do not of itself constitute a non-conformance, but which the auditor considers may lead to a future non-conformance if not addressed by the client. An observation may be a warning signal on a particular issue that, if not addressed, could turn into a nonconformance in the future.

Report Write-up – following the forest evaluation, the team prepares the certification assessment report. This report follows a standardized format and includes detailed findings of performance and proposes pre-conditions, CARs or observations.

Review of Assessment Report by Candidate Operation, Independent Peer Reviewers and SmartWood Report Review – the candidate operation, at least one peer reviewer, and SmartWood regional staff, review each certification assessment report.

Certification Decision – Once the above steps are completed, SmartWood headquarters coordinates a certification decision process. If a certification decision is to approve certification, a five-year certification contract will be executed which requires annual on-site audits. If an operation is not approved, the certification decision will establish what must be done in order for the operation to achieve certified status in the future.