We make a difference, locally and globally.

work as one to reach our goals.

always go that extra mile, seek dialogue and are service minded.

proudly improve livelihoods and sustainable forestry worldwide.

FSC OPERATIONAL VISION
FSC is on the verge of a new era

FSC has achieved a scale and impact that should be celebrated. Continued success requires us to think strategically as we look ahead.

Today, around 10 per cent of the Earth’s production forests are kept healthy through FSC certification, supporting the livelihoods of communities, workers, and families. This represents over EUR40 billion in responsible trade annually.

We've worked hard to get to where we are now, and it is delivering results. We have more than 200 staff, 800 international members, 3,000 national members, hundreds of partners and 50,000 businesses in over 100 countries that have come together under one organization to take care of the world’s forests.

Now is the time to be innovative, bold, and aware. It has been more than two decades since a group of visionaries first came together to create FSC, and we understand that the needs and challenges facing forests and people have changed over that time. This implementation plan draws on an array of input from our members and our staff, and will help us turn our vision into operational reality.

This plan represents a profound moment in our transformation. Looking back, we've achieved a great deal together. Our work has made a real difference for the world’s forests and people’s lives, and helped to create a legacy of environmental stewardship for future generations. It’s time to take it to the next level.

How we got here:
From strategy to implementation

At the 2014 FSC General Assembly, our members made it clear that they wanted a bolder, stronger, more effective FSC. Together with FSC staff and members, we were able to agree on a new direction of the organization and capture it in our Global Strategic Plan 2015-2020.

In September 2015 the FSC Board of Directors approved the FSC Global Strategic Plan 2015-2020. The strategy was the first ever to be created from collective input from members, staff and stakeholders worldwide. In line with the mandate given by Motion 84, the board also requested that we operationalize the strategy through the development of an implementation plan.

The process to develop this implementation plan has been the first step in performing a global transformation of FSC. With the mandate from Motion 84, staff have worked together in shaping the ambitious success criteria from the global strategy into a series of meaningful actions that position us to reach our targets in time. We have only begun our journey towards this organizational transformation. The next years will hold many challenges and changes for our organization and system.

But unlike earlier times, this implementation plan ensures that the changes to come will no longer be organic, unstructured and overwhelming. For all involved in the FSC community – be it stakeholders, certificate holders or staff – this plan marks a new era of FSC, where we plan for the changes we make, evaluate their impact and follow strategic priorities.

We began the journey of aligning our work globally with the global strategy with the new finance and accountability model that we developed in 2015 to be implemented in 2016 and 2017. This allowed us to ensure that the front lines of our organization were aligned to the highest degree possible as a first step, while the implementation plan was being planned and created.

During 2016 we focused on developing the implementation plan by operating as one FSC, in alignment with strategy 3, working together to refine the strategy down to the items and the timing envisaged in this plan.

In 2017 we have selected 15 top priority projects that address the most urgent portions of this plan. We seek to work as one FSC in the implementation of these projects, the outcomes of which will be reported to the General Assembly in October.

In 2017 we will also work on the creation of a new multi-year budget and work plan, helping with delivery and input into the items in the implementation plan. Before the start of each year, we will turn to the implementation plan as our guide as we plan our work for the coming year. In our planning, we will assess new issues in the industry, market trends, and the needs of our certificate holders and members. This assessment could lead to a change in some of the actions detailed in the implementation plan. We must continue to be mindful of the need to adapt to changing circumstances, and brave in embracing that change, as we continue to correct our course in this time of transformation.

It is a new era for FSC, one where we move even closer toward global coordination, alignment and working as one FSC.

To all who have contributed in steering groups, participated in discussions in Mattermost (one.fsc.org), and served to critique plans along the way: thank you for making this plan possible.

Kim Carstensen
Words from our staff

Our staff were involved at every step of the way in developing this implementation plan. These quotes are a sample of their commitment to this process.

“Push for an internal communication as a matter of priority.”  
– Global Communications

“Give more feedback and input reflecting the regional situation and priorities.”  
– Asia Pacific

“Keep a positive spirit.”  
– Global Business Development

“Invest in the process.”  
– Latin America Network

“Be open for creativity.”  
– FSC UK and FSC Germany

“Be flexible and open to change.”  
– Scandinavia Network

“Be drivers for change.”  
– Forest Network

“Provide an African collective voice.”  
– Africa Network

“Bring high-level discussions down to the daily work of our Network Partners..”  
– Global Network

“Trust working forces. Implement final result. Find money.”  
– European Network
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The five core themes

The implementation plan is organized around five core themes. These themes will correspond to a proposed way of structuring our internal organization in the future, moving away from working in silos - on both a national and international level – and use our resources to the fullest extent.

1. **Theme 1: Certification Products and Performance**
   Linked to Strategies 1.1 and 1.2 of the FSC Global Strategic Plan 2015-2020
   - The nine broad actions that form part of this theme are:
     1. Design and apply a risk-based and approach to our normative framework
     2. Intervene in high-risk regions and product groups to ensure credibility
     3. Develop a controlled wood strategy
     4. Design and apply a user-based revision process for our normative framework
     5. Ensure policies and standards are responsive to emerging sectors
     6. Use experts to improve standards and policy impact
     7. Ensure targeted audits and performance monitoring
     8. Orient our activities toward outcome and impact
     9. Leverage the power of dispute resolution

2. **Theme 2: Innovation and New Product Development**
   Linked to Strategies 1.4 and 2.3 of the FSC Global Strategic Plan 2015-2020
   - The six broad actions that form part of this theme are:
     10. Connect with emerging ecosystem services markets
     11. Deliver empowering solutions for smallholders
     12. Identify priority forests
     13. Develop a digital option to increase credibility and lower cost: FSC 2.0
     14. Provide validation tools to drive responsible investment and financing
     15. Increase revenue to landowners to support conservation and restoration of landscapes

3. **Theme 3: Membership, Advocacy and Dialogue**
   Linked to Strategies 1.3 and 2.2 of the FSC Global Strategic Plan 2015-2020
   - The nine broad actions that form part of this theme are:
     16. Develop and strengthen information channels with the membership
     17. Engage our members
     18. Increase our international membership
     19. Expand the reach of our hosted dialogue platforms
     20. Expand the involvement of Indigenous Peoples
     21. Promote gender equality
     22. Empower workers
     23. Be recognized as thought leaders in our field
     24. Position for future trends, challenges and opportunities

4. **Theme 4: Transforming Markets**
   Linked to Strategies 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 of the FSC Global Strategic Plan 2015-2020
   - The six broad actions that form part of this theme are:
     25. Accelerate the development of supply chains and new markets
     26. Overhaul barriers to product labelling and promotion
     27. Drive commitment to FSC and differentiation from substitutes
     28. Build a digital marketing resource platform
     29. Create professional development and training services
     30. Activate a global consumer movement

5. **Theme 5: Change, Operations and Continuous Improvement**
   Linked to Strategies 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 of the FSC Global Strategic Plan 2015-2020
   - The ten broad actions that form part of this theme are:
     31. Manage our operations according to risk
     32. Manage our transformation
     33. Adapt and improve global operations and governance
     34. Create a service delivery culture
     35. Plan for and finance our activities
     36. Streamline legal, organizational structures and processes
     37. Introduce a global quality management system
     38. Deliver best practice IT systems and management
     39. Retain and attract a talented workforce
     40. Exhibit leading sustainability and social responsibility practices
For easy reference, the actions on the following pages include symbols to link them to one another and to our global strategy. In addition, symbols indicate our immediate priorities. This key will assist you in identifying the symbols.

Implementation plan is based on the FSC Global Strategic Plan 2016-2020. It consists of five core themes.

A1-A9, etc indicates the actions that form part of each of the five core themes of this implementation plan.

Global Strategy refers to the FSC Global Strategic Plan 2016-2020, which forms the foundation of this implementation plan.

Strategies 1, 2, 3 and their critical result areas (e.g. 3.1, 3.2) refer to the overarching calls to action of the FSC Global Strategic Plan 2016-2020.

2017 priority Priority in 2017, and priority number

S in circle (1.1.1, etc) Strategy reference and link to relevant strategy critical result area

Symbol: A# in circle Action number and colour of core theme
Immediate priorities

The FSC International Board of Directors has approved a set of immediate priorities from the implementation plan for the organization to work on in 2017. These cut across many of the individual action sets outlined in this document.

The priorities for 2017 are:

1. Recruitment of a Chief Operating Officer, Market Development Director and IT Director
2. Development of HR and IT strategies
3. Engage members in the General Assembly process
4. Lead the Governance Review to a successful outcome
5. Develop a a structure for global coordination
6. Strengthen action-based learning: oversee and manage ongoing processes as close as possible to the direction of the global strategic plan
7. Propose a risk-based approach to the normative framework, at the General Assembly
8. Deliver the controlled wood strategy
9. New approaches to smallholder certification
10. Indigenous engagement (PIPC v2.0, community certification, FPIC)
11. Developing solutions for certification of ecosystem services
12. Solutions Forum for intact forest landscapes/Indigenous cultural landscapes
13. Solutions Forum for labour rights
14. Take action against false claims in high risk supply chains
15. Marketing strategy: build capacity and market intelligence, including supporting and strengthening current momentum globally and in regions
The actions we will take to implement the FSC Global Strategy
Certification products and performance
Design and apply a risk-based and outcome-oriented approach to our normative framework

**Activities:** We will increase the effectiveness and efficiency of our normative framework, by:

- focusing on high risk and high impact certification requirements, while reducing effort where there are low risk and low impact contexts. This will be related to our global risk management plan.
- applying this approach across all normative standards, policies and associated processes.
- applying this approach to help determine the priority of standards’ revision.
- presenting this new approach to our membership at the 2017 FSC General Assembly for discussion, followed by further development and implementation.

**Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan:** Our activities will build on our existing work, which includes:

- implementation of the scale, intensity and risk concept when international generic indicators (IGIs) are transferred into national forest stewardship standards.
- introduction of a risk-based approach to detect and eliminate false claims in our supply chains.
- creation of centralized national risk assessments (CNRA) and national risk assessments (NRA) to strengthen the risk assessment inherent in controlled wood requirements.
- exploring new approaches for the certification of smallholders.

Additional endeavours support this action. These include:

- growing the Forest Network by engaging network partner forestry experts.
- alignment of the global network in forest management standards’ development.
- ongoing development of standards to protect intact forest landscapes (IFL), and the formation of an IFL Solutions Forum.
- development of high conservation values (HCV) guidance.
- the review of the pesticides policy.

Intervene in high-risk regions and product groups to ensure credibility

**Activities:** To ensure we maintain our credibility, we will:

- identify high-risk regions and supply chains or product groups in the chain of custody (CoC) system.
- deploy a multi-skilled task force to develop cost effective, targeted solutions to ensure credibility of FSC claims and transactions.
- integrate fibre testing in our operations in high-risk regions and product groups, and foster related training of relevant stakeholders.
- take action against misrepresentation.
- ensure that credibility interventions are linked to the creation of a risk-based approach.

**Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan:** Our activities will build on our existing work, which includes working with Accreditation Services International (ASI) to:

- launch forest management credibility projects in Latin America, Scandinavia, Russia and Ukraine, among others.
- introduce the first credibility intervention projects in chain of custody certification in China and Vietnam.
- gain an understanding of the scale of the issues faced, and the approaches and technologies necessary to increase system integrity.
- distill our learnings into recommendations to improve auditing methods, risk-based standards, and our assurance framework.

Where transaction verification has been tested in our chain of custody, the online claims platform has delivered results.
Activities: We will define and implement an agreed strategic direction for controlled wood by:

- developing a controlled wood strategy to comprehensively address the merits of FSC controlled wood against competing approaches, and address the requirements of legality verification systems
- enabling the FSC membership to debate this strategy, and eventually approve it at the 2017 FSC General Assembly.
- ensuring thorough communications on all controlled wood issues, to maintain the stability of the system.

Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan: We have newly revised the controlled wood standard, which strengthens the controlled wood system by:

- implementing a due diligence system to enable businesses to find and assess the necessary information on their products.
- implementing an updated FSC risk assessment procedure.
- mitigating the risk of sourcing unacceptable material from origin, or from mixing in the supply chain.
- providing stronger requirements for transparency, through public reporting, stakeholder feedback, and risk mitigation concerning Indigenous Peoples’ rights and IFL conservation.

Design and apply a user friendly and needs-based revision process for our normative framework

Activities: We will improve the performance and relevance of our core documents by:

- creating a coordinated revision process of our normative framework so that revisions are scheduled at manageable intervals for our stakeholders and staff.
- ensuring revised standards are in plain language and presented in user-friendly ways.
- incorporating market feedback, and analysing proposed changes for cost implications before proceeding with revisions.

Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan: We are committed to completing already started processes, including:

- the IGI transfer process into national standards.
- the transition to CNRA or NRA for controlled wood, without jeopardizing the stability of the system.

We will hold back all policy reviews and revisions – with some exceptions - awaiting the results of the risk framework (Action 1) and credibility intervention (Action 2).

The following standards will still be developed or reviewed in 2017:

- trademark standards (50-001 and 50-002)
- project certification (40-006)
- group chain of custody eligibility requirements (40-003)
- ecosystems services claims procedure (30-002).

The following ongoing initiatives are also underway:

- development of new approaches to community and smallholder certification. This may lead to changes to standards in line with Motions 11 and 83 (2014).
- integration of the conservation of IFL into our normative framework
- development of an online consultation platform for easy participation in our consultations planning for the presentation of at least three current standards per year in a more user-friendly format, including web-based guidance.
Ensure policies and standards are responsive to emerging sectors

**Activities:** To implement this action, we will:

- create a quick response mechanism to ensure prioritized policy development keeps pace with market opportunities for all forest products.
- be mindful of the potential to commercialize new approaches, and work closely with other credible standards’ systems to deliver mutually beneficial outcomes. This is dependent on significant external funding.

**Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan:** These activities will build on our existing work, including:

- development of specific initiatives in non-timber forest product markets, in line with Motion 58 (2014). These include bamboo, rubber, and cork.
- investigating our role in biomass for energy production.
- development of credible ecosystem services claims.

Use experts to improve standards and policy impact

**Activities:** In collaboration with the governance review working group, we will unlock the potential of working groups and technical committees by developing systems and procedures to engage these experts by:

- revising how they are set up and managed. This is in line with Motion 68 (2014).
- ensuring the creation of policies and standards that deliver the desired impact.

**Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan:** This activity will build on our existing work, including:

- the more regular and systematic use of expert and technical panels to support member participation in standards development.
Activities: To address risks to our integrity, and inefficiencies in our system, we will:

- establish an assurance risk management system, considering sectoral, regional and/or national contexts
- investigate audit and sampling intensities, auditor performance, impartiality risks and innovative assurance tools
- incorporate findings of these investigations into risk-based approaches in the normative framework, and into specific interventions addressing high-risk regions and product groups.

Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan: Our activities will build on our existing work, which includes:

- supporting ASI in the further development of their auditor registry that captures critical information to assess auditor performance and audit schedules
- implementing a procedure addressing the training and qualification requirements of audit teams
- developing a generic forest stewardship standard for use by certification bodies to increase auditing credibility and consistency in countries that lack locally developed national standards
- working with ASI to develop standard reporting templates that will allow for a more systematic evaluation of non-conformities raised, improving the transparency of the FSC system, as per Motion 45 (2014).

Activities: We will overhaul how we conduct studies, how we present impact, and how it informs the ongoing evolution of the organization. To do this, we will develop systems to monitor impacts and outcomes that:

- drive the prioritization of the revision process
- inform our quality management system
- inform the deployment of resources
- influence the working directory of priority forests
- decide how to best channel revenue to forest management certificate holders.

Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan: Our activities will build on our existing work, which includes:

- the ongoing provision of annual monitoring and evaluation reporting and coordination of external impact research for many years
- our partnership with the ISEAL-hosted Value and Impact Analysis initiative, aiming to improve methods for collating impact information
- our current work on Motion 45 (2014), which asked FSC to use standard reporting templates to improve transparency and consistency
- our recent partnership with ASI to develop and pilot a system to report on FSC forest management audits. This new system allows for cross-certificate data analysis. The pilot is funded by the ISEAL Innovations Fund
- investigating whether a revision of the forest management reporting standard (FSC-STD-20-007) is needed. Our procedure that governs the revision of normative documents requires this investigation as a first formal step in the process.
Activities: To expand our roles in the resolution of disputes, we will:

- increase our mediation capacity through a structured mediation framework and associated training to ensure conflicts are managed as quickly as possible
- work with poorly performing operators and disassociated organizations to raise the bar of their operations to meet FSC standards and regain their association with FSC.

Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan: Our activities will build on our existing work, which includes:

- informal mediation and resolution of disputing or disagreeing parties
- an established dispute resolution system that evaluates the source and validity of complaints that are not related to certification decisions (complaints related to certification decisions are handled by certification bodies or ASI)
- the piloting of a more formalized approach using mediation training in Brazil since 2015; and building our required mediation capacity in some of our offices around the world
- using our Policy for Association (FSC-01-004) to protect the reputation of FSC and its supporters; and developing roadmaps to end disassociation, and so resolve complex and significant disputes
- continuing the revision of the Policy for Association, which could introduce the concept of warnings to improve poor performance, so providing for immediate corrective action to occur.
Innovation and new product development
Activities: FSC will work towards highlighting the true value of natural forests, creating social and environmental benefits, by:

• developing a sustainable business model for the certification of ecosystem services
• linking certification of ecosystem services to established systems, including REDD+, the voluntary carbon market, and payments for watershed services.

Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan: Our activities will build on our existing work, which includes:

• the inclusion of the ecosystem services claims system (currently under development) in 14 out of 17 national standards
• the inclusion of additional indicators in the IGIs that allow these claims
• pilot testing in Vietnam, Nepal, Indonesia and Chile, with additional pilot sites with broad geographic distribution being planned
• conducting extensive market research and setting up of a business advisory group to provide feedback on product development.

Activities: We aim for easier access to certification and markets for smallholders by:

• implementing mechanisms for deeper engagement of smallholders in relevant standards
• reforming relevant standards to reduce the cost and complexity of FSC certification through risk- or landscape-based approaches, as per Motion 11 (2014)
• using earth observation tools that meet the needs of smallholders
• supporting access to investment and new revenue streams
• developing a system for differentiating smallholder products in the marketplace, as required by Motion 88 (2014).

Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan: Our activities will build on our existing work – began to address several 2014 motions (11, 58 and 88) – which includes:

• hosting of regional discussions with stakeholders to identify needs specific to each region. The first such event was held in Tanzania, Africa
• developing scale, intensity and risk guidelines. These are currently being implemented by standards development groups to make certification for smallholders more accessible
• testing earth observation use in smallholder sites as a tool to help increase access to markets and inventory management
• conducting research to inform a market differentiation strategy for smallholders.
**Activities:** We will ensure our work is well-resourced, providing more direct action against tropical deforestation and degradation than at present. This will be done by:

- creating a working directory of the highest priority production and conservation forests of the world that FSC needs to impact most.
- linking this working directory to an Earth observation platform, allowing for clear communications and monitoring of impact.

**Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan:**

Our activities will build on our existing work, which includes:

- identifying priority regions for investment in forest management in the financing model for our global network of offices
- expanding our presence in tropical regions
- examining our Earth observation capabilities

This action delivers on Motion 28 (2008) that calls on FSC to develop strategies to increase certification in the tropics.

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**Identify priority forests**

**Activities:** FSC-certified materials must maintain their integrity from forest to shelf by providing immediate validation and verification, supported by subsequent monitoring. To do this we will:

- develop and implement an integrated digital global verification system that incorporates approaches such as Earth observation, transaction verification, and product labelling and cataloguing
- provide stronger assurance from the forest to finished labelled products, deliver a better user experience, and reduce the costs of certification in many cases.

**Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan:**

- a number of existing technology projects, currently in use or development will be assessed to determine if they are useful in this new system; and if so, how they are useful
- a new position at senior management level has been created, and this Director of Knowledge Management and IT is currently being recruited to lead the significant amount of work that is already underway.
Activities: Many banks, retirement funds and other investors look to FSC now as a validation tool to support investment decisions. This is driven by the requirements of stakeholders or investors, helping prevent deforestation and degradation. To increase FSC’s relevance in this, we will:

- ensure our work delivers on the needs of forest investors, incorporating innovative thinking in our approach
- use a combination of Earth observation platforms and the FSC Principles & Criteria to provide validation for responsible investment and financing of the world’s forests.

Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan: Our activities will build on our existing work, which includes:

- the use of FSC in a wide variety of sectors and geographies as a risk management tool
- completing trials of a demonstration Earth observation platform, which generated interest from financiers of forestry assets.

Activities: There is a substantial amount of external funding available to support forest conservation and restoration activities. We will ensure that the incentives to conserve and restore forests reach the people who manage them, and are properly validated. We will do this by:

- creating a validation tool, supported by Earth observation, and a set of principles directly aligned with the FSC Principles & Criteria, to ensure that restorations reinstate the landscape’s former natural state, and enable cross-commodity approaches to landscape certification
- providing access to our monitoring tools to funders and certificate holders, so connecting potential donors and recipients.

Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan: Our activities will build on our existing work, which includes:

- early intelligence gathering and advocacy related to forest conservation and restoration
- assessment of Earth observation tools to ensure they can be used for this purpose
- establishment of a Motion 12 (2014) working group to consider the challenges and opportunities related to restoration and conversion.
Membership, advocacy and dialogue
Develop and strengthen information channels with the membership

**Activities:** We will routinely and actively engage our membership by:

- using the 2017 FSC General Assembly preparation process to establish dialogue with our members through meetings, webinars and the like.
- setting up discussion and feedback mechanisms for the preparation of General Assembly motions.
- consistently analysing our engagement with a view to improving information channels.
- measuring membership satisfaction rates and communicating and addressing areas of clear dissatisfaction.

**Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan:** Our activities will build on our existing work, which includes:

- ongoing engagement in dialogue with members across chambers at international, regional and network levels. This includes regional member meetings in preparation for the 2017 General Assembly.
- the launch of an online member’s portal, which provides a dedicated channel for member information.

Engage our members

**Activities:** With a renewed focus on our information channels we will:

- develop an engagement plan for more substantive and efficient membership participation, with an initial focus on Indigenous Peoples, trade unions, landowners and forest managers.
- define the relationship between national and international membership following recommendations from the Motion 42 (2014) governance review.
- respect national level governance, and provide national members with mechanisms for structured input into international processes that directly affect network partner work.
- develop relevant information and sub-chamber-specific value propositions to support recruitment.

**Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan:** Our activities will build on our existing work, which includes:

- our work with the Permanent Indigenous Peoples’ Committee (PIPC) to ensure Indigenous members’ engagement.
- our engagement with forest owners and managers in various climate zones and forest types (plantations, boreal, tropical).
Increase our international membership

Activities: We will focus on:

• improving the membership experience for our existing members
• attracting new members, particularly in strategically important and under-represented geographies, interest groups, and sub-chambers; and certificate holders.

Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan:

Our activities will build on our existing work, which includes:

• dialogue meetings on tropical forests and new trends in the forest products’ market
• the cross-chamber IFL Solutions Forum met during 2016, and included a diverse group of stakeholders. It is expected to continue.
**Expand the involvement of Indigenous Peoples**

**Activities:** We undertake to make FSC the preferred certification system for Indigenous Peoples globally by providing a global platform for their collective voices, promoting their rights, and supporting their involvement in FSC certification. We will do this by:

- developing a new FSC subsidiary to act as the secretariat of the PIPC, and support Indigenous Peoples’ engagement in building FSC forest sector market share
- developing a community standard as required by Motion 83 (2014) to enable Indigenous certification
- working with PIPC to identify and map Indigenous cultural landscapes (ICL) of significance as a unique layer of the working directory of priority forests to ensure FSC is effective in these places.

**Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan:** Our activities will build on our existing work. This includes:

- PIPC has been an advisory committee to FSC since 2013
- the committee is finalizing a redesigned organizational model for the launch of a new subsidiary within the FSC group
- in 2016, PIPC focused on free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) guidelines that have been piloted in 10 locations: China, Chile, Mozambique, Congo Basin, Sweden, Spain, Nepal, Malaysia, Canada and Russia
- a community certification approach is in development, as required by Motion 83 (2014).

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**Promote gender equality**

**Activities:** We will:

- develop and implement an FSC system-wide gender equality strategy to enable equal gender access to our system and the benefits it delivers
- increase the resources of the FSC social programme to provide capacity to support this work
- analyse the impact of our gender guidance note (GUI 60-005) and incorporated indicators into national standards to inform the development of the gender strategy.

**Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan:** Our activities will build on our existing work. This includes the 2016 release of a gender guidance note, pointing to the nine IGIs on gender equality, and providing related examples of national indicators and means of verification.
Empower workers

**Activities:** We will continue to work to ensure that FSC standards protect the rights of workers. This includes:

- continued work to ensure respect for the principles of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Core Conventions, and living wages for workers in FSC-certified forest enterprises
- activating a Labour Solutions Forum to discuss issues raised by trade union representatives in the context of the CoC standard revision, and that could possibly extend beyond the principles of the ILO Core Conventions
- strengthening the FSC Dispute Resolution System in relation to worker’s rights.

Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan: Our activities will build on our existing work. This includes:

- being a founding member of ISEAL’s Global Living Wage Coalition and incorporating this concept in the IGIs (STD-60-004).
- the work of the ILO working group to resolve issues of how to ensure respect for the principles of the ILO Core Conventions throughout the FSC system.
- the incorporation of occupational health and safety standards into STD-40-004 in version 2.1 in 2011.

Be recognized as thought leaders in our field

**Activities:** To move towards the 2050 beacon and to meet the 2020 aspiration to become the leading catalyst and defining force for improved forest management, we will strengthen our status as a dialogue platform and draw on the collective wisdom of our multi-stakeholder membership and global staff. We will do this by:

- ensuring that we build on our work and increase our efforts to reposition FSC where needed
- positioning the organization as a recognized, go-to global leader in the sustainability movement, helping to achieve a tipping point in humanity’s relationship to natural resources.

This action is not just about what we offer, but the level of leadership inherent in how we work, and the influence of the organizations we bring with us.

Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan: Our core strength and future as thought leaders lies in harnessing the collective wisdom of our multi-stakeholder platform and our global staff. We have gained global recognition by achieving real scale and the beginnings of a brand presence in the global market.
Activities: To achieve our aim, we will:

• routinely and actively monitor the external environment for developments and trends that provide opportunities or threats to FSC and take immediate action to address them.

• ensure ‘future proofing’ through ongoing systematic monitoring of our strategy and implementation plan, by FSC management.

• engage advisors to assist us understand our wider operating context and potentially disruptive trends, prior to beginning the development of the 2021-26 strategic plan.

Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan:

We are setting up systems to measure progress against our current strategic plan, with annual reports back to the membership and wider FSC community.
Transforming Markets
Accelerate the development of supply chains and new markets

Activities: We will activate a global outreach team to promote certified products and proactively grow FSC’s market presence. We will do this by:

• mapping the priority supply chains that lead to greatest impact globally and regionally; and identifying certification gaps, barriers to supply chain establishment, and the ‘leakage’ of certified products to non-certified buyers
• deploying people with specific industry skills and knowledge to these priority markets to drive certification, linking buyers and sellers, and providing information to attract new certificate holders
• providing access to exchange of product information through online platforms field visits, web and in-person workshops and training
• targeting business development and key account management.

These activities will greatly increase the volume, diversity and availability of FSC-labelled products.

Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan: Our activities will build on our existing work. This includes:

• current good understanding of local supply chains by many network partners, who are well placed to share best practice approaches and peer learning opportunities
• a number of priority sectors (i.e. finance, green building) and commodities (i.e. tissue, packaging, textiles, rubber, tropical timber) were identified in the Motion 8 (2011) work by PriceWaterhouseCoopers
• our key account management function provides services to global key accounts, with network partners providing similar services at regional and national scales
• the beginnings of a process to define our baseline for measuring the 20 per cent by 2020 objective.

Overhaul barriers to product labelling and promotion

Activities: We will:

• finalise the trademark standard revision in 2017 to simplify trademark use and streamline approval processes
• revise use requirements and authorization processes for product labeling and promotion at all levels of the supply chain
• create an efficient online service to provide easier use requirements for all and more efficient verification of claims for retailers and wholesalers. This new system will deliver a wave of new products for promotion that are not currently eligible for promotion. This action directly addresses Motions 29 and 36 (2014).

Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan: Our activities will build on our existing work. This includes:

• work already done on the trademark standard revision
• a pilot project that aims to lighten the verification process for finished labelled products. It will do this by easing certification requirements at trader level. In addition, verification processes overall will be easier for clients, certification bodies and FSC.
Activities: To enable a consistent marketing ethos that emphasizes our unique selling points and impact, both internally and externally, we will:

- create a single integrated global marketing strategy including brand, communications and competitive analysis that captures the full scope of this implementation plan
- frame core messages in ways that resonate with our users, as shown by our ongoing brand research
- adapt this strategy and implement it in collaboration with network partners and other advocates to ensure local relevance
- recruit a senior market development position to lead this work.

Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan: Our activities will build on our existing work. This includes:

- existing marketing and communications strategies
- existing competitive strategies at some regional and national levels
- already conducted brand research across over a dozen markets.

Activities: We will build and encourage the uptake of an online marketing resource platform. The platform will:

- be oriented to priority user groups including different industry segments, trademark license holders, retailers, private and public purchasers, forest owners and investors, and FSC members
- feature assets that are ready for use
- include compelling educational and promotional materials, images, videos, impact assessments, case studies, certification comparisons, and model purchasing policies
- be informed by the strategy developed in Action 27, helping us understand what specific market segments want from us.

Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan: Our activities will build on our existing work. This includes:

- an established multi-lingual marketing toolkit for the Forests For All Forever campaign
- advanced multimedia platforms and online resources held by some network partners
- the ongoing development of a multimedia platform at international level, which is due for launch in 2017. The platform will allow FSC’s bank of photos, video and other visual materials to be available to all FSC offices. In addition, FSC staff will have the option to upload their FSC-related materials to the platform for others to use.
Create professional development and training services

Activities: We will position FSC as an authority on its own products and services, by:

- creating a comprehensive, integrated, module-based training suite and accreditation system for use throughout the FSC system
- enabling this system to be delivered through a network of qualified providers, regional offices and network partners.
- delivering training on the content of policies and standards to certification bodies, global staff, consultants and trainers
- designing training materials to include a range of user-oriented and simplified training products for different market segments
- timing training to deploy as new products or amendments are made
- developing a continuing professional development system to support the accreditation of FSC consultants and trainers (in line with Motion 52 (2014)). In addition, this system will include ‘soft skills’ development capacity for staff globally
- commercialize professional development and training services, leading to increased revenue for all in the FSC Group that deliver training.

Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan: Our activities will build on our existing work. This includes:

- a multilingual online learning management system – currently with 2,500 registered users – for the delivery of a set of e-learning courses, mainly on the use of FSC trademarks. Additional courses on the FSC normative system are also available or under development
- the exploration of various approaches to optimize the provision of online courses, especially in terms of development costs and work processes
- analysis of options for an online payment system
- development of normative requirements (FSC-STD-20-001 V 4-0 + FSC-PRO-20-004 V 1-2), providing the basis for the accreditation of training providers
- an online database (Auditor and Training Registry), hosted by ASI, for registration of accredited training organizations, their trainers and training courses
- a ‘transition examination’ for FSC auditors is in place. This is an online knowledge testing system on FSC’s normative requirements and certification system
- a ‘Train the Trainers’ course to build the competence of trainers.

Activate a global consumer movement

Activities: To drive FSC preference with young adults in priority countries, we will activate a global consumer movement, by:

- working with partners to build mutually beneficial consumer engagement activities to instil our story and our impacts to consumers, leading them to exhibit purchase preference for FSC products
- adapting marketing and related communications approaches for local relevance
- developing a platform for consumers and retailers to easily find and source FSC-certified products. This action will be activated in line with Action 27.

Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan: Our activities will build on our existing work. This includes:

- a variety of consumer research, brand development and engagement activities have been implemented across the globe
- the Forests For All Forever campaign has been rolled out in many countries.
Change, operations and continuous improvement
Manage our operations according to risk

Activities: To empower management and staff to act swiftly with accountability we will:

• create a global risk management plan to provide the basis for decentralizing and delegating decision making. This plan will define our organizational risk tolerance and include management tools for analysing and managing operational, legal and financial risks.

• ensure appropriate levels of resourcing are available to prioritize and manage our work, and mitigate risk.

We will use an assessment of risk of the implementation plan itself as a basis to move forward on this action.

Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan: Our activities will build on our existing work. This includes:

• the use of risk management in several areas of the organization already (including controlled wood, system integrity, finance and fundraising, and legal).

Manage our transformation

Activities: We will manage FSC’s change process to ensure that we:

• deploy in stages

• plan for any HR changes needed

• instigate necessary culture change

• monitor goals and timelines

• communicate the change and impact of the change to key stakeholder groups.

Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan: A significant amount of work has already been done to manage our transformation and implement our global strategy. These include:

• ensuring this implementation plan was developed in an inclusive and bottom up process

• basing the content of this implementation plan on the work done by steering groups of FSC global staff, who created project cases directly from the strategy

• conducting extensive training on the transformation process throughout the organization, including with 97 per cent of staff in the global office

• beginning work on culture and skills assessment to support our strategic approach.
Activities: The overall review of FSC’s governance as called for by Motion 42 (2014) is in the hands of the governance review working group, who will report to the FSC International Board of Directors and to the FSC General Assembly.

At the same time, the FSC secretariat will work with the International Board and the governance review working group to identify and immediately implement actionable proposals for improving global operations and collaboration. We will:

• support the work of the governance review working group
• develop options on how we may better guarantee global coordination of FSC operations whilst ensuring local relevance
• develop recommendations, for consideration, on how we see the on-the-ground presence of FSC developing, and how we could further develop the concept of one FSC
• implement any systematic changes that are recommended by the governance review working group, and later approved by the FSC General Assembly in 2017.

Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan:

The governance review working group has been established and is working on recommendations for the 2017 FSC General Assembly.

Over the past years, we have experimented with models of engaging network partners in different aspects of the development of our global operations. These include:

• the Motion 8 (2011) steering group
• the Motion 8 (2011) implementation team
• the FSC 2020 team.

All have delivered opinions and input from the ground into institutional decisions.

Activities: We must provide world class service at all levels of our organization, both internally and externally. To this end, we will:

• conduct a cost-benefit analysis and external study of our current and proposed service delivery models, based on stakeholder expectations
• explore an effective management and governance model to establish and support efficient service delivery. This model will consider revenue generation, resource allocation, and accountability.

Outputs of this action include a new network finance and accountability model, and the implementation of globally consistent service levels.

Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan: Our activities will build on our existing work. This includes:

• the release of a new funding and accountability model in November 2015, marking our first effort to ensure that change – as outlined in the global strategy - was felt on the ground as early as possible
• a review of the 2015 model, which was developed before the drafting of this implementation plan, and refining tasks where necessary
• gathering a substantial amount of information from a business to business survey to help inform our planning
• planning for a further finance and accountability model.
Plan for and finance our activities

Activities: To ensure we have the resources and infrastructure to support our work, we will:

- develop and implement a global finance strategy. The strategy will:
  - encourage and enable entrepreneurship of all global staff
  - outline realistic income projections
  - develop clear protocols for implementation
  - create a distribution model that defines our strategic priorities
  - diversify our revenue streams
  - address any projected shortfalls
  - allow for externally funded projects wherever possible, while optimizing our existing resources
  - reflect both short and long term objectives, adopted by all FSC entities around the world
- ensure we manage our internal finance processes and donor relationships
- provide transparent and responsive reporting on our financial position
- shift our financial management procedures to ensure they can support our move toward one FSC
- ensure fundraising activities align with this implementation plan so that fundraising supports FSC and does not decide its priorities.

Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan:

Our activities will build on our existing work. This includes:

- the creation of a charitable entity, based in the United States, engaging in fundraising in the U.S. and globally to support the work of all parts of FSC
- a fundraising toolkit for all parts of FSC, to support local fundraising activities
- making audited financial information available each year, delivering on Motion 71.

Streamline legal, organizational structures and processes

Activities: We will conduct an assessment to:

- ensure the formal legal structures and entities are in place and are designed to actively support the delivery of this implementation plan
- make management decisions on legal advice, contracts and analysis within the context of the risk management plan
- systematically remove bureaucracy in our internal processes, allowing our lawyers to focus, enabling project completion within the timelines of this implementation plan.

Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan: Our activities will build on our existing work. This includes:

- the legal registration of a national FSC office in China
- the ongoing process to register the Latin American regional office, which is expected to provide a model useful in the legal registration of other regional offices
- the ongoing registration process of FSC Investments & Partnerships in the USA, with work continuing to obtain tax exempted status and to shift staff to this site.
Introduce a global quality management system

Activities: We will:

• ensure accountability and continuous improvement by operating an organization-wide quality management system

• develop required processes and procedures in compliance with a third party standard and later integrate these into our IT systems and management.

Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan: Our activities will build on our existing work. This includes:

• some network partners have implemented local quality management systems, which have been reviewed for potential application on a global scale

• investigation of a supporting project management system is in progress. This will be implemented first at global office level and then throughout the regions and the FSC network.

Deliver best practice IT systems and management

Activities: We will analyse the IT needs of the organization globally and develop an IT strategy to:

• deliver a complete, interconnected, and secure information and knowledge sharing system, which enables:
  · all users worldwide to easily and reliably access the information relevant to them
  · transparent and informed decision making and stakeholder relationships
  · a user friendly and solution-oriented system, streamlining the way we work.

• prioritize the provision of an advanced and professional video conferencing solution to support FSC processes and reduce the human and environmental impact of frequent travel, so ensuring our people remain in their regions to service on the ground as much as possible.

• track project costs and the impact of decisions

• ensure a financial system that is interconnected and able to provide faster information for swift decision making.

Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan: Our activities will build on our existing work. This includes:

• an analysis of the existing IT system to provide a solid basis from which database consolidation and system integration could begin

• the beginning of the build of an ASI electronic reporting system to enable us to capture corrective action requests. This system will also provide a stronger foundation for data management, driving action based on impact, and ensuring we can deliver Motion 45 (2014), improving the transparency of the FSC system.
Retain and attract a talented workforce

**Activities:** Our people will reflect our values, be proud of our organization, and work with us toward our 2020 mission. To achieve this, we will:

- map training needs to the requirements of all roles in FSC globally, to rapidly increase the skills of our people
- ensure appropriate training and support is available, using our module-based training system and focusing on soft skills required to meet role expectations
- retain people with the expertise and mindset to fulfill our strategic direction.
- develop an HR strategy to recognize, attract and retain talent, whilst ensuring we develop our presence in strategically important roles and locations. The HR strategy will increase staff motivation, with collaboration, mentoring and diversity playing central roles.

**Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan:** Our activities will build on our existing work. This includes:

- work is already undergoing on several HR policy issues to make FSC an employer of choice and support this action in general. Examples include:
  - ongoing work on policies for:
    - working hours, including flexi time and overtime compensation
    - working from home
    - salary scales
  - travel risk management
  - welcome management
  - improvement of recruitment processes
  - completing a culture analysis
  - skills and skills gap analyses.

Exhibit leading sustainability and social responsibility practices

**Activities:** We will lead by example, including:

- the development of a policy for our own operations to incorporate sustainability and social responsibility practices, with annual progress reports
- deploying savings from these for other purposes
- the reduction of travel frequency to assist us to maintain a happy and engaged workforce
- ensuring we make simple changes and improve gradually, with a more significant shift to occur later.

**Already underway at the start of implementation of this plan:** Our activities will build on our existing work. This includes:

- carbon offsetting of air miles
- ensuring procurement decisions keep sustainable sourcing front and centre.
Glossary

**Critical result areas.** The high level outcomes we are prioritizing to achieve the 2020 objective.

**Enabling phase.** An internal analysis process that follows strategic planning and precedes implementation planning. This process ensures the strategic plan is achievable, and defines what preconditions are necessary for its implementation.

**Forest Network.** A network of all forest officers of standard development groups in Europe, Canada and Russia, created for participants to exchange information on standards development. It is coordinated by FSC France and FSC Canada.

**Global network.** All FSC organizations collectively, including the FSC global office, regional offices and network partners.

**Global staff.** All FSC staff among all FSC organizations.

**Guiding principles.** A shared set of ethics that guide the behaviour of FSC staff and that will be institutionalized within our management systems.

**Implementation plan.** The detailed steps of how FSC’s group of organizations will implement the various elements of the strategic plan.

**Mission.** Our reason for existence, which should permeate everything the organization does.

**Network partner.** An affiliated organization or individual representing FSC at a national level. This includes national offices, national representatives, and national focal points.

**Normative framework.** The policies, standards, procedures, directives and advice notes related to FSC certification.

**Objective.** A measureable and time-bound indicator of progress toward a particular goal.

**Partners.** FSC’s allies in the collective governing, building and implementing of programmes and systems that help achieve the FSC mission.

**Product group.** Refers to types or a range of types of FSC-certified products. This could refer to the raw materials (for example, bamboo or cork), or to finished products along the supply chain (such as pulp, or packaging).

**Quality Management System.** A set of policies, processes and procedures focused on consistently meeting customer and stakeholder requirements and enhancing their satisfaction. It is aligned with an organization’s purpose and strategic direction (ISO9001:2015).

**Risk-based.** Verification methods that calibrate auditing intensity against actual risk of non-conformance.

**Solutions.** A generic term for any strategies, tools, products, programmes or approaches that work in support of the global strategy.

**Strategies.** A coherent set of high level actions designed to enable the 2020 objective.

**Success criteria.** The specific outcomes of specific actions that FSC needs to be successful and by which the strategic plan will be judged.
We make a difference, locally and globally.

work as one to reach our goals.

always go that extra mile, seek dialogue and are service minded.

proudly improve livelihoods and sustainable forestry worldwide.

FSC OPERATIONAL VISION