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| ADVICE 20-007-15 | Certification of Forest Management Units (FMUs) with areas converted from natural forest to plantations after 1994 |
| Normative reference | FSC-STD-01-001 V4-0 Criterion 10.9 |
| Effective date | Upon approval |
| Terms & definitions | Very limited portion: The area affected shall not exceed 0.5% of the area of the FMU in any one year, nor affect a total of more than 5% of the area of the FMU in total. |
| Background | <p>In many parts of the world, Organizations are constrained from entering their FMU(s) into FSC certification because of Criterion 10.9 of FSC-STD-01-001 V4-0, which forbids the FSC certification of “plantations established in areas converted from natural forests after November 1994”.</p> <p>There are situations where a single FMU contains both natural forests and plantations in several separate blocks, divisions or subdivisions of the FMU, including areas converted from natural forests before and after 1994. Some Organizations in this situation, wishing to obtain FSC Forest Management certification for the eligible areas, have stopped all conversion of natural forests, and are managing all areas according to a similar set of FSC-compatible guidelines.</p> <p>In these situations where the 1994 rule makes it impossible for the Organization to comply fully with the FSC Principles and Criteria in the plantation areas, there is precedence under FSC-POL-20-002 <i>Partial Certification of Large Ownerships</i> for allowing them to split the existing FMU into two or more separate new FMUs, each one eligible for either FSC Forest Management certification or FSC Controlled Wood certification.</p> |
| Advice | <p>In these situations, and to ensure compatibility with other FSC policies, the Organization is given the option to implement the following requirements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Post-1994 conversion plantations that are separated into one or more FMUs in accordance with this Advice Note shall be certified to the FSC Controlled Wood standard, FSC-STD-30-010, before or at the same time as the FSC Forest Management certification of the other new FMUs, unless such action is deemed by the certification body to be impossible for reasons beyond the control of the Organization. 2. When a FMU is divided into new, separate FMUs in accordance with this Advice Note, the new Management Units collectively are permitted to continue conversion of natural forest to plantations only to the extent that the total area of all Conversion Plantations does not exceed the current rules for “a very limited portion” of the FMU. If the original Management Unit contains more than “a very limited portion” of conversion plantations, then the new FMUs formed in accordance with this Advice Note are not permitted to continue converting natural |

forests into plantations, in either the Forest Management or the Controlled Wood certified Units. Such conversion must have ceased not less than two (2) years before the new certificates are issued.

3. Each separate FMU will require a separate set of management planning documentation according to Principle 7 of the FSC Principles and Criteria. According to the FSC Principles and Criteria, units which are FSC certified shall be clearly demarcated on maps, and clearly distinguished on the ground from non-certified areas, whether or not they are Controlled Wood-certified. Clear separation of products from the different FMUs will also be required for the control of Chain of Custody.

4. The Organization shall comply with all applicable FSC Policies and Standards, including the Policy for Association.

EXAMPLE:

The following generic example shows how Forest Management Units may be split into two or more separate Forest Management Units, each one eligible for either FSC Forest Management certification or FSC Controlled Wood certification.

A large company owns natural forest and plantations in several separate properties, blocks, divisions or subdivisions but all areas are within one FMU. All areas are managed according to similar sets of general guidelines, but some plantations areas cannot be certified for Forest Management because they were formed by conversion of natural forests after 1994. These "conversion plantations" are well-defined, clearly delineated on the ground and on maps, and clearly distinguished from other subdivisions of the Management Unit. Recognizing that the 1994 rule makes it impossible for the Organization to comply fully with the FSC Principles and Criteria in these Conversion Plantation areas, they may be recognized as separate Management Units, without preventing the Forest Management certification of the remainder of the property.