

FSC New Approaches Program as a high-level priority for advancing smallholder and Community certification

Policy Motion

Original language: English

	PROPOSER:	1st SECONDER:	2nd SECONDER:
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Policy Motion (high-level action request):

Prioritize implementation of the FSC New Approaches program including communication of progress and results, with emphasis on core actions within that program needed to significantly advance the ability of smallholders and Communities to access, maintain and capture the benefits of FSC certification. Such actions include:

- o **Ground-truthing, approval and international implementation of the Community Certification tool (as per Motion 2014:83);**
- o **Development and implementation of a Contractor Certification scheme; and, exploration and implementation of other mechanisms for improving access for smallholders in countries where Contractor Certification is not considered appropriate;**
- o **Revision of the Group Certification standard, including a comprehensive evaluation of the current standard to identify strengths/weaknesses and potential barriers that could be removed, and development of solutions and tools to enhance group certification (e.g., simplification, applying contractor certification and risk-based approach in group certification context, etc.);**
- o **A robust strategy to develop and improve access and markets for forest products and services derived from smallholders and Communities, including creating real incentives for certified companies to increase smallholder and Community uptake in their supply chain;**
- o **Fast-track the exploration, piloting and system-wide uptake of risk-based approaches for smallholders and Communities;**
- o **Support to National Standard Development Groups to ensure that the full potential of Scale, Intensity and Risk (SIR) considerations result in simplified standards for smallholders, particularly for very small forest owners (thresholds to be decided on national level), ;**
- o **A study of the costs associated with the smallholder certification audit process and recommendations for making the process more cost-effective, including potential financial mechanisms for both implementation and verification costs (this can be included within the study of Smallholders typologies and recommendations from the Community Standard development process).**

While maintaining its commitment to effectively resource and implement the New Approaches program, FSC shall also incorporate the following elements into its approach:

- o **A communications strategy that targets smallholders, group managers, Communities, certification bodies, and other practitioners, and that includes user-friendly guidance, best practices, templates and other techniques aimed at rapid adoption and diffusion of innovation;**
- o **A partnership strategy which serves to create and build on relationships with other organizations working for or with forest smallholders and Communities aimed at creating synergies and advancing certification and benefits for the target groups;**
- o **Conduct a number of trial or pilot projects in selected countries, preferably in collaboration with other organizations as described above, to assess the feasibility of different approaches;**
- o **Research the pros and cons and potential of including the element of ecosystem services in the new approaches (e.g. as a stand-alone standard, combined with the Community Standard, or as a separate annex to FM standard)**
- o **Research on how the FSC system can increase the confidence of responsible investors and their engagement with the products and services provided by FSC certified smallholders and communities.**

