



FSC® General Assembly 2017

Vancouver, Canada, 8–13 October

September 2017

New Approaches to Smallholder Certification

Background

FSC certification cannot be 'one size fits all'.

Launched in 2016, New Approaches to Smallholder Certification (New Approaches) is a project that brings together a transdisciplinary team of experts to enable smallholders to design a certification system that works for them, in their contexts, while ensuring a balance with the need to maintain the credibility of FSC certification.

The project has three dedicated work streams, including normative framework, market developments and enablers (i.e. communications and fundraising) to improve access to, and uptake of, the FSC system by small forest owners and communities.

Current status

Within the context of the FSC system, the project is:

1. Exploring existing flexibility within the FSC policy and standards system (i.e. the FSC normative framework)
2. Revising relevant standards for clarification and simplify the requirements relevant to smallholders
3. Exploring new areas for smallholders (e.g. contractors' certification or a simplified smallholder standard)

Within the context of market development, the project aims to:

1. Improve FSC market intelligence on smallholders
2. Improve FSC market tools and services for smallholders
3. Develop market strategies for smallholders



Communications, fundraising, and stakeholder engagement will complement each activity.

Timeline

The project is designed in three phases and consistent with the *FSC Implementation Plan*, developed to help FSC take the necessary steps towards achieving the *Global Strategic Plan 2015–2020*.

Phase I – Mobilize the team and launch the project (2016)

Phase II – Develop existing certification products and test certification prototypes (2017–2018)

Phase III – Scale up certification products that have the potential to drive real returns (2019–2020)

GA 2017 activities

Thinking small is the key to big success.

Since the last general assembly, we've been engaging with smallholders in all regions of the world to learn about issues they care about and capture first-hand information about what's missing, what they'd like to be able to do, and why they're unable to do those things with existing standards and services.

At the smallholder side event at the 2017 General Assembly, we will share our most current smallholder data and present two certification prototypes – a progressive path to certification for smallholders, and certifying contractor's working in smallholder owned forests.

Side event 9 October 16:30 to 18:00

Additional information

- [Certifying small forests](#) (a dedicated web page on ic.fsc.org)
- [Group Certification Now Open For 30-Day Consultation](#) (technical update in our biweekly newsletter)
- [Learning From Others: Approaches To Encouraging Smallholder Certification](#) (technical update in our biweekly newsletter)
- [New Approaches to Smallholder Certification](#) (section in the Implementation Plan website)