

Controlled Wood Regional Meetings: Connect, Communicate, Collaborate

The following summarizes FSC's vision for Regional Meetings for certificate holders and other stakeholders to identify risk mitigation actions at a landscape scale. The FSC US Board of Directors conceived the approach in December 2016 and it has since been further developed by FSC US staff, the Controlled Wood National Risk Assessment Technical Advisory and Working Groups and a focus group meeting held in 2017.

- The Regional Meetings will be organized as forums for information sharing and relationship building, where new information about risk, information to assist with effectiveness assessments, and results of research and analysis will be shared. The format will include both plenary-style presentations as well as smaller group discussions, along with other approaches to information-sharing. To do this effectively, FSC will need to engage those individuals and organizations in the region who are most knowledgeable about and working most closely with the issues identified.
- As required by the risk assessment's control measures, the meetings will include facilitated, interactive dialogues through which participants will work together to identify effective and practical mitigation actions that will reduce the risk of unacceptable materials entering the FSC supply chain. We will ask participants to strive for landscape-scale mitigation actions, which may be implemented by certificate holders within the landscape of the specified risk designations, without identifying the specific origin of the materials to be controlled. There is also great potential value in building on existing programs and projects associated with the identified risks.
- With respect to antitrust concerns, certificate holders (who are competitors) will not be asked to agree to or decide on one specific mitigation action, but instead, certificate holders at the regional meetings will be working toward a set of multiple potential actions, with each organization later deciding individually which they will implement. This is in line with legal advice received by FSC. Antitrust as an issue will be well articulated at the regional meetings, and FSC will ask all participants to be vigilant in identifying and avoiding any situation where antitrust violations could occur.
- The Regional Meeting cycle will drive effectiveness verification of implemented control measures at the scale of the specified risk designation. We will ask certificate holders and other participants to provide information and feedback on the specified risk designations and mitigation actions. Using this information and any other outcomes from the Regional Meetings, in combination with monitoring data shared by other stakeholders and previous Regional Meeting outcomes, we will complete an assessment of the effectiveness of control measure implementation and share the results. Our goal is to see the assessed level of specified risk decline over subsequent Regional Meetings and ultimately allow a low risk designation in the National Risk Assessment.
- FSC US will be responsible for the planning and coordination of the Regional Meetings. We will work to ensure participation is as diverse as possible, including certificate holders, environmental organizations, social organizations, experts, academics, public agencies, and landowners who are not certificate holders. We believe that this diversity will be key to the success of the regional meetings and the US National Risk Assessment.
- Following each Regional Meeting, FSC US will develop and publish a Regional Meeting Report that includes: a summary of new information about risk and risk mitigation that was

shared during the meeting; risk mitigation action options for each specified risk designation; and details of information that has been requested of from certificate holders and/or stakeholders to augment effectiveness verification.

- Ultimately, we expect meetings to occur every 3-5 years in association with each region that has a specified risk designation. However, initial implementation of the risk assessment will likely require adjustments, so we anticipate a second set of meetings will be needed sooner, approximately 18 months after the initial meetings, which are being planned for early Summer 2018. Some regions may be combined into a single meeting if geographically adjacent and similar risk issues need to be addressed. The duration of the meetings may vary depending on the number and complexity of issues that need to be addressed, but we are planning for 1-2 day meetings.

Contingency Plan

The Regional Meetings are critical to the success of the US National Risk Assessment and Controlled Wood system overall. Therefore, if Regional Meeting participants are unable to identify mitigation actions within the timeframe of the scheduled meeting, we propose the following contingency steps to complete the process:

1. A small group of certificate holder and stakeholder representatives from the region is formed to build on the information and perspectives shared during the Regional Meeting. The participants must have demonstrated an ability to represent the perspective of the chamber with which they are most aligned, an ability to be open to other perspectives and new ideas, and a willingness to compromise. This group will be asked to complete the process within one month after the meeting. Small group participants will be identified:
 - a. Preferably, at the Regional Meeting, by participants (once it has become clear that it will not be possible find agreement on a set of mitigation actions by the end of the meeting).
 - b. Failing (a), FSC US will solicit participants representing a diversity of perspectives and form a small group in consultation with our Board of Directors.
2. If the small group is unable to find agreement on a set of mitigation actions within one month, FSC US staff will build on the dialogue held at the Regional Meeting, and any subsequent small group discussions, to develop a draft set of mitigation actions that will be approved by the FSC US Board of Directors prior to being published in the Regional Meeting report.

We look forward to seeing you at the first round of Controlled Wood Regional Meetings in early-Summer 2018! Watch for announcements with more information coming soon....