



Forest Stewardship Council®



Requirements for use of the FSC® trademarks by certificate holders

FSC-STD-50-001 V2-0 – EN

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The Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) is an independent, not for profit, non-government organization established to support environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests.

The FSC vision is that the world's forests meet the social, ecological, and economic rights and needs of the present generation without compromising those of future generations.

Introduction

This document contains the requirements and guidelines for use of Forest Stewardship Council trademarks by FSC certificate holders. It covers labelling with FSC trademarks as well as promotion of products and organization's status as an FSC certificate holder.

The FSC trademarks are the primary communication tool for FSC certificate holders to demonstrate that their products meet the standards set by FSC. Labelling the products and promoting them with FSC trademarks helps consumers make informed decisions about the products and materials they purchase. Therefore, it is essential that they are used correctly, do not misguide customers and the public about certification claims, and are not associated with quality aspects beyond those covered by FSC certification.

In addition to these requirements, FSC provides tools to help certificate holders to promote and to label products – for example, by providing a label generator and marketing toolkit with guidance and ready-to-use examples on how to create promotional materials in line with the FSC brand. Access to the online services for certificate holders is arranged by their certification bodies.

There is also a quick guide on FSC trademark use available that summarizes the core requirements presented fully in this document.

Note: The FSC trademarks can be used on products only by holders of FSC chain of custody (CoC) certificates or joint FSC forest management and chain of custody (FM/CoC) certificates.

FSC will update these requirements periodically to include necessary clarification, based on the feedback generated from the use of this document.

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A Scope

Adherence to this standard is mandatory for all FSC certificate holders who are entitled to use the FSC trademarks; it sets out how to use the FSC trademarks correctly. The standard covers use of the FSC trademarks on FSC-certified products, use for promotion of FSC-certified products, and for promotion of the company's status as an FSC certificate holder. This standard forms the basis for evaluation and approval by FSC-accredited certification bodies of all certificate holders' use of FSC trademarks.

Elements for making FSC claims on invoices and delivery documents are defined in chain of custody standard FSC-STD-40-004 and are not affected by these requirements.

This standard replaces:

FSC-ADV-50-003 *Labelling of Products from Small and Community Producer, clause 2.5*
FSC-ADV-50-004 *Requirements for Use of the Forest-for-All-Forever Trademarks By Certificate Holders*

B Standard effective date

Approval date	tbd
Publication date	tbd
Effective date	tbd

Existing stocks of labelled products and promotional materials that have been approved as correct according to previous versions of the FSC trademark standards may continue to be used and distributed.

C References

FSC-STD-40-003 *Chain of Custody Certification of Multiple Sites*
FSC-STD-40-004 *FSC Standard for Chain of Custody Certification*
FSC-STD-40-005 *Standard for Company Evaluation of FSC Controlled Wood*
FSC-STD-40-006 *FSC Chain of Custody Standard for Project Certification*
FSC-STD-40-007 *FSC Standard for Sourcing Reclaimed Material for Use in FSC Product Groups or FSC Certified Projects*

Part I: General requirements

1. Ground rules for using the FSC trademarks

1.1. The Forest Stewardship Council AC (FSC) owns following registered trademarks:

(a) the name 'Forest Stewardship Council'

(b) the initials 'FSC'

(c) the FSC 'checkmark-and-tree' logo

(d) the Forests For All Forever – full mark

(e) the Forests For All Forever – logo with text mark



1.2. In order to use the FSC trademarks, the organization shall have signed the FSC trademark licence agreement and hold a valid certificate.

1.3. The FSC trademark license code assigned by FSC shall be included with all applications described in this standard, unless stated otherwise.

1.4. The FSC logo and the Forests for All Forever marks shall include trademark symbols ® or ™ in superscript font in the upper right corner. The symbol shall be chosen on the basis of the registration status of the FSC trademark in the country in which FSC-certified products or materials are to be distributed. The applicable symbol shall also be added to 'FSC' and 'Forest Stewardship Council' at the first use in any text. The registration status of the FSC trademarks by country is given in Annex 1.

1.5. Holders of group or project certificates shall refer to Annex 2 for additional requirements for the use of the FSC trademarks.

1.6. The organization shall submit all intended uses of FSC trademarks to the certification body for approval unless it has a valid self-approval status. Please see Annex 3 for further information on self approval.

2. Restrictions on using FSC trademarks

2.1. The FSC trademarks shall not be used:

- (a) in a way that could cause confusion, misinterpretation, or loss of credibility to the FSC certification scheme
- (b) in a way that implies that FSC endorses, participates in, or is responsible for activities performed by the company, outside the scope of certification
- (c) to promote product quality aspects not covered by FSC certification
- (d) in product brand names, company names, or website domain names
- (e) in connection with FSC controlled wood – they shall not be used for labelling products or in any promotion of sales or sourcing of controlled material or FSC controlled wood; the initials FSC shall only be used to pass on FSC

controlled wood claims in sales and shipping documentation, in conformity with FSC requirements.

- 2.2. The name 'Forest Stewardship Council' shall not be replaced with a translation. A translation may be included in brackets after the name.

FSC reserves the right to suspend or terminate permission to use the FSC trademarks if the organization is failing to comply with the FSC trademark requirements as set out in this standard. The interpretation of these rules is at the sole discretion of FSC.

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Part II: Using the FSC labels on products

3. Selecting FSC label

Note for stakeholders: Please refer to the Discussion paper FSC-DIS-50-003 on product labels released for consultation simultaneously with this draft. Clauses to follow are subject to change in line with the direction chosen. The discussion paper is available at <https://ic.fsc.org/fsc-std-50-001-v1-2.880.htm>

- 3.1. In order to make an on-product claim, the organization shall select the correct FSC label on the basis of the FSC claim it has been supplied with or is qualified for. Text claims may be made only in addition to an on-product label.
- 3.2. The labels corresponding to the claims categories are: **Please refer to the discussion paper FSC-DIS-50-003**
- 3.3. The labels corresponding to the claims categories specific for small and community producers are: **to be aligned with clause 3.2.**
- 3.4. The organization may choose whether to use the full label with all elements or the mini-label with reduced elements.
- 3.5. Only the FSC label artwork provided by the label generator or otherwise issued or approved by the certification body or FSC shall be used.

Access to the label generator is arranged by the organization's certification body.

Specifying product type

- 3.6. Product type shall always be used within product labels on FSC-certified printed materials. For other products, the product type shall be used unless all materials of the product and its packaging/content are covered by FSC certification.
- 3.7. Specific product names shall not be used as product types. A list of product types (e.g. 'paper', 'wood') is provided in the label generator. These are intended as broad categories. The list is not exhaustive and organizations shall contact FSC via the certification body with any request for a new product type, e.g. for a non-timber forest product, to be added.

Using Moebius loop

- 3.8. The use of the Moebius loop is optional for Mix and Recycled labels.
- 3.9. The Moebius loop shall not be used without a percentage figure. The figure shall reflect the sum of post- and pre-consumer reclaimed material content, which can be substantiated either through internal procedures or information from the supplier based on their chain of custody processes.

4. Labelling requirements

- 4.1. The products which are intended to be labelled or promoted as FSC certified shall be included in the organization's certified product group schedule and shall meet the eligibility requirements for labelling as stipulated by the respective FSC standard.
- 4.2. The label shall be used only where all permanent forest-based parts of the product are covered by FSC certification. Packaging materials are not considered permanent parts of the product, but shall be treated as products in their own right.
- 4.3. The FSC label should be clearly visible on the product, its packaging, or both.
- 4.4. Where a publication is to be distributed both in print and online, the FSC on-product label should be removed from the online version.
- 4.5. When a product is FSC labelled, marks of other forest certification schemes shall not be used on the same product.
- 4.6. The marks of other forest certification schemes may be used for product promotion or educational purposes in an FSC-labelled publication, as long as there are no claims about the paper of the publication being certified by the other certification scheme (i.e. there is no claim of double certification).

Using FSC logo in addition to an on-product label

- 4.7. The FSC logo with the licence code may be applied directly to the product only if an on-product label is used either on the packaging or otherwise attached as a sticker or hang-tag.
- 4.8. Where the normal label placement for a product is not on the side facing the consumer (such as a side panel or inside a book), an extra logo or Forest for All Forever mark may be used in a more prominent place. In this case, the on-product label shall be visible to the consumer without purchasing the product.

Labelling semi-finished products

- 4.9. If the organization wishes to label semi-finished products, the FSC label should only be applied to packaging or to the product in a way that it can be removed before or during further processing (such as the wrapping on packs of timber or paper).

Labelling arrangements between organizations

- 4.10. If two FSC-certified organizations enter into an agreement whereby the supplier labels products with the buyer's FSC trademark license code, the following conditions shall be met.
 - (a) Products to be labelled shall be included in the certificate scope of both organizations.
 - (b) Both parties shall inform their certification bodies in writing about the agreement. This information shall include the definition of which certification body shall be responsible for approval of product labels.

- (c) The selected certification body is responsible for ensuring that the buyer's code is only used on products which are supplied to that buyer.
- (d) Both organizations shall keep data relating to the use of the buyer's labels easily available for review by the certification body.

The organizations are not required to be in a direct client relationship, but any other company in the intervening supply chain needs to hold an FSC chain of custody certificate.

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Part III: Promotional use of the FSC trademarks

5. Promotional elements

5.1. When promoting FSC-certified products or status as FSC certificate holder, one of the following shall be used:

(a) FSC logo



FSC® C#####

Forest For All
Forever
or
Forest/product-
related messaging

(b) Forest For All Forever
– full



FSC® C#####

Reference to product
promoted and/or forest-
related messaging

(c) Forest For All Forever
– logo and text



FSC® C#####

Reference to product
promoted and/or forest-
related messaging

5.2. If there are space constraints, text may be omitted when using FSC logo (5.1. a).

5.3. For use of FSC logo (5.1. a) there is a ready-to-use arrangement of the elements in an FSC promotional panel available in the label generator.

6. Promotional use requirements

6.1. When the full Forests For All Forever mark (5.1. b) is used on an FSC-labelled product, a clear reference shall be made to the specific product being promoted unless the mark is used on the same side or page as the FSC on-product label specifying the certified product type. For example, cardboard packaging that is carrying a full Forests For All Forever trademark in addition to an on-product label, shall visibly position a description such as 'FSC-certified board' or similar on the product.

6.2. Where the set of promotional elements described in 4.1 is used only once in catalogues, brochures, and online sales websites that also include uncertified products, a link or text such as 'Look for FSC-certified products' shall be included next to them, where the products are not all on the same page. FSC-certified products shall be indicated by using the preferred trademark.

Promotional items and trade fairs

6.3. The FSC trademarks may be used on mugs, pens, T-shirts, caps, banners, company vehicles, etc. In these cases, the FSC logo and FSC trademark licence code are sufficient.

- 6.4. If promotional items are made wholly or partly of wood (e.g. pencils or memory sticks), they must meet the applicable labelling requirements as specified by FSC-STD-40-004 in order to also carry an FSC trademark as promotion for the organization.
- 6.5. When FSC trademarks are used for promotion at trade fairs, the organization shall:
 - (a) clearly mark which products are FSC-certified and the products shall carry an on-product label, or
 - (b) add a visible disclaimer stating 'Ask for our FSC-certified products' or similar if no FSC-certified products are displayed. Use of text to describe the FSC certification of the organization does not require a disclaimer.

Investment claims about FSC-certified operations

- 6.6. Organizations shall take full responsibility for the use of the FSC trademarks by investment companies and others making financial claims based on their FSC-certified operations.
- 6.7. Any such claims shall be accompanied by a disclaimer 'FSC is not responsible for and does not endorse any financial claims on returns on investments'.

7. Restrictions on promotional use

- 7.1. The FSC trademarks shall not be used together with the marks of other forest certification schemes in a way which implies equivalence or in a way which is disadvantageous to the FSC trademarks in terms of size or placement.
- 7.2. The FSC trademarks shall not be used on invoices, delivery notes, or similar for promotion. Chain of custody claims are not regarded as promotion.

Note for stakeholders: Restriction on promotional use on invoices has been introduced as a suggestion to implement Motion 36 calling for action to address confusion in the marketplace. In addition, research is under way to better map the confusion referred to in the motion beyond the documents above.

- 7.3. The FSC logo or marks shall not be used on business cards for promotion. Text claim with licence code is allowed, e.g. 'We have FSC certification (FSC® C#####)'.
- 7.4. FSC-certified products shall not be promoted with the certification body logo alone.

Part IV: Graphic rules

8. FSC on-product label and checkmark-and-tree logo

Colour

8.1. FSC on-product label and FSC logo shall be used in following colour variations:

Green
positive



Green
negative



Black and white
positive



Black and white
negative



8.2. The green colour for reproduction shall be Pantone 626C (or R0 G92 B66 / C81 M33 Y78 K28).

8.3. If standard colours are not available, the darkest available colour on a solid nonpatterned background may be used provided the contrast allows legibility. The label may be produced in positive or negative versions.

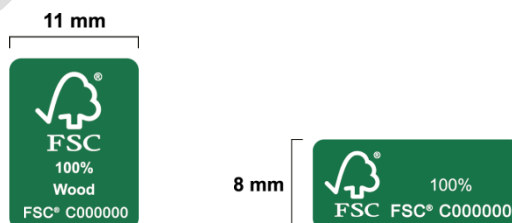
8.4. Where no unprinted white areas are available, the label elements may be reproduced in black or white on a background colour that provides sufficient contrast.

Size and format of the labels

8.5. FSC labels may be used in portrait or landscape versions.

8.6. FSC labels shall be printed at a size at which all elements are legible. Minimum size for the label shall be:

- (a) in portrait format 11 mm in width
- (b) in landscape format 8 mm in height.



8.7. For small products where paper size is below A5 or packaging size below 250 ml, the minimum sizes are 9 mm for portrait and 6 mm for landscape format, providing that legibility is maintained.

- 8.8. Where technical problems arise in creating labels with multiple lines for small products (e.g. pens, pencils, make-up brushes), a one-line arrangement of mini-label elements may be used following the size guidance of the landscape label.



- 8.9. In the label generator, up to four languages of the label text can be added to a label.
- 8.10. Where adding the product type or translation requires more space, the portrait label may be grown in height and the landscape label in width only.
- 8.11. The use of a border around the label is preferred. When the border is not used the label elements shall not be altered.

Size of the logo

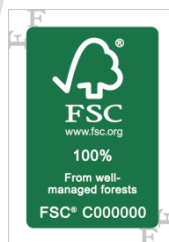
- 8.12. The minimum size of the tick-and-tree logo that is not part of an on product label shall be calculated by the height of the logo and shall be
- (a) 10 mm, or



- (b) 6 mm, when used as an extra logo for paper size below A4, packaging below 1 litre, or to identify FSC-certified products as in 5.4.

Placement

- 8.13. There shall be enough clear space surrounding the label and logo to ensure that they remain uncluttered. The minimum space is calculated by using the height of the FSC initials of the logo.



- 8.14. The label or logo shall not be placed on background that interferes with the design or could be misleading about what they refer to.

9. Forests For All Forever marks

Colour and size

9.1. Forests For All Forever trademarks shall be used only in following colour variations:

(a) Dark and light green



(b) White and light green



(c) White and dark green



(d) White



(e) Black



(f) Dark green



9.2. The green colours for reproduction shall be:

(a) Dark green: Pantone 626C (R0 G92 B66)

(b) Light green: Pantone 368C (R114 G191 B66)

9.3. No other colours shall be used; the marks shall not be reproduced if required colours are not available.

9.4. The minimum size for the Forests For All Forever marks when printed shall be 10 mm in height.



Placement of the marks

- 9.5. There shall be enough clear space around the marks. The minimum space is calculated by using the height of the FSC initials on the logo.



- 9.6. The marks shall not be placed on backgrounds that interfere with the design or could be misleading about what they refer to.

Translations of the marks and strapline

- 9.7. Organizations shall not create new translations or change any elements of the Forests For All Forever trademarks.
- 9.8. The official language versions of the Forests for All Forever trademarks shall be used only in countries stipulated in Annex 1 with the appropriate trademark symbol.
- 9.9. Approved translations of the strapline 'Forests For All Forever' may be used in text format within the messaging or below the trademark, while respecting the exclusion zones.



(translated strapline)



(translated strapline)

10. Misuse of FSC trademarks

- 10.1. The following are not allowed:
- Changing proportions of any designs
 - Changing or adding to the contents beyond specified elements
 - Making FSC appear to be part of other information such as environmental claims not relevant to FSC certification
 - Creating new colour variations
 - Changing the shape of the border or background
 - Tilting or rotating the designs in relation to other content
 - Violating exclusion zone around designs
 - Combining any FSC trademarks or designs with any other branding in a way which implies association
 - Placing the logo or label on a background that interferes with the design.

Examples of misuse: **Graphics to be added**

Annex 1: Trademark registrations by country and mark

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Annex 2: Additional trademark rules for group, multisite, and project certificate holders

1. Special requirements for:

- (a) FSC group forest management certificate holders**
- (b) FSC group chain of custody certificate holders**

- 1.1. The group entity (or manager, or central office) shall ensure that all uses of the FSC trademarks by the group entity or its individual members are approved by the certification body prior to use, unless they have a valid self-approver status. Group members shall submit all approvals via the group entity or central office and keep records of approvals. Alternative submission methods may be approved by the certification body.
- 1.2. The group entity shall not produce any document similar to an FSC certificate for its participants. If individual membership documents are issued, these statements shall be included:
 - (a) 'Managing the FSC certification programme of [name of group]'
 - (b) 'Group certification by [name of certification body]'
- 1.3. No other forest certification schemes' marks or names shall appear on any documents issued by the group in connection with FSC certification.
- 1.4. Subcodes of members shall not be added to the licence code.

2. Special requirements for FSC project certification (applicants or certificate holders)

- 2.1. The project manager shall be responsible for submitting all uses of the FSC trademark relating to the project to the certification body prior to use.
- 2.2. Promotional use of the FSC trademarks shall only refer to the project itself and not to any parties involved in the project.
- 2.3. Use of the FSC trademarks on stationery templates is not allowed by any parties to the project.
- 2.4. Once the project is registered with the certification body as an applicant project, either of the following statements may be included in signage and printed materials: 'FSC-certified wood specified for [this project]' or 'Using responsibly sourced forest products'.
- 2.5. The year that the certificate is issued shall always be included in the materials.
- 2.6. Once the project is complete and the certificate has been issued, the appropriate FSC on-product label may be used in a sign on the project if desired; alternatively the promotional elements may be used for signs, banners, and other materials. A product type shall always be specified, whether this is for full project certification (e.g. house, arena) or partial project certification (e.g. floors, joinery).
- 2.7. For full project certification, once the certificate has been issued, the project may be described in promotions as an FSC-certified project.

For example, 'FSC-certified house'

- 2.8. For partial project certification, once the certificate has been issued, the FSC-certified elements shall be named with every use of the FSC trademarks.

For example, 'The internal joinery in these offices is FSC certified'

- 2.9. If the final project owner was not included in the certification, the project manager shall provide a formal signed and dated document giving the licence code and year of issue and the scope of the certificate, verified by the certification body, in order to allow the owner to apply to FSC to use the FSC trademarks in future promotions.

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Annex 3: Procedure for gaining status as self-approver

1. Eligibility for self-approval status

- 1.1. The organization shall submit at least three consecutive correct approval requests per requested scope corresponding to their certificate to the certification body. The scopes for self-approval are:
 - (a) On-product label 100%
 - (b) On-product label MIX
 - (c) On-product label Recycled
 - (d) Promotional use.
- 1.2. The organization has no outstanding corrective action requests related to FSC-STD-50-001.
- 1.3. The organization shall name one person responsible for controlling FSC trademark use within the organization. The responsibility is not transferable to another person in the organization, although several persons in the organization may take the training and work with approvals.
 - 1.3.1. For groups and multisites, the responsible person will be an assigned person of the central officer and it is at their discretion whether additional persons from member organizations may apply for the self-approval status.
- 1.4. The appointed person shall be required to successfully complete FSC Global Development's training programme on FSC trademark use based on the most recent requirements. A new training course shall be completed when the requirements are changed.
- 1.5. The appointed person shall demonstrate clear understanding of and competence with FSC trademark requirements.

2. Confirming and maintaining self-approval status

- 2.1. When the aforementioned conditions have been met, and at the discretion of the certification body, the status of self-approver may be granted to the organization by sending a written confirmation naming (a) the appointed person and (b) the scope of the self-approval.
- 2.2. All instances of FSC trademark use with corresponding eligibility record where relevant shall be maintained and made available to the certification body for annual audit.

3. Suspension and termination of the self-approval status

- 3.1. A change of the named person in charge of FSC trademark use in the organization shall lead to suspension of self-approval status until a new person has been assigned and trained. The status may be renewed without submitting additional requests. If the suspension has not been lifted within three months, the status for self-approval shall be

terminated.

- 3.2. Any major corrective action requests related to FSC-STD-50-001 raised in an audit or during the audit period shall lead to the termination of self-approval status with immediate effect. It may be renewed after demonstrating improvements in the control system and by submitting new approval requests as specified in 1.1.
- 3.3. The certification body and FSC reserve the right to withdraw self-approval status at its discretion if the organization is failing to conform with any part of these requirements.

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Annex 4: Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this standard, the terms and definitions given in FSC-STD-01-002 *FSC Glossary of Terms* and the following apply:

Certificate: A document issued under the rules of a certification system, indicating that adequate confidence is provided that a duly identified product, process, or service is in conformity with a specific standard or other normative document [ISO/IEC Guide 2:1991 paragraph 14.8 and ISO/CASCO 193 paragraph 4.5].

Certification body (CB): A body which is appointed by FSC AC to undertake FSC certification audits of applicants for the FSC certification scheme, and the surveillance of certified forest management enterprises and forest product enterprises against the certification requirements.

FSC-certified product: FSC-certified material that is eligible to carry an FSC label and to be promoted with the FSC trademarks.

FSC controlled wood: Material or product carrying the FSC Controlled Wood claim which has been assessed to be in conformity with FSC Controlled Wood requirements according to the standard FSC-STD-40-005 Requirements for sourcing FSC Controlled Wood or FSC-STD-30-010 Forest management requirements for FSC Controlled Wood certification.

FSC label: Graphic design, consisting of the FSC logo plus other required elements for on-product uses of the FSC trademarks.

FSC trademark licence agreement: The legal document signed by the organization permitting use of the FSC trademarks (the 'licensed material').

FSC trademark licence code: Identification code issued to organizations that have signed an FSC Licence Agreement. For certificate holders, it is in the form FSC® C#####. It is used to identify the organization on the FSC licence holder database and must accompany any use of the FSC trademarks.

FSC trademarks: FSC has several registered trademarks: (a) the FSC 'checkmark-and-tree' logo, (b) the initials 'FSC', (c) the name 'Forest Stewardship Council', (d) the 'Forest For All Forever – full' mark, and (e) "Forest For All Forever – logo with text" mark.

Group chain of custody certification: FSC certification for small businesses. A group is managed by a group entity (individual or organization), which is responsible for trademark use by group members.

Group entity: The entity that applies for group certification and holds any group certificate that is issued. The group entity may be an individual person, a cooperative body, an association, or other similar legal entity.

Forest management group certification: FSC certification for groups of forest enterprises.

Label generator: The online service for providing the FSC labels and logo to organizations that are entitled to use FSC trademarks.

Multisite organization: An organization that has an identified central office and a network of at least two sites. Products from these sites or from identified sets of sites covered by a multisite certificate must be substantially of the same kind, and must be produced or handled according to fundamentally the same methods and procedures.

Non-timber forest products: All forest products except timber, including other materials obtained from trees such as resins and leaves, as well as any other plant and animal products. Examples include, but are not limited to bamboo, seeds, fruits, nuts, honey, palm trees, rubber, cork, ornamental plants and other forest products originating from a forest matrix.

Organization: Registered legal entity that has signed an FSC licence agreement and holds a valid FSC chain of custody (CoC) certificate or joint FSC forest management and chain of custody (FM/CoC) certificate, including group entities, members of multisite, group FM and CoC certification schemes, and users of project certification.

Postconsumer reclaimed material: Material that is reclaimed from a consumer or commercial product that has been used for its intended purpose by individuals, households, or by commercial, industrial, and institutional facilities in their role as end-users of the product.

Preconsumer reclaimed material: Material that is reclaimed from a process of secondary manufacture or further downstream industry, in which the material has not been intentionally produced, is unfit for end use and not capable of being re-used on site in the same manufacturing process that generated it.

Product group: A product or group of products specified by the organization, which can be combined for the purpose of FSC claim control and labelling.

Product type: For the purposes of these requirements, a list of descriptions of the certified material or content to be used within the on-product label. The list is available in the label generator.

Small and community producer: A forest management unit (FMU) or group of FMUs that meet(s) the small and low-intensity managed forest (SLIMF) eligibility criteria (FSC-STD-1-003a) and addenda. An FMU complying with tenure and management criteria defined in **to be added**.

Verbal forms for the expression of provisions

[Adapted from *ISO/IEC Directives Part 2: Rules for the structure and drafting of International Standards*]

'shall': indicates requirements strictly to be followed in order to conform with the standard.

'should': indicates that among several possibilities one is recommended as particularly suitable, without mentioning or excluding others, or that a certain course of action is preferred but not necessarily required.

'may': indicates a course of action permissible within the limits of the document.

'can': is used for statements of possibility or capability, whether material, physical, or causal.