

FSC® US FSS EXPLAINERS SERIES – VERIFIABLE TARGETS EXPLAINED



Purpose and Role of Verifiable Targets:

Verifiable targets are a new requirement in the revised Forest Stewardship Standard (Indicator 7.3.1 & Indicator 8.1.1), but they are likely already a part of management planning processes.

Verifiable targets need to be directly aligned with management objectives, i.e., specific goals of management. They are the points by which to measure progress towards achieving management objectives and are considered “verifiable” because they define clear outcomes that can be assessed to determine whether or not they have been achieved. Verifiable targets are intended to be used for internal monitoring, but could also be used to clearly communicate internally and externally about achievement of management objectives and implementation of the management plan. Another way of thinking about verifiable targets is to consider them “measurable midterm goals” of forest management, or “touchpoints” or “milestones” by which to measure progress.

Examples of Potential Verifiable Targets:

(Provided for communication purposes only. All verifiable targets will need to be approved by an organization’s certification body, based on that organization’s management objectives.)

Management Objective: Native ecosystems within representative sample areas remain viable.

Potential Verifiable Targets:

- 50% of RSA have completed site conservation plans that are being implemented by [DATE].
- 100% of RSA have completed site conservation plans that are being implemented by [LATER DATE].
- RSA site conservation plans are adapted (if needed) within 10 years of plan completion, based on monitoring results, and then adapted again (if needed) within each 10-year period that follows.

Management Objective: Underrepresented successional stages are restored to within X% of levels that would be expected under natural conditions.

Potential Verifiable Targets:

- [X] acres of early successional and [X] acres of late successional [FOREST TYPE] are restored by [DATE].
- [X+] acres of early successional and [X+] acres of late successional [FOREST TYPE] are restored by [LATER DATE].

Management Objective: Gender equity and other anti-discrimination policies are aligned and effectively implemented throughout the organization.

Potential Verifiable Targets:

- Mapping and analysis of all organizational policies is completed by [DATE].
- Worker engagement regarding organizational policies is completed by [DATE].
- A tactical plan for improving and aligning policies is completed by [DATE].
- Tactical plan implementation is completed by [DATE].
- Beginning in [DATE], tri-annual monitoring (including worker engagement) is completed to identify needed adjustments in policies, with adjustments implemented within 6 months of monitoring completion.