Forest Stewardship Council®

FSC-STD-40-006 V2-0 EN
FSC Standard for Project Certification

Questions and Answers (Q&A)

Report

Introduction

The FSC-STD-40-006 V2-0 FSC Standard for Project Certification became effective as of the 1st of February 2020. The new version of the standard contains a range of options for the certification of organizations of all sizes that manage projects, from small to large entities, as well as a variety of project types (e.g. a single wooden boat or a large complex of buildings).

This guidance document has been developed to help in the effective implementation of the new version of this standard. It provides a range of clarificatory questions that were raised by different stakeholders since the new version of the standard became effective.

This document is meant to be a 'living' document and would be periodically updated with new questions and queries from stakeholders. in case you have any additional questions/queries/clarifications regarding the implementation of this standard, please reach out to us at chainofcustody@fsc.org.

1. **From what date is the new version of the Project Certification standard effective?**
   The effective date for the new version of the standard is the 1ˢᵗ of February 2020.

2. **When do organizations need to fully comply with the requirements of the V-2 of the standard?**
   As of the 1ˢᵗ of February 2022, all organizations will have to fully comply with the requirements of the new version of the standard. The same date marks the end of the transition period for the new version of the standard.

3. **How does the introduction of the FSC-STD-40-006 V2-0 impact the existing certificate holders?**
   All existing certificate holders of the Project Certification Standard (V1-0) have a transition period until 31 January 2022. The existing certificate holders do not need to change anything regarding the trademark/label used during the transition period.
   The new version (V2-0) has a transition period until 31 January 2022. Until then, the certificate holders will be able to still choose to get certified against the old version (V1-0) of the Project Certification Standard or the new version (v2-0).
   During the transition period, certificates issued against the old version (V1-0) of the standard will continue to stay valid for at least 6 months after the end of the transition period.

4. **What types of projects are applicable by the new version (V2-0) of the standard?**
   The projects that are applicable by this standard are:
   i)   Renovation or construction or civil engineering projects (e.g. building).
   ii) Individual art or decorative objects (e.g. sculpture).
   iii) Transportation vehicles (e.g. boat).
   iv) Other items or products not listed in this standard may become eligible to be certified as a project upon specific approval by FSC International.

5. **Does the new version of the standard (V2-0) allow the application to single production batches in the manufacturing of forest-based products?**
   No, the new version of the standard does not apply to single production batches in the manufacturing of forest-based products (e.g. a printing run, one batch of FSC-certified furniture produced according to customer's specifications) that shall be certified according to FSC-STD-40-004.

6. **What is the proof for the FSC certified projects?**

   The FSC certificate is issued to the organization (certificate holder) and may cover multiple projects (continuous certification). The organization shall issue Project Statements as evidence that projects are FSC-certified.

7. **Is the new version of the standard only applicable for a single organization for a single project? What are the certification types that can be applied with the new version of the standard?**

   No, it is not restricted to a single organization for a single project. The new version of the standard can also be combined with the FSC-STD-40-003, enabling its application by participating sites of the group and multi-site certificates that manage multiple projects.

   In addition, the standard offers the possibility of continuous certification allowing organizations to manage several projects continually, instead of having to obtain individual certificates for each project.

   The new version (V2-0) of the standard can be applied to Single, Group, and Multi-site CoC certificates.

8. **Where can one find the information about the specific project and its certificate scope?**

   The information about the project and certificate scope are published at www.info.fsc.org . All finalized and certified projects shall be available and listed on the FSC website. Please note that the project members' information is not visible.

9. **Is the certificate issued to the organization according to the new version (V2-0) of the Project Certification standard?**

   Yes, the certificate is issued to the organization that manages the project. The projects managed by the organization can be certified if produced according to this standard, allowing organizations to manage several projects continually, instead of having to obtain individual certificates for each project.

10. **What information shall organizations specify in the scope of the project certification?**

    The organization shall specify the next information:
    a) FSC standards applicable to the scope of the certification (e.g. FSC-STD-40-006, FSC-STD-40-003, FSC-STD-40-005, FSC-STD-40-007).
    b) Entities included in the scope of a group or multi-site certificate as participating sites (where applicable).
    c) Specification of the scope as: One-time or continuous certification.
    d) For each project under the scope, specify:
       i. project name and description (e.g. commercial building, wooden boat).
       ii. project site(s) specifying the site's name or unique identifier, and address.

| | iii. | project claims type: full project certification claim, claims on specific components of a project or percentage claims. |
| | iv. | project member(s) working on or off the project site(s) specifying name of each project member, contact details, description of their involvement in the project, FSC CoC certificate code (in the case of FSC-certified project members). |

11. How long can a project certificate be valid for?

If the organization chooses the continuous certification for a project, the certificate is valid for 5 years, with the possibility of renewing it after this period. The other scenario is the one-time project certification that applies to the certification of a single project. In this case, please note that once the project is finalized and certified, the certificate that was issued to the Organization that managed the project can be terminated.

12. What normative documents are applicable for the new version of the Project Certification standard?

The FSC-STD-40-006 *Standard for Project Certification* and FSC-POL-01-004 *Policy for the Association of Organizations with FSC* are applicable documents for Project Certification.

The standard FSC-STD-40-006 may be combined with other standards of the FSC normative framework (e.g. FSC-STD-40-007) depending on the scope of The Organization's certification (specified in more detail in Table A. of the standard). Please note, that standards FSC-STD-40-004 and FSC-STD-40-006 cannot be combined in project certification.

13. What entities/companies can be project members according to this standard?

Project members are entities/companies purchasing, transforming, and/or installing forest-based material/products for a project (e.g. contractors, including joiners, carpenters, cabinet makers, etc.).

Please note, that contractors that do not purchase, produce, and/or install forest-based material (such as electricians, plumbers, etc.) do not need to be classified as project members.

14. What is the continuous project certification?

Continuous project certification enables organizations to manage and obtain FSC-project certification for multiple projects on a continual basis.

That is, the organization may choose to only become certified for the duration of the project (one-time certification) or to retain certification for managing multiple projects (a continuous certification that can be renewed every 5 years allowing the organization to manage multiple projects).

15. In the case of continuous project certification, do project members need to be certified as well?

All project members that source forest-based input materials shall be certified against the FSC-STD-40-004 or FSC-STD-40-006. Please note that this is not required for one-time certification.

In the case of non-FSC-certified project members (e.g. those companies that do NOT source forest-based input materials), the organization shall establish an agreement that specifies the five conditions that are indicated in the Clause 3.2 of the Project Certification standard (page 11).

16. Can multiple independent projects be certified in the new version of the standard under the scope of the same certificate?

Yes, multiple independent projects can be certified under the scope of the same certificate. This is different from the previous version in which multiple independent projects could not be certified under the same certificate.

17. How are the conditions regarding the non-certified contractors set in the new version of the standard?

For one-time project certification, non-certified contractors can be included in the scope of the certificate and have an agreement with the CH as per Clause 3.2. For continuous project certification, contractors that source forest-based input materials need to be FSC-certified, as per Clause 3.1.

18. What are the possible claim options with the new version of the Project Certification standard?

There are three options for the claims that can be issued under this standard:

1) Full project certification
2) FSC claims on specific components of a project
3) Percentage claims

19. Are claims only being used for the wood products used in the final project?

The possible claim options likely refer to all wood materials/products used in the final project. However, they can also include wood used in the construction phase of the project including concrete forming boards, bracing, and other temporary but non-rented construction applications. Please note that temporary wood may be left out of the claims.

20. When can organizations make a full project certification claim?

Only when all forest-based material/products used in the project are claim-contributing inputs the organization can claim that a project is fully certified.

21. **Can organizations claim specific components of a project? And in which case?**

Yes, the new version of the standard allows organizations to claim specific components or materials of a project that are FSC-certified. For example, in the projects where all door frames of a specific construction project are FSC Mix 80% certified.

22. **When can organizations make percentage claims?**

Once the project is considered as finalized the organization can make FSC claims about a percentage of forest-based materials used as claim-contributing inputs.

In the case project contains the forest-based materials that are not claim-contributing inputs, the inputs shall be sourced as preconsumer reclaimed wood, controlled material, or FSC Controlled Wood. Please note that this only applies to percentage claims and not to full project certification or FSC claims on specific components of a project.

23. **How should organizations calculate and record the percentage of certified material (FSC%) for each project?**

The below formula indicates how organizations shall calculate and record the quantity of material/products for each project:

$$FSC\% = \frac{Q_C}{Q_T} \times 100$$

FSC% = FSC percentage
Q_C = Quantity of claim-contributing inputs in the whole project
Q_T = Total quantity of forest-based inputs in the whole project

In the case of percentage claims, the amount of input materials received with an FSC Mix x% or FSC Recycled x% claims that count as claim contributing input is proportional to the percentage stated on the supplier's sales documents.

In other words, if the product/material is followed with an FSC Mix 70% claim, only 70% of the volume count as claim-contributing input.

The full amount of input materials received with FSC Mix Credit or FSC Recycled Credit claims count as claim-contributing input (i.e. 100% of the volume count as claim-contributing input).

24. **How much quantity of non-certified and non-controlled components can a project contain in the case of the full project certification?**

In the case of full project certification, the project may contain the quantity of up to two (2) % non-certified and non-controlled components if they are not visible in the final project.

25. **How accurate should organizations calculate the amount of non-certified and non-controlled material?**

If the organization can demonstrate that the amount of non-certified and non-controlled is not higher than two (2) %, the percentage calculation does not need to be extremely precise. For example, the organization sourced 1 kg of non-controlled and non-certified dowels but sourced 100 kg of FSC certified wood for the project. In this case, the percentage is less than 2% non-controlled and non-certified dowels.

26. **Who is responsible for ensuring that the sourced materials are coming from legal sources?**

The organization shall ensure that all the sourced materials for a project under the scope of FSC certification conform to all applicable timber legality legislation.

27. **How do organizations and their project members ensure the integrity of the FSC certified material?**

The organization and its project members shall ensure that all FSC-certified materials sourced for the project come directly from suppliers with valid FSC certificates and shall regularly verify the validity and product scope of the certificates of their active FSC-certified suppliers through the FSC certificate database (info.fsc.org).

The organization and its non-FSC-certified project members sourcing FSC certified materials shall have a system in place to check the supplier's sale and/or delivery documents for all forest-based material/product supplied for the project, to confirm that:

   a) *only eligible materials are sourced for the projects.*
   b) *the supplied material type and quantities conform to the supplied documentation.*
   c) *the FSC claim is specified (where applicable);*
   d) *the supplier's FSC chain of custody or FSC Controlled Wood code is quoted for material supplied with FSC claims.*

28. **Does this standard allow that FSC-certified suppliers to sell FSC Controlled Wood to non-FSC-certified project members?**

Yes, it does. In the context of project certification, it is acceptable that FSC-certified suppliers sell FSC Controlled Wood to non-FSC-certified project members.

Please note that this is not acceptable in the context of the FSC Chain of Custody standard (FSC-STD-40-004) where FSC-certified suppliers may only sell products with the 'FSC Controlled Wood' claim to customers that are FSC certified.

29. **What segregation methods can organizations implement in case there is a risk of contamination?**

In situations where there is a risk of material contamination, the organization shall implement one or more of the following segregation methods at the project site and the worksites of project members:

   a) physical separation of materials (e.g. separate areas for FSC-certified and non-certified materials).

   b) temporal separation of materials (for a certain period, only FSC certified materials are processed for the project).

   c) identification of materials (e.g. use of tags, labels, signs to identify FSC certified and/or non-FSC-certified materials).

30. **Why are segregation methods important and where should the organizations implement them?**

If properly applied, the segregation methods ensure that the nonconforming materials are identified, controlled, and not mixed with eligible inputs for the certified project. Please note that the organization shall implement the segregation methods at the project site but also on the worksites of (non-certified) project members.

31. **What activities shall the organization undertake in case non-conforming materials are detected after the project is certified?**

Where non-conforming materials are detected after the project is certified and/or sold to a customer, the organization shall undertake the following activities:

   a) **notify its certification body and all affected direct customers** in writing within five business days of the non-conforming material identification and maintain records of that notice.

   b) in case of continuous project certification, **analyze causes for the occurrence** of non-conforming products, and implement measures to prevent their reoccurrence.

   c) **cooperate with its certification body** to allow the certification body to confirm that appropriate actions were taken to correct the nonconformity.

32. **Do requirements of the Project Certification standard apply to the newly sourced forest-based material/products in projects that cover renovations?**

Yes, they do. For projects which cover a renovation, all requirements of this standard shall apply to the newly sourced forest-based material/products used in the renovation project.

33. **What happens in the case of a previously FSC-certified project that needs to be renovated?**

In the case of renovations of a previously FSC-certified project, where FSC-certified material has been specified and the FSC trademarks are to be used, a new project shall be established.

34. **In which case can organizations apply for an extension of the project scope?**

For projects that require changes or maintenance within one year after the completion of the project, The Organization is entitled to apply to the certification body for an extension of the project scope.

"Changes" include cases where the forest-based material must be replaced/reinforced, or where smaller amounts of additional material must be added (e.g. internal fittings are added to the project).

Please note that in case of continuous certification the organization may also choose to define this as a new project.

35. **When can organizations issue a project statement?**

Once projects are finalized, the organization shall issue a project statement for each project and where relevant, to sub-projects.

36. **Who is responsible for approving the declaration template? What information shall be included?**

The organization's certification body is responsible for approving the declaration template and it shall include the next information:

   a) The name of the organization managing the project certificate.
   b) A unique identifier of the project or sub-project formed by The Organization's FSC certificate code followed by additional numeric digits defined by the organization: XXX-COC-123456- (unique identifier);
   c) Name and contact details of the organization.
   d) The date of the project completion.
   e) Project name and address

37. **In which cases should organizations include the disclaimer to the project statement?**

The organization shall include the following disclaimer to the project statement *"This project contains up to 2% of non-FSC-certified materials",* only for the full project certification that contains up to two (2) % of non-certified and non-controlled components (clause 4.4).

38. **Can organizations include references to other forest certification schemes?**

Project statements shall not include references to other forest certification schemes or information not related to FSC project certification.

39. **At what stage of the building process should the project be added to the FSC online database?**

The project should be added to the database once the project is finalized (no further transformation to the forest-based materials of the project is needed before end-use) and the project statement is issued.
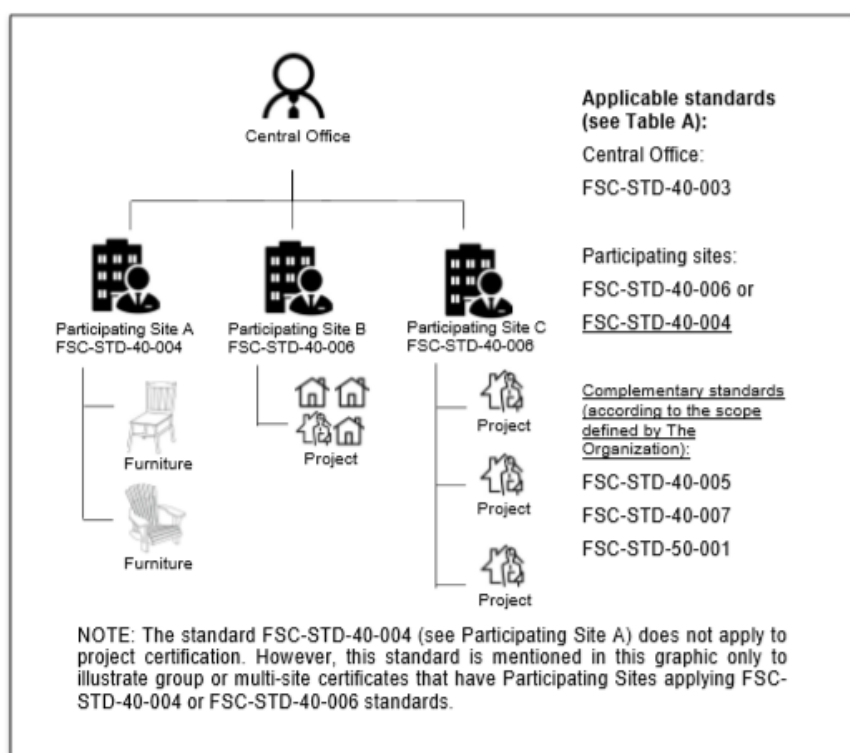
40. **If a certified organization sources the forest-based input materials itself and leaves the production to a sub-contractor, do the project certification requirements for outsourcing apply?**

Yes, the project certification requirements for outsourcing apply. In this case, the scope of the project certification standard for contractors specifies that all companies or individuals that purchase, produce and/or install customized/bespoke FSC certified material or products specifically for the project shall be included in the scope of the certificate as project members.

41. **In case the organization has a multi-site project certificate, where should be the projects listed: under the central office or the relevant participating site?**

In that case, the projects should be listed under their relevant participating sites, as illustrated in the standard under SCENARIO C (page 7).

SCENARIO C: Group or Multi-site certificate covering multiple entities and multiple projects.

NOTE: The standard FSC-STD-40-004 (see Participating Site A) does not apply to project certification. However, this standard is mentioned in this graphic only to illustrate group or multi-site certificates that have Participating Sites applying FSC-STD-40-004 or FSC-STD-40-006 standards.

42. **Who is responsible for maintaining and updating information on the scope of the project certification?**

The certificate holder is responsible for maintaining and updating information on the scope of the project certification, including information on new projects, which will be published on the info.fsc.org site. The information is published by the certification bodies and certificate holders should inform them in case they want to add a new project under the scope.

43. **Who should conduct the audits for organizations that want to be certified against the FSC Project Certification standard?**

According to the FSC-STD-20-011 (V4-1, Clause 5.2), for continuous project certification, the certification body shall conduct the main evaluation, annual surveillance evaluations, and re-evaluations. At each evaluation, the certification body shall audit a sample of the participating sites, project sites included in the scope of the certificate to verify their conformance with the applicable FSC normative documents.

44. **What should organizations do in case they would like to add the new project to the existing and already FSC certified project, and in case the scope of the new project is different from the original scope that has already been evaluated by a CB? What should certificate holders do in case there is a change in the project scope?**

In that case, the organization should define the scope of the new project as specific as possible. This would allow the designated CB to evaluate the management system as well as the system by which the organization maintains control over the Chain of Custody for all projects included in the scope of the certificate.

In case the organization would like to include the project with a scope that is different from the already certified project, then the organizations should contact the CB. The scope is classified as different when it contains one of three changes listed below:
   1. Changes in the FSC standards applied
   2. Change of the participating entity (change from single to group/multisite etc.)
   3. Change in the project description (a commercial building would be a different scope than a wooden boat).

In case there is a change in project scope (for example a new project is added before the next surveillance audit) the certificate holders shall inform the certification bodies about the potential risk.