



Standards Development Process

# Standards Development Process: Sustainability Certification Landscape

Sustainable Biomass Program  
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## Foreword

This document is the output of desk-based research commissioned by SBP. As such it does not represent SBP's position, rather it raises issues for consideration during the Standards Development Process.

## Executive summary

The purpose of this document is to provide a brief summary of key themes that sustainability certification schemes are currently facing, and forms part of a set of working documents for reference during the SBP Standards Development Process. The findings have been based on desk-based research. This document does not intend to provide a detailed analysis of the key themes and opportunities.

At the heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Primarily intended as a framework for countries to work in partnership towards those goals they are a useful tool for all organisations in identifying their focus on the sustainability agenda. Due to their focus on economic, environmental and social improvements, sustainability certification schemes are linked to many of the SDGs. It is important to note that these SDS are “integrated and indivisible”. Indeed, when a sustainability standard ensures that a business contributes to SDG 8 (decent work) by guaranteeing a safe working environment and providing on-site medical services, this also has positive impacts on SDG3 (health and well-being) and SDG1 (ending poverty), as work-related accidents can push whole families into poverty<sup>1</sup>.

In 2018, UN Secretary-General António Guterres told a World Summit that climate change is an 'existential threat' to humanity<sup>2</sup>. Across industries, sustainability standards support efforts to respond to climate change. In relation to delivering on SDG 7 “Affordable and Clean Energy” and SDG 13 “Climate Action” sustainability certification schemes help the private sector in a variety of ways. For example by helping company supply chains reduce their emissions and improve energy efficiency, adapt to climate change and through facilitating the use of renewable energy. Indeed, SBP is driven by the aim of the UNFCCC Paris Agreement to combat climate change and through a multi-stakeholder approach translates high level goals into concrete sustainability criteria within the SBP certification system.

The debate related to the role of forests, trees and timber among renewable energy alternatives is still very heated. It will be vital to carefully consider the latest research, data and stakeholder inputs to ensure standards are based on the current science and are accepted by stakeholders. The use of participatory multi-stakeholder processes such as those led by the High Carbon Stock Approach, bolstered by remote sensing technology may offer a good opportunity to respond to some of those challenges. In addition, across the private sector, businesses are using independent verification and multi-stakeholder initiatives to reduce their Greenhouse Gas Emissions below a 2 degree Celsius warming scenario.

It is primarily SDG 15 and its targets and criteria that is of relevance to certification schemes addressing forests and forest risk commodities. Whilst substantial progress has been made in recent years on SDG 15 'Life on Land', some of the intermediary goals for 2020 will not be reached, with work to halt biodiversity and species loss lagging far behind. Biodiversity is considered in most sustainability certifications schemes. Research shows that criteria are often not explicit enough, indirectly covered through other matters, such as soil, water, or forest management. Biodiversity is dealt with in a very heterogeneous way across schemes. It would be beneficial to consider terms such as High Conservation Value widely accepted by NGOs; as well as broader approaches to biodiversity which cover habitat degradation, research, awareness and capacity building. Biodiversity requirements tend to focus on practices that protect ecosystems rather than practices related to the monitoring and measurement of outcomes, or restoration of such systems.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.isealalliance.org/sites/default/files/resource/2019-05/WWF\\_ISEAL\\_SDG\\_2017.pdf](https://www.isealalliance.org/sites/default/files/resource/2019-05/WWF_ISEAL_SDG_2017.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://news.un.org/en/story/2018/05/1009782>

Social safeguards will remain a fundamental issue for certification schemes and pose a significant credibility risk. The ILO and its fundamental conventions provide the basis for certification schemes to manage social requirements effectively in their standards, both at the producer level and throughout the supply chain. A combination of recognition of existing social auditing platforms and the use of mobile technology may offer substantial opportunities for certification schemes to ensure robust safeguards for people throughout the supply chain. The importance of Free, Prior Informed Consent for indigenous peoples continues to be a substantial challenge for many certification schemes and can at least in part be responded to through engaging in multi-stakeholder processes; and where possible harnessing mobile and remote sensing technology to support community participation.

It is important that standards development, assurance and management of impacts follow best practice, as set out in independent guidelines such as those developed by ISEAL, to ensure that schemes are able to meet expectations and deliver intended outcomes. The approach certification schemes take to standards development varies considerably, although clear trends include risk-based approaches and consideration of intended impacts and outcomes. In terms of assurance, the leading topics include training, risk-based approaches to auditing, the reduction of corruption and related dependencies and the increased use of evolving technologies in monitoring and data management.

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose

This document is a brief summary of key features of the current and emerging landscape of sustainability certification; written as starting point for discussing potential issues that should be considered during the revision of the SBP Standards 1 to 6. It is not intended to be fully comprehensive in the identification of key features, given that there are over 200 different issues that could be identified, but rather a mapping of features of interest in the landscape of certification schemes.

## 2 Sustainable Development

Through desk-based research, sustainability issues related to forests and other natural landscapes relevant to the scope of SBP were mapped out. That exercise identified a broad range of potential issues for consideration.

The Sustainable Development Goals provide a useful framework for considering those issues. Forests and trees, when managed sustainably (for example through certification at forest or regional level), provide a wide range of beneficial products and services and thereby contribute in numerous ways to meeting the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that countries should strive to achieve (mostly by 2030)<sup>3</sup>. Some of the more relevant sustainability issues for woody biomass are illustrated in Figure 1, building on the FAO report *The contribution of forest certification to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals* and *Forest Sector SDG Roadmap* from the World Business Council on Sustainable Development.

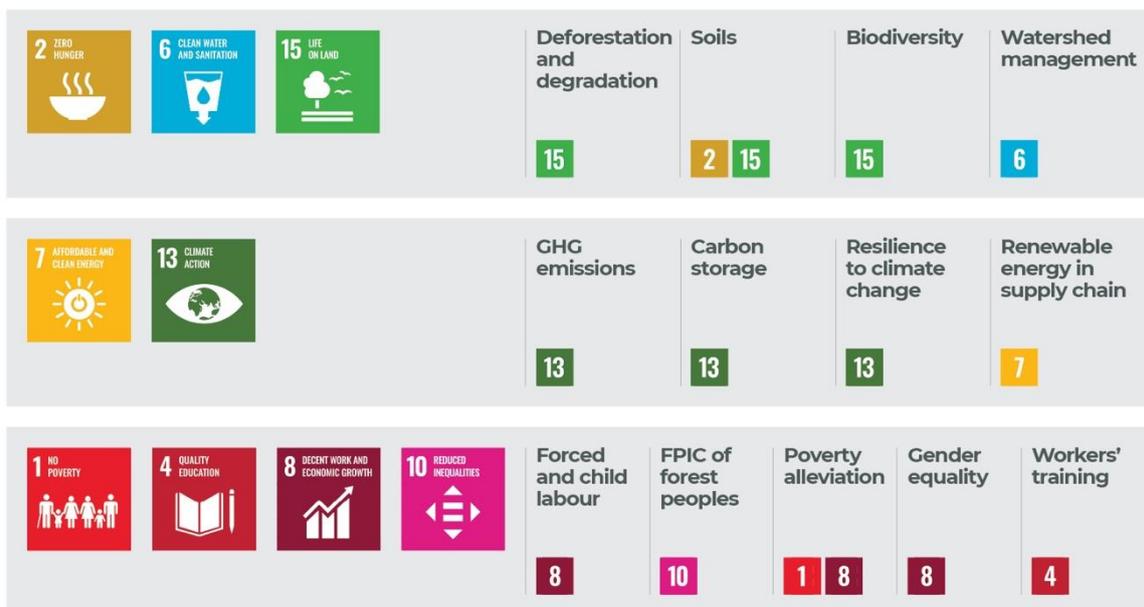


Figure 1 Relevant sustainability issues for woody biomass

<sup>3</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300>

## 3 Environmental themes

Considering the SDGs and focusing on the environmental issues identifies a number of topics, including through SDG 15 deforestation, conversion of other natural ecosystems including peat (whether within forested land or not); biodiversity, soil and through SDG 7 and 13 the climate crisis and carbon. How to increase agricultural production and improve food security without reducing forest area is one of the great challenges of our times<sup>4</sup>, given the significant conflict between raw materials for the same land.

### 3.1 Climate change

#### Carbon and (forest) certification schemes

- FSC is considering opportunities to engage more effectively in the forest carbon sector; leveraging on its ecosystem services certification. The FSC Ecosystem Services<sup>5</sup> approach now has 23 claims verified across 1.368Mha of forests; in 7 countries and provides new tools to strengthen incentives for the protection of ecosystem services. Impact verification: The FSC ecosystem services procedure is an optional add-on service during FM audit; it enables FSC certificate holders to demonstrate the impact of their forest management activities on ecosystem services.
- Linking Certification & UN Convention on Climate Change National Determined Contributions (NDCs) to support governments' targets, FSC is exploring how they can encourage governments to use certification to help delivery on their NDCs.
- There are several examples of voluntary standards for modelling forest carbon including Verified Carbon Standard<sup>6</sup>, Plan Vivo<sup>7</sup>, and the California Forest Protocol<sup>8</sup>.
- The High Carbon Stock (HCS) Approach<sup>9</sup> is a methodology that distinguishes forest areas for protection from degraded lands with low carbon and biodiversity values that may be developed. The methodology was developed with the aim to ensure a practical, transparent, robust, and scientifically credible approach that is widely accepted to implement commitments to halt deforestation in the tropics, while ensuring the rights and livelihoods of local peoples are respected. 165 companies are committed to it, among others many consumer goods companies. The High Carbon Stock Approach (HCSA) toolkit and the HCV-HCSA Assessment Manual can be used to identify areas of high carbon stock forest and HCV which could/should be maintained and enhanced in fragmented landscapes. Whilst HCS is a fairly new concept originally designed for fragmented humid tropical forest, the HCSA Secretariat are adapting the approach temperate and boreal high forest cover landscape.
- In January 2020, WRI and WBCSD launched the GHG Protocol Carbon Removals and Land Sector Initiative<sup>10</sup>. An Advisory Committee and three Technical Working Groups have been convened to develop three new GHG Protocol standards and guidance:

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.fao.org/3/i9535en/i9535en.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://fsc.org/en/page/ecosystem-services>

<sup>6</sup> [Verified Carbon Standard](#)

<sup>7</sup> [Plan Vivo](#)

<sup>8</sup> [California Forest Protocol](#)

<sup>9</sup> <http://highcarbonstock.org/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://ghgprotocol.org/blog/update-greenhouse-gas-protocol-carbon-removals-and-land-sector-initiative>

## Decarbonisation of industry as a response to climate goals

- The Paris agreement in 2015 saw 195 of the world's governments commit to prevent dangerous climate change by limiting global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius.
- Company responses: Science Based Targets Initiative<sup>11</sup> provides a methodology for companies aiming to keep their GHG emissions within a below 2 degree warming scenario. CDP, World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), WWF; UN Global Compact, World Resources Institute (WRI) and We Mean Business are partners in this initiative. As an example, the pulp and paper manufacturer Stora Enso has committed to reduce GHG emissions from operations 31% per tonne of pulp, paper and board produced by 2030 from a 2010 base-year. To reduce Scope 3 emissions, Stora Enso committed to ensure 70% of suppliers and downstream transportation suppliers (in terms of spend) set their own GHG reduction targets by 2025, towards the aim that these suppliers adopt science based GHG reduction targets by 2030.
- A research hub of Utrecht University<sup>12</sup> is focusing on deep decarbonisation of the energy system: Towards Industry with Negative Emissions. This hub addresses one of the big open question within deep decarbonisation of the energy System, namely the decarbonisation of industry. The energy transition is well underway and gathering pace as far as electric renewables and electrification are concerned. However, industry faces challenges in addressing GHG emissions within production and logistics. It may be necessary for industry to deliver negative emissions, to offset unavoidable emissions.

## 3.2 Deforestation commitments

According to the FAO, 7.6 million hectares of forests were lost each year between 2010 and 2015, mainly in the tropics<sup>13</sup>. SDG target 15.2 specifically responds to this challenge: 'By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally'.

A number of commitments, in addition to SDG 15 have been made. These include but are not limited to the below.

- EC Communication on Stepping up Action on Deforestation<sup>14</sup> could include a variety of partnerships with other countries, encouraging government commitments on forest risk commodities (e.g. palm oil, soy, and cocoa) building in indicators on sustainability to trade agreements; the Parliament is considering deforestation free ecolabels on products
- New York Declaration on Forests (NYDF)<sup>15</sup> is a voluntary and non-binding international declaration to act to halt global deforestation, first endorsed at the UN Climate Summit in 2014; the list of NYDF supporters has grown to include over 200 endorsers: national governments, sub-national governments, multi-national companies, groups representing indigenous communities, and non-government organizations.

<sup>11</sup> <https://sciencebasedtargets.org>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.uu.nl/en/research/sustainability/research/towards-industry-with-negative-emissions>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.fao.org/forest-resources-assessment/past-assessments/fra-2015/en/>

<sup>14</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/eu\\_comm\\_2019.htm](https://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/eu_comm_2019.htm)

<sup>15</sup> <https://forestdeclaration.org/>

- Tropical Forest Alliance 2020 (TFA)<sup>16</sup> is a multi-stakeholder partnership platform, initiated to support the implementation of private-sector commitments to remove deforestation from palm oil, beef, soy, and pulp and paper from their supply chains; many with a deadline of 2020. A number of initiatives are being implemented globally; with a focus on commodities which drive land use change largely in the tropics.
- The Amsterdam Declarations 2015<sup>17</sup> are non-legally binding political commitments that aim to support the implementation of private sector commitments on deforestation and sustainable palm oil. By expanding market demand for sustainable commodities in the signatory European countries, the Declarations aim to incentivise sustainable production in producer countries. The two Declarations—one on stopping deforestation and one on sustainable palm oil—were launched on December 7th, 2015 with the intention of achieving fully sustainable and deforestation-free agro-commodity supply chains in Europe by 2020. To date, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, the United Kingdom, Italy, and France have signed. The Declarations are intended to stimulate private sector commitment and progress on agricultural commodities associated with deforestation (such as palm oil, soy, and cocoa) for which Europe has a significant market share.
- The Amsterdam Commitment by eight national food and feed industry alliances and three European federations (Caobisco, FEDIOL and IMACE) to support 100% sustainable palm oil in Europe by 2020 is closely linked to the Amsterdam Declarations.
- Consumer Goods Forum (CGF) 2010 Resolution on zero deforestation<sup>18</sup> in key commodity sectors (soy, palm oil, paper and pulp/timber, and beef), has played a key role in galvanising business commitments to zero deforestation amongst CGF member companies and beyond.
- Individual private sector sustainability policies related to deforestation, often focusing on No Peat No Deforestation No Exploitation (NDPE): >700+ individual commitments to specific themes, e.g. no deforestation, no products from conversion of HCVF/HCS in Forest Risk Commodities (wood, pulp and paper, palm, cocoa, soy, sugar, cocoa, cattle).
- 484 (56%) of the 865 companies with forest-risk exposure identified by Forest Trends Supply Change initiative have set sustainable commodity commitment(s)<sup>19</sup>. Supply Change also tracks explicit mention of more than a dozen variables within deforestation commitment documents. These variables include goals and policies, such as the use of certification or the need to pay special attention to High Carbon Stock areas. They add specificity to a company's overall commitment and help move a company toward commitment implementation. By order of importance issues such as human rights protection, High Conservation Value (HCV) area protection, zero deforestation, peatland protection, High Carbon Stock and legality were among the most cited<sup>20</sup>.
- CDP Forest 500 which identifies and scores the deforestation policies of the world's 250 most influential companies – including 55 CGF members - in the transition to a deforestation-free economy.

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.tropicalforestalliance.org/>

<sup>17</sup> <https://ad-partnership.org/>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.theconsumergoodsforum.com/implementing-and-scaling-up-the-cgf-zero-net-deforestation-commitment/>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.forest-trends.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/2019.06.05-Supply-Change-Targeting-Zero-Deforestation-Report-Final.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> [https://www.forest-trends.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/doc\\_5248.pdf](https://www.forest-trends.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/doc_5248.pdf)

The scores directly drive policy change. For example, pressing for disclosure of sources for commodities from elevated risk countries.

### Implementing deforestation commitments – using certification schemes as a proxy

A minority of companies with zero deforestation commitments are disclosing quantitative progress toward their zero/net deforestation commitment(s)<sup>19</sup>. Certification is the most used proxy of adherence to zero-deforestation pledges. Forest Trends has found that four out of five zero-deforestation pledges rely on certification in this way<sup>21</sup>. Whilst the majority of voluntary sustainability certification schemes prohibit conversion of forests as set out below, the methods for monitoring these requirements vary significantly from scheme to scheme.

- Roundtable on Responsible Palm Oil prohibits conversion of primary forests but not of other forest types;
- Roundtable on Responsible Soy (RTRS) prohibits conversion of both primary and secondary forests, using a narrow definition of forests;
- Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) prohibits forest conversion in all but exceptional cases;
- Programme for Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) endorses national standards that regulate forest conversion;
- Global Roundtable for Sustainable Beef calls for the protection of native forests, but does not issue certifications;
- Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) prohibits the inclusion of wood sourced from areas being converted from forests to other land uses;
- American Tree Farm System (ATFS) require compliance with regulatory frameworks and require restocking on harvested sites and non-stocked areas where tree growing is consistent with land use practices and the landowner's objectives;
- Roundtable on Sustainable Biofuels (RSB), prohibits conversion of land in no-go areas which include 'primary forest' (as defined by FAO in the Global Forest Resources Assessment 2015); and
- International Sustainability and Carbon Certification (ISCC) prohibits permanent conversion of continuously forested areas.

## 3.3 Biodiversity

The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services published in May 2019<sup>22</sup> is a comprehensive intergovernmental assessment. The report finds that around 1 million animal and plant species are now threatened with extinction, many within decades, more than ever before in human history.

The International Union of Conservation (IUCN) Red List Index – which measures the risk of extinction, in which a value of 1 indicates no threat to any species, and a value of 0 indicates that all species are extinct – has deteriorated from 0.82 in 1993 to 0.73 globally in 2019<sup>23</sup>.

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.forest-trends.org/publications/supply-change-corporations-commodities-and-commitments-that-count/>

<sup>22</sup> <https://ipbes.net/global-assessment>

<sup>23</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg15>

In response to this threat, biodiversity is covered in the SDG 15: ‘Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss.

SDG Target 15.2 includes promoting the sustainable management of all types of forests, with ‘forest area under independently verified forest management certification schemes’ one of four approved sub-indicators for assessing indicator 15.2.1 (‘progress towards sustainable forest management’). The sustainable management practices required to maintain compliance with forest certification programmes can reduce habitat destruction and biodiversity loss (target 15.5), address invasive species (target 15.8) and support the integration of ecosystems and biodiversity values into planning and development processes (target 15.9). The most fundamental and irreversible human impact on nature is species extinction.

The Convention on Biological Diversity was opened for signature on 5 June 1992 at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (the Rio Earth Summit)<sup>24</sup>. The Convention on Biological Diversity was inspired by the world community's growing commitment to sustainable development. It represented a dramatic step forward in the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources.

### Potential roles of voluntary certification systems in biodiversity conservation

- Forest certification is addressed as an important sub-indicator for SDG 15 ‘the aim of which is to “protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.”
- Standards and Biodiversity<sup>25</sup>, 2017 report by the State of Sustainability Initiatives examines the intersection between voluntary sustainability standard and the conservation of biodiversity. The study identified several opportunities to leverage the impact of voluntary sustainability standards to prevent and slow biodiversity losses.
- Climate change-related requirements had the lowest level of coverage of the standards reviewed by IISD, with none of the standards including strict (critical) requirements on the measurement or reduction of greenhouse gasses (GHGs).
- The IISD report<sup>25</sup> noted that “at current compliance levels, every sector reviewed is potentially subject to significant leakage through conventional production in areas of biodiversity risk” and “The absence of comprehensive GIS location data for certified production represents a significant challenge in understanding the distributional effect of standards adoption on areas of strategic importance to biodiversity conservation.”
- In addition, the IISD report<sup>25</sup> authors highlighted that “the vast majority of requirements reviewed specify practices rather than performance outcomes. Moreover, requirements tend to focus on practices that protect ecosystems rather than practices related to the monitoring, measurement, or restoration of such systems. Thus, although standards typically maintain a sophisticated auditing infrastructure that may be capable of collecting outcome data, the actual requirements associated with the standards are not prone to producing such data.”

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.cbd.int/forest/>;

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.iisd.org/sites/default/files/publications/standards-biodiversity-ssi-report.pdf>

## Heterogeneity of approach to biodiversity by certification systems

- Biodiversity criteria are being addressed in certification systems. Evaluating these criteria is challenging as it is difficult to separate the impact on biodiversity from other indicators (e.g. water conservation, soil management, use of pesticides).
- There is a wide variation in the approach taken by certification schemes. In 2015 WIREs<sup>26</sup> identified benchmark principles including:
  - Endangered species,
  - Habitat destruction and fragmentation,
  - Habitat degradation and modification,
  - Overexploitation,
  - Invasive species and GMOs,
  - Energy use and GHG,
  - Research, awareness, and education.

Comparing performance against these benchmark principles; SFI came out stronger than FSC or PEFC for habitat degradation and modification; and research, awareness, and training. Conversely FSC was identified as stronger on habitat destruction and fragmentation; and overexploitation than SFI.

- The use of generic standards, which must be comprehensive in order to cover relevant aspects for a broad set of production systems, could be facilitated by (1) specifying for which production systems a criterion is valid, (2) defining different quantitative requirements for different production systems, or (3) developing sub-standards for different production systems<sup>26</sup>.
- Heterogeneity of systems can also be reduced by considering multiple end uses of biomass in individual standards, when appropriate. Sustainable Agricultural Network (SAN) Rainforest Alliance e.g., was initially applicable for food products only, but is now endorsed by RSB for production of biofuel feedstock. Consequently, producers can now sell their certified products at a premium on both the food market and the biofuel market, and traders can buy SAN/RA certified products and sell them on the EU-RED market.

## Three examples of how forest certification schemes identify forest with exceptional values

Term used	Program	High level definition
High Conservation Values (HCV)	FSC	Originally developed within FSC, the HCV approach is a tool for documenting features of critical or exceptional social and environmental value across a given area so that these can be protected and managed for. There are six core conservation values within HCV, four of which can be assessed within a defined unit (e.g., a forest, plantation, etc.) while two are assessed at a higher, regional level. HCV is centrally integrated into the RSPO standard which requires all operators to undergo a formal HCV assessment. In other standards systems, HCV is proposed as one approach along with more

<sup>26</sup> WIREs Energy Environ 2015, 4:26–50. doi: 10.1002/wene.118

		traditional planning tools such as Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs). The HCV Resource Network has developed common guidance: <sup>27</sup> . The HCV Approach is referenced in the CGF Deforestation Resolution, CGF Sustainable Palm Oil and Sustainable Soy Guidelines, FSC, RSPO, SAN. HCV is not referenced by RTRS.
Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value (FECV)	SFI	SFI Standard, Section 6, guidance <sup>28</sup> : known sites of flora and fauna associated with viable occurrences of critically imperiled and imperiled species and communities also known as Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value.
Forests of Recognized Importance (FORI)	ATFS	ATFS Standard, glossary <sup>29</sup> : globally, regionally and nationally significant large landscape areas of exceptional ecological, social, cultural or biological values. These forests are evaluated at the landscape level, rather than at the stand level, and are recognized for a combination of unique values, rather than a single attribute.

### Other references and tools that can be of use for the identification of exceptionally valuable forests:

- NatureServe<sup>30</sup>
- The Global Forestry Risk Register<sup>31</sup>
- Global Forest Watch<sup>32</sup>
- The Intact Forest Landscape<sup>33</sup>
- The Nature Conservancy's Conservation Gateway<sup>34</sup>
- FSC Controlled Wood Risk Assessments<sup>35</sup>
- Roundtable for Sustainable Biomass (RSB) Conservation Impact Assessment Guidelines RSB-GUI-01-007-01<sup>36</sup>

<sup>27</sup> <https://hcvnetwork.org/library/common-guidance-for-the-identification-of-high-conservation-values/>

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.sfiprogram.org/files/pdf/2015-2019-standardsandrules-section-6-pdf>

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.treefarmssystem.org/fori>

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.natureserve.org>

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.globalforestregistry.org/>

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.globalforestwatch.org/>

<sup>33</sup> <http://intactforests.org/>

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.conservationgateway.org/ConservationByGeography/Pages/Conservation-By-Geography.aspx>

<sup>35</sup> <https://fsc.org/en/document-centre>

<sup>36</sup> [https://rsb.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/RSB-GUI-01-002-02\\_Screening-Tool.pdf](https://rsb.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/RSB-GUI-01-002-02_Screening-Tool.pdf)

## Intact Forest Landscapes

- According to ISEAL, the Intact Forest Landscapes (IFLs) is a concept that was first developed for fast and cost-effective assessment and monitoring of forest degradation in the context of REDD+ initiatives<sup>66</sup>.
- An IFL is an unbroken expanse of natural ecosystems within the zone of current forest extent, showing no signs of significant human activity, and large enough that all native biodiversity, including viable populations of wide-ranging species, can be maintained<sup>37</sup>.
- IFL global maps have been developed by a consortium of organisations including Greenpeace, Transparent World and WRI. They provide a useful visual overlay that can inform large scale conservation planning.
- Through Global Forest Watch<sup>38</sup>, IFLs can be overlaid with forest change data to help inform decision making.
- An FSC Advice Note was produced in December 2016<sup>39,40</sup> which stated that forest management operations within IFLs, including harvesting and road building, could proceed as long as they did not impact more than 20 per cent of IFLs within the FMU and did not reduce any IFLs below the 50,000 ha threshold in the landscape. This advice note ensured that 80 per cent of IFL core areas within FSC-certified forests have been placed under temporary protection as of 1 January 2017, until new national standards are in force.
- A key component of FSC Motion 65 on IFLs is to consider cultural, social, and economic values of Indigenous peoples and forest-dependent communities, including the provision of Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC). The FSC Social Chamber introduced the concept of Indigenous Cultural Landscapes (ICLs) as both a tool for implementing FPIC within the Policy Motion and as an alternative, Indigenous peoples-led land management method. Since the approval of the Policy Motion, there has been active discussion about its implementation internationally and in Canada. A useful paper by FSC Canada explores some of the significant challenges posed by applying an IFL and ICL approach<sup>41</sup>.
- Whilst this precautionary approach provides incentives to act and creates space for dialogue to develop a national approach; equally it prohibits forestry for example in critical countries with high intact forest cover like Liberia where companies may be disincentivised from FSC certification<sup>66</sup>. Payments for Ecosystem Services maybe one option that could incentivise FSC certification in IFL areas.
- FSC established a process and minimum requirements for the implementation of the Motion, prioritising the work in the key locations of Russia, Canada, Congo Basin and Brazil/Amazon. The work on this assessment will be done through standard development groups in those priority countries and regions, which FSC has committed to before the end of 2020<sup>42</sup>.

<sup>37</sup> <http://www.intactforests.org/>

<sup>38</sup> <http://data.globalforestwatch.org/datasets/intact-forest-landscapes-2016>

<sup>39</sup> <https://ca.fsc.org/download-box.2419.htm>

<sup>40</sup> <https://ga2017.fsc.org/history-of-a-motion-intact-forest-landscapes-ifls/>

<sup>41</sup> <https://ca.fsc.org/preview.ifl-icl-discussion-paper.a-1105.pdf>

<sup>42</sup> <https://fsc.org/en/page/intact-forest-landscapes>

## Measuring the impact of certification on biodiversity

- IUCN published in 2016 the Report ‘Policy Matters 2016: Certification and Biodiversity Measuring impacts of certification on biodiversity at multiple scales’<sup>43</sup>. and concluded “a more systematic, large-scale evaluation would increase the effectiveness of [Voluntary Certification Schemes] VCS through better targeting of places and actors that are lagging in environmental performance, fine tuning of standards to local priority issues, rapid detection of areas with low compliance or additionality, and design of optimal policy mixes.”
- Biodiversity Impact Indicators for Commodity Production (BIICP) reflect high-level priority indicators for assessing the potential impact or contribution of agricultural production to biodiversity conservation. Indicators are categorised across habitat conservation, soil fertility, water use, water quality, climate change.
- Example of outcome based standard: LEAF Marque<sup>44</sup> began investigating how to transition its standard towards a hybrid assurance model that assesses outcomes alongside its current practice-based approach. The main area of focus was biodiversity, but soil management, water management and energy efficiency could be considered in the future. As a result of the discussions, two measurable biodiversity outcomes have been proposed:
  - Populations of locally agreed indicator species; and
  - The percentage of land managed as habitat for native biodiversity.
- Spatial assessment of environmental impacts of bioenergy production<sup>45</sup>, the University of Utrecht runs this project aiming to quantify impacts of increased bioenergy demand on carbon, biodiversity, and water.

## 3.4 Soils

Although management of soils is critical to advancing most of the SDGs, the word soil is not once mentioned in any of these goals. SDG 15, for example, mentions land degradation but does not specifically focus on soils. Other SDGs that require healthy soils as a precondition are SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), 3 (Good Health and Well-being), 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), 13 (Climate Action).

### Initiatives related to soil

- Interest in soils has been increasing with various institutions playing a key role in increasing the emphasis on including soil management as part of wider sustainable management of natural ecosystems and agricultural land.

<sup>43</sup> [https://www.iucn.org/sites/dev/files/policy\\_matters\\_21\\_chapter\\_1\\_-\\_measuring\\_impacts\\_of\\_certification\\_on\\_biodiversity\\_at\\_multiple\\_scales\\_experience\\_from\\_the\\_san\\_rainforest\\_alliance\\_system\\_and\\_priorities\\_for\\_the\\_future.pdf](https://www.iucn.org/sites/dev/files/policy_matters_21_chapter_1_-_measuring_impacts_of_certification_on_biodiversity_at_multiple_scales_experience_from_the_san_rainforest_alliance_system_and_priorities_for_the_future.pdf)

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.isealalliance.org/innovations-standards/innovations-projects/moving-towards-outcome-based-standards>

<sup>45</sup> <https://www.uu.nl/en/research/academy-of-ecosystem-services/research/greening-value-chains/spatial-assessment-of-environmental-impacts-of-bioenergy-production>

- UN FAO International year of Soils 2015; which led to the Voluntary Standard on Sustainable Soil Management (VGSSM)<sup>46</sup>.
- VGSSM are being used as a reference for several Global Soil Partnership outputs such as the 'Protocol for assessing sustainable soil management' and 'the International Code of Conduct for the Sustainable Use and Management of Fertilizers'.
- The 'Global Action on Pollination Services for Sustainable Agriculture and Research in Soil Biodiversity' project<sup>47</sup>; led by FAO is working toward protecting genetic diversity in our food systems and the equitable sharing of associated benefits as well as pollination services and soil fertility required to maintain food production.
- Soil health is one of the three principal areas of focus of One Planet Business for Biodiversity <sup>48</sup>(OP2B) - a business-led, agriculture-centric coalition of 19 large CGM representing revenues of USD \$500 billion. While the impact of work will extend through to 2030, meaningful solutions will be announced in June 2020 and measurable targets in October 2020.
- OP2B member Nestlé has now gone beyond its No Peat No Deforestation No Exploitation (NDPE) commitments to scale up agricultural work, with an additional strong focus on soils; as well as reforestation and biodiversity protection.
- Additional opportunities include supporting research and education about soil management; monitoring of soil health using remote sensing (e.g. of fertiliser use, soil organic matter, soil erosion, sedimentation in water courses, etc.).

### 3.5 Land use

Land-use issues relate to a number of different UN Development Goals but are in particular covered under: SDG target 15.6 'Promote fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilisation of genetic resources and promote appropriate access to such resources, as internationally agreed' and SDG target 15.9 'By 2020, integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies and accounts'.

#### Jurisdictional and landscape approaches

- Jurisdictional-level and multi-stakeholder processes led by national, regional, district or local level governments can provide a space for stakeholders to discuss the many challenges (of addressing poverty alleviation, land use planning and natural ecosystem degradation) in a constructive manner.
- Working beyond supply chains also offers a way to reduce the risk of leakage (i.e. shifting deforestation to other actors within the jurisdiction) and to make monitoring and verification cheaper and more efficient.
- Jurisdictional approaches also offer a chance of reducing the risk that responsible sourcing commitments may not be met by all producers in a jurisdiction, by small-holder producers. Interventions are needed to support integrated supply chain approaches with jurisdictional

<sup>46</sup> <http://www.fao.org/global-soil-partnership/en/>

<sup>47</sup> <http://www.fao.org/pollination/en/>

<sup>48</sup> <https://www.wbcsd.org/Programs/Food-Land-Water/News/Nineteen-leading-companies-join-forces-to-step-up-alternative-farming-practices-and-protect-biodiversity-for-the-benefit-of-planet-and-people>

approaches and foster a combination of financial, fiscal, technical and trade incentives to trigger the required change at jurisdictional level.

- RSPO is piloting a jurisdictional approach to state level in Malaysia<sup>49</sup>.
- FSC Intact Forest Landscapes Landscape has held one large forum meeting; although forward progress is unclear.

### **Sustainable intensification**

- This is one response to the conflict between land use and market demand; FSC have a working group focused on how to respond to this. RSPO also encourages increase in sustainable yield by better management practices. This increased yield is a key element of improving livelihoods for smallholders.

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<sup>49</sup> <https://rspo.org/news-and-events/announcements/public-consultation-jurisdictional-approach-for-rspo-certification>

## 4 Social themes

The themes most relevant to the SBP Standard Development Process and the working context of the scheme could include:

- Production of feedstock does not endanger food; water supply or subsistence means of communities.
- Feedstock and biomass production can serve as a means of poverty alleviation and beneficial for the local rural livelihoods.
- Prevention of exploitation of labour (right to collective bargaining, child labour, compulsory labour, discrimination, fairness, health, and safety) as defined by the fundamental ILO Conventions<sup>50</sup>.
  - Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87)
  - Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)
  - Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) (and its 2014 Protocol)
  - Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)
  - Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)
  - Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)
  - Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100)
  - Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)
  - Free, prior and informed consent is defined in ILO Convention No.169.

### Effective means for voluntary certification schemes to apply social safeguards

- Embedding indicators and verifiers for ILO core conventions into CoC standards and supply chain auditing e.g. FSC<sup>51</sup> and PEFC<sup>52</sup> CoC – however this is still transition and ensuring the competency of such audits remains a crucial question.
- Contributions to the local economy from feedstock harvesting and biomass production should be evaluated for positive and negative impacts. These could be calculated on the basis of economic performance indicators EC1, EC6, and EC7 of Global Reporting Initiative (GRI)<sup>53</sup>.
- Addressing exploitation: One of the most common tools for managing exploitation risks (part of the No Peat No Deforestation No Exploitation policy shift) including forced/bonded/slave labour) is SEDEX. SEDEX enables companies to work together to better manage their social and environmental performance, and protect people working in the supply chain through an ethical audit format adopted by its members, SMETA<sup>54</sup>. SEDEX has over 60,000 members in 180 countries, across 35 industry sectors, including food, agriculture, financial services, clothing, and apparel, packaging, and chemicals. Auditing and assurance further up the supply chain is variable.

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.ilo.org/global/standards/introduction-to-international-labour-standards/conventions-and-recommendations/lang--en/index.htm>

<sup>51</sup> <https://www.fsc-uk.org/en-uk/newsroom/id/629>

<sup>52</sup> <https://www.pefc.org/standards-implementation/standards-and-guides/changes-to-our-key-standards>

<sup>53</sup> <https://www.globalreporting.org/Pages/default.aspx>

<sup>54</sup> <https://www.sedex.com/smeta-audit/>

- Revising standards for smallholders: A crucial strategy for successful increase in uptake of certification in several sectors as they produce a high proportion of forest risk commodities (representing 40% of global palm oil production). RSPO<sup>55</sup> and FSC<sup>56</sup> have undertaken major reviews of their approach.
- Mobile technology use in addressing social risks: Mobiles have been used for several years now to help local communities and workers engage with social risks (e.g. RSPO Ulula<sup>57</sup>).
- Apply best practice to ensure Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC)<sup>58</sup> of local communities and forest people. Consider work of for example the Global Landscapes Forum on a 'gold standard' for indigenous rights<sup>59</sup>.

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<sup>55</sup> <https://rsep.rspo.org/>

<sup>56</sup> <https://fsc.org/en/details-page/smallholders-solutions>

<sup>57</sup> <https://rspo.org/news-and-events/news/rspo-extends-ulula-pilot-to-sabah-malaysia-with-wilmar-international>

<sup>58</sup> <https://www.forestpeoples.org/en/environmental-governance-legal-human-rights-responsible-finance/training-tool/2017/resources-free>

<sup>59</sup> <https://news.globallandscapesforum.org/viewpoint/a-new-gold-standard-for-people-and-planet/>

## 5 Best practice in assurance

### 5.1 Best practice in certification schemes

ISEAL's Credibility Principles<sup>60</sup> represent the core values on which effective sustainability standards are built to ensure their credibility. The principles are: Sustainability, Improvement, Relevance, Rigour, Engagement, Impartiality, Transparency, Accessibility, Truthfulness, and Efficiency. These principles are embedded throughout ISEAL's three codes of good practice covering standard setting, assurance, and impacts.

### 5.2 Impact orientated standard development

- Stakeholders expectations include evidence that certification schemes deliver on their goals; the envisaged impacts and to link the process to these expected outcomes.
- Example of outcome based standard: LEAF Marque<sup>61</sup> began investigating how to transition its standard towards a hybrid assurance model that assesses outcomes alongside its current practice-based approach. The main area of focus was biodiversity, but soil management, water management and energy efficiency could be considered in the future. As a result of the discussions, two measurable biodiversity outcomes have been proposed:
  - Populations of locally agreed indicator species;
  - The percentage of land managed as habitat for native biodiversity.

### 5.3 Risk-based approach to standard development

- Some schemes such as FSC include a risk-based approach in standard setting, prioritising revision of key elements of a standard; rather than a full revision.
- An assessment of the impacts/outcome for each of indicator, can help identify the priority and/or order of indicator revision, as whether indicator revision is even required.

### 5.4 Separate what needs monitoring from what needs auditing

- As set out in a WWF report 'Innovating Assurance'<sup>62</sup>, audits could be focused to assess management systems, whilst outcomes are monitored differently.
- Key sustainability outcomes within any standard (e.g. no deforestation, HCVF, HCS, FPIC) first and foremost need to be monitored well, and independently; not necessarily by an auditor.
- ISEAL in 2017 recommended<sup>63</sup> shifting the focus from auditing and data management; to risk analysis, and participatory monitoring.

<sup>60</sup> <https://www.isealalliance.org/credible-sustainability-standards/iseal-credibility-principles>.

<sup>61</sup> <https://www.isealalliance.org/innovations-standards/innovations-projects/moving-towards-outcome-based-standards>

<sup>62</sup> [http://poig.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/WWF\\_Auditing\\_Innovations\\_Nov-2017.pdf](http://poig.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/WWF_Auditing_Innovations_Nov-2017.pdf)

<sup>63</sup> [https://www.isealalliance.org/sites/default/files/resource/2017-12/ISEAL\\_Standards%20Contributions\\_to\\_Landscape\\_Approaches\\_April16\\_Final.pdf](https://www.isealalliance.org/sites/default/files/resource/2017-12/ISEAL_Standards%20Contributions_to_Landscape_Approaches_April16_Final.pdf)

## 5.5 Increasing uptake in certification/assurance stepwise approaches

- Historically led by organisations such as the Tropical Forest Trust, WWF GFTN – but largely failed in tropical forests.
- Some renewed small-scale interest from FSC, RA and RTRS. Recommended in 2017 WWF report.
- ISEAL noted that certification schemes can play a role in providing the aspirational sustainability goals for producers to meet over time, and helping to identify the incentive structures that will keep them improving (ISEAL, 2016)<sup>64</sup>.
- Bonsucro (sugarcane certification scheme) Connect provides an online tool for certificate holders (from Supplyshift)<sup>65</sup>. The Bonsucro Calculator is an audit calculator which enables certificate holders to track which data entry points have been audited, use benchmarking outcomes to link with best performers/identify issues against indicators, manage quality control of data entry. This enables visualisations of performance for producers for mills and farms (live benchmarking through a ‘smart dashboard’), facilitation of the audit process and scorecards to track progress.

## 5.6 Training

- ISEAL notes that certification schemes can play a role in meeting deforestation commitments through ‘providing the infrastructure to support capacity building activities and introducing new tools such as peer learning networks to strengthen producers’ capacity’<sup>66</sup>.
- Certification schemes such as Bonsucro and SFI include education and training as a fundamental aspect of their scheme.
- For example, in 2018, 96% of all fibre supplied to SFI Program Participant mills was delivered by trained harvesting professionals, with 10,628 resource and harvesting professionals trained in water quality, biodiversity, and other sustainable forest practice requirements.

## 5.7 Increased use of IT

- Satellite imagery and GIS is being increasingly used to monitor risks at macro level for buyers and NGOs, to identify production sites in public geospatial maps and demonstrate impact.
- KPIs and GIS and Data – both FSC (with their FSC 2.0 Digital push), and PEFC by hiring a GIS specialist, and ASI by investing in GIS technology, are all gearing up to try and demonstrate their positive impact.
- FSC are looking to capture forest and CoC data during the audit process, to report on benefits and impacts of FSC; and to see, analyse and act upon trends, e.g. when improving standards globally and locally. Developing GIS tools to support remote assessment of compliance with FSC requirements; and CW risk assessment mapping.

<sup>64</sup> [https://www.isealalliance.org/sites/default/files/resource/2017-12/ISEAL\\_Standards%20Contributions\\_to\\_Landscape\\_Approaches\\_April16\\_Final.pdf](https://www.isealalliance.org/sites/default/files/resource/2017-12/ISEAL_Standards%20Contributions_to_Landscape_Approaches_April16_Final.pdf)

<sup>65</sup> <http://www.bonsucro.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Bonsucro-Connect-Introduction-English.pdf>

<sup>66</sup> [https://www.isealalliance.org/sites/default/files/resource/2017-12/ISEAL\\_Standards%20Contributions\\_to\\_Landscape\\_Approaches\\_April16\\_Final.pdf](https://www.isealalliance.org/sites/default/files/resource/2017-12/ISEAL_Standards%20Contributions_to_Landscape_Approaches_April16_Final.pdf)

## Using data to inform standard-setting

There are several data related IT projects, tools, products and tools used in standard setting including those listed below.

- GIS and forestry mapping tools include examples Global Forest Watch and Global Forest Watch Pro, Starling.
- Wood origin identification through isotope analysis to address credibility challenges – probably built into Controlled Wood by identifying origin and high-risk supply chains. Georeferenced wood samples for accurate supply chain credibility investigations (Kew project).
- ISEAL Certification Atlas<sup>67</sup> to map certification sites and identify areas where a multicommodity jurisdictional approach may be of particular benefit.
- GIS for producers as a tool for management (Global Forest Watch Pro, Starling, other private systems e.g. Rezatec for New South Wales).
- Mapping commodity trade flows using customs data (TRASE in Brazil and Indonesia on soy and palm).
- Online Claim Platforms (RSPO, SBP, UTZ). Using IT to control and verify transactions and reduce audit load (transaction documentation and verification of SBP on Radix Tree). There is an opportunity to share data with uncertified stakeholders to verify certified transaction; for example, to plug into policy compliance monitoring and reporting for EU Non-Financial Reporting directive compliance, Forest 500 reporting etc.
- FSC are conducting manual transaction verification for high risk supply chains and investigating blockchain initially for reconciling and identifying discrepancies in high risk supply chains.
- ISEAL in cooperation with provenance and RSB have developed a pilot project ‘The Blockchain Revolution: Application to Sustainably Certified Supply Chains<sup>68</sup>’ with the conclusion that *‘many of the introduced technologies are in their infancy - blockchains and zero knowledge proofs are still experimental, but have been under heavy development recently due to growing interest. However, there are still huge benefits that can be achieved today - simple steps such as connecting an existing certification to the blockchain, using digital signatures whenever possible or experimenting with public blockchain based timestamping are already possible.’*

## 5.8 Increasing transparency

- ISEAL notes the opportunity certification schemes have for driving transparency in implementing deforestation commitments by: ‘mapping certified production units across a landscape through the adoption of polygon-based location data, and integration with mapping platforms such as Global Forest Watch’<sup>66</sup>.
- Demand for sharing of information on forest risk commodities and social risks from NGOs and scoring methodologies. For example, ZSL’s SPOTT scores timber and pulp producers<sup>69</sup> as well as palm oil producers across several indicators related to responsible production; and publishes the data as a

<sup>67</sup> <https://iseal.maps.arcgis.com/home/index.html>

<sup>68</sup> [https://www.isealalliance.org/sites/default/files/resource/2019-02/Blockchain\\_Report.pdf](https://www.isealalliance.org/sites/default/files/resource/2019-02/Blockchain_Report.pdf)

<sup>69</sup> <https://www.spott.org/timber-pulp/>

scorecard. There is an expectation that large producers have this geospatial and compliance information available and that they should share it.

- NGOs are pushing for transparent sharing of information on sources of forest risk commodities. For example, palm oil traders such as Wilmar now publish their mill names and locations online<sup>70</sup>. This is also now a key question in the CDP Forest 500 questionnaire<sup>71</sup>.
- Full transparency: The audit reports of Palm Oil Innovation Group (POIG)<sup>72</sup> grower members are posted in their entirety in the public domain POIG proposals on assurance.

## 5.9 Risk-based approaches to auditing

- Interest in changing frequency of physical audits, based on risk for specific issues. Looking at patterns of Non-Conformances and redesigning audits to focus on real risks of non-compliance.
- Focus on risk of non-conformance. The proposed POIG Auditing Guidelines<sup>73</sup> specify which indicators are verified immediately. If there is no risk (e.g. no peatlands, no High Carbon Stock (HCS) forests, Genetical Modified Organisms (GMO)) in the certified plantation, then these indicators are not verified in subsequent surveillance audits. However, they are checked every five years. This approach cuts costs and removes redundancies in auditing.
- In addition, large corporates routinely use certification as part of supply chain risk management and support of legal compliance (e.g. for EUTR DDS).

## 5.10 Improving audit quality, mitigating risk of corruption and influence

- Limits to successive audits: Palm Oil Innovation Group's (POIG) proposed Auditing Guidelines require that certification bodies can carry out audits for a maximum period of five years and must be rotated thereafter. In addition, the lead auditor should change after three years.
- Improve the quality of auditors, for example through a roster of approved, high quality lead auditors.

## 5.11 Removing Certification Body fee relationship with Certificate Holders

- Developing mechanisms to strengthen the objectivity and integrity of audits, such as an escrow fund to delink the financial dependency of certification bodies from their clients<sup>74</sup>.

<sup>70</sup> <https://www.wilmar-international.com/sustainability/traceability/supply-chain-map>

<sup>71</sup> <https://www.cdp.net/en/forests>

<sup>72</sup> [http://poig.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Innovating-Assurance\\_POIG-Brief\\_27-Nov-2017.pdf](http://poig.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Innovating-Assurance_POIG-Brief_27-Nov-2017.pdf).

<sup>73</sup> <http://poig.org/the-poig-charter/poig-verification-indicators/>

<sup>74</sup> [http://poig.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/WWF\\_Auditing\\_Innovations\\_Nov-2017.pdf](http://poig.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/WWF_Auditing_Innovations_Nov-2017.pdf) and POIG)

## 5.12 A Human-Centred Design (HCD) approach to normative documents

- The HCD approach starts with a basic question, such as ‘How might we most effectively and clearly transmit the intent and meaning of the normative requirements to the reader?’ or ‘How might we reduce confusion caused by the density of the normative language?’
- One possible answer may well be changing the design and layout the standards, away from purely text and towards the use of (more) pictures and/or diagrams.

## 5.13 Audit software

- Software applications enabling a degree of automation in a data collection and analysis; together with improved efficiency and transparency offer a number of opportunities.

A number of technologies for improving compliance verification are emerging including block chain; along with various remote sensing techniques; such as LiDAR, GIS, and drones.

## Annex 1: Commonly used abbreviations

There are many abbreviations used in this document. For a better readability, please find their meanings listed here:

BIICP	Biodiversity Impact Indicators for Commodity Production
CoC	Chain of Custody
CGF	Consumer Good Forum
CGM	Consumer Goods Manufacturer
DDS	Due Diligence System
EC	European Commission
ETH	Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule
EU	European Union
EUTR	European Timber Regulation
FAO	Forest and Agricultural Organisation
FM	Forest Management
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
FPP	Forest People Partnership
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
GFTN	Global Forest and Trade Network
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GIS	Geographic Information System
HCD	Human Centred Design
HCS	High Carbon Stock
HCSA	High Carbon Stock Approach
HCVF	High Conservation Value Forest
ILO	International Labour Organisation
ISEAL	International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling Alliance
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
MRV	Monitoring, Reporting and Verification
NDCs	National Determined Contributions
NDPE	No Peat No Deforestation No Exploitation
NYDF	New York Declaration on Forests
OCP	Online Claims Platform

PEFC	Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification
POIG	Palm Oil Innovation Group
RA	Rainforest Alliance
RSPO	Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil
RTRS	Roundtable on Responsible Soy
SA	Soil Association
SBT	Science Based Target
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
WBCSD	World Business Council for Sustainable Development
WRI	World Resources Institute
WWF	World Wildlife Fund
ZSL	Zoological Society of London