



## FSC Forest Management Standards in the UK

The formal basis for FSC Forest Management (FM) certification in the UK is the national forest stewardship standard FSC-STD-GBR-03-2017 V1-0 EN, available from the FSC UK and FSC International websites. This presents FM requirements in the context of FSC's international Principles and Criteria.

Most forest managers are more familiar with the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS). The current version, UKWAS 4, is available from the FSC UK and UKWAS websites.

This has a different, more user-friendly format, and omits the wording of the Principles and Criteria, but contains the same FM requirements (it omits FSC-specific chain of custody requirements – see below).

All current and potential FM certificate holders in the UK should be aware that the Principles and Criteria ordered version of the standard is the formal basis for auditing and decision making.

In cases of dispute, this version is considered to be definitive. However, certificate holders are free to use the UKWAS version in their day to day work and in discussions with auditors.



### Other FSC requirements

FSC has separate requirement regulating the use of what it considers to be Highly Hazardous Pesticides. Current and potential FM certificate holders should check for the latest version of these requirements with their certification body. The FSC national forest stewardship standard includes two chain of custody requirements which are not in UKWAS, which expand on Indicator 8.5.1/UKWAS 3.2.2:

Indicator 8.5.2 Information about all products sold is compiled and documented, including:

- Common and scientific species name;
- Product name or description;
- Volume (or quantity) of product;
- Information to trace the material to the source of origin logging block;
- Logging date;
- If basic processing activities take place in the forest, the date and volume produced; and
- Whether or not the material was sold as FSC certified.

Indicator 8.5.3 Sales invoices or similar documentation are kept for a minimum of five years for all products sold with an FSC claim, which identify at a minimum, the following information:

- Name and address of purchaser;
- The date of sale;
- Common and scientific species name;
- Product description;
- The volume (or quantity) sold;
- Certificate code; and
- The FSC Claim "FSC 100%" identifying products sold as FSC certified.

## What do the Principles and Criteria mean for forest management in the UK?

FSC's vision for responsible forest management is set out in ten Principles, under each of which are a number of Criteria. Below is an outline of how some of the requirements of the Principles and Criteria relate to UK forestry, with references to FSC indicators/UKWAS requirements.

### Principle 1:

Compliance with Laws – Legal compliance is vital in a heavily regulated country; in addition to obvious requirements like felling licences (FSC 1.1.2/UKWAS 1.1.3(d)), this Principle also addresses issues such as protecting the forest against illegal activities (FSC 1.4.1/UKWAS 1.2.1), and complying with anti-corruption legislation (FSC 1.7.1 & 1.7.2/UKWAS 1.1.6).

### Principle 2:

Workers' Rights and Employment Conditions – Here the main issues are health and safety (FSC 2.3.1, 2.3.2 & 2.3.3/UKWAS 5.4.1), equality (FSC 2.2.1 & 2.2.2/UKWAS 5.6.1(a) & 2.3.1(d)), living wages (FSC 2.4.1/UKWAS 5.6.1(e)), and training (FSC 2.5.1/UKWAS 5.5.1).

### Principle 3:

Indigenous Peoples' Rights – This Principle is not applicable in the UK, where there are no recognised indigenous peoples.

### Principle 4:

Community Relations – Owners/managers must respect the rights of local people (FSC 4.1.4/UKWAS 5.1.1(a)), avoid negative impacts on communities (FSC 4.5.2/UKWAS 5.2.1), provide public access (FSC 4.4.1 & 4.4.2, UKWAS 5.1.2), and resolve complaints (FSC 4.6.1/UKWAS 5.2.2).

### Principle 5:

Benefits from the Forest – The emphasis here is on producing a variety of goods and services at sustainable levels (FSC 5.2.1-5.2.4/UKWAS 2.4.1-2.4.3), using local processing, services and value adding where possible (FSC 5.4.1/UKWAS 5.3.1), and committing to long-term economic viability (FSC 5.5.1 & 5.5.2/UKWAS 2.1.3).

### Principle 6:

Environmental Values and Impacts – The owner/manager must protect the environment during operations (FSC 6.3.1/UKWAS 2.5.1(b)), including priority species and habitats (FSC 6.4.1/UKWAS 4.1.2) and natural watercourses (FSC 6.7.1/UKWAS 3.1.2), diversify forest landscapes (FSC 6.8.1 & 6.8.2/UKWAS 2.6.1 & 2.7.1), and avoid losses of semi-natural woodland (FSC 6.9.1/UKWAS 2.13.1(a)).

### Principle 7:

Management Planning – There must be a clear vision and objectives for management (FSC 7.1.1/UKWAS 2.1.1(a)), a plan consistent with them (FSC 7.2.1/UKWAS 2.2.1), and targets to measure progress (FSC 7.3.1/UKWAS 2.2.1). The plan must be revised periodically (FSC 7.4.1/UKWAS 2.2.3) and be made publicly available (FSC 7.5.1/UKWAS 2.2.2), and stakeholders should be involved in planning where appropriate (FSC 7.6.1/UKWAS 2.3.1(c)).

### Principle 8:

Monitoring and Assessment – Monitoring is essential to assess the implementation of the management plan and the achievement of targets (FSC 8.1.1-8.1.3/UKWAS 2.15.1), as well as evaluating environmental and social impacts and changes in environmental condition (FSC 8.2.1/UKWAS 2.15.1(c)), all of which feed back into the plan (FSC 8.3.1/UKWAS 2.15.2).

### Principle 9:

High Conservation Values – Features and areas of high conservation value, including statutory designated sites (FSC 9.1.1/UKWAS 4.1.1(a)), ancient woodland (FSC 9.1.3 & 9.1.4/UKWAS 4.2.1(a) & 4.3.1(a)), and areas of critical importance for watershed management (FSC 9.1.6/UKWAS 4.5.1(a)), must be maintained and, where possible, enhanced.

### Principle 10:

Implementation of Management Activities – This Principles addresses many fundamental issues of good forestry practice, including choice of species (FSC 10.2.1-10.2.4/UKWAS 2.8.1(a), 2.8.1(c) & 4.7.1) and silvicultural systems (FSC 10.5.1-10.5.4/UKWAS 2.10.1 & 2.10.2), use of fertilisers (FSC 10.6.1-10.6.7/UKWAS 3.4.1 & 3.4.5) and pesticides (FSC 10.7.1-10.7.10/UKWAS 3.4.1 -3.4.4), and addressing natural hazards, including pests and diseases (FSC 10.9.1 & 10.9.2/UKWAS 2.5.3).