

1.0 Commitment to FSC Principles and Legal Requirements

Non-timber forest products shall be managed in accordance with principles and criteria 1-10 of the Forest Stewardship Council and principle number 11 (non-timber forest products) and its criteria. NTFP certification will also take place within the ethical and legal framework of international environmental and human rights law and policy, and national, state/provincial and local laws in the country where forest management takes place.

- 1.1 The forest management operation (FMO) clearly demonstrates a long-term commitment to adhere to the FSC principles and criteria.
- 1.2 The FMO meets national, state/provincial, and local environmental, labor and forestry laws.
- 1.3 The FMO is up to date in payment of local taxes, resource rights or leases, fees, royalties, etc.
- 1.4 The FMO is in accordance with local customary law governing exploitation of the resource. If local communities (landowners or administrators) are not actively involved in the forestry operation, prior informed consent for all forest management operations on their lands, or for exploitation of traditionally managed resource, must be granted. In most cases, prior informed consent (consent based upon understanding and agreement with the proposed plan) takes written form (agreements, memoranda of understanding, etc).
- 1.5 The FMO is in accordance with international environmental, human rights and labor conventions; field operations must meet the intent of such conventions.
- 1.6 Forest managers are willing to make available a public certification summary of forest management operations according to the certifier's requirements.

2.0 Land tenure and use rights and responsibilities

NTFPs are often spread across great distances, and are managed according to traditional systems that incorporate complex customary legal and management norms. The forest operation must respect and incorporate customary law with regard to tenure and forest and species stewardship. Clear land tenure – guaranteeing rights and access to resources – enables forest managers and communities to invest in long-term forest management strategies of the kind NTFP certification is intended to promote

- 2.1 The rights to use the property and access to resources are secured for the long-term.
- 2.2 Land is dedicated by owners to long-term forest management.
- 2.3 Local communities with legal or customary tenure or use rights maintain control, to the (legally acceptable) extent that they are able to protect their rights or resources over forest operations unless they delegate control with free and informed consent to other agencies.
- 2.4 Resource conflicts with adjoining landowners or other resource users are resolved or are addressed in a systematic and effective manner.
- 2.5 A monitoring system exists to maintain security over forest areas (e.g. protection from illegal logging, occupation, hunting, resource extraction, commercial agricultural development, ranching, or land conversion to other land uses).

3.0 Forest management planning and monitoring

- 3.1 A multiyear forest management plan is written and available for the whole area under management that integrates all commercialized NTFPs and timber products.
- 3.2 The forest management plan is comprehensive, site specific and detailed, appropriate to the scale and intensity of the forest operations, and should include the following elements:
 - Clear statement of management objectives;
 - Description of forest resources being managed (including NTFP and, if applicable, timber forest resources) environmental limitations and land use;
 - Description of measures for protecting or enhancing regeneration;

- Description of actions taken to protect rare, threatened, and endangered species and ecosystems;
 - Description of, and rationale for, selected harvesting systems;
 - Maps that describe total forest management area, including the harvest areas, strict conservation and /or other protection areas, road systems, buildings;
 - Plan for forest protection against encroachment, uncontrolled fires, etc;
 - Sales plan;
 - Description of local communities, including total population, number of participants in the activity, history of harvesting, form of organization, organizations involved;
 - Plan for periodic monitoring, and a description of how results will be used to adjust the forest management plan.
- 3.3 Rational behind harvesting prescriptions is documented (i.e. based upon regional or site-specific field data, local knowledge or published regional forest research, as well as government requirements).
- 3.4 Allowable harvest has been set based upon conservative and documented estimates of growth, ensuring that the rate of harvest does not exceed sustainable levels (use attached indicators and verifiers).
- 3.5 Maps and work plans are available to indicate locations of extraction trails or roads, conservation areas and main infrastructure at a scale that is useful for supervision of management activities and to facilitate onsite monitoring.
- 3.6 Summary of the main elements of the management plan, or related annual operating or harvesting plans, are available to stakeholders.
- 3.7 The management plan is periodically reviewed (at least every five years) to incorporate the results of filed monitoring and new scientific or technical information, as well as to respond to changing environmental, social, cultural, and economic conditions.
- 3.8 If timber products are harvested, they have been inventoried and their management is incorporated within the management plan.
- 3.9 Monitoring is conducted appropriate to the scale and intensity of forest management in order to assess the condition of the forest. Forest management includes systematic research and data collection needed to monitor the following:
- Estimated production of forest products harvested;
 - Regeneration and condition of the forest;
 - Observed changes in the flora and fauna;
 - Environmental impacts of harvesting and related operations;
 - Social impacts of harvesting and related operations.
- 3.10 Indicators and verifiers, as applicable, are addressed in the management plan (include indicators and verifiers (I & Vs) according to class as discussed in subsection 10.0: performance and verifiers).

4.0 Forest management practices

- 4.1 Allowable harvesting is complied with in the forest.
- 4.2 Harvesting prescriptions are adhered to.
- 4.3 Monitoring is implemented according to the plan (see 3.9).
- 4.4 Trail or road construction, maintenance and closure standards are implemented in the field, according to local standards or best practice, in order to minimize drainage problems, soil erosion, and/or sedimentation of water courses
- 4.5 Trees are not felled or uprooted in order to harvest NTFPs unless specified as necessary and acceptable in the management plan or other management documents.

5.0 Environmental impacts and biological conservation

- 5.1 Field assessments of the forest condition are completed prior to the commencement of activities (appropriate to the scale, intensity of forest management and the uniqueness of the affected resources) and are adequately integrated within management systems. Assessments include landscape-level considerations, as well rare, threatened, and endangered species.
- 5.2 Non-timber and timber species on either local or international endangered or threatened species lists (Appendix 1, national list, of the CITES) are not harvested.
- 5.3 Conservation zones and protected areas are established, appropriate to the scale and intensity of forest management and the uniqueness of the affected resource.
- 5.4 Conservation zones are preferably contiguous blocks, though they may be a series of smaller blocks connected linked by corridors.
- 5.5 Conservation zones are clearly demarcated on maps and in the field, and forest operations are carefully controlled in these areas.
- 5.6 Threatened (i.e. rare, endangered) species are protected. Harvesting of products in protected areas will account for ecological requirements of other species (e.g. food for frugivorous birds and mammal).
- 5.7 Desirable habitat features for wildlife are maintained (e.g. wildlife food, mast producing species, downed logs, standing trees suitable for nesting, diverse cover of vegetation).
- 5.8 Ecological functions and value are maintained intact, enhanced, or restored, including forest regeneration; genetic, species and ecosystem diversity; and natural cycles that affect the productivity of the forest ecosystem.
- 5.9 Changes in species diversity and composition resulting from human intervention are maintained within critical limits, and emphasize the maintenance of natural diversity patterns wherever possible.
- 5.10 The building of rails ad/or roads avoids damage to residual forest, under story, non-target species, wildlife habitat and waterways. Canopy cover reduction through road-building is minimized. Use of trails or roads is restricted in inappropriate season.
- 5.11 Steps are taken to minimize damage to soils, including erosion ad compaction.
- 5.12 Synthetic chemical inputs and biological control agents are not used unless part of a well-designed, environmentally sensitive production system, and as articulated in the management plan.
- 5.13 Genetically modified organisms are not used.
- 5.14 Waste from processing is properly handled and disposed of. NTFP processing by-products may have a range of uses that should be investigated and potentially integrated within commercial activities.
- 5.15 Hunting is regulated and controlled.
- 5.16 Harvesting or collection of non-certified timber (e.g. firewood) or NTFPs that have not been certified are regulated and controlled.
- 5.17 Enrichment planting, if carried out, should use native species.
- 5.18 Introduction of exotic species is discouraged. However, naturalized NTFP species (exotic species that are reproducing on their own over a long time frame) may be certifiable, as long as known negative ecological impacts are controlled, since they may now form an integral part of local forest and the management of resources.

6.0 Social and cultural impacts

7.0 Community and worker relations

8.0 Benefits from the forest and economic viability

9.0 Chain of custody in the forest

10.0 Performance indicators and verifiers:

10.2 Vegetative Structures

Monitoring indicators and verifiers for all types of vegetative structures

Management indicators and verifiers for specific vegetative structures

Leaves