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CERTIFICATION MANUAL

This document contains the certification policies, procedures for the operation of Forest Conservation Program (FCP), including the standards that are intended for use by evaluators, see Annex A, List of SCS-FCP Certification Programs. SCS-FCP operates in accordance to Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Standards.

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Definitions

1. Accreditation – Initial and ongoing recognition of Forest Management and Chain of Custody Certification by Forest Stewardship Council for ISO/IEC Guide 65: 1996 (E) by FSC Accredited Certification Bodies.
2. Annual Audit – Otherwise, referred to as Surveillance, is a third-party verification of the client occurring each calendar year to ensure that all SCS-FCP standards for the scope of certification granted is being maintained and adhered to, and by which the results are then forwarded to a certification committee for review and decision.
3. Appeal – A request by a certificate holder or a certification applicant for formal reconsideration of any adverse decision made by the certification body related to its desired certification status.
4. Applicant – A person or client that has applies for certification under the SCS-FCP.
5. Auditor: Otherwise referred to as an assessor or an inspector, is a representative of the SCS-FCP program appointed to undertake the inspection of a client or applicant. An auditor may be an employee or subcontractor, and must be independent from the certification committee.
6. Certificate – The document issued by SCS-FCP signifying formal award of certification. Certificates are typically issued for 5-year periods, subject to annual, at a minimum, monitoring inspections. The certificate identifies the entity’s name, address, client and client number, effective date of certification, categories of certification and products/services certified as well as the name and address of SCS-FCP and other information as determined by SCS-FCP.
7. Certification – The overall process by which an entity’s operation and/or products are assessed for conformance to the relevant SCS-FCP standards, and provided a certification decision and, if warranted, granted SCS seal privileges
8. Certification Body – Also referred to as “CB”. May also be referred to as Certifying Body, Certifying Agency, Certification Agency or Certification Agent. SCS-FCP is accredited for the purpose of certifying the operation and/or products, and is herein understood as the Certification Body.
9. Certification Committee-Those personnel as identified in Chart 3.1.1 of this Manual. The role of the Certification Committee is to review FM and COC reports to determine if the audit team properly followed FSC and SCS protocols, and to make the final decision of certification.
10. Certified-Status afforded to a client with possession of a valid certificate, where privileges to use the certification marks in accordance with the SCS-FCP program are granted.
11. Client- An entity which seeks the services of the SCS-FCP program. This entity may be an applicant or an existing certified operation.

12. CoC: Chain of Custody department, which certifies the products handled by primary and secondary manufacturer(s)/wholesaler(s), dealer(s), broker(s), wholesaler(s) and also distributor(s).
13. Complaint– A written expression of dissatisfaction, other than “appeal”, by any person or organization, to a certification body, relating to the activities of staff of the SCS-FCP and/or representatives or a company or entity holding an FM or COC certificate issued by SCS and endorsed by FSC, where a response is expected.
14. Corrective Action Requests (CARs) – Major and/or minor non-conformances issued as a result of an initial evaluation, annual audit, or re-evaluation, which the client must correct within a specified timeframe.
15. Declaration of Interest – A declaration of personal and/or commercial interests in the forest industry made by those involved in the certification process to enable determination of a party’s objectivity.
16. Document: A template registered for use in the Quality System used for operating the Forest Management and Chain of Custody certification process and as evidence of conformance to accreditation regulation(s).
17. Evaluation –The full assessment of an applicant or client against the applicable SCS-FCP standard for determining award (initial evaluation) or re-award (re-evaluation) of certification.
18. Explanation – Interpretation of a standard (Certification Manual Addendum)
19. SCS-FCP- Forest Conservation Program is the overall department by which Forest Management and Chain of Custody operate.
20. FM- Forest Management certification department.
21. FSC- Forest Stewardship Council. Accreditation body under which Forest Management and Chain of Custody Certification seek recognition for conformance to ISO Guide 65.
22. FSC Controlled Wood – Virgin wood or wood fiber which has been verified as having a low probability of including wood from any of the following categories:
 - a) Illegally harvested wood;
 - b) Wood harvested in violation of traditional and civil rights;
 - c) Wood harvested in forests in which high conservation values are threatened by management activities;
 - d) Wood harvested in forests being converted from natural and semi natural forest to plantations or non- forest use;
 - e) Wood from forests in which genetically modified trees are planted.
23. Internal Audit – A systematic periodic review and assessment of the objectives and performance of a program that is undertaken by the SCS-FCP itself.
24. ISO – International Organisation for Standardisation – an independent body (with worldwide membership) based in Geneva, Switzerland.

25. ISO Guide 65–The SCS-FCP Quality System is developed and operated in accordance to *ISO Guide 65 General Requirements for Bodies Operating Product Certification Systems*.
26. Major non-conformance- The degree of an auditor’s finding(s), which describes the level by which a client is not meeting relevant SCS-FCP standards. Major non-conformances are identified as one or more of the following within a system: repeated failure(s), failure to implement a non-conformance(s), or to correct a non-conformance(s) within an allotted time, or a non-conformance that if not corrected will cause a total breakdown of the system or integrity of product(s). Major non-conformances must be corrected within a specified timeframe (normally 3 months and not longer than 6 months) if identified during a surveillance audit or must be corrected prior to the granting or renewing certification, if identified during an initial evaluation or re-evaluation. See CARs.
27. Management Plan- A written plan for management of an operation which specifies the management system used by the operation to comply with the Forest Management and Chain of Custody Certification standards and which has been agreed upon by both the operator and the certification body.
28. Minor non-conformance- The degree of an auditor’s finding(s), which describes the level by which a client is not meeting relevant SCS-FCP standards. Minor non-conformances must be corrected within a specified timeframe (normally one year, not more than 2 years), and may be subsequent to the granting or maintenance of certification. See CARs.
29. Operator- Primary and secondary manufacturer(s)/wholesaler(s), brokers, handlers, forest enterprise, dealer(s), distributor(s), and also wholesaler(s).
30. Production Unit – A portion of an operation that produces a forest product under a specified management plan.
31. Quality System – Documented procedures that are established, implemented and periodically audited to assure that production, handling, management, certification, and other systems meet specified requirements at all levels of the certifying body.
32. Records – Forms, journals, reports and minutes, which have been completed or created for specific purposes. Uncompleted forms or templates are documents approved to operate the certification process.
33. Re-Evaluation – The full assessment of a client against the applicable SCS-FCP standard for determining re-award of certification- typically occurs on 5-year intervals.
34. Regulation –ISO/IEC Guide 65: 1996 (E) by FSC Accredited Certification Bodies.
35. SCS-Scientific Certification Systems, lead provider of environmental certifications and founder of the SCS-FCP.
36. SLIMF – Small and Low Intensity Managed Forest. Forest management units may be classed as SLIMF units when they are 100 ha. or smaller in area (up to 1000 ha if accredited FSC National Initiative or CB formally proposes this with demonstrated broad stakeholder support), OR when the rate of harvesting is less than 20% of the mean annual increment (MAI)² within the total production forest area of the unit, AND

EITHER the annual harvest from the total production forest area is less than 5000 cubic meters, OR the average annual harvest from the total production forest is less than 5000 m³ / year during the period of validity of the certificate as verified by harvest reports and surveillance audits.

37. Standards – Forest production, processing or handling standards. The standards in use by Forest Management and Chain of Custody Certification are the Forest Management and Chain of Custody Certification Standards.
38. Surveillance – See Annual Audit
39. Suspension – The temporary removal by certification body administration action of a certificate holder's certification, pending either corrective action by the certificate holder or formal withdrawal of certification by the certification body.
40. Third Party – A person or entity that is recognized as being independent of the parties involved as concerns the issue in question.
41. Termination: Voluntary cancellation of the certification contract by either certification body or certificate holder according to contractual arrangements.
42. Withdrawal The removal by the certification body of a certificate holder's certification.

Foreword

Scientific Certification Systems

Scientific Certification Systems (SCS) is a leading provider of environmental certification services. Since 1984, SCS has used analytically based tools and techniques to recognize companies whose management practices, products and services meet the highest environmental standards, giving them an edge in the marketplace. Our comprehensive forestry and paper products programs are widely recognized for their thoroughness and objectivity. We are a founding member of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC, <http://www.fsc.org/>) and one of three original accredited certification bodies.

Certification gives consumers, retail and business customers, and government and institutional purchasing agents the information they need to make the best-informed choices. In addition to our FSC-endorsed forest management and chain-of-custody programs, SCS operates certification programs in recycled/recovered/reclaimed product content, food safety, EPP (environmentally preferable products), marine stewardship, and life cycle assessment. For more detailed information about Scientific Certification Systems and our services visit www.scscertified.com.

Forest Conservation Program

The Forest Conservation Program (FCP) is an independent, third party forest management certification program that operates under the sponsorship of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). The SCS-FCP is accredited by the Forest FSC to conduct Forest Management and Chain-of-Custody certifications worldwide as such the program is operated in full conformance with FSC Accreditation Standards.

To date, SCS, under the FCP, has certified over 30 million acres of forests in Central, South and North America, Europe, Asia, and New Zealand; we have also issued more than 1400 FSC-endorsed chain-of-custody certificates. Our experience and market activity is truly international and our institutional resources and capacity reflect this global outlook.

Preface

1.0 Introduction

This Certification Manual demonstrates SCS-FCP's commitment to providing quality certification services to its clients and constituents of the forest industry.¹

This Certification Manual contains the policies, procedures and standards for those seeking FSC certification through the SCS-FCP.

The Certification Manual illustrates SCS-FCP's conformance to International Organization for Standardization (ISO) Guide 65: *General requirements for bodies operating product certification systems* (1996)², and accreditation by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).

2.0 Contents

The contents of this Certification Manual were developed in accordance to ISO Guide 65§4.8.1.a-f, and FSC Accreditation standards FSC-STD-20-001 to FSC-STD-20-012. The Certification Manual is divided as follows:

- 2.1 An **Overview** of the authority by which SCS-FCP operates (ISO Guide 65§4.8.1.a);
- 2.2 **General Provisions**, by which SCS-FCP operates (ISO Guide 65§4.8.1.a & g);
- 2.3 **Certification Process** (ISO Guide 65§4.8.1.b):
 - 2.3.1 Application and Renewal of Certification,
 - 2.3.2 Inspection and Certification Procedures,
 - 2.3.3 Labeling (ISO Guide 65§4.8.1.e),
 - 2.3.4 Fees for Service (ISO Guide 65§4.8.1.d), and
 - 2.3.5 Complaints, Disputes and Appeals Procedures (ISO Guide 65§4.8.1.f);

¹ ISO Guide 65 §4.5.1

² ISO Guide 65 §4.5.2

2.4 Standards (ISO Guide 65§4.8.1.c):

- 2.4.1 Forest Management Standards
- 2.4.2 Chain of Custody Standards

3.0 Purpose

This Certification Manual serves as:

- 3.1 A basis of communication between clients and FCP,
- 3.2 A guideline of the certification process and standards, and
- 3.3 A notification of fees for services.

01 Overview

1.1 Legal Status and Ownership³

The Forest Conservation Program (SCS-FCP) conducts the business of Forest Management and Chain of Custody certification services for the forestry and wood industry as an independently operated department of Scientific Certification Systems (SCS). SCS is a for-profit organization operating as incorporated in the State of California on July 28, 2000.

1.2 Validity of Services

The SCS-FCP operates the certification services of Forest Management and Chain of Custody in accordance with ISO/ICE Guide 65 1996 (E) and FSC-STD-20-001 to FSC-STD-20-012, as recognized by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).

1.3 Scope of Certification Services

The purpose of SCS-FCP is to ensure that forest managers and forest product processors are conforming with the FSC standards and guidelines. SCS-FCP is comprised of the Forest Management (FM) and Chain of Custody (CoC) departments. Both of which take full responsibility for the granting, maintaining, extending, suspending or withdrawing of certification⁴ in accordance to the SCS-FCP Certification Manual.

Forest Management provides certification services to those forest management operations that have the management and production systems which meet the Forest Certification Standards. Offers its high quality certification services including but limited to the following types of operations, which may either be private or public agencies, and considered individual forest management units:

- Managers of natural forests
- Managers of plantation forests
- Groups of forest management units

Chain of Custody (CoC) provides certification services for those entities whose wood products handling procedures meet Chain of Custody Certification Standards and need verification of those products throughout the succession of custody. CoC offers its high quality certification services including but not limited to the following FSC product groups and sites⁵:

³ ISO Guide 65 4.2.d

⁴ ISO/ICE Guide 65 1996 (E) § 4.4.a

⁵ Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)-STD-20-001, Section 15.3

- Primary and secondary manufacturer(s) and
- dealer(s), broker(s), wholesaler(s) and distributor(s).

1.4 Regions of Operation (Language Policy)

The Forest Management and Chain of Custody departments provide services to forestry operations worldwide, particularly those clients located in the Americas, Asia, Europe, and the South Pacific.

Forest Management and Chain of Custody will make all efforts to facilitate communication by utilizing multi-lingual partners, staff, and translators.

Forest Management and Chain of Custody have the capabilities of translating the following languages in collaboration with their representatives: Portuguese, Spanish, French, Dutch, German, Swedish, Finnish, Chinese, Malay, Indonesian, and Japanese. Additional communication and translation needs will be developed on an as-needed basis.

02 General Provisions

General Provisions are policies and procedures that SCS-FCP has developed to ensure that the structure and the services of certification support the provision of competent service to its clients by adhering to the principles of Equity, Impartiality, Confidentiality, and Transparency.

2.1 Equality

SCS-FCP responsibly operates a non-discriminatory certification service. SCS-FCP does not make undue financial or other conditions, nor discriminate applicants based on their size or type(s) of operation(s)⁶.

SCS-FCP does not certify or issue conditions to its clients based on the number of certifications already issued or on the basis of any of the clients' membership affiliations and/or associations to forest-related industries (ISO Guide 65 § 4.1.2).

SCS-FCP services are designed not to discriminate against any member because of race, creed, religion, marital status, sex, ancestry, age, or national origin and administered in a non-discriminatory manner, which does not impede or inhibit applicant(s) access to the certification services of SCS-FCP (ISO Guide 65 § 4.1.1).

2.2 Impartiality

At all levels of FCP, provisions are taken to safe guard the objectivity of certification functions. By ensuring independence is maintained and conflict of interest is avoided at all levels, Forest Management and Chain of Custody can ensure a client an independent and technical service of certification (ISO Guide 65 4.2.c).

SCS-FCP ensures that activities of related bodies do not affect the objectivity and impartiality of its certifications, nor does SCS-FCP supply or design products of the type it certifies⁷ or provide products or services, which could compromise the confidentiality, objectivity or impartiality of its certification processes⁸, such as providing consultancy services to its applicants, as to matters dealing with barriers to certification requested.⁹ SCS-FCP only provides those services as outlined in Section 1.3 of this manual. Fees and charges shall not be contingent on the outcome of certification decisions.

⁶ ISO Guide 65 4.1.2

⁷ ISO Guide 65 4.2.o.1

⁸ ISO Guide 65 4.2.o.3 & 4.2.a

⁹ ISO Guide 65 4.2.o.2

SCS-FCP ensures persons who make certification decisions are different from those who evaluated the operation. SCS-FCP maintains full responsibility for the granting, maintaining, extending, suspending or withdrawing of certification¹⁰, particularly, regarding decisions on certification, considering appeals and handling complaints and disputes¹¹. If a responsible person of SCS-FCP is found to have a conflict of interest with an operation, an appropriate action is taken, such as transferring the applicant to another agency, or re-assigning the evaluator and/or certification decision maker.

2.3 Confidentiality

SCS-FCP safeguards confidentiality of all information obtained in the course of certification activities, including those of committees and external bodies or individuals acting on its behalf.

SCS-FCP releases routine information, such as name, address, phone, categories of operation, effective date of certification and certification status. A public summary is released for FM operations, describing additional information as required by the FSC¹². All other information (i.e. evaluation report, financial information, certification review, etc) is considered proprietary, used only for the purpose of certification, and must have the written consent of the operation prior to making it public or available to an outside body. Where the law requires information to be disclosed, the body shall be informed of the information provided.

At all levels of SCS-FCP, provisions are taken to ensure that all responsible persons safeguard confidential information obtained in the course of certification activities, including any external persons or individuals acting on SCS-FCP behalf (ISO Guide 65 § 4.10.1 and 5.2.2 (a)).

All SCS-FCP subcontractors prior to taking on work for SCS-FCP are required to sign the SCS-FCP *Subcontractor Agreement*. The SCS-FCP *Subcontractor Agreement* includes conflict of interest¹³ and confidentiality¹⁴ provisions as required of Subcontractors.

2.4 Transparency

SCS-FCP's certification programs, Forest Management and Chain of Custody maintain a high level of transparency to all persons internally and externally. Transparency is maintained through making the following publications available on the SCS-FCP website, which is located on the SCS website at www.scs-certified.com or making them available upon request to the public, electronically or by other means.

¹⁰ ISO Guide 65 4.4.a

¹¹ O Guide 65 4.2.o.2

¹² FSC-STD-20-009 (version 1-0)

¹³ ISO Guide 65 § 9.3

¹⁴ ISO Guide 65 § 4.4

2.4.1 SCS-FCP Certification Manual¹⁵

The SCS-FCP Certification Manual includes the standards and information on the certification procedures, right and responsibilities relevant to its certification activities for those programs listed in sections 1.3, Scope of Certification Services, and 6.0, Standards, of this manual.

The Certification Manual is made available to all upon application to SCS-FCP and published on the SCS website, www.scs-certified.com. Forest and Chain of Custody will notify clients, a minimum of 60 days prior to implementation of any change to the Certification Manual via addendum.

2.4.2 Forest Conservation Program Directory¹⁶

The SCS website also offers any interested party access to a register of SCS-FCP clients, listed by the relevant department of certification. This register includes:

- The certificate registration code issued by the SCS-FCP;
- The name and address of the certificate holder;
- Reference to the specific standard(s) including the version number or date that the certificate holder has been evaluated against;
- The certificate date of issue and expiration
- A description of the process and/or product, at least to the level of 'FSC product groups', including the location and a description of the certification granted
- Specification of what FSC-certified products are available from the certification holder on request

2.4.3 Additional Publications and/or Links¹⁷

In addition to the above publications, the SCS website also publishes or provides links to the following:

2.4.3.1 A list of the forest areas that the certification body has been contracted to evaluate for conformance with FSC standards;

2.4.3.2 The locally adapted generic forest stewardship standard used for the audit of each certificate holder;

¹⁵ ISO Guide 65 § 4.8.1a-f,

¹⁶ ISO Guide 65 § 4.8.1.j

¹⁷ Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)-STD-20-001, Section 9.3.b-d & 10.1.i

2.4.3.3 A summary report for each certified forest management enterprise or group manager, in conformance with FSC-STD-20-009 public summaries of forest certification reports.

2.4.4 FM Stakeholder Publications¹⁸

SCS-FCP makes its organizational structure available to stakeholders on request, including the names and qualifications of its members responsible for:

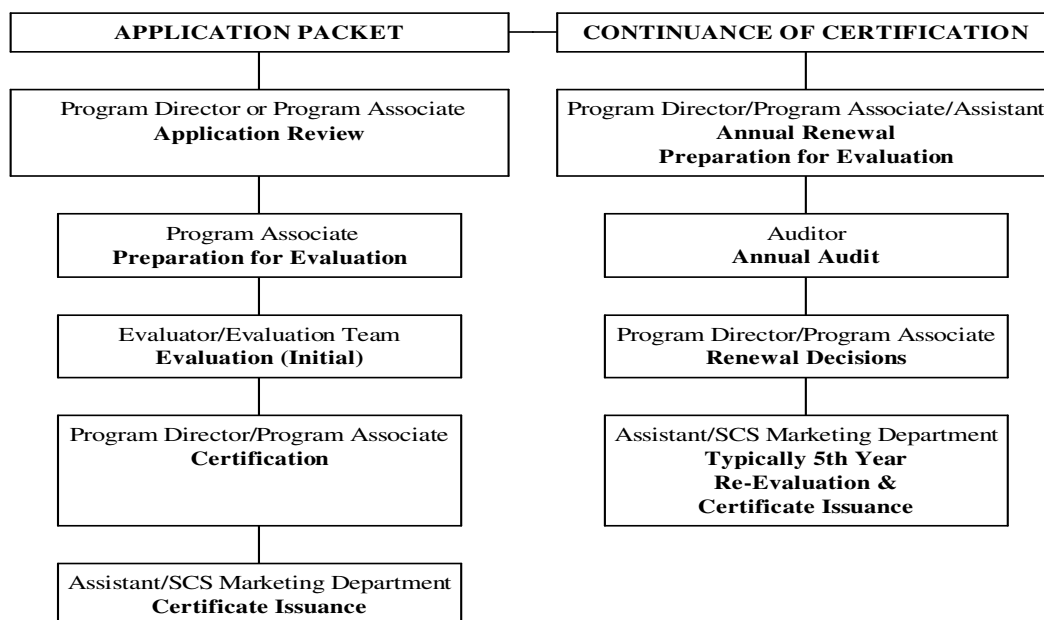
- a) Overall performance of the certification body's activities (Vice President);
- b) Reviewing the independence of the certification body (COI Committee);
- c) Formulation of policy matters which relate to the operation of the certification body (Vice President);
- d) Certification decision making (Certification Committee);
- e) Implementation of the policies of the certification body (Program Directors);
- f) Dispute resolution (Program Directors).

¹⁸ Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)-STD-20-001, Section 3.3

03 Certification Sequence

The flow of the certification process (from initial application to continuance of certification) is described in this section. The chart below illustrates the responsible persons in relation to the tasks involved throughout the certification sequence.

SCS-Forest Conservation Program (SCS-FCP) General Certification Sequence



Following this chart are the policies and procedures for operating the Certification Sequences of Forest Management and Chain of Custody.

3.1 Application Packet

The initial round of communications with a prospective client provides information about SCS, the Forest Conservation Program, and FSC-endorsed certification. In addition to providing the client with a detailed introduction to SCS-FCP, it also clarifies the potential client's goals with respect to forestry certification and the compatibility of those goals with the requirements of the SCS-FCP. SCS-FCP projects typically begin with a phone call or meeting to ensure that all parties understand the objectives of the program.

Once a person expresses interest in the services of SCS-FCP, an application packet is sent to the potential client. The application packet contains up-to-date and detailed description of the appropriate audit and certification procedures including requirements for certification, the applicant's rights, and duties of the client.

3.1.1 Application Packet

Depending on the level of the applicant's knowledge of the certification process, the Program Director/Program Associate sends the following to the client:

- SCS Information package
- FM or COC Application
- SCS-FCP Certification Manual (downloadable from website), and the applicable standards for certification SCS Standard Certification Agreement
- SCS Standard Certification Agreement (optional at this time)
- Other information as deemed necessary at this time (i.e. brochures, SCS guidelines, etc.)

3.1.2. Application¹⁹

Required of all clients is the *Application*. SCS-FCP requires all clients to complete a formal *Application* to be signed by the duly authorized representative of the client.

The *Application*, which at minimum requests the following:

- The corporate name and entity, including address and legal status;
- Statement of the client's desired scope of certification, as per Section 1.3 Outline of Services; and
- Basic information about client (e.g. size, production level) to produce a cost estimate; and
- A Statement that the client signs by which they agree to comply with the requirements for entities seeking certification and to supply any information as needed for audit of their operation and/or products to be certified. Electronic signatures and/or the typing of the representative's name in the space provided is considered a "signed" application.

3.1.3 SCS Standard Certification Agreement

The SCS Standard Certification Agreement is sent to the client in the Application Packet; however the client is not required to sign and return it until the time of certificate issuance (see section 3.5). Appendix A contains a more detailed description of this agreement.

¹⁹ ISO Guide 65 § 8.2.1

3.2 Application Review

During the time between the client's request for an application and the time SCS-FCP receives it back, the Program Director and/or Program Associate(s) are the designated contact(s) for that client. This initial correspondence in conjunction with the review of the client's application, as per Section 5.1 Application Packet of this Manual, ensures the following:

- 1) That SCS-FCP has the capability to perform the certification services with respect to the scope of certification requested, the location of the operation and any special requirements such as language used by the applicant, and
- 2) The applicant's eligibility to receive services of SCS-FCP.
- 3) The client qualifies or can potentially comply with the relevant SCS-FCP standards and regulations;
- 4) Requirements for certification have been clearly defined, documented and understood; and
- 5) That any difference(s) in understanding between the certification body and the applicant is resolved prior to the assignment of the initial audit;

3.3 Preparation for Full (Initial) Evaluation

3.3.1 Assignment of Auditor(s)

Once the application review is complete, the Program Director/Associate assigns an Auditor or Audit Team. The Program Director/ Program Associate use the following criteria to determine the appropriate auditor(s):

- a) Appropriate education, training and experience;
- b) Previous experience in the country where an audit takes place;
- c) Knowledge of the language of the country where the audit takes place;
- d) For audit of forest management enterprises, knowledge of the forest management system (including silviculture and ecology) and/or the local forestry context.

In addition to the above criteria, both Forest Management and Chain of Custody maintain audit specific criteria, available upon request from SCS.

3.3.2 Cost Proposal/Work Order

Once the Program Director/ Program Associate receives a cost proposal from the auditor(s), a Cost Proposal/Work Order is sent to the client. The Cost Proposal/Work Order for Forest Management may include costs for a Preliminary and/or Full Evaluation.

The Work Order Contract should not vary in the costs, if the tasks remain within the parameters expressed in the contract. If additional services are required or there are any extraordinary circumstances (e.g. a series of pre-conditions to be met before Forest

Management and Chain of Custody Certification is able to issue a certification report), then these services will be quoted separately on a time and materials basis.

Audits are normally contracted as a fixed fee for a specified scope of work, based upon:

- a) Professional fees of the audit team and expenses necessary to conduct the audit and to prepare a peer reviewed written report (FM only)
- b) Project administration and oversight including standard development, quality control, review of the audit, issuance of certificate and disseminating the results to the public (if certification is awarded)
- c) Marketing and communications support, including logo approvals, by SCS

In determining fees, the location and scale and complexity of an applicant are taken into consideration. Fees are not contingent on the outcome of certification decisions. Fees must be paid in full prior to delivery of the final certification report and prior to award of certification (if warranted).

3.3.3 Audit planning

Audit logistical planning (e.g., travel arrangement, starting time, hotels) is generally the responsibility of the auditor, or audit team leader, unless otherwise instructed from SCS. Once a signed work order has been returned, the auditor should work directly with the staff of the forest management operation being evaluated. One to two weeks before the start of an evaluation, the auditor and client should finalize the start time and general itinerary for the evaluation.

3.3.4 Additional Forest Management Evaluation Preparation

In the case of a forest management evaluation, SCS-FCP will also:

1. Adapt its generic forest stewardship standard, if the country in which the evaluation is to take place does not yet have a preliminarily accredited or FSC-accredited regional, national, or sub-national forest stewardship standard.
2. Complete a pre-evaluation visit prior to the main evaluation when required by FSC or deemed necessary by the audit team.
3. Inform the FSC National Initiative in the country concerned at least one month prior to the main evaluation that an evaluation is scheduled, and provide information about the expected dates of field-work.
4. Initiate Stakeholder consultation. Notification of the pending FSC evaluation must be given at least 30 days before the full evaluation begins.

3.4 Audit/Evaluation²⁰

The audit or evaluation is the physical inspection of each forest management operation, production unit, facility, and/or site that produces or handles forest/wood products and that is included in an operation for which certification is requested. An audit involves reviewing documents, auditing record-keeping systems, interviewing personnel, interviewing stakeholders (FM only), inspecting field sites (*desk audits are permitted for CoC evaluations in certain circumstances*), and decision rendering. The purpose of the audit is to verify the process or products of the applicant against the applicable Forest Management and Chain of Custody Certification Standards. As soon as possible, typically not to exceed one month for Chain of Custody and 4-6 weeks for FM, the Auditor(s) will provide the Program Director/Associate a completed Draft Report.

3.4.1 Peer Review (FM only)

For typical Forest Management evaluations, the report is submitted for peer review by pertinent experts in forestry, biology, and socio-economic sciences. This step is not needed for FMU's that meet small or low intensity qualifications. Peer review is critical in adding a second layer of professional expertise to the overall process. Peer reviewers are selected on a project-by-project basis, considering the following criteria:

- Balanced expertise in the relevant disciplines
- Widely-recognized regional expertise
- Independence

3.5 Certification Decision²¹

Once the Program Director/Associate receives the Draft Report and supporting documentation from the Peer Review process (for FM clients), a copy is sent to the client along with the *SCS Standard Certification Agreement* (if not already on file), to be signed and returned²².

As soon as possible, at the latest 30 days (typically 1-2 weeks), a decision as to whether or not to certify the product/operation is made. The authority to grant, maintain, extend, suspend or withdraw certification is only delegated to the Certification Committee.

The Certification Committee is comprised of person(s) responsible for decisions on certification. The Certification Committee may choose to make the final certification decisions individually or as a whole, depending on the complexity of the operation and/or product. Generally, the certification committee is comprised of two employees except in smaller evaluations or Chain-of-Custody evaluations, when one may suffice.

²⁰ ISO Guide 65 § 10

²¹ ISO Guide 65 §12

²² ISO/ICE Guide 65 1996 (E) §11.b

3.5.1 Granting of Certification

SCS-FCP shall only issue a certificate when the applicant:

- a) Complies with the requirements of all applicable FSC-endorsed SCS- FM and/or CoC standards;
- b) Signs the SCS-FCP Standard Certification Agreement, as per Section 5.1.4: SCS SCS-FCP Standard Certification Agreement of this Manual; and
- c) Agrees, in writing, to meet the stated CARs within the stipulated timeframe(s).

Certification may include corrective action requests (CAR's), or conditions, which require correction of non-compliances observed during the evaluation. Corrective action(s) are evaluated during continuing on-site audits (see section 3.5.3).

The term of certification is valid for the time period expressly stipulated by SCS-FCP, usually five years contingent upon annual renewal.

3.5.2 Maintaining Certification (Surveillance)

In order for a client to maintain certification with SCS-FCP, the certificate holder must:

- a. Maintain conformance to the SCS-FCP Standard Certification Agreement, as per Appendix A: SCS-FCP Standard Certification Agreement of this Manual, and
- b. Successfully complete annual on-site surveillance audits (note: in some instances desk audits or the waiving of audits are permitted).

As a general rule, no more than 12 months should lapse without having an on-site surveillance audit; exceptions of up to an 18-month lapse are allowed under unique circumstances. The annual audit schedule is as follows:

- | | |
|--------|--|
| YEAR 0 | Upon application, a client shall receive an Initial Evaluation. It's not uncommon in this initial period to receive more than one audit to verify conformance. |
| YEAR 1 | Onsite Surveillance Audit (approximately 12 months from award of certification). |
| YEAR 2 | Onsite Surveillance Audit (approximately 2 years from award of certification). |

- YEAR 3 Onsite Surveillance Audit (approximately 3 years from award of certification).
- YEAR 4 Onsite Surveillance Audit (approximately 4 years from award of certification).
- YEAR 5 Re-Evaluation (approximately 5 years from award of certification) and results in Re-Certification.

3.5.2.1 On-Site Annual Audit Provisions

Forest Management and/or Chain of Custody certificate holders must undergo an on-site surveillance audit at least annually, and may be more frequent depending on:

- a) The scale of the operation (e.g. the area of an FMU, the quantity of production in the case of a manufacturer, or the volume turnover in the case of a trader);
- b) The intensity of resource management in the case of an FMU (e.g. the frequency and level of timber harvest);
- c) Complexity of the chain of custody control system;
- d) Results of risk assessment in the case of group certification;
- e) The ecological sensitivity of the resource base to management intervention;
- f) The experience and track record of the operators involved (managers and field personnel/loggers);
- g) The number and nature of any non-conformances identified by the certification body;
- h) The number and nature of any complaints submitted by stakeholders.

3.5.2.2 Unannounced Surveillance Visit Provisions

SCS-FCP reserves the right to carry out unannounced surveillance visits.

3.5.3 Certification Sanctions²³

SCS-FCP has a series of graduated steps that are taken when an operation is determined in non-conformance with the certification standards or where there are special circumstances that call for close scrutiny of an operation's conformance. SCS-FCP reserves the right to change an operation's status to any category whenever deemed appropriate.

²³ ISO Guide 65 § 4.5.3.k

3.5.3.1 Certified with Minor CARs²⁴

3.5.3.1.a Minor Non-Conformance

A non-conformance may be considered minor if:

- a) It is a temporary lapse, or
- b) It is unusual/ non-systematic, or
- c) the impacts of the non-compliance are limited in their temporal and spatial/organizational scale, and
- d) prompt corrective action has been taken to ensure that it will not be repeated, and
- e) it does not result in a fundamental failure to achieve the objective of the relevant FSC requirement.

3.5.3.1.b Minor Corrective Action Requests

Minor corrective action requests are stipulated in response to any minor non-conformance observed by the auditor. The deadline for complying with a CAR is set by the auditor. Conformance with the certification conditions will be monitored and evaluated during annual inspections or in some cases extra surveillance audits set up expressly for this purpose. In the event that the operation fails to comply with the conditions within the specified time period, the certification is subject to revocation.

The auditor is encouraged to arrive at CARs in open dialogue with responsible managers of the operation receiving certification. The auditor will incorporate CARs into the report, which by the auditor will detail each CAR and the respective timescale for implementation. The timeframe for correcting minor non-compliances will not normally be longer than one year (maximum of two years under exceptional circumstances). The client must sign to attest conformity. Any subsequent changes to the Conditions (report agreement) must be authorized by SCS-FCP. If corrective action is not appropriately implemented within the allotted timescale, minor non-compliances will be elevated to major non-compliances.

3.5.3.2 Certified with Major CARs²⁵

3.5.3.2.a Major Non-Conformance

Major non-conformance, either alone or in combination with non-compliances of other requirements, result (or are likely to result in) a fundamental

²⁴ ISO/ICE Guide 65 1996 (E) § 4.6-4.6.2.a and Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)-STD-20-001, Section 7

²⁵ NOTE: For the purposes of ISO Guide 65, certification pending major CARs is equivalent to a denial of certification, and SOP FM-06 Certification Decision Making and Issuing of Corrective Action Requests

failure to achieve the objectives of the relevant FSC requirement. Such fundamental failures are indicated by non-conformance(s) which:

- a) continue over a long period of time, or
- b) are repeated or systematic, or
- c) affect a wide area, or
- d) are not corrected or adequately responded to by the responsible person once they have been identified or
- e) fail a “major failure” or “fatal flaw” requirement (for example, major failure would entail a situation when products could be or were delivered as certified when they won’t be/were in fact NOT certified).

3.5.3.2.b Major Corrective Requests

Major Corrective Action Requests (CAR’s) to certification are stipulated when a major non-conformance is observed. An operation cannot receive certification or re-certification until the auditor determines that all major CAR’s have been satisfied. Major CAR’s issued before certification is awarded are sometimes termed “pre-conditions”, and are usually issued without timeframes. If a major non-compliance is identified after the certificate is issued, the certificate can be suspended or withdrawn per Section 5.5.4.3 if the non-conformance is not remedied within the time frame specified by the auditor. The timeframe for correcting major non-compliances will not normally be longer than three months (maximum of six months under exceptional circumstances). If continuing work towards complying with a major CAR extends past the due date, the CAR can still be closed as long as steps have been taken to ensure no new instances of non-conformance.

For CoC evaluation and surveillance audits, the occurrence of five or more major non-compliances in a surveillance audit will be considered as a breakdown of the company’s system and the certificate will be suspended immediately.

3.5.3.4 Suspension²⁶

FM and CoC certificate holders that do not address Major CARs satisfactorily or within the specified timeframe(s) are placed under suspension and sent a *Suspension letter*.

In the event that a client cannot resolve the issue(s) upon the agreed upon timeline, the client will be suspended. The existing client must cease all claims and must refrain from making reference of the SCS/SCS-FCP logo and name, and if applicable, return all certificates, labeling and marketing material containing

²⁶ ISO/ICE Guide 65 1996 (E) § 4.6-4.6.2.a and Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)-STD-20-001, Section 7

reference of SCS/SCS-FCP materials, as per the SCS Standard Certification Agreement.

3.5.4 Modification of Certification²⁷

Clients are required to inform SCS-FCP, in writing about any modifications, which extend or reduce their scope of certification. The client is not allowed to release products affected by the modification until the Certification Committee has reviewed the modification and has found it to be compliant with applicable certification standards. Furthermore, SCS-FCP reserves the right to inspect the site of the certified operation before deciding whether or not to grant a change to the scope of the certificate²⁸.

A change of scope shall not include or result in an extension of the certificate's expiry date beyond the time period for which it was originally issued, unless justified per procedural requirements.

If changes affect the scope in significant terms of area, management or operational implications then SCS-FCP will inspect the site before the change of scope is granted.

If the changes are extensive or are not easily demonstrated (i.e. in the event of changes significantly affecting the product's design or specification, or changes in the standards to which conformance of the product is certified, or in the case of any other information indicating that the product may no longer comply with the requirements of the certification system), an audit may be required before modification is approved.

If SCS-FCP grants a change of scope, SCS-FCP shall review the wording of the certificate previously issued and, if necessary, shall require that the old certificate be returned to SCS-FCP and a new certificate be issued with revised wording reflecting the change of scope.

Clients are responsible for the costs incurred for these services.

3.5.5 Appeal

An appeal concerning a SCS-FCP certification decision may come from either clients (e.g., forestland owner, mill owners, manufacturer or retailer, brokers) or from other third parties such as interested stakeholders.

The burden of establishing the invalidity of a certification decision rests with the filing participant. All requests and notices of appeal must be made in writing and be accompanied by supporting documentation. The written appeal must provide sufficient detail and describe prior involvement in the operation at issue.

A written appeal must be submitted within 30 days of receipt of notification or public announcement of certification status.

²⁷ ISO Guide 65 § 12.4, 13-13.3 & ANSI Policy & Criteria for Accreditation of Certification Programs 2.3.4

²⁸ Material from the FSC approved SCS-SCS-FCP Procedure for Issuing, Maintaining, Extending, Suspending and Withdrawing FSC-Endorsed Certification, Conditions for Issuance or Re-Issuance

Upon receipt of the appeal, investigation of the appeal will be confidentially conducted in a timely manner. The Certification Committee will assess the substance and significance of the issues raised and then attempt to resolve the appeal as per Section 3.5.5, Modification of Certification.

As appropriate, the client's corrective and preventive action and resolution of any deficiencies found in products or services shall be taken and documented.

In the event that the Certification Committee cannot resolve the matter by a Modification of Certification, the SCS Senior Vice-President will initiate the *Appeals Resolution Procedure*; see Administrative Manual for more information.

3.5.6 Discontinuance of Certification

At any time clients may terminate their certification from SCS-FCP through written notification. SCS-FCP will send a Termination Letter/Email to the client notifying them to cease all claims of the SCS logo and name, destroy or return all certificates, labeling and marketing material containing reference of SCS-FCP materials, and all other requirements as per the SCS-FCP Certification Standards Agreement and that the client is liable for the costs of services provided up to the point of withdrawal.

SCS-FCP may also send a client a Withdrawal Letter, which notifies the client that SCS-FCP has withdrawn the client from certification due to lack of response within the designated renewal timeframe.

3.5.7 Complaints²⁹

For purposes of this procedures document, a “**complaint**” is a written expression of dissatisfaction, other than **appeal**, by any person or organization, to a certification body, relating to the activities of staff of the SCS Forest Conservation Program and/or representatives of a company or entity holding either a forest management (FM) or chain-of-custody (CoC) certificate issued by SCS and duly endorsed by FSC, where a response is expected (ISO/IEC 17011:2004 (E)). In the context of the SCS Complaint Investigation Procedure, functionally equivalent terms include: grievance and dispute. Note, however, that the term “dispute” assumes a distinct meaning and connotation in the event that a complaint cannot be satisfactorily resolved by SCS and, as such, the complainant raises the matter with the FSC. An “**appeal**” is a request by a certificate holder or a certification applicant for formal reconsideration of any adverse decision made by the certification body related to its desired certification status. See section 3.5.7 for SCS appeal procedures.

The SCS Complaint Investigation Procedure functions as a key element of the FSC Informal Dispute Resolution Process. That is, the certification body's receipt and

²⁹ ISO Guide 65 § 15

investigation of complaints is intended to provide a first-stage forum and mechanism for hopefully resolving issues, thereby avoiding the need to involve the FSC. In the event that the SCS Complaint Investigation Procedure proves unsuccessful in resolving the matter, it can be brought forward by the complainant to the FSC for the second stage of the Informal Dispute Resolution Process. This follow-up informal process entails the FSC Executive Director, in collaboration with the Chair of the Dispute Resolution Committee, seeking an informal resolution through additional dialogue and negotiation. In the event that this second stage also proves unsuccessful in resolving the matter, the complainant can then invoke the FSC Formal Dispute Resolution Process. The reader is referred to the FSC web site (www.fsc.org) for additional materials describing dispute resolution.

Availability/Standing

The SCS Complaint Investigation Procedure is available to third party individuals or organizations that perceive a stake in the affairs of the SCS Forest Conservation Program and that/whom have reason to question either the actions of SCS itself or the actions of a SCS certificate holder. The Appeal Procedure, not this Complaint Investigation Procedure, is available to SCS certificate holders and certification applicants seeking formal reconsideration of an SCS decision that directly affects that certificate holder/applicant's certification. The Complaint Investigation Procedure is applicable to any formal decision rendered under the SCS Forest Conservation Program (e.g., award of certification, denial of certification, termination of certification) or actions taken by a FSC certificate holder, where such actions are believed to conflict with the terms and conditions of certification. Examples include:

- A third party objecting to the fact that SCS has awarded a FSC-endorsed chain of custody (CoC) or a forest management (FM) certificate
- A third party that believes that a certificate holder is taking actions that conflict with the terms and conditions of their certification, such as non-conformance with the FSC Principles & Criteria (relevant to FM certificate holders)

In the case of complaints against the actions of a certificate holder, the complainant must first attempt to resolve the issue with the certificate holder prior to requesting that SCS become involved, pursuant to this Complaint Investigation Procedure.

Complaint Content Requirements

To have standing under this Procedure, the written complaint must:

- Identify and provide contact information for the complainant
- Clearly identify the aggrieved action (date, place, nature of action) and which parties or individuals are associated with the action
- Explain how the action is alleged to violate a FSC requirement, being as specific as possible with respect to the applicable FSC requirement
- In the case of complaints against the actions of a certificate holder, rather than SCS itself, the complainant must also describe efforts taken to resolve the matter directly with the certificate holder

- Propose what actions would, in the opinion of the complainant, rectify the matter.

Written complaints should be submitted to:

Dr. Robert J. Hrubes
 Senior Vice-President
 Scientific Certification Systems
 2200 Powell Street, Suite 725
 Emeryville, California, USA 94608
 Email: rhrubes@scscertified.com.

Procedural Steps upon Receipt of a Written Complaint

Upon receipt of a written complaint, the SCS Senior Vice-President or his designee will undertake the following actions:

- Provide a written response to the complainant within 4 weeks of receipt of the complaint, informing them as to whether or not the complaint qualifies for investigation under this Procedure; the response letter will also outline the investigation process and the recourse available to the complainant with the FSC, itself
- Forward all timely complaints onto the standing SCS Complaints Committee, of which the Senior Vice-President is the standing Chair, as well as the relevant certificate holder
- Select an individual to investigate the complaint; such individual must be independent of:
 - the certification evaluation at issue
 - the associated certification decision
 - the day to day implementation of the policies of the SCS Forest Conservation program (for FM certificates, this means that the SCS Director, Forest Management Certification cannot conduct the investigation; for CoC certificates, this means that the SCS Director, Chain of Custody Certification cannot conduct the investigation)
- Open a complaint file in which all materials and correspondence associated with the complaint will be maintained.

The assigned investigator will undertake the following tasks:

- Inform the complainant and relevant certificate holder, as appropriate, of their assignment
- Solicit and collect additional information, as appropriate; the investigation is to be based primarily upon written documentary evidence supplied by the complainant—it is the complainant’s burden to establish that there has been an action taken in contravention of a FSC requirement. Typically, the investigator will augment the documentary evidence submitted by the complainant with

telephone and email interviews. The investigator, if authorized by the SCS Senior Vice-President, may elect to conduct a field inspection to augment the documentary evidence.

- Prepare a written complaint investigation report in which the inspector's findings and recommendations are presented. Under normal circumstances, the complaint investigation report is expected to be completed within 120 days of receipt of the written complaint.
- Convey the written complaint investigation report to the Chair of the standing SCS Complaints Committee

The Chair of the SCS Complaints and Appeals Committee (or designee, if the Chair does not meet the independence requirements) will then:

- Forward the report onto other committee members for review and consultation
- Render a decision as to the proposed disposition of the complaint, including actions such as:
 - Denial of the complaint
 - Reversal of the action that is the focus of the complaint
 - Issuance of corrective action requests (CARs) and/or recommendations aimed at rectifying the situation
- Inform, in writing, the complainant and other relevant parties (e.g., certificate holder, FSC) of the disposition of the complaint; at the discretion of the Chair or designee, the complaint investigation report or a summary thereof will be conveyed to all parties along with the final decision; additionally, the written disposition will include a summary of the complainant's dispute resolution options with the FSC
- Final disposition of the complaint, and written confirmation thereof, will generally take place within 30 days of receipt of the complaint investigation report.

Costs of the Investigation

While SCS is committed to the principle of broad access to the certification process, including but not limited to the complaints process, undue costs associated with investigating a complaint cannot be borne by SCS. Depending upon the nature of the complaint and the profile of the complainant, SCS reserves the right to request a fee to cover at least a portion of the costs of the investigation. Such fees will only be considered in situations where the time required to investigate the complaint is expected to be substantial.

For complaints against the actions of a certificate holder, SCS reserves the contractual right to charge the certificate holder for time and expenses incurred in investigating the complaint. Failure to agree to pay these additional charges or to otherwise cooperate in the investigation of the complaint can be grounds for termination of certification.

SCS is committed to duly considering substantive complaints from any party that is committed to the long-term goals of the SCS Forest Conservation Program and of the Forest Stewardship Council. However, in the event that the SCS Complaint Investigation Procedure is being employed by a “vexatious litigant” for reasons in conflict with the long term goals of the SCS Forest Conservation Program or the Forest Stewardship Council, SCS reserves the right to turn the matter immediately over to the FSC for further disposition.

5.5.8 Appeal Investigation Procedure

An “**appeal**” is a request by a certificate holder or a certification applicant for formal reconsideration of any adverse decision made by the certification body related to its desired certification status. A certificate holder or applicant may formally lodge an appeal with SCS against any adverse certification decision taken by SCS, within thirty (30) days after notification of the decision.

Adverse decisions include:

- Refusal to accept an application;
- Refusal to proceed with an assessment;
- Status of Corrective action requests;
- Changes in accreditation scope;
- Decisions to deny, suspend or withdraw accreditation; and
- Any other action that impedes the attainment of certification.

Appeal Content Requirements

To have standing under this Procedure, the appeal must:

- Identify and provide contact information for the appellant;
- Clearly identify the basis of the appeal (date, place, nature of action) and which parties or individuals are associated with the action;
- Explain how the action is alleged to be inconsistent with FSC requirements, being as specific as possible with respect to the applicable FSC requirement;
- Indicate what steps have been taken to informally resolve the issue;
- Propose what actions would, in the opinion of the appellant, rectify the matter.

Written appeals should be submitted to:

Dr. Robert J. Hrubes
 Senior Vice-President
 Scientific Certification Systems
 2200 Powell Street, Suite 725
 Emeryville, California, USA 94608
 Email: rhrubes@scscertified.com.

Procedural Steps upon Receipt of a Written Appeal

Upon receipt of a written appeal, the SCS Senior Vice-President or his designee will undertake the following actions:

- Provide a written response to the appellant within 4 weeks of receipt of the appeal, informing them as to whether or not the appeal qualifies for investigation under this Procedure; the response letter will also outline the investigation process
- Forward all timely appeals onto the standing SCS Complaints and Appeals Committee, of which the Senior Vice-President is the standing Chair, as well as the relevant certificate holder
- Select an individual to investigate the appeal; such individual must be independent of:
 - the certification evaluation at issue
 - the associated certification decision
 - the day to day implementation of the policies of the SCS Forest Conservation program (for FM certificates, this means that the SCS Director, Forest Management Certification cannot conduct the investigation; for CoC certificates, this means that the SCS Director, Chain of Custody Certification cannot conduct the investigation)
- Open an appeal file in which all materials and correspondence associated with the appeal will be maintained.

The assigned investigator will undertake the following tasks:

- Solicit and collect additional information, as appropriate; the investigation is to be based primarily upon written documentary evidence supplied by the appellant—it is the appellant's burden to establish that there has been an action taken in contravention of Forest Conservation Program certification procedures. Typically, the investigator will augment the documentary evidence submitted by the appellant with telephone and email interviews. The investigator, if authorized by the SCS Senior Vice-President, may elect to conduct a field inspection to augment the documentary evidence.
- Prepare a written appeal investigation report in which the inspector's findings and recommendations are presented. Under normal circumstances, the appeal investigation report is expected to be completed within 60 days of receipt of the written appeal.
- Convey the written appeal investigation report to the Chair of the standing SCS Complaints and Appeals Committee

The Chair of the SCS Complaints and Appeals Committee (or designee, if the Chair does not meet the independence requirements) will then:

- Forward the report onto other committee members for review and consultation

- Render a decision as to the proposed disposition of the appeal, including actions such as:
 - Denial of the appeal
 - Reversal of the action that is the focus of the appeal
 - Propose an alternative solution
- Inform, in writing, the appellant of the disposition of the appeal; the appeal investigation report or a summary thereof will be conveyed to the appellant with the final decision; additionally, the written disposition will include a summary of the appellant's dispute resolution options with the FSC.
- Final disposition of the appeal, and written confirmation thereof, will generally take place within 30 days of receipt of the appeal investigation report.

Costs of the Investigation

Undue costs associated with investigating an appeal will not be borne by SCS. Depending upon the nature of the appeal and the profile of the appellant, SCS reserves the right to request a fee to cover at least a portion of the costs of the investigation. Such fees will only be considered in situations where the time required to investigate the appeal is expected to be substantial.

04 Forest Conservation Program Labeling³⁰

4.1 FSC Labeling and Promotional use of the FSC Trademarks

SCS-FCP complies with the requirements of all applicable FSC policies, standards, guidance documents and advice notes as published on the FSC International Center website www.fsc.org in relation to use of FSC's trademarks, including the words 'Forest Stewardship Council', the letters 'FSC', the FSC 'tick-mark tree' logo and any other intellectual property of the Forest Stewardship Council A.C.

The labeling requirements SCS-FCP uses are those found in the FSC On-Product Labeling Standard FSC-STD-40-201 (Version 1.0), accompanied by the FSC Product Labeling Guideline. For FSC requirements on promotional use of the FSC trademarks SCS-FCP uses FSC-TMK-50-201 (Version 1-0). These documents are maintained in the SCS-FAS Quality System.

SCS-FCP will update FSC regulations and labelling guidelines upon release and approval of use from FSC.

All existing and new chain of custody certificate holders wishing to use the FSC trademarks on-product or off-product (for promotional use), must adhere to FSC-STD-40-201 FSC On-Product Labelling Requirements as of 1 July of 2005 and FSC-TMK-50-201 FSC Requirements for the Promotional Use of the FSC Trademarks by FSC Certificate Holders and Non-Certified Commercial Organizations as of January 1, 2008.

The following are examples of FSC on-product labels:



³⁰ ISO Guide 65 § 14-14.1, ANSI Policy & Criteria for Accreditation of Certification Programs 2.4-2.4.2



4.1.1. On-Product Uses

The primary use of the FSC logo is to promote the actual product that has received certification. The FSC logo may be used on the products themselves and on their labeling and packaging. Such uses are termed “On-Product” claims and include product tags, labels, stencils, heat brands, retail packaging, protective packaging, plastic wrap, etc.

Companies wishing to make “on-product” claims may use the FSC Logo only if they have a valid chain of custody certificate or joint forest management and chain-of-custody certificate and the product meets the applicable threshold for labeling.

SCS-FCP must approve all on-product claims of its clients. FSC Logo Guides are issued to all certificate holders further explaining the proper use of the FSC Logo.

4.1.2. Off-Product Uses

There is a much wider variety of permissible “Off-Product” uses including reproduction in brochures, leaflets, company prospectuses and reports, advertising promotions, Web pages, etc. In instances where groups of certified products are promoted together, the detailed breakdown figures are not required, although SCS recommends that they be used to the extent possible. In cases where several products are promoted together, the most conservative claim should be used. For example, a family of wood products that contain 70%, 80%, and 100% certified fibers could be promoted together as having at least 70% certified fiber. Companies wishing to make off-product claims may do so only if their products are covered by the scope of a valid chain-of-custody or forest management certificate and meet the applicable threshold for labeling.

SCS-FCP must approve the FSC Logo used in all off-product claims. Unauthorized use of the FSC Logo is prohibited and will be treated as an infringement of copyright.

06 Certification Standards

The standard applicable to an individual Forest Management or Chain of Custody operation varies depending on the size, scope, location, and purpose of the certificate. A number of different standards have been developed by the Forest Stewardship Council to address various situations. The standards applicable to your operation will be sent in a separate correspondence.

6.1 Forest Management Standards

Forest Management certification is evaluated against regional or national forest stewardship standards. These standards are created by national or regional FSC working groups. If no standard has been officially accredited by the FSC for use in the area in which the forest to be certified is located, then SCS-FCP adapts its own generic interim standard for the certification. A short description of each type of standard follows:

a) Fully Accredited FSC Standards

When a regional or national Forest Stewardship Standard created by an FSC working group has been duly accredited by the international FSC Accreditation Business Unit, all FSC certification taking place in the region covered by the standard must utilize this standard. These working groups are composed of individuals and groups from the environmental, economic and social chambers of the FSC. The process of regional adaptation allows the working groups to customize and add detail to the FSC Principles and Criteria. These standards are available from SCS-FCP or from the national initiatives (such as FSC-United States, www.fscus.org). If no such standard exists then SCS-FCP adapts its existing standard, as in section 6.3.1.b.

b) SCS Generic Interim Standard³¹

When no duly accredited standard exists in a region in which a certification applicant is located, SCS-FCP goes through the process of adapting its Generic Interim Standard for regionally specific use.

A SCS-FCP Local Interim Standard is then developed. Local Interim Standards are created on a client-by-client basis, unless an already existing SCS-FCP Local interim standard covers the area in which the forest to be certified is located.

The process of adapting the Generic Interim Standard for local use involves adding region-specific indicators not already included in the SCS-FCP Generic Interim Standard, mentioned above in 6.3.1.a. This adaptation involves input from stakeholders and any existing national initiative or working group existing in the area in which the forest to be certified is located. If a working group has developed a draft Forest Stewardship Standard that has not yet been fully accredited by the FSC, appropriate elements from this standard are incorporated into the SCS-FCP Local Interim Standard, at the discretion of SCS.

All SCS-FCP Interim Standards are developed and approved in accordance with the Standard Operating Procedure for Local Adaptation of the Generic Standard³². The SCS Generic Interim Standard is sent to interested parties when necessary along with the Certification Manual, or is available upon request. Also, the SCS-FCP Generic Interim Standard and all Local Interim Standards are available on the SCS website.

If a forest management operation is evaluated against an SCS Local Interim Standard, and a Forest Stewardship Standard is later accredited by the FSC for use in the area where the operation is located then all further evaluations of the operation are done against the new fully accredited standard. Certified operations have 1 year to come into conformance with newly accredited stewardship standards.

c) Guidelines for Group Management and Small Operations

Forest Management operations that consist of many individual operations all managed together (such as all the clientele of one Forester) fall under the requirements for “Group Management.” In such cases, individual forests are termed “group members,” and the forest manager is termed the “group entity”. These operations are held to the same Forest Stewardship Standard as any other operation (as in sections 6.3.1.a and b). Many of these standards have different requirements for group schemes as opposed to single Forest Management Unit operations. In addition to being assessed to those standards, group schemes are evaluated against an additional 4 criteria, which assess the management capacity of the group seeking FM certification.

Small or Low Intensity Managed Forests (SLIMF’s), are operations that fall below a maximum size (typically 1000 ha) or harvesting rate threshold. All standards (the interim standards are

³¹ Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)-STD-20-001, Section 15.1.2

³² In accordance to ISO Guide 65 § 4.1.3, SCS-FCP’s stakeholder consultation or drafting of certification standards complies to ISO/IEC Guide 7: Guidelines for drafting of standards suitable for use for conformity assessment, 4.2

fully accredited standards) have lowered requirements for some of the criteria in order to better reflect the scale of the management operation. The evaluation process for SLIMF's is also less intense in order to reduce the cost of certification for small operations. It is possible for forest management operations to qualify as Group SLIMF's if they are a group scheme in which every member individually qualifies as a SLIMF.

6.2 Chain-of-Custody Standards

The current operating standards, policies and procedures for Chain of Custody are as follows:

- a) FSC-ADV-40-004-V1-0 Transitory Requirements for CoC Control and Labelling
- b) FSC-ADV-40-014-V1-1 Effective dates for CoC and CW standards
- c) FSC-ADV-40-016-V1-1 Implementation of FSC Controlled Wood
- d) FSC-POL-2009 AAF Policy
- e) FSC-POL-40-002 Group Chain of Custody Certification: FSC Guidelines for Certification Bodies (FSC-STD-40-002 V1-0 in development)
- f) FSC-PRO-40-004 V1-0 Minor Components Derogation Applications
- g) FSC-STD-40-003 V1-0 Standard for Multi-site Certification of Chain of Custody Operations
- h) FSC-STD-40-004 V2-0 FSC Standard for Chain of Custody Certification
- i) FSC-STD-40-004a V1-0 FSC Product Classification
- j) FSC-STD-40-004b V1-0 FSC Species Terminology
- k) FSC-STD-40-005 V2-1 Standard for Company Evaluation of FSC Controlled Wood
- l) FSC-STD-40-006 V1-0 FSC Chain of Custody standard for Project Certification
- m) FSC-STD-40-007 V1-0 FSC Standard for Sourcing Reclaimed Material for Use in FSC Product Groups or FSC-certified Projects
- n) FSC-STD-40-201 V2-0 FSC on-product labeling requirements
- o) FSC-TMK-50-201 FSC requirements for the promotional use of the FSC trademarks by FSC certificate holders and non-certified commercial organizations

Appendix A - SCS Standard Certification Agreement

The SCS Standard Certification Agreement covers the provisions of SCS-FCP required of SCS-FCP clients³³; including but not limited to:

- 1) Complies and will continue to comply with all the certification body's conditions for granting of the certificate, including but not limited to the full implementation of any actions required to correct minor non-conformances identified prior to the issue of a certificate³⁴;
- 2) Make all necessary arrangements for the conduct of the audit, including provision for examining documentation and access to all areas, records and personnel for the purposes of audit (i.e. bills of lading, invoices, inventory records, interviews with company employees, and any additional records required by SCS-FCP to successfully conduct its initial evaluation, annual audits and re-evaluation³⁵ .
- 3) Make claims regarding certification only in respect of the scope for which certification has been granted (products are certified as being in conformance with specified standards)³⁶;
- 4) Shall make no claim of conformity (or near conformity) with FSC requirements (e.g. the FSC Principles and Criteria, in the case of Forest Management certification) in the area included in the scope of the audit until and unless a certificate is awarded;³⁷
- 5) Does not use its product certification in such a manner as to bring the certification body into disrepute and does not make any statement regarding its product certification, which SCS-FCP may consider misleading or unauthorized³⁸;
- 6) Upon suspension or cancellation of certification, discontinues its use of all advertising matter that contains any reference thereto and returns any certification documents as required by the certification body³⁹;
- 7) Endeavor to ensure that no certificate or report nor any part thereof is used in a misleading manner;
- 8) In making reference to its product certification in communication media such as documents, brochures or advertising, complies with the requirements of SCS-FCP⁴⁰;
- 9) Acknowledge that SCS-FCP may at any time use subcontractors for audits and other service activities, except those services related to the granting, maintaining, extending, suspending, or withdrawing of certification;⁴¹
- 10) Inform SCS of any changes in management circumstances and/or resource conditions that could materially impact the continued validity of the certification;⁴²

³³ ISO/ICE Guide 65 1996 (E) §8.1.2.a-h

³⁴ SCS Standard Certification Agreement, Section 9.H.a and Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)-STD-20-001, Section 7.7.a-d

³⁵ SCS Standard Certification Agreement, Section 3.A

³⁶ SCS Standard Certification Agreement, Section 6.D

³⁷ Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)-STD-20-001, Section 15.2

³⁸ SCS Standard Certification Agreement, Section 6.E

³⁹ SCS Standard Certification Agreement, Section 6.E

⁴⁰ SCS Standard Certification Agreement, Section 6.A

⁴¹ ISO/ICE Guide 65 1996 (E) §4.4.c

⁴² SCS Standard Certification Agreement, Section 6.F and Material from the FSC approved SCS-SCS-FCP Procedure for Issuing, Maintaining, Extending, Suspending and Withdrawing FSC-Endorsed Certification, Conditions for Issuance or Re-Issuance

- 11) Undergo surveillance audits, the timing as determined by SCS-FCP⁴³;
- 12) Comply with the conditions specified by FSC for the use of FSC Trademarks, sale, or promotion of products using the FSC Trademarks and for making any claims relating to FSC or to conformance with FSC standards⁴⁴;
- 13) Comply with all SCS-FCP and FSC requirements regarding claims, logos, certification marks or trademarks, see Section 7: Labeling, of this Manual⁴⁵;
- 14) Corrects any major non-conformances with the applicable standard(s) within the maximum period specified by SCS-FCP⁴⁶;
- 15) Continues to pay all specified audit fees and costs.⁴⁷

⁴³ SCS Standard Certification Agreement Section 4 and 9.H.b.ii and Material from the FSC approved SCS-SCS-FCP Procedure for Issuing, Maintaining, Extending, Suspending and Withdrawing FSC-Endorsed Certification, Conditions for Issuance or Re-Issuance

⁴⁴ SCS Standard Certification Agreement, Section 9.H.b.iv and Material from the FSC approved SCS-SCS-FCP Procedure for Issuing, Maintaining, Extending, Suspending and Withdrawing FSC-Endorsed Certification, Conditions for Issuance or Re-Issuance

⁴⁵ Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)-STD-20-001, Section 7.7.a-d

⁴⁶ Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)-STD-20-001, Section 7.7.a-d

⁴⁷ SCS Standard Certification Agreement, Section 7 and Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)-STD-20-001, Section 7.7.a-d