

For more information about FSC chain of custody certification:



## FSC Certification: Chain of Custody

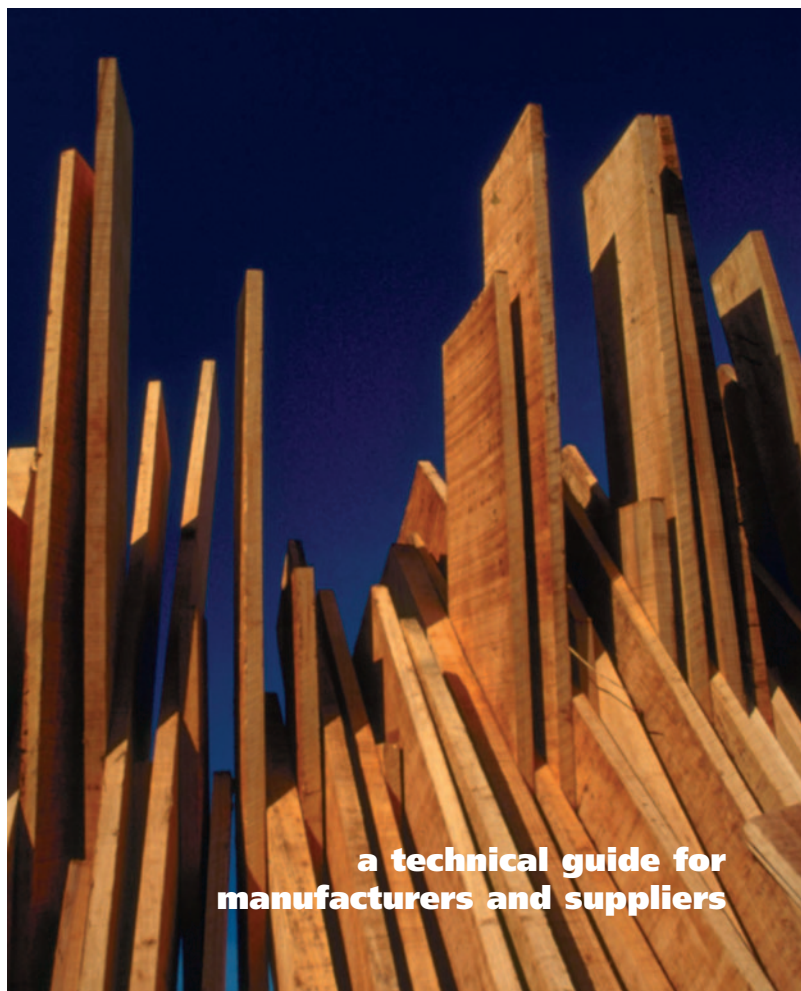


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**a technical guide for  
manufacturers and suppliers**



## FSC Chain of Custody

The FSC chain of custody (CoC) system connects responsible forest management practices and products with consumers. Through FSC chain of custody, companies can demonstrate their commitment to environmentally and socially responsible forest management and label their products with the FSC trademarks.

FSC chain of custody certification is for companies that **process, transform or trade** FSC certified forest products. It enables companies to:

- Identify and control their sources of FSC certified and reclaimed/recycled material;
- Show their customers that they meet FSC requirements for the control of non-FSC certified wood and fiber;
- Use the FSC trademarks and labels to promote their products in the marketplace.

FSC chain of custody certification can also be used to demonstrate compliance with some government or private procurement policies and specifications such as the EU Ecolabel scheme for furniture, or the U.S. Green Building Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system.

### **A technical guide for forest product manufacturers and suppliers**

This guide is for companies seeking technical information on FSC chain of custody certification. It presents key concepts and technical requirements from the FSC chain of custody standard for forest product manufacturers and suppliers (FSC-STD-40-004).

Companies interested in becoming FSC certified should contact one of FSC's accredited certification bodies for the full requirements and details on the certification process. Certification body contact details are available at [www.fsc.org](http://www.fsc.org).

# FSC Chain of Custody Requirements

The main objective of chain of custody certification is to ensure that FSC certified material is tracked through the production process. In this way, end customers are able to select FSC certified products knowing there is a system in place to verify the sourcing of the wood.

## **FSC chain of custody requirements cover five areas:**

- Part 1. Quality system requirements
- Part 2. Wood sourcing requirements
- Part 3. Production controls and record keeping requirements
- Part 4. FSC product and label requirements
- Part 5. Documentation requirements

This guide presents the key concepts for each of these five areas.

Full chain of custody requirements are described in the *FSC chain of custody standard for companies supplying and manufacturing FSC certified products (FSC-STD-40-004)*. This brochure is not a substitute for the complete standard. Interested companies and the general public can obtain this standard at [www.fsc.org/coc](http://www.fsc.org/coc), or by contacting an FSC accredited certification body.

## **The requirements described in this guide are for manufacturers and suppliers of forest products.**

This includes:

- Companies producing sawn wood (e.g. beams and planks);
- Companies producing chip and fiber products (e.g. pulp, paper, chip board);
- Companies producing assembled products (e.g. furniture, plywood, fiberboard with a veneer face);
- Companies producing non-timber forest products (e.g. Brazil nuts).

Traders, agents, printers, publishers and others are covered by other FSC policies and standards.

## **New concepts**

Several new concepts are introduced in the FSC chain of custody standard:

- FSC Product group (Page 4–5)
- FSC Pure material (Page 9)
- FSC Mixed material (Page 9)
- Controlled wood (Page 9)
- FSC Credit system (Page 16)

These concepts are described in more detail in this guide. Technical definitions of these and other terms are provided in the chain of custody standard FSC-STD-40-004.

## Quality system requirements

Chain of custody quality system requirements cover the company's internal procedures, staff training and record-keeping. They also cover the certificate scope – the groups of products and product lines that are included in the FSC chain of custody certificate.

### Companies need to:

- Have one person/position responsible for overall chain of custody for the company.
- Ensure all key personnel (employees and contractors) understand their role in the chain of custody – company identifies, provides and documents necessary training for staff.
- Have documented procedures for all elements of company chain of custody.
- Keep records and reports accurate, complete and up-to-date.
- Define and maintain an up-to-date list of all product groups included in the FSC chain of custody certificate.
- Specify each product group as FSC Pure, FSC Mixed or FSC Recycled.

### Defining FSC product groups

FSC product groups are the basic unit in the FSC chain of custody standard. An FSC product group is a product or line of products which shares the same set of input materials in approximately the same proportions.

Companies need to list all the FSC product groups they produce with a detailed description of the materials in each product group.

### Examples of FSC product groups:

- a line of pine fencing
- a line of glue laminated lumber
- a line of yellow balau window frames
- a line of multiple layer flooring
- a line of oriented strand board (OSB)
- a single paper item or quality
- a line of spruce sawn timber
- a set of garden furniture (one table and four chairs)



## Specific requirements for FSC product groups

### Accepted

- ✓ Products made with a mixture of components or species.
- ✓ Several product lines having the same species mixture, quality and value in one FSC product group.

### Not Accepted

- ✗ Distinct product lines (different species, quality and/or value) within one FSC product group.
- ✗ Exchanging species of different quality and/or value within a FSC product line. These need to be classed as separate FSC product groups.

**Example 1.** An FSC product group could consist of a set of garden furniture (a table and 4 chairs).

- ✓ The chair legs could be made of eucalyptus and the chair seat made of teak.
- ✓ However, the chair legs must always be eucalyptus and the chair seat must always be teak (the same component of each table/chair must always be the same species, quality and/or value).

**Example 2.** Two garden chair lines made with FSC certified eucalyptus and teak.

- ✓ One FSC product group would be the line of eucalyptus garden chairs.
- ✓ The second FSC product group would be the line of teak garden chairs.
- ✗ However, an FSC product group could not be a line of teak garden chairs which is then interchanged with eucalyptus (cannot exchange species).
- ✗ Similarly, the same grade of teak must always be used in the FSC product group. A higher or lower grade of teak cannot be substituted.

**Example 3.** In a paper mill, the same machine is producing two different kinds of paper in alternating sequences of a few hours. One paper contains 5% fiber from fresh timber and 95% from post-consumer paper. The other kind of paper contains 20% fiber from fresh timber and 80% from post-consumer material.

- ✓ There are two products of different quality, so there are two FSC product groups, one for each paper type.

**Example 4.** A bed made of fiberboard with an FSC certified veneer face. The fiberboard component is not FSC certified.

- ✓ The product group would consist of the whole product (bed) including all the components.

## Wood and fiber sourcing requirements

Identifying the wood and fiber that goes into an FSC product is a fundamental component of chain of custody. Material sourcing requirements describe which materials can be included in FSC certified products, what the company's written specifications for those materials need to contain, and the requirements for receiving and storing these materials.

Materials used for FSC certified products must be either:

- FSC Pure
- FSC Mixed
- Post-consumer reclaimed/recycled
- Other reclaimed
- Controlled

All other material (such as glass, metal, plastics, non-wood fiber that comes from outside a forest matrix (such as bagasse or hemp), mineral fillers and chemicals) is not considered.



## Categories of FSC material:

**FSC Pure** material is 100% FSC material from an FSC certified forest. It has been sold and/or processed by an FSC chain of custody certified company, and has been identified as FSC Pure.

**FSC Mixed** material contains a mixture of FSC certified material, reclaimed (recycled) material and/or controlled wood. It has been processed by an FSC chain of custody certified company, and has been identified as FSC Mixed. This category replaces the old 'percentage' category of FSC material.

Non-FSC certified wood can be included in FSC certified products only if it is reclaimed wood or controlled wood.

**Post-consumer reclaimed** material includes wood and/or wood fiber has been reclaimed from a product after that product has been used for its intended end-use purpose by individuals or businesses.

**Other reclaimed** material includes wood and/or wood fiber that has been reclaimed from a product, by-product or co-product during or after manufacture. It is reclaimed before the product reaches the end-consumer.

**Controlled wood** is not FSC certified, but is controlled by the company to exclude:

- a. Wood from forest areas where traditional or civil rights are violated;
- b. Wood from forests where high conservation values are threatened;
- c. Wood from genetically modified (GM) trees;
- d. Illegally harvested wood;
- e. Wood from natural forests which have been harvested for the purpose of converting the land to plantations or other non-forest use.



## Specifying and buying material for FSC products

Companies need to ensure the following when specifying materials for FSC product groups:

### **FSC Pure and FSC Mixed material:**

- The supplying company has a valid FSC chain of custody certificate or a joint forest management/chain of custody (FM/CoC) certificate.
- The material is FSC Pure or FSC Mixed.
- Transportation documents and invoices quote the supplying company's FSC certificate number and confirm the material is FSC certified.

### **Post-consumer reclaimed/recycled wood and other reclaimed material:**

- A clear description of post-consumer reclaimed material, based on FSC definitions.
- Evidence of independent verification of the post-consumer reclaimed material, along with the supplying company's registration code or equivalent.

### **Controlled wood:**

- Companies *buying* non-FSC certified wood for mixing into FSC product groups should refer to FSC's controlled wood standard (FSC-STD-40-005).
- Forest enterprises *wanting to supply* controlled wood should refer to FSC's controlled wood standard for forest managers (FSC-STD-30-010).

## Production control and records

# 3

## Receiving and storing material

Companies need to check that the material is identifiable and is accompanied by the correct information.

### FSC Pure material:

- Shipping documents with correct and valid FSC chain of custody or joint forest management/ chain of custody certificate.
- Identifiable and/or stored separately.

### FSC Mixed material:

- Shipping documents with correct and valid FSC chain of custody or joint forest management/ chain of custody certificate.
- Identifiable and/or stored separately from uncontrolled materials.

### Post-consumer reclaimed:

- Shipping documents with valid registration code or equivalent identification as post-consumer reclaimed.
- Identifiable and/or stored separately from uncontrolled materials.

### Other reclaimed:

- Identifiable as 'other reclaimed material'.
- Identifiable and/or stored separately from uncontrolled materials.

### Controlled wood:

- Identifiable and/or stored separately from uncontrolled materials.
- See FSC controlled wood standards (FSC-STD-40-005 and FSC-STD-30-010).

### Uncontrolled:

- Material does not meet FSC requirements for one of the five acceptable FSC product group materials.
- Identifiable as 'uncontrolled' and/or stored separately from FSC product group materials.

Companies need to keep the following monthly records of their FSC production:

- Quantity (volume/weight)
  - Material received and used in the manufacture of each FSC product group
  - Product sold as FSC Pure/Mixed/Recycled
- Batch number
- Average content of FSC material for each product group
- FSC claim period (usually 12 months) for calculating the average content of FSC material in a product group.



## FSC products and labels

Through the FSC label, chain of custody certified companies can show that their products support responsible forest practices. There are three categories of FSC product types and labels, based on the materials used in the FSC product group.

Companies need to meet the requirements in the *FSC on-product labelling standard (FSC-STD-40-201)* and the FSC Labelling Guide when applying labels to FSC certified products. These documents are available on the FSC website [www.fsc.org/coc](http://www.fsc.org/coc) or from FSC accredited certification bodies.



### FSC Pure Label

This FSC product group contains 100% FSC certified material.



### FSC Recycled Label

This FSC product group contains 100% post-consumer reclaimed material.



### FSC Mixed Label

This FSC product group contains a mixture of FSC certified material, reclaimed material and other controlled sources.

Three of the five Mixed label options are presented here. The labels allow for three different product content descriptions and the option to use a recognized recycling symbol with the FSC trademark.

Recycling symbols can be used by companies who wish to identify the recycled content in the product group. Companies who do not wish to emphasize the recycled content may use the FSC Mixed label without a recycling symbol.

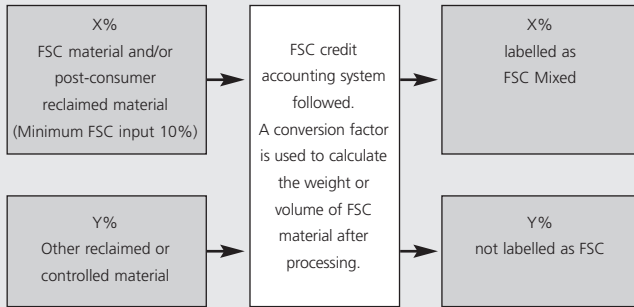
For labelling with the FSC Mixed label, companies may use either a threshold system or an FSC credit system for the FSC product group. These systems are presented on page 16.

# Invoices, sales and shipping documentation

## FSC Mixed: Using the FSC credit and threshold systems

The proportion of a product group that can be identified and labelled as FSC Mixed is calculated according to either the “FSC credit system” or the “threshold system”.

### FSC Credit System

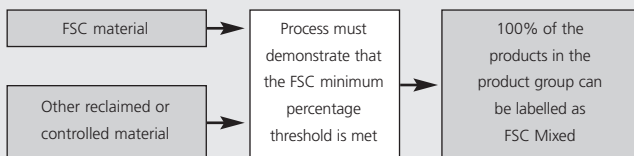


$X\% + Y\% = 100\%$  of wood material in a product group.

#### There are two options for labelling using the FSC credit system:

- |   |          |   |
|---|----------|---|
| <p>a) FSC content is X% (must be greater than 10%).</p>   | <p>→</p> | <p>X% (the same as the FSC input) of the products can be labelled as FSC Mixed.</p>                             |
| <p>b) FSC content is greater than 10%. AND FSC content and post-consumer reclaimed material together is X%.</p> | <p>→</p> | <p>X% (the same as the FSC and post-consumer reclaimed input) of the products can be labelled as FSC Mixed.</p> |

### Threshold System (to be phased out by 1 January 2008)



#### There are three options for labelling using the threshold system:

- |   |          |   |
|---|----------|---|
| <p>a) FSC content is greater than 70%.</p>  | <p>→</p> | <p>100% of the products can be labelled as FSC Mixed.</p> |
| <p>b) FSC content is greater than 10%. AND FSC content and post-consumer reclaimed material together is greater than 70%.</p> | <p>→</p> | <p>100% of the products can be labelled as FSC Mixed.</p> |
| <p>c) Post-consumer reclaimed material content is greater than 90% AND the remaining portion is FSC material.</p>             | <p>→</p> | <p>100% of the products can be labelled as FSC Mixed.</p> |

Accurate and complete documentation ensures the chain of custody is maintained from one company to the next.

Companies need to include the following information on their sales invoices and shipping documentation for FSC certified material or products:

#### Sales invoice:

- Name and address of buyer
- Date of issue
- Description of product, including if product is FSC Pure, FSC Mixed or FSC Recycled
- Quantity of products
- Chain of custody certificate registration number from certification body (e.g. CB-COC-0100)
- FSC product group
- Threshold percentage or statement: 'FSC credit material'

#### Shipping documentation:

- Name and address of buyer
- Date of issue
- Description of product
- Quantity of products
- Reference to sales invoice
- FSC chain of custody certificate registration number from certification body
- Percentage of FSC certified material claimed for the product group, if applicable.