

Guyana National Forest Certification System

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THE GUYANA STANDARD FOR SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT



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The Guyana Standard for Sustainable Forest Management (GSSFM) was developed by the multi-stakeholder working group, the National Standard Setting Working Group (NSSWG). The following organisations are represented on the NSSWG:

- Amerindian Peoples' Association (APA)
- Conservation International Guyana (CI-G)
- Forest Products Association (FPA)
- Guyana Agricultural and General Workers' Union (GAWU)
- Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC)
- Guyana Manufacturers & Services Association (GMSA)
- Guyana School of Agriculture (GSA)
- Guyanese Organization of Indigenous Peoples (GOIP)
- Indigenous Peoples' Commission (IPC)
- Iwokrama International Centre for Rainforest Conservation and Development
- Ministry of Amerindian Affairs (MoAA)
- Ministry of Human Service and Social Security (MoHSSS)
- Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR)
- National Amerindian Development Foundation (NADF)
- National Steering Committee for Community Forest Organization (NSCCFO)
- National Toshaos' Council (NTC)
- The Amerindian Action Movement of Guyana (TAAMOG)
- The Forestry Training Centre Incorporated (FTCI)
- Women and Gender Equality Commission (WGEC)
- World Wildlife Fund Guyana (WWF-G)

This Standard has been developed to assist the implementation of the Guyana National Forest Certification System in Guyana.

Keeping the Standard document up to date:

To maintain its effectiveness, the Standard will be reviewed periodically, and new editions will be published as necessary.

Users must ensure that they are using the current version of the Standard, which should include any amendments that may have been published since the last version.

Detailed information about the GSSFM including drafts, amendments and new projects can be found by visiting www.forestry.gov.gy.

The Guyana Forestry Commission, as the Standardising Body, welcomes suggestions for improvements to the Standard and encourages readers to notify the Commission immediately of any apparent inaccuracies or ambiguities. Contact us by email at forestrygy@gmail.com, guyanaforestryefc@gmail.com or write to us at 1 Water Street, Kingston, Georgetown, Guyana (Tel: +592-226-7271/4 Fax: +592-226-8956).

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1. PREFACE

This Standard was prepared by the National Standard Setting Working Group (NSSWG), a technical committee of the key stakeholders in Guyana's forestry sector, established for the purpose of developing the Standard.

The objective of this Standard is to provide forest sector operators with environmental, economic, social, and cultural criteria and requirements that will continually support the sustainable management and use of Guyana's natural forests.

Presently, commercial forest plantations are not an important component of Guyana's forestry sector and have therefore been excluded from the Standard. However, prescriptions and requirements for establishing and managing plantations sustainably will be developed in the future as part of this Standard if commercial forest plantations become an important component of the sector.

This Standard will be reviewed every five years or earlier, if required, to take account of changing stakeholders' values and expectations, new scientific and technological information, and changes in international norms for sustainable forest management. It has been published as **The Guyana Standard for Sustainable Forest Management**.

The Standard applies to any of Guyana's natural forests being managed for the commercial production of timber and non-timber forest products and forest services.

The development of the Standard is a response to the global market demand for legal and sustainable wood and non-wood forest products.

It assures that the timber and non-timber forest products are certified by an independent, third-party accredited certification body. The Standard is intended for voluntary application by any forest sector operator from a State Forests Authorisation, private land or an Amerindian Village who is seeking independent, accredited third-party certification.

It is a culmination of the policies, strategies, and legal framework the Government of Guyana has been developing and implementing continually to underpin the sustainable management and use of the Country's forests since Guyana gained its independence.

The prescriptions and requirements of this Standard will further support and enhance the policies, strategies, and regulations to improve continually: the environmental, economic, social, and cultural objectives and outcomes for the management of Guyana's natural forests.

Independent, accredited third-party certification against the Standard provides a clear and unambiguous statement that the production of timber and non-timber forest products and forest services within a particular defined forest area is managed in accordance with a set of predetermined and clearly defined environmental, economic, social and cultural performance criteria and requirements that support reducing deforestation, and improving the sustainable management and conservation of Guyana's natural forests continually.

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2. BACKGROUND

Guyana's forests cover approximately 85 percent (18,070,000 hectares) of the total surface area. Of the forestland, 12,156,000 hectares have been designated as State Forests and placed under the management of the Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC).

Another 2,485,000 hectares are Amerindian/Indigenous Titled Lands, the largest private landownership in Guyana.

According to the Protected Areas Commission, Guyana's National Protected Areas System currently comprises approximately 8.4% of Guyana's landmass. The National Protected Areas System includes the following:

- Iwokrama Forest (established by separate legislation, the Iwokrama Act 1996, and a joint mandate from the Government of Guyana and the Commonwealth Secretariat);
- Kaieteur National Park;
- Kanashen Amerindian Protected Area;
- Kanuku Mountains Protected Area;
- Shell Beach Protected Area; and
- Urban Parks: National Park, Botanical Gardens, Zoological Park, and Joe Vieira Park.¹

With the exception of the Kanashen Amerindian Protected Area, which is owned and managed by the Wai Community, all others are Government owned.

The Country's economic development and prosperity are directly linked to the management and use of its forests and forested lands. Aside from the commercial timber industry, Guyana's forests are key to tourism development, biodiversity conservation, wildlife management, bioprospecting, soil fertility and nutrient cycling, and other ecosystem services, such as; water provisioning and carbon sequestration.² Sustainable forest management in Guyana is underpinned by the Guyana National Policy Statement, 2018. Commercial timber harvesting in Guyana is mainly carried out on State forests and is governed by the provisions of the Forests Act, 2009, the Forest Regulations 2018, the GFC Act, 2007 and the Code of Practice for Forest Operations, No.1 of 2018.

Under these statutory and regulatory instruments, the GFC has the statutory mandate to manage the national forest estate sustainably for multiple use purposes, including:

- allocating forest concessions and harvesting rights; and
- protection of high conservation areas and biodiversity and cultural values within State forests.

Guyana allocates two main concession types (large and small concessions) to provide forest use rights for commercial timber and non-timber forest products activities in State forests. Large Concessions are areas larger than 8,097 hectares, and small concessions are areas less than 8,097 hectares.

State Forest Authorisations are areas of State forests available for allocation for commercial forestry operations and are advertised publicly for allocation based on competitive open public tender. Applications received are reviewed by the GFC's Technical Committee, which submits a report on

¹ Protected Areas Trust (Guyana). 2022. <https://protectedareatrust.org.gy/protected-areas/>

² (GFC). 2020 *Guyana REDD+ Monitoring Reporting & Verification System (MRVS) MRVS Report – Assessment Year 2019* <https://forestry.gov.gy/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/MRVS-Year-2019-Report-Version-1-Final.pdf> and Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC). 2018. *Revised National Forest Policy Statement*. <https://forestry.gov.gy/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Guyana-National-Forest-Policy-Statement-2018.pdf>.

its review to the GFC's Board of Directors. The GFC then issues applications approved by the GFC Board to the successful applicants (FSOs) as either a large concession or small concession.

The FSOs are categorised based on:

Large Concessions – Areas larger than 8097 hectares are categorised by the GFC as large concessions. FSOs of Large Concessions must have a State Forest Authorisation granted by the GFC. These State Forest Authorisations can be either a Forest Concession Agreement or an Exploratory Permit. Forest Concession Agreements can either be Timber Sales Agreements or Wood Cutting Leases, which are granted for up to 40 years or subject to conditional renewal. A Forest Concession Agreement is only issued after the FSO has obtained an Exploratory Permit.

Small Concessions – Areas of 8097 hectares or less are categorised by the GFC as small concessions. FSOs of Small Concessions must have a State Forest Authorisation that can either be a State Forest Permission or a Community Forest Management Agreement. These State Forest Authorisations are granted by the GFC for up to two years, subject to conditional renewal.

Outside State forests, the GFC's statutory mandate extends to Indigenous forests, private lands, and state lands in conversion used for commercial forestry operations.

Amerindian Village – Section 2 of the Amerindian Act, Cap 29:01 defines Village or Amerindian Village as “a group of Amerindians occupying or using Village lands” and defines Village lands as “lands owned communally by a Village under title granted to a Village Council to hold for the benefit of the Village”.

An absolute grant or a certificate of title is granted to a Village Council to demonstrate land ownership. An Amerindian Village becomes an FSO when it enters into a contract with the GFC to conduct commercial forestry operations on Indigenous forested lands within the boundaries of the Amerindian Village.

Private land – Section 2 of the Forests Act No. 6 of 2009 defines private land as “land that is neither public land nor Village land”. Private land is legally held by either an individual or corporate body by registered title, transport, or absolute grant. A private landowner becomes an FSO when it enters into a contract with the GFC to conduct commercial forestry operations within the boundaries of the private land.

A Third Party is a natural person or body corporate that has a legal agreement with an FSO to conduct commercial forestry operations within the boundaries of an approved area. The FSO, registered with GFC, is responsible for ensuring that the third party complies with the requirements of all laws, regulations, statutory procedures, and guidelines governing commercial forestry operations in Guyana.

Under the Forests Act No. 6 of 2009, large concession and small concession holders are subject to different requirements. For example, prior to commencing harvesting operations, large concession holders must prepare a five-year Forest Management Plan and an Annual Operational Plan for GFC's approval, and, if required, an environmental and social impacts assessment report for the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA)'s approval.

As part of its due diligence, the GFC also undertakes a 2.5 percent verification of the 100 percent pre-harvest inventory prepared by the FSO before approval of a block to commence harvesting in any one year. This involves the verification of inventory data, including block boundaries. Harvesting operations must comply with the requirements of the Guyana Code of Practice for Forest Operations No. 1 of 2018 and the Guidelines for Forest Operations (Large Concession), which cover the following:

- Harvesting operations;
- Post-harvesting activities;
- Occupational health and safety and hygiene at harvesting camps;
- Land and forest use rights and responsibilities; and
- Community and workplace relations, rights, and responsibilities.

In addition, the GFC undertakes post-harvest checks and monitoring to verify compliance with statutory requirements, including Guyana's Wood Tracking System (which deals with supply chain requirements from the forest to the market).

For small concessions/community forestry, the GFC uses information from satellite imagery, vegetation maps, extrapolation of surrounding concessions' inventory etc. to give an estimate of the forest cover to determine stock levels which is used to calculate the annual harvesting quota for each FSO. State Forest Authorisations and Community Forest Management Agreements prepared by the GFC and signed with FSOs include sufficient information and data to obviate the need for holders of these State Forest Authorisations to prepare:

- Forest Management Plans (FMPs);
- Annual Operational Plans (AOPs); and
- Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIAs).

Boundary demarcation is undertaken by the small concession holder. Similar to large concession holders, small concession holders are subject to the requirements of the Guyana Codes of Practice for Forest Operations No. 1 of 2018, and Guidelines for Forest Operations (Small Concession), and the GFC undertakes post-harvest checks and monitoring to ensure compliance with the Code of Practice.

3. INTRODUCTION

Sustainable forest management involves managing forests based on the principles and norms of sustainability. Managing forests to achieve sustainability outcomes requires forests to be managed in a manner that produces the goods and services that the current generation of humanity needs, while ensuring that the environmental, cultural, and social values of forests are not irreversibly damaged to the extent that future generations cannot also use the forest resource to meet their needs.

The Precautionary Principle is a fundamental tenet of sustainable development, which requires actions to be taken to prevent and/or minimise damage to forests' environmental, cultural, and social values even in the absence of verified knowledge and information.

Sustainability also embodies the principle of inter-generational equity to maintain, preserve and enhance the range of environmental, social, and cultural values of forests for the present and future generations.

Four key sustainable forest management principles underpin the Guyana Standard for Sustainable Forest Management. These are environmental, economic, social, and cultural sustainability.

Environmental sustainability requires managing Guyana's forests to maintain and enhance:

- the forests' ecological processes;
- the forest landscape, including its soil and geological features;
- the forests' food chains and energy flows;
- the forests' ability to sequester carbon;
- the forests' nutrient and water cycles; and
- the forests' biodiversity (flora and fauna).

Guyana's forests must be managed to maintain and improve the forests' ecosystems which are necessary for supporting their endemic systems, particularly their resilience. Such an approach will also enhance and strengthen the forest's resilience, including its productive capacity, adaptive capacity, and ability to continually renew itself. The Standard has been developed to ensure these fundamental environmental objectives are achieved long-term.

The Economic Sustainability Principle involves managing the forests to ensure the economic benefits the country derives from them such as for income, employment, goods, and services are maximised, while ensuring the forests as a national resource will continue to be available for use by future generations to similarly harness their economic benefits.

The Social Sustainability Principle involves managing the forests of Guyana to maintain and enhance the social benefits the Country derives from them. In particular, it requires forest sector operators to be cognisant of their social obligations, such as benefit sharing with forest-dependent communities, the rights and welfare of their workers and maintaining good stakeholder and neighbourhood relations.

The ultimate social sustainability outcome ensures the resilience of forest-dependent communities and allows forest sector operators to continue to maintain their social licence from the nation's citizens to use the nation's forest resources for the benefit of both present and future generations.

The Cultural Sustainability Principle entails managing the forests in a manner that allows the community, particularly Indigenous peoples, to continue to access the forests for cultural practices, including practising their traditional customs and religion. Cultural sustainability also involves respecting and, where necessary and appropriate, incorporating traditional knowledge and wisdom of Indigenous and other forest-dependent communities in the management of the forests on benefit sharing basis. Some Indigenous cultural practices also enhance the environmental assets of the forests, and these must be preserved and maintained through sustainable forest management practices.

3.1 BENCHMARK REQUIREMENTS

The Standard has been developed based on the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Systems' (PEFC) key benchmark requirements, including the following:

- involvement of representatives of the key and primary stakeholders in Guyana's forestry sector in a balanced manner;
- providing an opportunity for all interested parties to make their contribution to the Standard development process fairly and transparently;
- ensuring a clear separation of the roles of the GFC as the Standardising Body and those of the National Standard Setting Work Group as the multi-stakeholder skills-based technical committee with the responsibility to develop the Standard;
- taking into consideration the local conditions in Guyana and ensuring the Standard provides a cost-effective option for all interested parties to become certified;
- taking into consideration the Country's existing forestry laws and regulations;
- drawing on available scientific-based information on sustainable forest management nationally and internationally;
- recognising and taking into consideration the differing capacities and performance levels of forest operators in Guyana based on the size and scale of their operations;
- being easily understood in its application and leading to consistent results when used by different certification bodies and/or auditors;
- reviewing the Standard regularly to allow for revision and update when new knowledge, technology and information are available to ensure sustainable forest management in Guyana is continually improved; and
- being a voluntary market-based mechanism available to forest operators desirous to improve their market competitiveness nationally and internationally.

3.2 USE OF THE STANDARD

Forests are managed for various objectives, and the Standard considers this, and defines specific forest management performance requirements for operations and activities on the defined forest area. In this context, the "defined forest area" is the forest area to be certified under the Standard.

It defines a consistent approach and requirements for managing Guyana's State forests. It is not intended to be used for demonstrating the quality or fitness for purpose for timber and timber products. It is intended to be used mainly for demonstrating that a defined forest area from which

timber and non-timber forest products have been produced, has been managed based on clearly defined sustainability performance (environmental, economic, social, and cultural) objectives.

It is a market-based voluntary system intended for application to forests of any size, irrespective of ownership.

The Standard also allows for group certification, and a guidance document has been developed to support cost-effective certification by groups of forest sector operators.

The PEFC's international standard for chain of custody certification has also been adopted as part of the Guyana National Forest Certification System, to enable participants who are not managers of forests, such as processors, manufacturers, and traders, to obtain and trade in timber and non-timber forest products from certified forests in Guyana.

To support continual improvement in Guyana's forests sustainable forest management systems, the Standard defines review, research, monitoring and evaluation protocols and requirements including stakeholder engagement.

A defined forest area can only be classified as certified under the Standard by an independent third-party auditor who is accredited by a PEFC-accredited certification body and has verified that the forest sector operator has met all the Standard's performance requirements.

This Standard applies to all tenures where commercial forestry operations are undertaken except State land in conversion.

The indicators apply to all situations unless specifically indicated otherwise.

Some indicators apply specifically to some tenures/and or size and scale of operations, and these are specified in the Standard.

Unless indicated, the term forest sector operator applies to all tenures and scales of operation. Similarly, the term "Indigenous" applies to the first nation's people of Guyana. Indigenous forests, therefore, refer to forest lands belonging to the first nation's people of Guyana.

3.3 VERIFIERS

The sustainable forest management performance benchmarks for the Guyana Standard for Sustainable Forest Management have been developed based on the sustainable management prescriptions and requirements from the following:

- Guyana's forest laws and regulations;
- Code of Practice for Forest Operations;
- Guidelines for large and small concessions;
- Wood Tracking System Guidelines; and
- PEFC Benchmark Standard.

The auditable verifiers for evaluating a forest sector operator's compliance with the sustainable forest management performance requirements of the Guyana Standard for Sustainable Forest Management may be different depending upon the size and scale of operation.

The auditable verifiers take into consideration requirements already assessed and verified by the GFC prior to approving harvesting operations, post-harvesting checks and monitoring. Additional

auditable verifiers are included only for PEFC Benchmark Standard requirements not already covered by the GFC's statutory approval processes.

Verifiers listed in this standard are examples of evidence and information that can be used by certification bodies to assess compliance with an indicator by a forest sector operator. They are not meant to be exhaustive, and a certification body may request additional supporting information or evidence in determining compliance.

3.4 DEVELOPMENT OF THE STANDARD

Development of the Standard has followed the requirements of the PEFC's benchmark Standards PEFC ST 1003:2018 and the PEFC's standard setting requirements PEFC ST 1001:2017. The proposal to develop the Standard was publicised widely in Guyana and was followed by a meeting of stakeholders to determine their support for the proposal.

Following acceptance by the stakeholders to develop the Standard, a stakeholder mapping was done, leading to the establishment of the skilled-based technical committee of the key stakeholders in Guyana's forestry sector: the National Standard Setting Working Group (NSSWG), which was tasked to develop the Standard.

The members of the NSSWG were drawn from civil society, national and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs), forestry associations including community forestry entities, Indigenous organisations, unions, academia, youth and gender equality organisations.

The initial (exposure) draft has been submitted for public review and comment, as well as desktop review and pilot testing, and the feedback received has been incorporated in the published version of the Standard.

Guyana is a member of the International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO). Development of the Standard has drawn on relevant and appropriate aspects of ITTO's Criteria and Indicators for the Sustainable Management of Tropical Forests.

Over the years, Guyana has developed and implemented several policies and strategies such as participation in the European Union's –Voluntary Partnership Agreement (EU-VPA) and a national wood tracking system. These policies and strategies are aimed at supporting legality and further sustainable forest management in Guyana, as well as enhance the governance and regulatory systems and structures for the nation's forests. The Standard has been developed to also support and improve on these forest governance, regulatory structures, and systems in Guyana.

As part of the VPA process, Guyana has developed a national Legality Definition, improved several aspects of its forestry governance and regulatory systems and enhanced the scope and capability of the national wood tracking system.

Experiences and lessons learned from the VPA process, including important and appropriate elements of the Legality Definition, stakeholder involvement and the wood tracking system, have been incorporated in the development of the Guyana Standard for Sustainable Forest Management.

The Standard is also guided by the National Forest Policy and Plan, 2018 and is included in the Low Carbon Development Strategy 2030, which is the overall development strategy for Guyana.

Development of the Standard has also taken into consideration international norms for sustainable forest management, including international forestry-related conventions and treaties to which Guyana is a signatory.

The Forests Stewardship Council (FSC) is the other globally recognised and accepted forest certification system. Development of the Guyana Standard for Sustainable Forest Management has also drawn on the relevant and appropriate elements of the FSC's principles and criteria for sustainable forest management.

The standard development process has also drawn on the assessment results of other tropical timber producing member countries whose national certification systems have been endorsed by the PEFC including Malaysia and the Congo Basin countries, as well as non-tropical timber producing members such as Vietnam, India, South Africa, and Australia. Together, these international norms, protocols and requirements have influenced and underpinned the development of the Guyana National Forest Certification Scheme (GNFCS), of which the Guyana Standard for Sustainable Forest Management is a very critical component. It is hoped that implementation and application of the GNFCS will make a major contribution to Guyana's on-going efforts to manage its State forests sustainably for the benefit of this and future generations.

3.5 NORMATIVE REFERENCES

To the extent possible, the development of the Guyana Standard for Sustainable Forest Management has drawn on the elements, norms, protocols, knowledge and experiences of national and international systems and schemes dealing with sustainable forest management, in particular those related to tropical forests. As such, the Standard incorporates all the elements and requirements necessary for forest sector operators in Guyana to achieve sustainable forest management outcomes. No other normative references are therefore required.

4. ACRONYMS

AAC:	Annual Allowable Cut
AWP:	Area Work Plan
CITES:	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CO2:	Carbon Dioxide
CoC:	Chain-of-Custody
CoP	Code of Practice
EPA:	Environmental Protection Agency
FCA	Forest Concession Agreement
FLEGT:	Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade
FMD:	Forest Monitoring Division
FMP	Forest Management Plan
FPIC:	Free Prior and Informed Consent
FSC:	Forest Stewardship Council
FSO:	Forest Sector Operator
GFC:	Guyana Forestry Commission
GNFCS	Guyana National Forest Certification Scheme
GHG:	Green House Gases
GLSC:	Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission
GMOs:	Genetically Modified Organisms
GRA:	Guyana Revenue Authority
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPM:	Integrated Pest Management
ITTO:	International Tropical Timber Organization
MOAA:	Ministry of Amerindian Affairs
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organization
NIS:	National Insurance Scheme
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Product
NSSWG:	National Standard Setting Working Group
PEFC:	Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification
SFA	State Forest Authorisations
SFM:	Sustainable Forest Management
TI:	Transparency International
TLTV:	Timber Legality and Traceability

UNEP: United Nations Environment Programme
VC: Village Council
VPA: Voluntary Partnership Agreement

5. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

The terms and definitions of the Standard draw on those from the PEFC ST 1003:2018. They also include terms and definitions that are specific to Guyana's forestry context.

Term	Definition
Afforestation	Establishment of forest through planting and/or deliberate seeding on land that, until then, was under a different land use. It implies a transformation of land use from non-forest to forest.
Annual Allowable Cut	The sustainably permissible levels of harvest/removal of any forest produce by volume, ensuring that the rate of harvest does not exceed the calculated rate of long-term regeneration and growth.
Area Work Plan	The Area Work Plan is a document specifying objectives, actions and control arrangements concerning the management of ecosystem resources and services for a set period of time for small concessions, Amerindian Villages, and private lands in Guyana. It includes the requirements that small concession holders, Amerindian Villages and private lands must follow in order to undertake forestry operations sustainably.
Avoidance Principle	According to Guyana's Environmental Protection Agency's Act 11 of 1996 (Cap 20:05), avoidance principle means "it is preferable to avoid environmental damage as it can be impossible or more expensive to repair rather than prevent damage."
Biodiversity	Biological diversity is the variety of living organisms from all sources including terrestrial, marine, and other aquatic ecosystems, as well as the ecological complexes of which they are part. This includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems.
Biodiversity Conservation	The act of protection, preservation, maintenance, sustainable use (conservation), recovery and enhancement of the components of biological diversity, where: a) <i>Conservation</i> is the sustainable use of resources and encompasses protection as well as exploitation and; b) <i>Preservation</i> is an aspect of conservation meaning to keep something without altering or changing it.
Buffer Zone	Areas peripheral to a specific protected area, like water courses or core area, where there are lesser restrictions on resource use, and special development measures are undertaken in order to promote coexistence between wildlife and human activity.

Capacity Building	It is a process of developing and strengthening, human resource, scientific and technological capabilities, organizational and institutional capabilities.
Carbon Cycles	The flow of carbon in various forms, primarily as carbon dioxide through atmosphere, terrestrial and marine biosphere, oceans, and lithosphere by various chemical, physical, geological, and biological processes.
Carbon Sequestration	It is the different processes through which carbon is removed from the atmosphere and stored in soil, biomass, geological formations, and oceans.
Carbon Stock	The quantity of carbon contained in a pool of any ecosystem.
Certified area	The forest area covered by a sustainable forest management system according to the Guyana Standard for Sustainable Forest Management.
Certificate	A document issued under the rules of a certification system, providing confidence that a duly identified product, process, or service, is in conformity with a specified standard or other normative document.
Chain of Custody	All the changes of custodianship of forest-based products, and products thereof, during the harvesting, transportation, processing, and distribution chain from the forest to the end-user.
Climate Change	A change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods.
Climate Change Adaptation	Actions taken to help communities and ecosystems to cope with changing climate condition. Adjustment in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli or their effects, which moderates, harms, or exploits beneficial opportunities.
Climate Change Mitigation	The reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to achieve stabilization of GHG concentrations in the atmosphere and subsequently a cessation of further warming.
Collective Bargaining	Negotiations which take place between an employer, a group of employers or one or more employers' organisations, on the one hand, and one or more workers' organisations, on the other, for: a) determining working conditions and terms of employment; and/or b) regulating relations between employers and workers; and/or

	c) regulating relations between employers or their organisations and a workers' organisation or workers' organisations.
Conflict Resolution	<p>It is a process for two or more parties to find a peaceful solution to a disagreement among them. The disagreement may be personal, financial, political, or emotional. When a dispute arises, often the best course of action is negotiation to resolve the disagreement. The goals of negotiation are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) produce a solution that all parties can agree to; b) work as quickly as possible to find this solution; and c) improve, not hurt, the relationship between the groups in conflict.
Continual Improvement	It is process of enhancing the management system and performance to achieve improvements in economic, environmental, and social and cultural aspects of forest management.
Conservation	It is the protection, preservation, management, or restoration of natural environments and ecological communities that inhabit them. Conservation is generally held to include the management of human use of natural resources for current public benefit and sustainable social and economic utilization.
Criteria	It is a category of conditions or process through which sustainable forest management can be assessed. A criterion is characterized by a set of related indicators, which are monitored periodically to assess change.
Customary Rights	The non-commercial rights and practices determined by the traditional exercise of a community or individual(s) as per the customs which may or may not have been codified. They differ from prescriptive rights i.e., the former are local usages, belonging to all the inhabitants of a particular place or district, and the latter are rights of individuals, independent of the place of their residence. e.g., for certain tribal communities living inside forest areas, certain areas are traditionally used by them for flower or fruit collection or honey collection or for burial of their dead.
Defined forest area	It is an area of forest (including land and water) to which the requirements of the Standard are applied. It includes productive and non-productive forest areas, streamside reserves, conservation areas, and roads, etc. The defined forest area is described either by survey plans, legal title(s), gazettal notices or GIS shape files whether as private land, Amerindian Villages and State Forest Authorisation. The forest sector operator seeking certification to the Standard will need to demonstrate management control and legal rights over the forest operations in

	the defined forest area through appropriate agreements or contracts, which will allow them to achieve all of the requirements. The forest sector operator is precluded from omitting elements of its operation which would otherwise be included in its defined forest area from the scope of its certification.
Degradation	A reduction in the capacity of a forest to produce ecosystem services such as carbon storage and wood products as a result of anthropogenic and environmental changes. Although there may be no reduction in forest area, it may impact the quality of forest, decrease in number of species, reduction in tree cover, or the alteration of the forest structure.
Degraded forest	It is land with long-term significant reduction of the overall potential to supply benefits from the forest, which includes carbon storage, wood, biodiversity and other goods and services.
Ecological Communities	They are an association or group of actually or potentially interacting species occupying the same geographical area in a particular time.
Ecosystem Services	They are benefits obtained from ecosystems. According to the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB), ecosystem services can be categorized in four categories: <i>Provisioning services</i> are the products obtained from ecosystems such as food, fresh water, wood, fibre, genetic resources and medicines. <i>Regulating services</i> are defined as the benefits obtained from the regulation of ecosystem processes such as climate regulation, natural hazard regulation, water purification and waste management, pollination, or pest control. <i>Habitat services</i> highlight the importance of ecosystems to provide habitat for migratory species and to maintain the viability of gene-pools. <i>Cultural services</i> include non-material benefits that people obtain from ecosystems such as spiritual enrichment, intellectual development, recreation, and aesthetic values.
Ecologically important forest areas	<p>Forest areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • containing protected, rare, sensitive, or representative forest ecosystems; • containing significant concentrations of endemic species and habitats of threatened species, as defined in recognised reference lists; • containing endangered or protected genetic <i>in situ</i> resources; and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> contributing to globally, regionally, and nationally significant large landscapes with natural distribution and abundance of naturally occurring species.
Ecosystem services	Benefits obtained from ecosystems. These include provisioning services such as food, water, timber, and fibre; regulating services that affect climate, floods, disease, wastes, and water quality; cultural services that provide recreational, aesthetic, and spiritual benefits; and supporting services such as soil formation, photosynthesis, and nutrient cycling.
Endemic species	These are species that exist only in one geographic region. Species can be endemic to large or small areas of the earth: some are endemic to a particular continent, some to part of a continent, and others to a single island.
Environmental Management Systems	These are a set of processes and practices that enable an organization to reduce its environmental impacts and increase operational efficiency.
Forest Conversion	<p>It is the direct human-induced change of forest to non-forest land or forest plantation. Forest conversion occurs when natural forests are converted to highly cultivated forests, typically with an increased focus on wood production, and decreased environmental benefits.</p> <p>Regeneration by planting or direct seeding and/or the human-induced promotion of natural seed sources, to the same dominant species as was harvested or other species that were present in the historical species mix is not considered a conversion.</p>
Forest Dependent Communities	The members or communities who primarily reside in and depend on forests or forest lands for <i>bona fide</i> livelihood needs.
Forest Management	The branch of forestry concerned with the operational management of forest resources and the overall administrative, economic, legal, and social aspects and with the essential scientific and technical aspects, especially silviculture, protection and forest regulation.
Forest Sector Operator	<p>A Forest Sector Operator is a natural person or body corporate registered with and approved by the Guyana Forestry Commission to conduct forestry operation(s). Note 1: An organisation applies for certification under the GNFCFS and is responsible for complying with the sustainable forest management requirements of the Guyana Standard for Sustainable Forest Management and can be responsible for several defined forest areas.</p> <p>A manager or owner can also take the role of an organisation.</p>

Free Prior and Informed Consent	The principle that an individual or a community has the right to give or withhold their consent to proposed projects that may affect the land they own, occupy, or otherwise use. Free implies that there is no coercion, intimidation, or manipulation. Prior implies that consent is to be sought sufficiently in advance of any authorization or commencement of activities and respect is shown to time requirements of Indigenous consultation/consensus processes. Informed implies that information is provided that covers a range of aspects, including the nature, size, pace, reversibility and scope of any proposed project or activity; the purpose of the project as well as its duration; locality and areas affected; a preliminary assessment of the likely economic, social, cultural, and environmental impact, including potential risks; personnel likely to be involved in the execution of the project; and procedures the project may entail. This process may include the option of withholding consent. Consultation and participation are crucial components of a consent process.
Forest	The Guyana Forest Act, 2009, defines forests as an ecosystem dominated by woody plants, consisting of closed forest formations, where trees of various stories and undergrowth cover a high proportion of the ground; or open forest with a continuous vegetation cover in which tree crown cover exceeds 10 percent; and includes mangrove forests and any wetlands or open lands within a forest which form an integral part of the ecosystem.
Forest Concession Agreement	Forest Concession Agreement is a contract between the Guyana Forestry Concession and a forest sector operator and gives the forest sector operator “effective control” of the concession area.
Forest health	Forest condition that is naturally resilient to damage; characterized by biodiversity. It contains sustained habitat for wood, fish, wildlife, and humans, and meets present and future resource management objectives.
Forest plantation	<p>Forest of introduced species, and in some cases native species, established through planting or seeding, mainly for production of wood or non-wood goods and services.</p> <p>Note 1: Includes all stands of introduced species established for production of wood or non-wood goods and services.</p> <p>Note 2: May include areas of native species characterised by few species, intensive land preparation (e.g., cultivation), straight tree lines and/or even-aged stands.</p>
Fundamental conventions	ILO Eight conventions (ILO 29, 87, 98, 100, 105, 111, 138 and 182) identified by the ILO’s Governing Body as “fundamental” in terms of principles and rights at work: freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining; the

	elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour; the effective abolition of child labour; and the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.
Genetically modified trees	<p>Trees in which the genetic material has been altered in a way that does not occur naturally by mating and/or natural recombination, taking into account applicable legislation providing a specific definition of genetically modified organisms.</p> <p>Note 1: The following techniques are considered as genetic modification resulting in genetically modified trees (EU Directive 2001/18/EC):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) recombinant nucleic acid techniques involving the formation of new combinations of genetic material by the insertion of nucleic acid molecules produced by whatever means outside an organism, into any virus, bacterial plasmid or other vector system and their incorporation into a host organism in which they do not naturally occur, but in which they are capable of continued propagation; 2) techniques involving the direct introduction into an organism of heritable material prepared outside the organism including micro-injection, macro-injection, and micro-encapsulation; 3) cell fusion (including protoplast fusion) or hybridisation techniques where live cells with new combinations of heritable genetic material are formed through the fusion of two or more cells by means of methods that do not occur naturally. <p>Note 2: The following techniques are not considered as genetic modification resulting in genetically modified trees (EU Directive 2001/18/EC):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) in vitro fertilisation; 2) natural processes such as: conjugation, transduction, transformation; 3) polyploidy induction.
Genetic Diversity	It is the variation in the amount of genetic information within and among individuals of a population, a species, an assemblage, or a community.
Habitat	It is a place where an organism lives and/or the conditions of that environment including the soil, vegetation, water, and food.
Indicator	It is a quantitative or qualitative parameter which can be assessed in relation to a criterion. It describes objectively and unambiguously a relevant element of a criterion.
Integrated Pest Management (IPM)	An approach to enhancing crop and livestock production, based on an understanding of ecological principles. Chemical pesticides

	are used only when biological and cultural control methods and available technologies fail to keep pests below acceptable levels, and when assessment of associated risks and benefits indicates that the benefits of the use of chemicals outweigh the costs (SPIPM, 2007). The careful consideration of all available pest control techniques and subsequent integration of appropriate measures that discourage the development of pest populations and keep pesticides and other interventions to levels that are economically justified and reduce or minimise risks to human health and the environment.
Keystone Species	Species whose activity governs the well-being of many other species.
Landscape	<p>A geographical mosaic composed of interacting ecosystems resulting from the influence of geological, topographical, soil, climatic, biotic, and human interactions in a given area.</p> <p>“Landscape approaches” seek to provide tools and concepts for allocating and managing land to achieve social, economic, and environmental objectives in areas where agriculture, mining, and other productive land uses compete with environmental and biodiversity goals.</p>
Large Concession	An area of State forest larger than 8,097 hectares approved for commercial timber production in Guyana.
Local Communities	Communities of any size that are in or adjacent to the Defined Forest Area, and also those that are close enough to have a significant impact on the economy or the environmental values of the Defined Forest Area or to have their economies, rights or environments significantly affected by the management activities or the biophysical aspects of the Defined Forest Area.
Management Plan	Documented information specifying objectives, actions and control arrangements concerning the management of ecosystem resources and services for a set period of time.
Management system	Set of interrelated or interacting elements of an organisation to establish policies and objectives and processes to achieve those objectives.
Monitoring and Evaluation	Monitoring and Evaluation can be defined as a continuing function that aims primarily to provide the management and main stakeholders of an ongoing intervention with early indications of progress, or lack thereof, in the achievement of results.
Non-compliance	It is a situation in which the audit evidence indicates that operations are not carried out in compliance with a certification criterion.

Non-forest ecosystem	Land not meeting the definition of forest.
Non-timber forest products	They are any product or service other than timber that is produced in forests. They include fruits and nuts, vegetables, fish and game, medicinal plants, resins, essences and a range of barks and fibres such as bamboo, rattans, and a host of other palms and grasses.
Plantation Forests	A forest area established by planting or sowing by using either alien or native species, often with one or few species, regular spacing and even ages, and which lacks most of the principal characteristics and key elements of natural forests.
Precautionary principle	According to Guyana's Environmental Protection Agency's Act 11 of 1996 (Cap 20:05), The precautionary principle states "where there is a threat of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation."
Pre-harvest inventory	Pre-harvest planning is an essential component of Reduced Impact Logging. It involves a detailed assessment of the timber stock and terrain conditions in the blocks which the concessionaire is allowed to harvest annually. A schedule for the planning and implementation of harvesting operations must be done as described in the Guidelines for Forest Operations (large concessions).
Protected Area	A clearly defined geographical space, recognised, dedicated, and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values.
Regeneration	The act of establishing or enriching vegetation on barren or degraded land/forest naturally or artificially.
Scale, Intensity and Risk	<p><i>Scale</i> refers to the relative size or extent of the defined forest area and its operational and management activities such as silviculture operations, road building, etc. It also helps in identification and estimation of threshold levels with respect to the activities.</p> <p><i>Intensity</i> is based on the level of management activities within the defined forest area. It is a measure of the force, severity, or strength of the impact of a management activity on environmental, social or economic values. In the context of forest management, intensity refers to site disturbing activities, such as disturbance caused by harvesting machinery, removal of trees, soil preparation, planting, use of fertilizers, use of pesticides, etc.</p> <p><i>Risk</i> refers to the likelihood or probability of an event with negative consequences or an unacceptable negative impact, caused by</p>

	any activity in the defined forest area, to result in a non-compliance at the Criteria level.
Small concession	Area of State forest less than 8,097 hectares approved for commercial timber production in Guyana.
Supply Chain (also supply system)	The different steps through which wood-based products go from being harvested in the forest to an end product.
Stakeholder	<p>A person, group, community, or organisation with an interest in the subject of the GNFCs. A stakeholder may include:</p> <p>a) Affected stakeholder</p> <p>A stakeholder who might experience a direct change in living and/or working conditions caused by implementation of a standard, or a stakeholder who might be a user of a standard and therefore is subject to the requirements of the standard.</p> <p>Note 1: Affected stakeholders include neighbouring communities, Indigenous Peoples, workers, etc. However, having an interest in the subject matter of the standard (e.g., NGOs, scientific community, and civil society) is not equal to being affected.</p> <p>Note 2: A stakeholder who might be a user of the standard is likely to become a certified entity, e.g., a forest sector operator in the case of a forest management standard, or a wood processing enterprise in the case of a chain of custody standard.</p> <p>The following are examples of affected stakeholders, and may include -</p> <p>Local communities, forest dwellers and indigenous communities. Workers, Forest dwellers, Neighbours, Downstream landowners, Local processors, Local businesses, Tenure and use rights holders, including landowners, Organizations authorized or known to act on behalf of affected stakeholders, for example social and environmental NGOs, labour unions.</p> <p>b) Interested stakeholder</p> <p>It is an individual, group of individuals or an organisation; that has shown an interest or is known to have an interest in the activities of the organisation.</p>
Stakeholder Engagement	The process used by an organisation to engage relevant stakeholders for the purpose to achieve accepted outcomes.
Stakeholder Mapping	An exercise of establishing contact with the already identified and interested stakeholders for the standard setting process. Stakeholder mapping exercise includes defining key sectors of stakeholders, issues of each sector and best means of communication to reach them.

	The major stakeholder groups outlined in the UN Agenda 21 are: business and industry, non-governmental organisations, scientific and technological communities, farmers and small forest landowners' workers and trade unions, local authorities, Indigenous Peoples, women, children, and youth.
Sustainable Forest Management	The process of managing forest to achieve one or more clearly specified objectives of management with regard to the production of a continuous flow of desired forest products and services without undue reduction of its inherent values and future productivity, and without undue undesirable effects on the physical and social environment.
Sustainable Use	Use of components of biological diversity in such manner and at rates that do not lead to the long-term decline of the biological diversity, thereby maintaining its potential to meet the needs and aspiration of present and future generations.
Standardising body	Body that has recognised activities in standardisation. The Standardising Body for the GNFC is the Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC) and is responsible for the development and maintenance of the Standards comprising the GNFC. The GFC is also the national governing body.
Tenure Rights	A legal claim made on tenure of land and/or natural resources by an individual or group of individuals.
Threatened species	Threatened species is a group of three categories: critically endangered species, endangered species, and vulnerable species. Endangered species are considered to be facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild, while vulnerable species are considered to be facing a high risk of extinction in the wild.
Vitality of Forests	A broad suite of factors that affect the structure or function of forest ecosystems. These factors can be generally classed as natural or exotic biotic agents, abiotic stressors, and anthropogenic emissions and manipulations of the forests.

6. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE STANDARD

- Sustainable forest management performance requirements in the Standard are applicable at the Defined Forest Area level, except monitoring of forest health, which could be done at regional level but with the monitoring results communicated at the Defined Forest Area level:
 - where forest health is monitored at the regional level, it will not be necessary to carry out individual monitoring of each Defined Forest Area; and
 - similarly, where an Area Work Plan (AWP) is developed at the regional level, it will not be necessary to develop an individual AWP for each Defined Forest Area.
- All the requirements have been developed so they are clear, performance based and auditable.
- The requirements apply to activities of all forest operators in the Defined Forest Area which have an impact on achieving compliance with the Standard.
- Relevant and appropriate records must be kept, to provide evidence of compliance with the Standard's forest management requirements.
- Documents related to timber and non-timber forest products from forests certified under this Standard and passed on to entities with PEFC-endorsed Chain of Custody certification, must specify "x% PEFC certified."

7. PRINCIPLES, CRITERIA, INDICATORS AND SUGGESTED VERIFIERS FOR THE STANDARD

Indicators	Verifiers
Principle 1 – Compliance with Legal Requirements and Organisational Commitments	
Criterion 1.1 The FSO has the legal right to harvest.	
Indicator 1.1.1 The FSO on State Forest is the holder of a State Forest Authorisation (SFA) (See explanatory note 1 in Annex 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Valid SFA Agreement (Large Concession {LC} or State Forest Exploratory Permit {SFEP} for large concessions; Small Concession {SC}, Forest Concession Agreement {FCA} or Community Forest Management Agreement {CFMA} for small concessions).
Indicator 1.1.2 For forest operations in Amerindian Villages: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The FSO is a Village Council, and has been appointed lawfully in accordance with the Amerindian Act; The Village Council (the FSO) has a legal title for the forest land where commercial activities are being conducted; If residents of the Amerindian Village are acting on behalf of the Village Council, they have a written agreement with the Council to engage in commercial activities related to harvesting or extraction within Village lands; and If non-residents who are acting on behalf of the Village Council, they have a written agreement with the Council to engage in commercial activities related to harvesting or extraction within Village lands. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statement of elections results (Ministry of Amerindian Affairs {MoAA}); One of the following verifiers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certificate of Title (Land Registry), Absolute Grant (Guyana Lands and Survey Commission), Written agreement between the Village Council (VC) and the FSO (resident or non-resident), Evidence of free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) from the interested indigenous communities.
Indicator 1.1.3 For forest operations on private lands, the FSO has legal title for the forest land where the commercial activities are taking place. (See explanatory note 2 in Annex 1).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One of the following verifiers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absolute Title (Land Registry). Transport (Deeds Registry). Absolute Grant (GLSC).
Criterion 1.2 The FSO complies with forest management and Wood Tracking System (WTS) requirements.	
Indicator 1.2.1 The FSO harvests timber products within the boundaries of the concession (State forests), Village lands (Amerindian Villages) or private land.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD). Maps of the Concession. Field inspection (boundary and stump check).
Indicator 1.2.2 The FSO does not prevent the legal user rights of other individual groups where these occur.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD) Field interviews with forest-dependent communities within or near the concession.
Indicator 1.2.3 The FSO complies with: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> in the case of a large concession agreement, the GFC approved Annual Allowable Cut (See explanatory note 3 in Annex 1) or in the case of a small concession agreement, the approved quota. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GFC Tag Issuance Letter (large SFA) or Tag Request Form (small SFA). Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD). FMP (large) or FCA (small).
Indicator 1.2.4 The FSO complies with the Wood Tracking System requirements. (See explanatory note 4 in Annex 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GFC Block approval letter and Tag Issuance Letter (large SFA) or Tag Request and Issuance Form (small SFA).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GFC Removal Permit or Transshipment Permit. • Pre-harvest Inventory (large SFA) (See explanatory note 5 at Annex 1). • Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD). • Field inspection (GFC tag use). • FMP (large).
Indicator 1.2.5 The FSO complies with all relevant requirements of the Code of Practice for Forest Operations governing sustainable forest management in Guyana. (See explanatory notes 6 & 7 in Annex 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD). • Compliance with the Sections 1 to 11 of the Code of Practice.
Criterion 1.3 The FSO complies with required fees, charges, and levies.	
Indicator 1.3.1 The FSO complies with the requirements for the payments of applicable management fees, charges, and levies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed Payment Plan with the GFC. • Receipts on the payment schedules (GFC/Finance Division). • Receipts for full payments (GFC/FD).
Indicator 1.3.2 The FSO complies with the tax requirements of the applicable tax schedule published by the Guyana Revenue Authority.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the following verifiers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Valid GRA Tax Identification Number Certificate (for FSOs less than one year of operation), ○ Lodgement Receipt from the GRA (for FSOs exceeding one year of operation), ○ For entities exempted by law from payment of taxes, a valid Entity Exempt letter/certificate.
Criterion 1.4 The FSO makes policy commitments to comply with national forest management standard and continuous improvements to forest management.	
Indicator 1.4.1 The FSO has a documented policy commitment to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) comply with the requirements of the GSSFM and other applicable requirements of the certification system; b) continuously improve the Organisation's sustainable forest management system; and c) clearly define and assign responsibilities required for sustainable forest management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documented policy commitments.
Indicator 1.4.2 The FSO makes the policy commitment referred to in 1.4.1 publicly available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of mechanism for public availability, e.g., websites, records of distribution, statement confirming availability on request.
Indicator 1.4.3 The FSO shall identify and have access to the legislation applicable to its forest management and determine how these compliance obligations apply to the operation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of legislation or web-links to applicable legislation on-line.
Indicator 1.4.4 The FSO shall: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) have a documented policy commitment not to offer or receive bribes or condone/ participate in any other form of corruption; and b) make the policy commitment publicly available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documented policy commitment. • Evidence of public availability.
Indicator 1.4.5 The FSO shall comply with anti-corruption legislation, where it exists.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documented policy commitment.

Criterion 1.5 The FSO protects the forest from illegal and unauthorised activities.	
Indicator 1.5.1 The FSO shall have strategies for, and implement measures to contribute to, protecting the forest from unauthorised activities such as illegal logging, illegal land use, illegally initiated fires, and other illegal activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies/procedures for identifying and managing illegal and unauthorised activities. • Observed sign boards. • Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD). • Field inspection (illegal/unauthorised activities). • Interviews with employees.
Indicator 1.5.2 Where forest protection is the legal responsibility of regulatory bodies, the FSO collaborates with these regulatory bodies to identify, report, control and discourage unauthorized or illegal activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FSO's records of detection of illegal or unauthorised activities (e.g., forest patrol reports). • Records of collaboration with regulatory bodies. • Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD).
Indicator 1.5.3 If illegal or unauthorized activities are detected; measures are implemented to address them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD). • Field inspection (illegal/unauthorised activities). • FSO's records of measures.
Principle 2 – Legal, Customary and Traditional rights	
Criterion 2.1 The FSO respects legal, customary, and traditional rights to land.	
Indicator 2.1.1 The FSO establishes and implements a policy commitment to ensure that his or her forest practices and operations are conducted in a manner that recognises the established framework of legal, customary, and traditional rights such as outlined in ILO 169, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documented policies and procedures. • Evidence from affected stakeholders.
Indicator 2.1.2 The FSO does not prevent traditional rights of Amerindian/Indigenous peoples. (See explanatory note 8 in Annex 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD). • Interviews with Amerindian communities.
Criterion 2.2 The FSO has appropriate commercial contracts with Amerindian villages.	
Indicator 2.2.1 The FSO shall ensure that any contractual arrangements for timber harvesting on Amerindian lands are made with free and informed consent of the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of written agreements. • Interviews with communities to verify free, prior and informed consent.
Indicator 2.2.2 The FSO shall ensure that any contractual arrangements for timber harvesting on Amerindian lands are brought to the attention of the MoAA and the GFC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records of communications with MoAA and GFC.
Indicator 2.2.3 FSOs desirous of negotiating commercial forestry contracts with an Amerindian Village Council shall inform the relevant Council, the MoAA and the GFC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records of communications with Amerindian Councils and MoAA. • Minutes of Village Council meetings.
Criterion 2.3 The FSO has a system to manage conflicts between forest operations and local communities.	
Indicator 2.3.1 The FSO shall ensure that any conflicts are first resolved through consultation before exploring legal options.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FSO's Conflict Resolution Policy and Procedures.

<p>Indicator 2.3.2 The FSO shall ensure that conflicts are resolved through consultations through a neutral third party.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conflict Resolution Committee notes.
<p>Indicator 2.3.3 The FSO shall ensure that disputes over Amerindian land tenure and use rights on its concession or within Amerindian lands are brought to the attention of the GFC, MoAA and the GLSC.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conflict Resolution Policy and Procedures. Records of communications with the MoAA and the GFC and GLSC.
<p>Principle 3 – Workers Rights</p>	
<p>Criterion 3.1 The FSO complies with employment law, social security requirements and the fundamental ILO conventions.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicator 3.1.1 The FSO complies with the National Insurance and Social Security Act and pays applicable National Insurance Scheme (NIS) contributions on behalf of workers/employees. (See explanatory notes 9 & 10 in Annex 1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of registration with the NIS (NIS #). Records of wages payment/pay-slips. Records of NIS payment/deductions to NIS. Interviews with workers. A valid Exempt Letter/Certificate including a non-liability letter.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicator 3.1.2 The FSO shall ensure that the forest practices and operations comply with fundamental ILO conventions (ILO Conventions 29, 87, 98, 100, 105, 111, 138 and 182 and related legislation. (See explanatory note 11 in Annex 1). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of compliance with the Code of Practice and Guidelines. Employee records/files. Interviews with workers.
<p>Criterion 3.2 The FSO provides appropriate workplace conditions.</p>	
<p>3.2A Child labour and forced labour.</p>	
<p>Indicator 3.2.1 The FSO employs persons above the relevant statutory ages in accordance with the operations being conducted and keeps records to verify that there is no use of child labour in keeping with the International Labour Organization Convention 182 as well as relevant domestic law. (See explanatory note 12 & 13 in Annex 1).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of compliance with Section 11.2 of the Code of Practice and Guidelines. Employee records/files. Records of workers ages (e.g., register of employees, copies of birth certificates or national identity cards that record the date of birth). Interviews with workers/communities.
<p>Indicator 3.2.2 The FSO does not use forced labour in forest operations as outlined in the ILO Convention 29 or the domestic law on forced labour. (See explanatory note 13 & 14 in Annex 1).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with workers/communities. Documented commitments by FSO.
<p>3.2B Anti-discrimination in the workplace.</p>	
<p>Indicator 3.2.4 The FSO complies with Guyana's Non-Discrimination Legislation. (See explanatory note 15 in Annex 1).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of compliance with Code of Practice and Guidelines. Interviews with workers.
<p>Indicator 3.2.5 The FSO does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, religion, colour, ethnic origin, and sexual orientation in relation to appointment, advancement, and training opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documented anti-discrimination policy. Interviews with workers.

Indicator 3.2.6 The FSO ensures women and men are paid equal remuneration for the same work or work of equal value.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Records of remuneration payments. Interviews with workers/communities.
Indicator 3.2.7 The FSO, wherever possible, provides opportunities for employment and training to local and forest dependent communities within or adjacent to the forestry operation. (See explanatory note 16 in Annex 1).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training and appointment records. Evidence of advertising opportunities to communities. Interviews with workers/communities. Number of employees from the local community as a proportion of the FSO's total workforce.
Indicator 3.2.8 The FSO does not prevent workers from freely organising and/or joining a trade union or association of their choice, as well as negotiating for wages and conditions as stipulated under applicable legislation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documented policies. Interviews with workers. Notes from staff meetings.
Indicator 3.2.9 The FSO ensures that wages of local and migrant forest workers as well as of contractors and other operators operating in PEFC-certified areas meet or exceed at least legal, industry minimum standards or, where applicable, collective bargaining agreements. (See explanatory note 17 in Annex 1).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of meeting legal, industry minimum standards. Collective bargaining agreements. Records of wages payments, pay-slips, timesheets. Interviews with workers.
Indicator 3.2.10 The FSO ensures that workers are paid on time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Records of wages payments, pay-slips, timesheets. Interviews with workers.
Indicator 3.2.11 The FSO ensures that contracts for employees include provisions for adequate rest and recreation time and facilities in keeping with the labour laws of Guyana.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work schedules. Employees' contracts. Interviews with workers.
Indicator 3.2.12 The FSO ensures employees are informed (verbally or in writing) of the terms and conditions of their employment at the time they are hired.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written employment contract or appointment letter. Job descriptions provided to workers. Interviews with workers.
Indicator 3.2.13 The FSO ensures that prior to or upon assumption of duties, he/she documents and informs an employee of his/her wages by task or by day.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written employment contract or appointment letter. Job descriptions provided to workers.
<p>Indicator 3.2.14 Where the FSO uses contractors and contracted labour, the FSO ensures work contracts include the following provisions:</p> <p>i. the parties agree that a written agreement between the concessionaire/employer and any contractor shall be the basis of any engagement with any such contractor for the purpose of conducting forest operations in the concession;</p> <p>ii. the FSO and/or the contractor provides a copy of any written agreement with any contractor(s) for the consideration of the Commissioner of Forests/authorised GFC Officer at least one month prior to the desired date of commencement of work by the contractor(s); and</p> <p>iii. the parties agree that any agreement regarding contractual work in which the employer/concessionaire is engaged includes the following:</p> <p>a) an explicit statement that the employer/concessionaire is responsible directly for all actions of the contractor;</p> <p>b) an explicit statement committing the employer/ concessionaire and the contractor(s) to full compliance with the terms of the concession</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copies of contracts. Evidence of compliance with Code of Practice and Guidelines. Evidence that a contract agreement between the contractor and the FSO is in place that ensures that the requirements of 3.2.14 are met.

<p>agreement, the provisions of the most recent Forest Management Plan where applicable and the provisions of the most recent Annual Operational Plan where applicable;</p> <p>c) an explicit statement encouraging the employer/concessionaire to reasonable responsibility for the social welfare of contractors and their families, while such contractors are engaged in the approved contractual operations; and</p> <p>d) an explicit provision making clear that there shall be no transfer whatsoever of the concession, the concession area, or any part thereof; (except with the approval of the GFC);</p> <p>iv. the contractor agrees that it will maintain registers of all employees or sub-contractors, together with payment records (including PAYE and NIS contributions if applicable) and that such registers will be available for scrutiny by the Guyana Forestry Commission and concessionaire, and such other agencies approved by the Guyana Forestry Commission.</p>	
Criterion 3.3 The FSO provides for the health and safety of workers.	
Indicator 3.3.1. The FSO complies with applicable OHS legislation and the Guidelines for Forest Operations. (See explanatory note 16 in Annex 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of compliance with the Guidelines. • Interviews with workers.
Indicator 3.3.2 The FSO identifies and documents the accident risks associated with planned forest operations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OHS implementation plan. • Minutes of OHS Committee meetings. • Interview with workers.
Indicator 3.3.3 The FSO specifies the measures to be applied to protect workers from work-related risks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk analysis report.
Indicator 3.3.4 The FSO plans and organises forest operations to ensure all reasonable measures are taken to protect workers (including contractors) when undertaking forest operations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe work operating procedures. • Workplace OHS Committee.
Indicator 3.3.5 The FSO informs workers (including contractors) of the risks involved with their work and the preventive measures adopted to mitigate those risks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview with workers. • Records of communication of risks to workers. • Interview with workers.
Indicator 3.3.6 The FSO reviews safety risk assessments and mitigation measures at least annually, in consultation with workers or their selected representatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records of annual reviews.
Indicator 3.3.7 The FSO ensures that first-aid facilities and other safety equipment are available or catered for at the workplace and kept up to date.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD). • Field inspection (first-aid kits/facilities). • Minutes/Reports of the OHS Committee.
Indicator 3.3.8 – The FSO ensures that working conditions are safe, and guidance and training in safe working practices is provided to all those assigned to a task in forest operations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records of training in safe working practices. • Safety signs.
Indicator 3.3.9 – The FSO ensures that workers (including contractors) are provided with and use personal protective equipment appropriate to their work tasks in accordance with the ILO Code of Good Practice: Safety and Health in Forestry Work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation of working conditions and PPE use. • Records of provision of applicable PPE.

Indicator 3.3.10 The FSO keeps an up-to-date register of all workplace accidents and injuries, including appropriate investigations conducted into these accidents and follows up action to prevent future occurrence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of compliance with the Guidelines. • Accident register. • Records of follow up actions.
Indicator 3.3.11 The FSO has an emergency escape and rescue plan, appropriate to the size and scope of the operation, for the quick evacuation of a person in the event of an injury or illness which requires medical assistance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An emergency rescue and escape plan.
Indicator 3.3.12 – The FSO identifies the competency and training needs associated with the implementation of sustainable forest management activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training needs assessment reports.
Indicator 3.3.13 – The FSO: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) establishes and implements a training plan to ensure that all workers (including contractors) are sufficiently competent to undertake assigned forest management activities; and b) undertakes refresher training and provides task-specific information to workers (including contractors) to ensure that competencies remain up-to-date and appropriate to the tasks being undertaken. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training plans and materials. • Records of training/refresher training. • Field observations (evidence of good practice).
Indicator 3.3.14 – The FSO establishes and maintains records of competencies held by, and training provided to, all workers (including contractors).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records of workers' experience, training and/or qualifications. • Training/refresher training records.
Indicator 3.3.15 The FSO has a plan, appropriate to the size and scale of the operation that provides: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) a range of educational and skills training programmes for the purpose of enhancing workers' job performance and promotion within the workplace; b) educational and vocational skills programmes to communities within or adjacent to the forest management operation; and c) wherever possible, that certification for educational and skills training programmes for employees is issued by a recognized national institution or body. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans for educational and skills training. • List of accredited national training institutions providing training services to the FSO.
Indicator 3.3.16 The FSO demonstrates that it provides ongoing training to its employees in the safe handling of hazardous agents at its workplace.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training/refresher training records.
Indicator 3.3.17 The FSO ensures that in the event of an industrial dispute, the relevant parties first explore the option to resolve the dispute through discussions with management/workers' representatives, and only seek to utilise mechanisms involving other parties such as conciliation and arbitration if the discussions fail.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records of staff meetings. • Complaints/Dispute Resolution Protocols. • Records of outside complaints and any follow-up activities. • Records of disputes resolution. • Interviews with workers.
Principle 4 – Management Systems and Planning	
Criterion 4.1 The FSO has a structured and resourced forest management system.	
Indicator 4.1.1 The FSO assesses the risks and opportunities of complying with the requirements of the GSSFM and has plans and strategies to mitigate the identified risks.	<p>Evidence of assessment of the risks and opportunities of complying with the GSSFM.</p> <p>Evidence of plans and/or strategies to mitigate identified risks.</p>
Indicator 4.1.2 The FSO establishes and maintains a forest management system appropriate for the size and scale of operations, that includes the documented information required by the Standard and determined by the FSO as being necessary for the effectiveness of the sustainable forest management system. The FSO also ensures the documented information is	<p>Forest management system documentation includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies. • FMP and AOP (large concessions).

relevant, and updated as appropriate, to the activities of the operation. (See explanatory note 19 in Annex 1).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area Work Plan (small concessions, private lands, and Amerindian Villages). Records (operational, monitoring and training).
Indicator 4.1.3 The FSO determines and provides the resources needed for the establishment, implementation, maintenance, and wherever possible, continual improvement of the sustainable forest management system appropriate for the size and scale of operations. (See explanatory note 19 & 20 in Annex 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FMP and AOP (large concessions) Area Work Plan (small concessions, private lands, and Amerindian Villages). Financial budgets. Evidence of appropriate human and physical resources.
Criterion 4.2 The FSO has a forest management plan appropriate to the size and scale of operation.	
Indicator 4.2.1 Where applicable, the FSO prepares, implements and maintains management plans to include the elements described in GFC/FPA: Forest Management Plan Guidelines, April 1999. For small scale operations, the FSO prepares, implements and maintains an Area Work Plan (AWP). An AWP shall be for either the life of the Agreement between the FSO and the GFC or for five years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FMP ((large concessions). Area Work Plan (small concessions, private lands, and Amerindian Villages).
Indicator 4.2.2 – The FSO makes the summary Forest Management Plan/Area Work Plan publicly available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary of FMP or Area Work Plan. Evidence of public availability, e.g., websites, policy on public availability.
Indicator 4.2.3 – The FSO periodically updates the summary management plan to ensure it continues to accurately reflect the forest management objectives and activities being undertaken. (See explanatory note 21 in Annex 1).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up-to-date summary of FMP or Area Work Plan.
Criterion 4.3 The FSO has a system for stakeholder engagement and managing complaints appropriate for the size and scale of operations.	
Indicator 4.3.1 – The FSO identifies and keeps up to date: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the affected stakeholders that are relevant to sustainable forest management; and b) the relevant needs and expectations of these stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder lists.
Indicator 4.3.2 – The FSO establishes and implements procedures for effective communication and consultation with local communities, Indigenous peoples and other stakeholders relating to sustainable forest management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documented procedures.
Indicator 4.3.3 – The FSO ensures that mechanisms for communication and consultation are culturally appropriate and facilitate meaningful engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder engagement policy and procedures.
Indicator 4.3.4 – The FSO keeps records of communications and consultation sufficient to demonstrate implementation of its procedures and meaningful engagement with local communities, Indigenous peoples and other stakeholders in relation to the FSO's forest management activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Records of communications and consultations (including informal communication).

Indicator 4.3.5 – The FSO establishes and implements appropriate mechanisms for resolving complaints and disputes relating to forest management operations, land use rights and work conditions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documented procedures.
Indicator 4.3.6 – The FSO keeps records of all complaints and disputes relating to forest management operations, land use rights and work conditions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records of complaints and disputes. • Interviews with affected stakeholders.
Principle 5 – Monitoring, Evaluation and Continuous Improvement	
Criterion 5.1 The FSO monitors, measures, analyses, and evaluates forest management	
<p>Indicator 5.1.1 For large scale operations, the FSO establishes and implements a system for:</p> <p>a) monitoring the forest resources (including non- forest timber products where these products are part of the operations) in their concession as well as evaluates the management of the forest resources; and</p> <p>b) feeds the results of the monitoring and evaluation back into the planning process. (See explanatory note 22 in Annex 1).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documented monitoring and evaluation system, including policies and procedures. • FSO monitoring and evaluation records. • Evidence that results are fed back into planning to improve forest management (e.g., updates to FMP; AOP).
<p>Indicator 5.1.2 For small scale operations, the FSO facilitates monitoring and evaluation of the impacts of forest operations by external regulators including the GFC, to provide feedback into the AWP. (See explanatory note 22 in Annex 1).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD) • Interviews with stakeholders
Criterion 5.2 The FSO conducts internal audits and management reviews and practices continual improvement.	
<p>Indicator 5.2.1 Appropriate to the scale and size of the operation, the FSO:</p> <p>a) plans, establishes, implements, and maintains an audit program(s) including the frequency, methods, responsibilities, planning requirements and reporting, which shall take into consideration the importance of the processes concerned and the results of previous audits;</p> <p>b) defines the audit criteria and scope for each audit (e.g., the GSSF);</p> <p>c) selects the auditors and conduct audits to ensure objectivity and the impartiality of the audit process;</p> <p>d) ensures that the results of the audits are reported to relevant levels of management within the company/business; and</p> <p>e) retains documented information as evidence of the implementation of the audit programme and the audit results.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documented internal audit procedure, including planning. • Records of internal audits and audit results.
<p>Indicator 5.2.2 Appropriate to the scale and size of the operation, the FSO carries out an annual management review that includes:</p> <p>a) the status of actions from previous management reviews;</p> <p>b) changes in external and internal factors including, results of ongoing consultations with neighbouring forest dependent communities, that are relevant to the management system;</p> <p>c) information on the operation's performance, including trends in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nonconformities and corrective actions; • monitoring and measurement results; and • audit results; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records of management reviews.

d) opportunities for continual improvement. (See explanatory note 23 in Annex 1).	
Criterion 5.3 The FSO has a system for detecting nonconformities and implementing corrective actions.	
Indicator 5.3.1 The FSO establishes and implements a system to respond to nonconformities detected through internal mechanisms such as internal audits or through external sources such as regulatory bodies. (See explanatory note 24 in Annex 1).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System for detecting and responding to nonconformities. • Records of nonconformities identified, and corrective actions implemented.
Principle 6 - Maintenance or Appropriate Enhancement of Forest Resources and their Contribution to the Global Carbon Cycle	
Criterion 6.1 The FSO maintains or increases forests and ecosystem services, and maintains or enhances the economic, ecological, cultural, and social values of forest resources.	
Indicator 6.1.1 Appropriate to the scale and size of the operation, the FSO establishes and implements a policy to maintain or increase forests and their ecosystem services, and maintains or enhances the economic, ecological, cultural and social values of forest resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FMP (large concessions) • ESIA (large concessions) and/or Environmental Authorisation (all concessions)
Indicator 6.1.2 Appropriate to the scale and size of the operation, the FSO establishes and implements procedures to ensure the area of forest and the associated ecosystem services are maintained or increased; and the economic, ecological, cultural and social values of forest resources are maintained or enhanced.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Work Plan (small concessions/private lands/Amerindian Villages). • Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD)

Criterion 6.2 The FSO recognises the role of forests and forest management activities in the carbon cycle.	
<p>Indicator 6.2.1 The FSO adopts management practices (for example silvicultural practices) appropriate to the scale and size of the operations that enhance or maintain the forest's carbon sequestration capacities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) For operations on State forest, the FSO adheres to the approved allowable harvesting rates in order to balance harvesting and the natural growth rates of the forest. b) For operations on private or Amerindian lands, the FSO demonstrates that harvesting rates are balanced by the natural growth rates of the forest (or follows the GFC guidelines governing harvesting). c) The FSO implements post-harvest remedies in line with the national Code of Practice for Forest Operations, including silvicultural measures appropriate to the scale and size of the operation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FMP (large concessions). • Area Work Plan (small concessions/private lands/Amerindian Villages). • Production records. • Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD). • Tag Request Form/Tag Issuance Letter. • Evidence of compliance with Sections 1.6, 2.2.4, 2.3.3, 4.1, 4.3 and 4.4 of the Code of Practice and Guidelines.
Criterion 6.3 The FSO does not undertake conversion except in clearly justified circumstances.	
<p>Indicator 6.3.1 The FSO does not undertake forest conversion other than in justified circumstances where the conversion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) is in compliance with national and regional policy and legislation applicable for land use and forest management and is a result of national or regional land-use planning governed by a governmental or other official authority including consultation with affected stakeholders; and b) entails a small proportion (no greater than 5 %) of forest type within the certified area; and c) does not have negative impacts on ecologically important forest areas, culturally and socially significant areas, or other protected areas; d) does not destroy areas of significantly high carbon stocks; and e) makes a contribution to long-term conservation, economic and social benefits. (See explanatory note 25 in Annex 1). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that the FSO's conversion of forests to create permanent forest operation infrastructure such as roads, bridges, meets Section 3.2 of the requirements of the Code of Practice and Guidelines. • Evidence that any conversion undertaken by the FSO has appropriate governmental approval. • Evidence of authorised access and use of lands by regulatory authorities or other entities acting in accordance with applicable legislation or regulations. • Evidence that there is no connection between the FSO and entities undertaking mining activities on the FMU.
<p>Indicator 6.3.2 The FSO does not undertake afforestation of ecologically important non-forest ecosystems, or afforestation and reforestation of forest ecosystems except in justified circumstances where the conversion or afforestation and reforestation meet the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) is in compliance with national and regional policy and legislation applicable for land use and forest management and is a result of national or regional land-use planning governed by a governmental or other official authority; and b) is established based on a decision-making basis where affected stakeholders have opportunities to contribute to the decision-making on conversion through transparent and participatory consultation processes; and c) does not have negative impacts on threatened (including vulnerable, rare, or endangered) non-forest ecosystems, culturally and socially significant areas, important habitats of threatened species or other protected areas; and d) entails a small proportion of the ecologically important non-forest ecosystem and forest ecosystem managed by the FSO; e) does not destroy areas of significantly high carbon stocks; f) makes a contribution to long-term conservation, economic, and social benefits; and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records of afforestation carried out. • Records of pre-existing non-forest ecosystems (e.g., maps). • Evidence of afforestation approved by the regulatory body.

g) involve tree species and provenances that are suited to the site conditions or the use of tending, harvesting and transport techniques that minimise tree and/or soil damage.	
Criterion 6.4 Efficient use of resource and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.	
Indicator 6.4.1 The Forest sector operator's forest management practices support/encourage greenhouse gas emission reductions and efficient use of resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of efficient use of resources and greenhouse gas emissions reduction practices. • Field observations.
Principle 7 - Maintenance of Forest Ecosystem Health and Vitality	
Criterion 7.1 The FSO maintains the health and vitality of the ecosystem.	
Indicator 7.1.1 – The FSO ensures that his or her management plan/area work plan specifies how to minimise the risk of degradation and damage to forest ecosystems in accordance with the Code of Practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FMP (large concessions). • Area Work Plan (small concessions/private lands/Amerindian Villages). • Evidence of compliance with Sections 7 and 8 of the Code of Practice and Guidelines.
Indicator 7.1.2 The FSO maintains or enhances the health and vitality of ecosystems within the forest management area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of compliance with Sections 7 and 8 of the Code of Practice and Guidelines.
Indicator 7.1.3 Where economically feasible, the FSO rehabilitates degraded forest ecosystems, by making best use of natural structures and processes and using preventive biological measures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD).
Indicator 7.1.4 The Forest sector operator ensures that standing and fallen dead wood, hollow trees, old groves, and rare tree species are left in quantities and distribution necessary to safeguard biological diversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence through field observation that forest management practices safeguard biological diversity.
Criterion 7.2 The FSO maintains the genetic diversity of species and forest structures.	
Indicator 7.2.1 The FSO demonstrates that forest management practices: (a) encourage and/or support adequate structural diversity; (b) enhance stability, vitality, and resilience of the forest to adverse environmental factors; and (c) strengthen natural regulation mechanisms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FMP (large concessions). • Area Work Plan (small concessions/private lands/Amerindian Villages). • Evidence of compliance with Sections 4 and 7 of the Code of Practice and Guidelines. • Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD). • Field inspection (forest structure).
Criterion 7.3 The FSO disposes of waste in an environmentally responsible manner.	
Indicator 7.3.1 The FSO establishes and implements waste management procedures to ensure that the indiscriminate disposal of waste within the forest management area is strictly avoided.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of compliance with Sections 8, 9 and 10 of the Code of Practice and Guidelines. • Field inspection (camp and forest operations). • Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of waste management training for staff.
Indicator 7.3.2 The FSO ensures that non-organic waste and litter is collected and stored in designated areas and removed in an environmentally responsible manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field inspection (camp and forest operations). • Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD). • Evidence of waste management training for staff.
Indicator 7.3.3 The FSO ensures that spillage of oil or fuel during forest management operations is prevented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field inspection (camp and forest operations). • Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD). • Evidence of waste management training for staff.
Indicator 7.3.4 The FSO establishes and implements emergency procedures for minimising the risk of environmental harm arising from the accidental spillage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documented emergency procedures.
Criterion 7.4 The FSO adopts an integrated approach to pest management, minimising the use of pesticides and other chemicals.	
Indicator 7.4.1 Where the management of pests is necessary as part of forest management, to the extent possible, the FSO uses integrated pest management, other appropriate silviculture alternatives and biological measures in order to minimise the use of pesticides. (See explanatory note 26 in Annex 1).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The FSO's documented pest management plan/guidelines/strategy. • The FSO's documented inventory of chemicals/pesticides approved for use by the regulatory authority. • Approved procedures/guidelines for the management and use of pesticides and other chemicals in forest operations. • Interview with staff. • The FSO's documented commitment relating to its pest management in forest operations.
Indicator 7.4.2 Where the use of pesticides or other chemicals is required as part of forest management, the FSO: (a) documents the use of such pesticides and chemicals; and (b) ensures that the use of the pesticides follows the instructions given by the pesticide producer and is undertaken with proper equipment by trained personnel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The FSO's documented chemical use records. • The FSO's documented procedures/guidelines for the use of chemical pesticides. • Evidence of training in the management and use of chemical pesticides by staff involved in forest operations.
Indicator 7.4.3 The FSO ensures that within the forest management area: a) the use of WHO Class 1A and 1B pesticides and other highly toxic pesticides are prohibited, except where no other viable alternative is available; and b) pesticides, such as chlorinated hydrocarbons whose derivatives remain biologically active and accumulate in the food chain beyond their intended use, and any pesticides banned by international agreement, shall be prohibited. (See explanatory note 26 in Annex 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved procedures/guidelines for the management and use of pesticides and other chemicals in forest operations. • Where the regulatory authority does not have published guidelines, demonstrated compliance with the manufacturer's use instructions for the pesticides. • Demonstrated compliance with the regulatory authority's guidelines/code of practice on the use of WHO Class 1A and 1B pesticides if any exists. • Evidence of staff training in the use of pesticides where approved pesticides are used in forest operations.

<p>Indicator 7.4.4 Where fertilisers are used as part of forest management, the FSO establishes and implements procedures to ensure that:</p> <p>a) fertilisers are applied in a controlled manner that minimises the potential for adverse environmental impacts; and</p> <p>b) fertilisers are not used as an alternative to appropriate soil nutrient management. (See explanatory note 27 in Annex 1).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The FSO's documented guidelines on the use of approved fertilisers. • Where the regulatory authority has published guidelines on the use of fertilisers in forest operations, demonstrated compliance with these guidelines. • Where the regulatory authority does not have published guidelines, demonstrated compliance with the manufacturer's use instructions for the fertilisers. • Evidence of staff training in the use of fertilisers where fertilisers are used in forest operations.
<p>Principle 8 Maintenance and Encouragement of the Productive Functions of Forests (wood and non-wood)</p>	
<p>Criterion 8.1 The FSO maintains the capacity of the forest to produce a range of timber and non-forest timber products and services on a sustainable basis.</p>	
<p>Indicator 8.1.1 The FSO demonstrates how planned forest management operations maintain the capability of the forest to produce a range of timber and non-forest timber products and services on a sustainable basis.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The FSO's documented statement of commitment to ensuring sustainable management and use of forest resources including policies and procedures. • FMP (large concessions). • Area Work Plan (small concessions/private lands/Amerindian Villages). • Evidence of compliance with Sections 1.4, 1.7, 2.1 and 2.2 of the Code of Practice and Guidelines. • Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD).
<p>Criterion 8.2 The FSO pursues sound economic management to derive maximum benefits from the goods and services from the forest.</p>	
<p>Indicator 8.2.1 The FSO's systems and procedures are designed to encourage the optimal use of forest resources. (See explanatory note 28 in Annex 1).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FMP (large concessions). • Area Work Plan (small concessions/private lands/Amerindian Villages).
<p>Indicator 8.2.2 The FSO has evaluated the financial costs and benefits from forest management and has incorporated this information into management planning decisions aimed at delivering sound economic performance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FSO financial records (P&L).
<p>Criterion 8.3 The FSO ensures that management, harvesting and regeneration operations do not reduce the productive capacity of the site.</p>	

<p>Indicator 8.3.1 The FSO establishes and implements management, harvesting and regeneration procedures, consistent with applicable Codes of Practice and Guidelines, to protect the productive capacity of the forest, including:</p> <p>a) implementing reduced impact logging techniques to minimise damage to residual stand and protect crop trees;</p> <p>b) implementing extraction techniques that minimise damage to soil and water values;</p> <p>c) timing harvesting and regeneration activities to maximise the potential for successful forest regeneration; and</p> <p>d) demarcating sensitive areas for the protection of soils.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FMP (large concessions). • Area Work Plan (small concessions/private lands/Amerindian Villages). • Evidence of compliance with Sections 1.1, 4.4.5, 6.1 and 6.4 of the Code of Practice and Guidelines.
<p>Indicator 8.3.2 The FSO provides regular training for his or her workers on reduced-impact logging techniques and other procedures described in 8.3.1.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff training records. • Field inspection (management, harvesting and regeneration operations).
<p>Criterion 8.4 The FSO sets harvesting levels to ensure long term sustainability and optimum use.</p>	
<p>Indicator 8.4.1 The FSO demonstrates that planned harvesting levels of both timber and non-forest timber products are sustainable in the long term and based on the best available information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FMP (large concessions). • Area Work Plan (small concessions/private lands/Amerindian Villages).
<p>Indicator 8.4.2 For large concessions, the FSO undertakes pre-harvest inventories, harvest planning and sustainable yield calculations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD). • Evidence of compliance with the Code of Practice and Guidelines.
<p>Indicator 8.4.3 For small concessions, the FSO complies with allowable cut quotas established by the GFC.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production Register. • Tag Request Form/Tag Issuance Letter.
<p>Indicator 8.4.4 The FSO maintains records of the quantity of timber and important non-timber forest products harvested and complies with the GFC's Wood Tracking System.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production Register. • Tag Request Form/Tag Issuance Letter.
<p>Criterion 8.5 The FSO plans, establishes and maintains adequate infrastructure to ensure efficient delivery of goods and services while minimising negative impacts on the environment.</p>	
<p>Indicator 8.5.1 The FSO plans, constructs, and maintains its harvesting infrastructure (such as roads, skid trails or bridges) to ensure the efficient delivery of goods and services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of compliance with Sections 4.5.1, 4.7, 5.1.3, 5.6, 6.3, 7.2-4 of the Code of Practice and Guidelines. • Field inspection (infrastructure).
<p>Indicator 8.5.2 The FSO establishes and implements procedures, consistent with the Code of Practice and relevant Guidelines, to ensure that the construction and maintenance of its harvesting infrastructure (such as roads, skid tracks or bridges) minimise negative impacts on the environment. (See explanatory note 29 in Annex 1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD). • Evidence of compliance with Code of Practice 4.5.1, 4.7, 5.1.3, 5.6, 6.3, 7.2-4 and Guidelines. • Field inspection (infrastructure). • Topographic map showing road alignment.
<p>Principle 9 – Maintenance, Conservation or Appropriate Enhancement of Biological Diversity in Forest Ecosystems</p>	
<p>Criterion 9.1 The FSO aims to maintain, conserve, or enhance biological and structural diversity.</p>	

<p>Indicator 9.1.1 The FSO demonstrates that management planning aims to maintain, conserve, or enhance biodiversity on landscape, ecosystem, species and genetic levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FMP (large concessions). • Area Work Plan (small concessions/private lands/Amerindian Villages). • Evidence of compliance with the Guidelines.
<p>Indicator 9.1.2 The FSO has procedures in place, appropriate to the size and scale of the operation, to promote, where applicable:</p> <p>a) diversity of both horizontal and vertical structures and the diversity of species such as mixed stands, with the aim of also maintaining or restoring landscape diversity; and</p> <p>b) the use of traditional management practices that create valuable ecosystems on appropriate sites.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FMP and AOP (large concessions). • Area Work Plan (small concessions/private lands/Amerindian Villages). • Interviews with Indigenous communities close to the FMU.
<p>Criterion 9.2 The FSO identifies, protects, conserves, and sets aside, where appropriate, ecologically important forest areas.</p>	
<p>Indicator 9.2.1 The FSO has identified and mapped ecologically important forest areas from which harvesting will be excluded, including:</p> <p>a) Areas of ecological, scientific, or touristic importance;</p> <p>b) Areas of extensive diversity of wildlife;</p> <p>c) Habitat of endemic species, and unique and fragile habitats;</p> <p>d) Watercourses, swamps, and rock outcrops; and</p> <p>e) Very steep areas (>60%).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FMP and AOP (large concessions). • Area Work Plan (small concessions/private lands/Amerindian Villages). • Maps of FMU if not included in the AOP or Area Work Plans.
<p>Indicator 9.2.2 The FSO has implemented buffer zones in accordance with the Guidelines to protect or conserve ecologically important areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of compliance with the Guidelines. • Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD).
<p>Indicator 9.2.3 For large scale operations, the FSO has set aside 4.5% of the productive forest area as a biodiversity reserve, which typifies the representative ecosystems/forest types of the entire forest management area. (See explanatory note 30 in Annex 1).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FMP and AOP (large concessions). • Topographic map.
<p>Criterion 9.3 The FSO ensures that protected, threatened and endangered species are not exploited for commercial purposes.</p>	
<p>Indicator 9.3.1 The FSO does not exploit protected, threatened and endangered plant and animal species for commercial purposes (except in accordance with trade authorised under CITES), and, where necessary, implements measures for their protection and, where relevant, to increase their population. (See explanatory note 31 in Annex 1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance with the relevant regulatory authority's threatened species management plan/guidelines. • FMP and AOP (large concessions). • Area Work Plan (small concessions/private lands/Amerindian Villages).
<p>Indicator 9.3.2 The FSO ensures that keystone species are protected during harvesting in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Practice and Guidelines, and that no Bulletwood (<i>Manilkara bidentata</i>) trees are harvested without the written permission of the Commissioner of Forests or an authorized GFC Officer. (See explanatory notes 32 & 33 in Annex 1).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that the FSO actively discourages illegal hunting and trapping of protected and endangered species, especially through training. • CITES permits where CITES listed species are exported. • Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD).
<p>Criterion 9.4 The FSO ensures successful regeneration of harvested areas.</p>	

<p>Indicator 9.4.1 The FSO implements RIL techniques in accordance with the Code of Practice and Guidelines to ensure successful natural regeneration of forests after harvesting, relying solely on natural seed and propagules present within the harvested area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of compliance with Sections 1.1, 4.4.5, 6.1 and 6.4 of the Code of Practice and Guidelines. • Field inspection (RIL).
<p>Indicator 9.4.2 The FSO does not fell trees with a diameter at breast height (dbh) (or in the case of a buttressed tree at a point immediately above the top of the buttress) of less than 35 cm unless it is for demonstrated infrastructure purposes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tag Request Form/Tag Issuance Letter. • Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD). Field inspection (stumps).
<p>Indicator 9.4.3 The FSO maintains canopy gaps in harvested areas in accordance with the Code of Practice and Guidelines to facilitate the natural regeneration of commercially harvested species, and limit the proliferation of undesirable vines, weeds or pioneer species.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD). • Field inspection (canopy). • Evidence of compliance with Section 4.4.5 of the Code of Practice and Guidelines.
<p>Indicator 9.4.4 The FSO marks and protects potential crop trees, seed trees, heritage trees, trees representative of harvested species and very large (>120 cm dbh) in accordance with the Code of Practice and Guidelines.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD). • Field inspection (special trees). • Evidence of compliance with Sections 4.4.1 and 4.4.6 of the Code of Practice and Guidelines.
<p>Criterion 9.5 The FSO does not use genetically modified trees.</p>	
<p>Indicator 9.5.1 The FSO does not use genetically modified trees within the forest management area. (See explanatory note 34 in Annex 1).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of compliance with the regulatory authority's policy/guidelines on non-introduction of genetically modified trees for regeneration purposes. • Policy document committing to the non-introduction of genetically modified trees for regeneration purposes, unless approved by the regulatory authority.
<p>Criterion 9.6 The FSO conducts forest management operations in a manner that minimises damage to forest ecosystems.</p>	
<p>Indicator 9.6.2 The FSO plans, constructs, and maintains the infrastructure (roads, skid trails, watercourse crossings, log markets, borrow pits, workshops, and camps) for its forestry operations in accordance with the Code of Practice and Guidelines in order to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> minimise damage to ecosystems, especially rare, sensitive, or representative ecosystems and genetics; and take into consideration threatened or other key species, in particular, their migration patterns in the case of fauna. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD). • Evidence of compliance with Sections 3.3, 4.3.2 and 5.7-8 of the Code of Practice and Guidelines. • Field inspection (infrastructure).
<p>Principle 10 – Maintenance or Appropriate Enhancement of the Protective Functions in Forest Management (notably soil and water)</p>	
<p>Criterion 10.1 The FSO has identified and commits to maintaining and or enhancing the protective functions of forests.</p>	

<p>Indicator 10.1.1 The FSO has documented a commitment in accordance with the Code of Practice to maintain or enhance the protective functions of forests for society within the forest management area, including their potential role in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erosion control; • Flood prevention; • Water purification; • Climate regulation; • Carbon sequestration; and • Other regulating or supporting ecosystem services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FMP and AOP (large concessions). • Area Work Plan (small concessions/private lands/Amerindian Villages). • Evidence of compliance with Sections 4.4.3 and 4.6 of the Code of Practice and Guidelines.
<p>Indicator 10.1.2 The FSO has assessed, documented and mapped the known protective functions of forests within the forest management area and incorporated this information into planned operations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FMP and AOP (large concessions). • Area Work Plan (small concessions/private lands/Amerindian Villages). • Evidence of compliance with Sections 4.4.3 and 4.6 of the Code of Practice and Guidelines.
<p>Criterion 10.2 The FSO implements measures to maintain and/or enhance the protective functions of forests in sensitive situations.</p>	
<p>Indicator 10.2.1 The FSO has identified areas within the forest management area with sensitive soils, as well as areas prone to erosion and areas where operations might lead to excessive erosion of soil into watercourses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FMP and AOP (large concessions). • Area Work Plan (small concessions/private lands/Amerindian Villages). • Evidence of compliance with Sections 4.4 and 5.4 of the Code of Practice and Guidelines. • Maps and plans showing areas identified as having sensitive soils, soils prone to erosion and watercourses.
<p>Indicator 10.2.2 The FSO has established and implements forest management techniques and uses machinery assessed by the regulatory authority as being suitable for such areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of compliance with Sections 4.4 and 5.4 of the Code of Practice and Guidelines. • Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD). • Field inspection (machinery).
<p>Indicator 10.2.3 The FSO has identified and mapped forest areas where soil and water values are vulnerable to impacts of forestry activities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas with fragile or erodible soils; • Watercourses and swamps; and • Steep areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FMP and AOP (large concessions). • Area Work Plan (small concessions/private lands/Amerindian Villages). • Evidence of compliance with Sections 4.4 and 5.4 of the Code of Practice and Guidelines. • Maps and plans showing areas identified as having sensitive soils, soils prone to erosion and watercourses.

<p>Indicator 10.2.4 The FSO has implemented buffer zones in accordance with the Guidelines to protect areas identified in 10.2.1 to minimise the potential for soil erosion and the potential for soil to enter watercourses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD). • Evidence of compliance with the Guidelines. • Field inspection (buffer zones).
<p>Indicator 10.2.5 If approved by the regulatory authority to undertake harvesting operations in areas with steep slopes, the FSO shall:</p> <p>a) use appropriate equipment and RIL techniques to minimise adverse impacts such as soil erosion; and</p> <p>b) undertake harvesting operations in accordance with the Code of Practice and the Guidelines.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD). • Evidence of compliance with the Guidelines. • Field inspection (steep slopes).
<p>Indicator 10.2.6 The FSO implements post-harvest rehabilitation of logged areas, including closure of blocks, roads, and skid trails, in accordance with the Guidelines.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD). • Evidence of compliance with the Guidelines. • Field inspection (post-harvest).
<p>Principle 11 – Maintenance or Appropriate Enhancement of Socio-Economic Functions and Conditions</p>	
<p>Criterion 11.1 Forest management planning respects all socio-economic functions of forests.</p>	
<p>Indicator 11.1.1 The FSO ensures that forest management planning recognises the importance of all socio-economic functions of forests and has clearly defined strategies to respect and enhance these functions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FMP and AOP (large concessions). • Area Work Plan (small concessions/private lands/Amerindian Villages). • Evidence of compliance with Sections 1.1, 2.2.1 and 11.2 of the Code of Practice and Guidelines.
<p>Criterion 11.2 The FSO facilitates public access to forests in accordance with legislative requirements.</p>	
<p>Indicator 11.2.1 For large and small concession holders, the FSO facilitates access to persons travelling through the State forest and occupying or using the State forest for the purposes of their journey in accordance with the Forests Act.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The FSO complies with the legitimate uses of State Forests as described in the Forest Act, 2009. • Interviews with local communities.
<p>Criterion 11.3 The FSO protects significant sites.</p>	
<p>Indicator 11.3.1 The FSO marks and protects any existing verified areas of special cultural, religious or historical significance, sites of cultural or religious value, e.g., sacred trees and forests (these should be identified in collaboration with the local communities) in accordance with the Code of Practice and the Guidelines.</p> <p>(See explanatory note 35 in Annex 1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of compliance with Sections 4.4.1 and 4.4.6 of the Code of Practice and Guidelines. • Interviews with forest dependent communities close to the concession. • FMP and AOP (large concessions). • Area Work Plan (small concessions/private lands/Amerindian Villages). • Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD). • Field inspection (special areas).
<p>Criterion 11.4 The FSO promotes the long-term health and well-being of forest-dependent communities and Indigenous peoples.</p>	

Indicator 11.4.1 The FSO has a plan and strategy to promote the long-term health and well-being of forest-dependent communities including Indigenous peoples within or adjacent to the forest management area.	Evidence of employment of forest-dependent communities close to the concession commensurate with the FSO's skills needs.
Indicator 11.4.2 The FSO maintains regular communication channels for exchanging information with forest-dependent communities including Indigenous peoples.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of on-going effective engagement with forest dependent communities close to the concession. Interviews with relevant stakeholders.
Criterion 11.5 The FSO makes best use of forest related experience and traditional knowledge.	
Indicator 11.5.1 Where relevant, the FSO seeks and incorporates appropriate forest-related experience and traditional knowledge, innovations, and practices such as those of forest owners, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), local communities, and Indigenous peoples in the management of the forest and rewards the use such knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of on-going effective engagement with stakeholders within the concession. Evidence of employment of forest-dependent communities within the concession commensurate with the FSO's skills needs. Interviews with relevant stakeholders AOP (large concessions).
Criterion 11.6 The FSO gives due regard for the role of forestry in enhancing local economies.	
Indicator 11.6.1 The FSO ensures that its forestry operations contribute to, and enhance local economies, including the well-being of forest-dependent communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence that forest-dependent communities including Indigenous peoples derive benefits from the operations.
Indicator 11.6.2 Where the FSO employs forest-dependent communities including Indigenous peoples within the concession, the FSO provides regular, appropriate and relevant training, to ensure continual socio-economic benefits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record of training for employees. Interviews with stakeholders (forest-dependent communities including Indigenous peoples). FMP and AOP (large concessions). Monitoring Report (GFC/FMD).
Criterion 11.7 The FSO contributes to sustainable forest management through research and data collection.	
Indicator 11.7.1 Where applicable, the FSO collaborates with the regulatory authority in relevant research activities and data collection necessary to enhance the sustainable management and use of Guyana's forests.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of collaboration in relevant research related to sustainable forest management. FMP and AOP (large concessions).
Indicator 11.7.2 Where applicable and appropriate to the size and scale of operations, the FSO supports relevant research activities carried out by other organisations that enhance sustainable forest management, when requested to collaborate and/or make a contribution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of collaboration in relevant research related to sustainable forest management. FMP and AOP (large concessions).

Annex A. Notes on the GSSFM

1. The existence of an authorised permit or agreement from GFC demonstrates that the requirements for the legal right to harvest in State forests have been met. These include:
 - A Valid Tax Identification Number certificate.
 - An Approval Letter for the forest concession to be allocated as either large or small concession (applicable to State Forest Authorisations only).
 - If the forest sector operator is a natural person or body corporate and has a business name registered under the Business (Name) Registration Act.
 - If the forest sector operator is a local company, the body corporate has a Certificate of Incorporation.
 - If the forest sector operator is a foreign company, the body corporate has a Certificate of Registration.
 - If the forest sector operator is a Friendly Society, it has an Acknowledgment of Registration; or
 - If the forest sector operator is a Co-operative Society, it has a Certificate of Registration.
 - For large concession areas prior to issuance of a FCA, valid Exploratory Permit.

An Environmental Authorisation (applicable to State Forest Authorisations only) is also required in principle, though in practice, small concessions may be allocated on condition that the FSO will apply for Environmental Authorisation.
2. Iwokrama has its own enabling legislation. However, Iwokrama's commercial forestry operations will be subject to the requirements of either a large or small concession, depending on the size of the operations. The distinction between large and small operations is based on GFC's mandated threshold of 8,097 hectares for large and small concessions.
3. The GFC approved Annual Allowable Cut is based on inventory data and information. In no case will it exceed the Maximum allowable cut of 20 m³/ha/60-year cycle, but it can be less if the inventory stocking is poor).
4. Wood Tracking System requirements as they apply to large forestry operations in Large concessions only are the following:
 - Pre-harvest inventory.
 - Conduct of pre-harvest inventory for all blocks to be harvested in the operational year to establish the maximum AAC within a given harvesting cycle.
 - Pre-harvest inventory report, including stock map.
 - Affixing tags with a unique inventory number on each tree to be harvested.
 - Forest Management Plan.
 - Annual Operational Plan with pre-harvesting inventory information.

Wood Tracking System requirements applicable to small concessions, Amerindian land and Private lands are verifiable from GFC's FMD's Post-Harvest Inspection Report (GFC/FMD) prepared for each Forest Sector Operator.

5. For Large Concessions only: The GFC will upon request, conduct assessments of concession areas that have a lot of active mining or infrastructure development. If it is determined that more than 25% of a block is impacted by mining in a non-contiguous manner, the requirement for conducting 100% inventory, and subsequent GFC verification prior to harvesting, may be waived (note that this would be on a case-by-case basis, and based on a thorough assessment).
6. The following Code of Practice requirements apply to all concession/tenure types.
 - Harvesting:
 - Harvesting only approved trees (Small and Large Concession).
 - Harvesting within approved boundaries (Small and Large Concession).
 - Harvesting only for commercial purposes trees approved in pre-harvesting inspection report (Large concessions).
 - Harvesting based on sustainable yield ((Small and Large Concession).
 - Affixing tags to harvested logs ((Small and Large Concession).
 - Affixing tags to harvested stumps (Small and Large Concessions).
 - Affixing tags to the batch of lumber if there is log conversion in the forest.
 - Completion of Removal Permit (Large and Small concessions) or Private Property Declaration Permit for private lands.
 - Following harvesting restrictions (minimum diameter and height) (Small and Large concessions).
 - Post-Harvest:
 - Payment of fees, charges, and levies (all forest sector operators).
 - Closure of harvested block (Large concessions).
 - Return of unused tags (All tenures).
 - Compliance with environmental requirements (all forest sector operators).
 - Erosion control (Small and Large concessions).
 - Waste removal management (Small and Large concessions).
7. See the Checklist of the Code of Practice for further guidance.
8. The rights of Indigenous people of Guyana are entrenched in the Guyana constitution and the Amerindian Act, Cap. 29:01 of Guyana. The Amerindian Act guarantees land rights and sets out a legal process not only for titling of existing Villages, but also claims for new lands and extensions to existing lands.
9. For entities exempted by law from making contributions to the National Insurance Scheme (NIS), a valid Entity Exempt Letter/Certificate is required.
10. NIS payments for self-employed contractors are the responsibility of the contractor (not the FSO) as contractors are not considered employees under Guyana's employment law.
11. Guyana has ratified all eight fundamental ILO conventions:
 - C029 - Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (Ratified 8 Jun 1966).
 - C087 - Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (Ratified 25 Sep 1967).
 - C098 - Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (Ratified 8 Jun 1966).
 - C100 - Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (Ratified 13 Jun 1975).
 - C105 - Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (Ratified 8 Jun 1966).
 - C111 - Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (Ratified 13 Jun 1975).
 - C138 - Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) (Ratified 15 Apr 1998).
 - C182 - Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) (Ratified 15 Jan 2001).
12. Indicators are applicable to direct employees and self-employed contractors.
13. The organization shall not employ workers below the age of 15, or below the minimum age as stated under national, or local laws or regulations, whichever age is higher, except as specified. In situations where the national law or regulations permit the employment of persons between the ages of 13 to 15 years in light work, such employment should not interfere with schooling nor, be harmful to their health or development. Notably, where children are subject to compulsory education laws, they shall work only outside of school hours during normal daytime working hours. No person under the age of 18 should be employed in hazardous or heavy work except for the purpose of training within approved national laws and regulation. The organization shall prohibit the worst forms of child labour.

14. The practice of the FSO centrally holding passports or other official documents of foreign workers can be justified if it is done so for security reasons and on a voluntary basis. Affected employees should be interviewed to ascertain whether they have surrendered their passports and other travel documents voluntarily for safe keeping.
15. Based on Guyana's legal framework comprising:
 - Prevention of Discrimination Act;
 - Occupational and Safety and Health Act; and
 - Occupational Safety and Health (HIV and AIDS) Regulations.
16. When looking at the number of persons actually employed from local communities, consideration should be given to the relevant experience and qualifications that exist locally. Also, FSOs may have a preference for employing persons from small communities but not necessarily located near to the concession.
17. Where wages are below the legal wage of Guyana, steps should be taken to attain increased wages towards the minimum wage level (note that FSOs should aim to pay a realistic "living wage" above the legal minimum).
18. Section 10: Health and Safety of the Guidelines for Forest Operations for Large and Small Concessions, includes detailed requirements for health and safety, including general rules, emergency rescue, personal protective equipment, fire prevention and suppression, equipment safety devices, chainsaw operations safety, skidding safety, landing area, loading, transporting workers and water operations. Applicable legislation includes Guyana's OHS Act.
19. Applicable to all tenures based on scale and intensity of operations.
20. P&L accounts on consolidated budget lines for one complete year and a 3-year forecast are recommended. Evidence of sufficient resources can be assessed by evident gaps in labour or machinery for achieving SFM objectives.
21. The publicly available summary of the Management Plan (large concessions)/Area Work Plan (small concessions, Private lands, Amerindian Villages) may exclude confidential business and personal information and other information made confidential by applicable legislation or for the protection of cultural sites or sensitive natural resource features.
22. Monitoring of impacts includes ecological, social, and economic aspects and effects, such as the health and vitality of forests, especially key biotic and abiotic factors that potentially can affect health and vitality of forest ecosystems, such as pests, diseases, overharvesting of wildlife, fire, and damage caused by climatic factors, air pollutants or by forest management operations; and working conditions.
23. Outputs of the management review include:
 - decisions related to continual improvement opportunities and any need for changes to the management system;
 - demonstration that the suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the sustainable forest management system and the sustainable management of the forest is being continuously improved; and
 - retention of documentary records as evidence of the results of management reviews.
24. The complexity of the system to respond to nonconformities will vary according to the size and scale of the forest management operation. However, the system should have the capacity that when a nonconformity occurs, the FSO:
 - reacts to the nonconformity and, as applicable:
 - takes action to control and correct it;
 - deals with the consequences;
 - evaluates the need for action to eliminate the causes of the nonconformity in order that it does not recur or occur elsewhere, by:
 - reviewing the nonconformity;
 - determining the causes of the nonconformity; and
 - determining if similar nonconformities exist, or could potentially occur;
 - implements any action needed;
 - reviews the effectiveness of any corrective action taken;
 - makes changes to the management system, if necessary.
 - where corrective actions are specified, the FSO demonstrates that those actions are appropriate to the effects of the nonconformities identified.
 - The FSO keeps records of documented information as evidence of
 - a) the nature of the nonconformities and any subsequent actions taken; and
 - b) the results of any corrective action.

25. The clearing of forest by the FSO for the establishment of permanent forest roads and other necessary forestry infrastructure, when carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Practice for Forest Operations, is not considered forest conversion. The FSO may salvage and recover all forest products generated from such clearing and sell these products as certified provided that the FSO maintains certification. The clearing of forest by authorised entities other than the FSO in association with Guyanese legislation or regulations for the purposes of public infrastructure (such as highways, power lines, gas pipelines, communications, or defence facilities) or authorised mining activities are not considered to be conversion undertaken by the FSO. In such circumstances, these areas that are not effectively and actively under the control of the FSO can be removed from the defined forest area. However, forest products salvaged by the FSO prior to the change in land management responsibility (and subsequent removal of the area from the defined forest area) may be sold as certified by the FSO provided that the FSO maintains certification. For forest areas subject to mining activities, the capacity to remove the affected area from the FSO's defined forest area and to sell salvaged forest products as certified is contingent on the FSO demonstrating that they are not directly or indirectly involved in the carrying out of the mining activity.
26. Pesticides banned by international agreements are defined in the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.
27. Note that fertilizers are not routinely used by FSOs in Guyana.
28. Evidence of compliance with the Code of Practice for Wood Processing Facilities for Guyana (Sawmills and Lumbeyards) can be used as a verifier as appropriate (i.e., for in-forest milling).
29. Specifications for roads, skid trails and watercourse crossings consistent with RIL principles are described in the Code of Practice and the Guidelines for Large and Small Concessions.
30. The requirements of Indicator 9.2.1 can be met with the requirement in Indicator 9.2.3. Additional area over and above the stipulation in Indicator 9.2.1 may be set aside if required.
31. Relevant regulatory agencies are the GFC and the EPA.
32. Keystone species include:
- Full protection
 - Hog Plum (*Spondias mombin*)
 - Ubudi (*Anacardium giganteum*)
 - Kokoritiballi (*Pouteria egregia*)
 - Duru (*Apeiba* spp.)
 - Pasture tree (*Trymatococcus paraensis*)
 - Sawari (Butternut) (*Caryocar nuciferum*)
 - Akuyuru (*Astrocaryum aculeatum*)
 - Partial protection – at least 3 trees (.40cm dbh) retained per 100 ha block
 - Aromata (*Clathrotropis brachypetala*)
 - Maho (*Sterculia pruriens* and *S. rugosa*).
33. Traditional subsistence hunting and fishing by local indigenous communities should not be hindered.
34. Note that GMO trees are not used by FSOs in Guyana.
35. Areas of special cultural, religious, or historical significance, sites of cultural or religious value, e.g., sacred trees, must be identified in collaboration with the local population and the relevant regulatory authorities.