

Summary of FSC contributions to biodiversity in Sweden, Estonia, Finland and Latvia

The contributions of FSC to forest biodiversity above that of legislation in each country are described. These summaries do not encompass all differences and contributions, but only those that FSC provides that make a difference in forest management. Green aspects are where FSC clearly contributes above legislation. Yellow aspects are brought up in the FSC standard, but the contributions of FSC are unclear, low, or match that of legislation. Orange aspects are not covered in the report.

Note that this table should not be used to make comparisons of the FSC standards between countries. There are many factors, such as differences in conventional forest management and in the level of legislation, that affect the relative contributions of FSC certification in each country.

	Sweden	Estonia	Finland	Latvia
Protected areas and habitats	At least 5 % of the forest is set aside, not including legally protected areas. All WKHs are protected.	At least 5 % of the forest is set aside. WKHs > 7 ha area are protected. Biodiversity features, including old-growth features, are promoted. Potentially more habitats of protected species preserved.	At least 5 % of the forest area is set aside. An additional 5 % is managed with the goal of supporting nature conservation. More habitats are preserved, including habitats of threatened species and large WKHs. Critically endangered drained mires are restored.	At least 10 % of the forest area is set aside. More forest types, including old deciduous forest stands and all stands meeting the criteria of WKHs, are preserved.
Retention trees	At least 10 living biodiversity trees are retained per ha in clearcuts. All trees defined as biologically valuable are retained.	At least 10 living biodiversity trees (alt. 5 noble hardwoods) retained per ha in clearcuts, as well as all old and hollow trees or trees with bird nests. More trees are retained per ha than by law.	At least 10 living biodiversity trees are retained per ha in clearcuts. All trees defined as biologically valuable are retained.	10 living biodiversity trees are retained per ha in clearcuts, and where present, in thinnings. More trees are retained per ha than by law.
Deciduous trees/mixed forests	Stands are managed so the deciduous component is at least 10 % of the volume when harvested (or 5 % in the north). At least 5 % of mesic and moist forestland dominated by deciduous trees.	Higher diversity and proportion of deciduous trees in forests.	A minimum 10 % proportion of deciduous trees are retained in conifer-dominated forests.	The regeneration of deciduous species in mixed and deciduous forests is promoted, although this is also supported by legislation.
Red-listed species	Actions implemented to protect known red-listed species.	Not covered.	All threatened species are preserved. Bird breeding sites and nests are better protected.	Not covered.
Damage to ground and water	Some extra considerations to avoid damage to forest soil and water regimes.	Some extra considerations to avoid damage to forest soil and water regimes.	Some extra considerations made to avoid damage to forest soil and water regimes.	Some extra considerations made to avoid damage to forest soil and water regimes.
Forest drainage/Wet forests	No new drainage of forests, although undrained forests are rarely drained.	No new drainage of forests.	No new drainage of forests, although undrained forests are rarely drained.	Parent trees and undergrowth are preserved in wet spruce forests. At least 30 growing trees per ha are retained in wet deciduous forest clearcuts. Old beaver wetlands are preserved.

Forest burning	Large forest owners burn the equivalent of 5 % of their dry/mesic regenerated land.	Not covered.	Large forest owners burn at least 3 % of the regeneration felling area per 5-year period.	Not covered.
High stumps	3 high stumps or girdled trees are created per ha.	Not covered.	Not covered.	Not covered.
Dead wood	All dead wood > 1 year retained, fresh wood from retained trees are left, at least. After a wind fell at least two wind felled trees shall be retained.	All large standing dead trees and dead trunks are retained. Dead wood of many species/age classes is retained in forests. Future inputs of dead wood are secured.	At least 20 dead trees are retained per ha, where present. All decaying deciduous trees are retained.	Dead wood is retained in transition zones between forest and open land, and in wet depressions. Trees are retained in burnt stands. Dead wood retention requirements in clearcuts match legislation.
Forest roads	Better planning to avoid negative impacts on water and sensitive biotopes. Barriers in culverts are removed.	Better planning to avoid negative impacts of roads on forests and water.	Not covered.	Roads are not constructed in areas protected by the FSC.
Buffer zones	Ecologically appropriate buffer zones are left along waterways, waterbodies, wetlands and forest impediments.	Not covered.	Buffer zones of 10 - 30 m (depending on waterbody type) of no economic activity are left along all waterbodies and watercourses. These can be included in the 5 % protected set asides.	Buffer zones of 10 m are left along all waterbodies and watercourses, and of 20 – 100 m along mires, in line with legislation.
Landscape planning	Large forest owners shall implement an ecological landscape plan. Some extra considerations increase the landscape value and connectivity of forests.	Some extra considerations increase the landscape value and connectivity of forests.	Some extra considerations increase the landscape value and connectivity of forests.	Some extra considerations increase the landscape value and connectivity of forests.
Native tree species	Not covered.	Maintenance of proportion and diversity of native tree species. Low proportion of exotic species. Noble hardwoods and European yew are retained.	Not covered.	Only native species are used in forest regeneration. Native undergrowth species are retained.
Biomass harvesting	Not covered.	Not covered.	At least 30 % of woody residues, 25 large stumps, all small or old stumps, and all dead trees in woody biomass harvesting sites are retained.	Not covered.