



Guidance on Certifiable Scope of the FairWild Standard v.2.0:

Wild Species and Natural Habitats

Version 19.04.2021

This document elaborates the policy of the FairWild Foundation (FWF) on the scope of ingredients that can be certified according to the current FairWild Standard (FWS) v.2.0.

The focus of the FWS is collection of wild species from natural habitats (Box 1). However, FWF recognizes that the intent of the FWS according to its **Purpose** and **Scope** can embrace a broad interpretation of “wild species” and “natural habitats”, rather than more narrowly stated common definitions (see Glossary, Annex 1 in this Guidance).

This document provides guidance for making decisions on eligibility for FairWild certification where the collection scenario may not clearly fit the expectations of species and habitat management as they are currently defined in the FWS v.2.0 Performance Indicators (Table 1) and other FairWild documents. It is intended as an interim solution, pending a future revision process that will address this topic more comprehensively.

It clarifies that some originally cultivated and translocated species can be included within the concept of “wild species” when certain criteria are met, and hence are within the certifiable scope of FWS v.2.0. The document provides further explanation and guidance on how case-by-case decisions will be made on eligibility, including in collection scenarios that are outside the main scope of FWS v.2.0 as currently described.

Box 1. Purpose, scope and applicability of the FairWild Standard (v.2.0)

According to the introduction to the current FairWild Standard v.2.0 (FairWild Foundation 2010a, p.1):

“The **purpose** of the FairWild Standard is to ensure the continued use and long-term survival of wild species and populations in their habitats,”¹

“The **scope** of the FairWild Standard: Version 2.0 includes ingredients of herbal drugs and other botanical products originating from wild collection:

- Plants, plant parts and plant products collected from natural habitats
- Fungi and lichens collected from natural habitats”

The FWS v.2.0 further states that “the applicability of the FairWild Standard to species outside this scope (such as originally cultivated, naturalised, invasive, or reintroduced species) must be determined on a case-by-case basis.” (FairWild Foundation 2010a, pp.1-2).

What are “wild” species?

A widely accepted understanding of the adjective “wild” applied to plants (but also relevant to lichen and fungi) has been defined by the FAO (1999) to refer to species “that grow spontaneously in self-maintaining populations in natural or semi-natural ecosystems and can exist independently of direct human action. The term is contrasted with ‘cultivated’ or ‘domesticated’ ... “species that have arisen through human action, such as selection or breeding, and that depend on management for their continued existence.”

In practice, however, many species of non-cultivated plants (and some lichen and fungi species) fall somewhere on a “spectrum between completely wild and completely domesticated species, depending on the degree of human intervention or management involved” (FAO 1999).

The current FairWild Standard is not specific on this point but it has been understood that fully domesticated species (non-self-sustaining), and in particular those agricultural varieties that have been the outcome of genetic selection and breeding programmes (such as coffee, rice cultivars, etc.), and that require intensive inputs of human energy to survive, are not usually included within the scope of FairWild certification. However, there are scenarios in which these species may in fact become naturalized / self-sustaining, and may contribute to habitat conservation objectives.

Some definitions of “wild” and “wild species” are provided in Annex 1.

What are natural habitats?

Although the current FairWild Standard does not define “natural habitat”, the performance indicators follow a definition of “habitat” according to UNEP (2001): “the place or type of site where an organism or population naturally occurs”. “Natural habitats” are more particularly defined by the International Finance Corporation (IFC 2012) as “areas composed of viable assemblages of plant and/or animal species of largely native origin and/or where human activity [has] not essentially modified an area’s primary ecological functions and species composition.”

Worldwide, most “natural habitats” have in fact been subject to some degree of human modification. The FairWild Standard allows for collection from a mosaic of low intensity agricultural and uncultivated lands, as outlined under performance indicator / control point CP 1.2e, and also allows for benign (or beneficial) habitat modification activities as outlined under performance indicator / control point CP 2.2e (Table 1).

Table 1. FairWild Standard v. 2.0 Performance Indicators (Control Points = CP) Relevant to “Natural Habitats”

<p>CP 1.2e: <i>The collection areas are separated from agricultural lands.</i> The minimum requirement of this indicator is for “collection from uncultivated patches / trees in low intensity agricultural lands, target plants clearly growing spontaneously and no sources of contamination.” Clear separation of collection sites from agricultural lands is considered “excellent performance: higher than norm requirements”.</p>
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<p>CP 2.2e: <i>Impacts of landscape-level and intensive target species management practices on sensitive species, ecosystem structure and function.</i> The minimum requirement of this indicator is that “management practices of the target species in order to minimise competition with or promote growth of the target species, enrichment planting...are occurring with monitoring of impacts through management plan.”</p>
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Determining eligibility for FWS v.2.0 certification

The spectrum of plant species / population and habitat management scenarios relevant to the purpose and scope of the FairWild Standard is outlined in Annex 2, which indicates some scenarios that may currently be certified according to the current v.2.0 of the FWS. Annex 3 provides a simple decision tree for the “fit” of species and collection scenarios within the scope of the FairWild Standard v.2.0.

In practice, eligibility of the collection scenario for FairWild certification will usually be determined at the application stage, in conjunction with the FairWild risk analysis process. If the species or collection site proposed for certification raise any “red flags” (e.g. the target species is introduced and/or potentially invasive in the geographic area concerned; collection site is described as agricultural land), further information may be requested from the applicant either prior to or during the risk analysis process. The decision tree in Annex 3 will be consulted by FairWild Secretariat staff to make a preliminary determination of eligibility, with complex cases referred to the FairWild Board (or their designated technical lead) as necessary.

However, it may not prove possible to fully determine eligibility without a site visit by a FairWild auditor. Questions on eligibility may also be raised at a later point in the certification process – for example, following the first field audit – or at any point, based on information arising from the wild harvest management and monitoring system. Such issues will be resolved in consultation with the scheme manager of the FairWild control body concerned.

Future revision options for the FairWild Standard (v. 3.0)

In the future, the FairWild Standard may be revised to further broaden its certifiable scope. This would be done to encompass a wider range of species and collection scenarios that can fit with the intended purpose of the FWS, as well as to resolve any inconsistencies in the current approach. Potential changes that have been identified include:

Revision of CP 1.2e¹. A problematic element of this indicator is that the progressive performance requirement discourages collection from low-intensity agricultural lands – despite the contribution that such sites may make to meeting biodiversity conservation objectives. While such sites meet the minimum requirement, the top score of 3 is reserved for a “wild/natural collection area, no agriculture.” This indicator may in future be revised to remove a progress requirement away from low-intensity agriculture or production forest, and instead emphasize the minimum requirement.

Revision of (or addition to) CP 2.2e². The gap in this indicator, or the need for a new indicator, concerns the impact of supplementing the harvested population of the target species (e.g. through enrichment planting) on the target species itself. Filling this gap is important to expanding the scope of the FWS to collection scenarios such as “forest grown” and reintroduced sub-populations within the species’ natural range, because these activities can have beneficial, benign, or negative impacts on the genetic make-up (=evolutionary fitness) of the resident sub-population.

¹ **The collection areas are separated from agricultural lands:** (0) collection from intensely cultivated agricultural lands, e.g. trees next to fields; **(1=M)** collection from uncultivated patches / trees in low intensity agricultural lands, target plants clearly growing spontaneously and no sources of contamination; (2) collection sites clearly separated from agricultural land; (3) wild / natural collection area, no agriculture.

² **Impacts of landscape-level and intensive target species management practices on sensitive species, ecosystem structure and function** (e.g. management practices of target species in order to minimise competition with or promote growth of the target species, enrichment planting): (0) such management practices are occurring but without monitoring of impacts; **(1=M)** such practices are occurring with monitoring of impacts through management plan; (2) documented evidence from monitoring that such practices do not negatively affect sensitive species or the ecosystem structure, diversity and functions in the collection area; (3) special efforts to improve existing management practices.

Further expansion of the FWS certifiable scope. Future standard revision processes will also consider whether to expand the certifiable scope of the FairWild Standard to include other activities that can contribute to its stated purpose, i.e. “to ensure the continued use and long-term survival of wild species and populations in their habitats”. This could potentially include certification of wild collection of other natural products within a FairWild-certified area (e.g., honey from wild bees) and activities that contribute to broader conservation objectives (e.g., sustainable harvest activities of non-“wild” resources that contribute to conservation of natural landscapes and ecosystems; conservation-oriented agriculture). Certification of such activities is not currently possible with FWS v.2.0, but may be considered as part of the review and revision of the FairWild Standard version 3.0.

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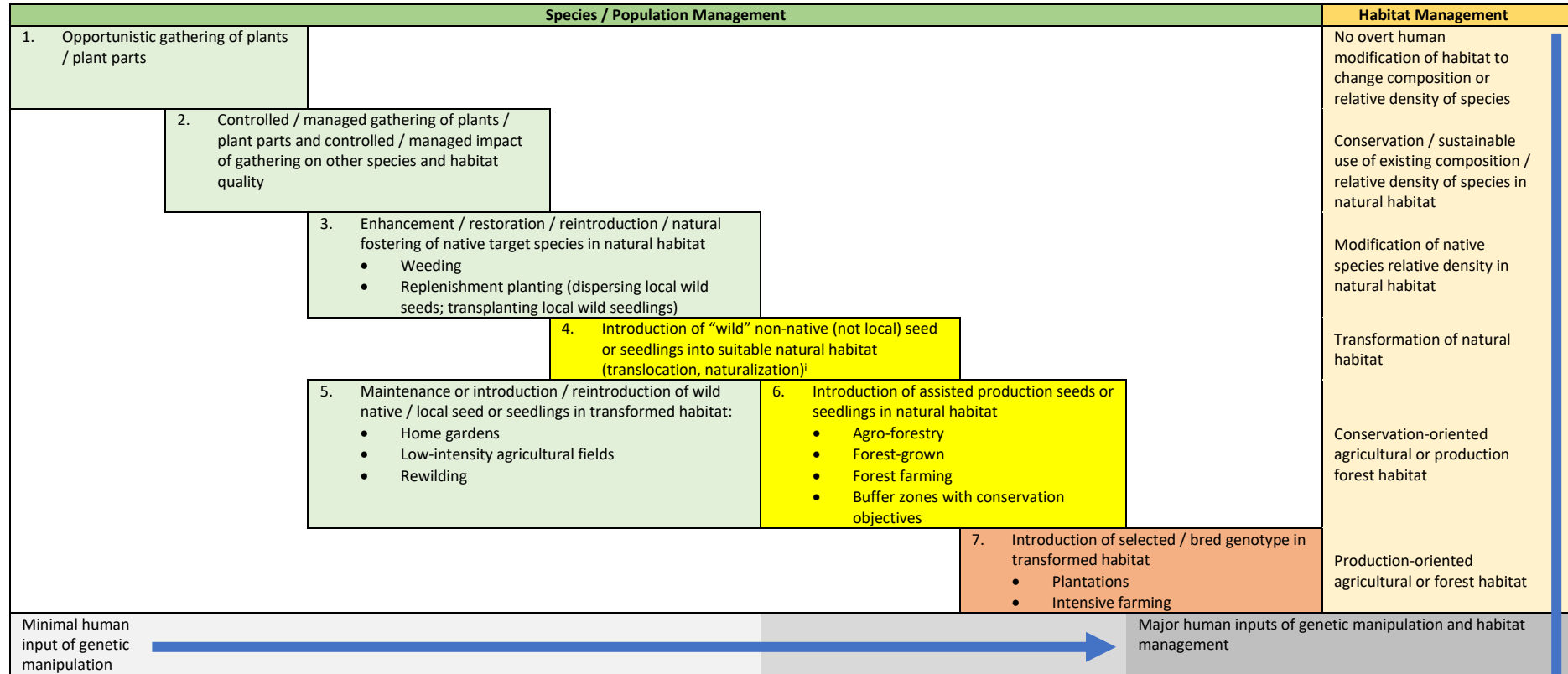
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Annex 1. Glossary of Terms Relevant to this Guidance on the Scope of FairWild Standard Certification

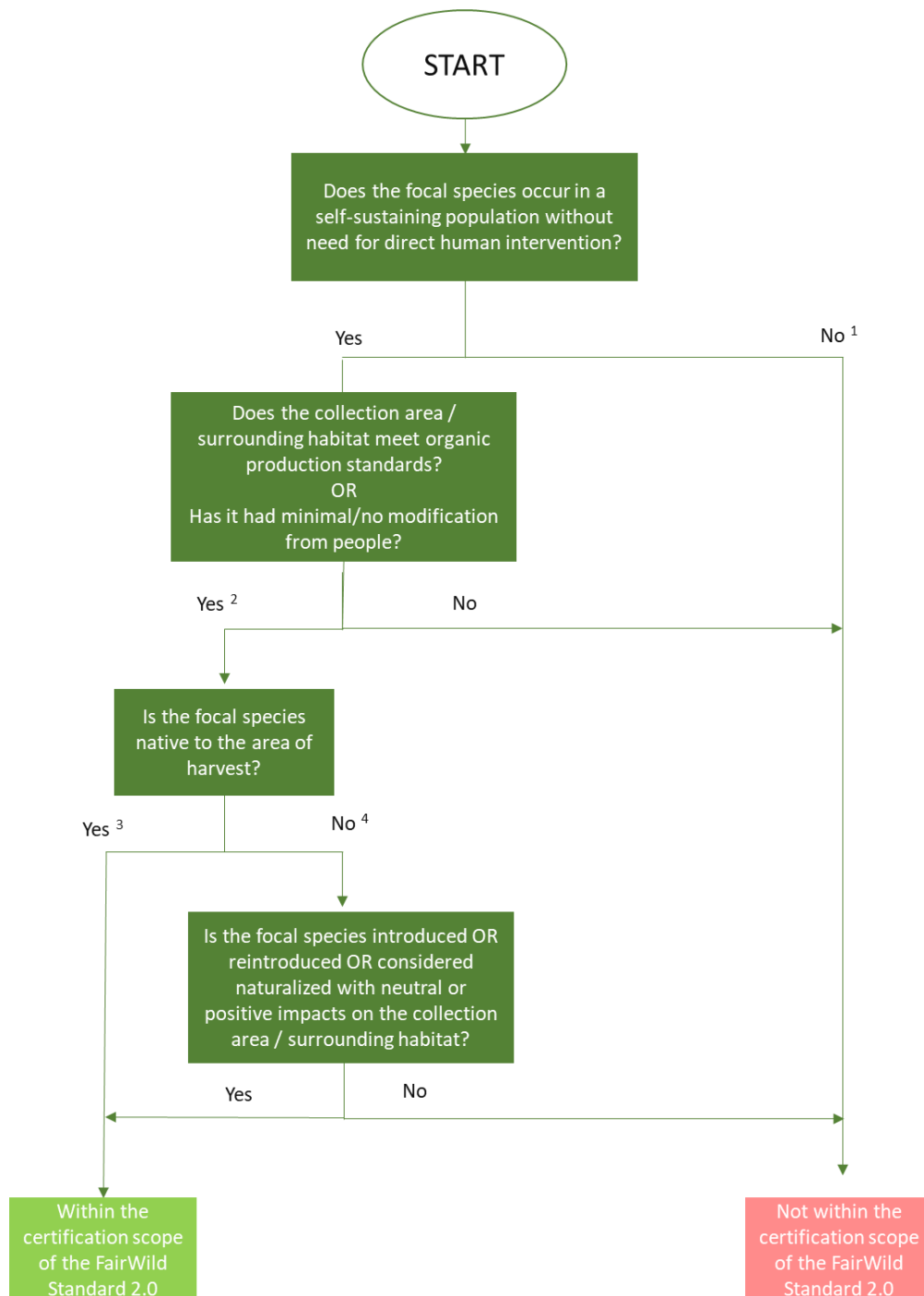
Term	Definition	Source
Assisted production	Specimens (individuals) “derived from ... artificially propagated ... material grown in an environment with some level of human intervention”.	CITES 2019
Forest farming	Forest farming is the cultivation of high-value crops under the protection of a managed tree canopy.	USDA 2020
Introduction	Occurs when a species is established in a new area outside its natural range (habitat)	COSEWIC 2018
Invasive (alien) species	Species whose introduction and/or spread by human action outside their natural distribution threatens biological diversity, food security, and human health and well-being. “Alien” refers to the species’ having been introduced outside its natural distribution (“exotic”, “non-native” and “non-indigenous” are synonyms for “alien”). “Invasive” means “tending to expand into and modify ecosystems to which it has been introduced”. Thus, a species may be alien without being invasive, or, in the case of a species native to a region, it may increase and become invasive, without actually being an alien species.	IPBES 2020
Natural habitats ³	Areas composed of viable assemblages of plant and/or animal species of largely native origin and/or where human activity had not essentially modified an area's primary ecological functions and species composition.	IFC 2012
Naturalized species (population)	A species that, once it is introduced outside its native distributional range, establishes self-sustaining populations.	IPBES 2020
Reintroduction	Occurs when a species is established in an area from which it has been extirpated.	COSEWIC 2018
Rewilding	This term is applied to large-scale conservation efforts to restore natural processes and wilderness areas, as well as to much smaller-scale efforts to re-establish native species and habitat quality in support of increasing diversity of native species.	Various sources, not verbatim
Translocation	Occurs when a species is established in a new either within or outside of its natural habitat.	COSEWIC 2018
Conservation translocation	Conservation translocation is the deliberate movement of organisms from one site for release in another. It must be intended to yield a measurable conservation benefit at the levels of a population, species or ecosystem,	IUCN/SSC 2013
“Wild” versus “Domesticated”	<p>“The term ‘wild’ when applied to plants or plant species refers to those that grow spontaneously in self-maintaining populations in natural or semi-natural ecosystems and can exist independently of direct human action. The term is contrasted with ‘cultivated’ or ‘domesticated’ plants or plant species that have arisen through human action, such as selection or breeding, and that depend on management for their continued existence.”</p> <p>The FairWild Standard performance indicators define wild collection as “the practice of gathering a non-cultivated native or naturalised resource from its natural habitat”.</p>	<p>FAO 1999</p> <p>FairWild Foundation 2010b, p. 35</p>

Annex 2. Spectrum of Plant Species / Population and Habitat Management Scenarios Relevant to Purpose and Scope of the FairWild Standard



Green boxes indicate species collection scenarios clearly within the scope of FairWild certification. Yellow boxes indicate species collection scenarios that may be eligible for FairWild certification, depending on consideration of beneficial vs. adverse impacts on the existing/resident species and habitat. The orange box indicates species harvest scenarios that are outside the current purpose and scope of the FairWild Standard.

Annex 3. Proposed Decision Tree for FairWild Certification Candidate Species



1. For example, the harvested population requires significant inputs of genetic manipulation / habitat alteration / management intervention.
2. For example, this could include low-intensity agricultural habitats.
3. Applies only where the harvested population does not contain translocated individuals (e.g. enrichment planting/forest farming) that may have negative impacts on the survival of the focal species. Eligibility must be determined on a case-by-case basis.
4. Non-native species that are considered invasive are not currently eligible for FairWild certification; however, there is potential for FairWild certification with an adapted set of criteria if a pilot project is proposed.