

**4 September 2023**  
**(Publication date)**

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**Guidelines on the Application of Requirements for the Certification of Non-Timber Forest Products in MTCS ST 1002:2021 Malaysian Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management**



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**Document name** : Guidelines on the Application of Requirements for the Certification of Non-Timber Forest Products in MTCS ST 1002:2021 Malaysian Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management

**Document title** : MTCS GD 1002:2023

**Approved by** : MTCC Board of Trustees **Date** : 4 September 2023

**Publication date** : 4 September 2023

**Application date** : 4 September 2023  
**(Date of entry into force)**

**Next periodic review** : 5 March 2025

## **Preface**

This document has been developed to provide clarity in the requirements of non-timber forest products (NTFP) certification using the MTCS ST 1002:2021 *Malaysian Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management* (MC&I SFM) standard under the Malaysian Timber Certification Scheme (MTCS). It specifies the NTFP requirements of the MC&I SFM, which includes products of biological origin other than timber that are renewable and derived from the forests for human use/consumption, and encompasses both natural and plantation occurrences of NTFP.

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## INTRODUCTION

### Background

The MTCC Strategy 2020-2025, which was launched at MTCC's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration on 24 September 2019, contains key enablers for MTCC to chart its sustainability journey towards achieving its envisioned state by 2025. The Desired State by 2025 among others includes the expansion of the scope of certification to cover both timber and non-timber products including ecosystem services as it is necessary to take on board additional values and contributions of forests.

Non-timber forest products (NTFP) or "non-wood forest products" are defined as products or services other than timber that are renewable and derived from the forests for human use/consumption. NTFP can be divided into tangible and intangible products. Tangible NTFP from plant-based sources make up the majority of NTFP and consist of rattan, bamboo, palms, fruits, biochemicals derived from plants, herbs and medicinal plants as well as ornamental plants while animal-based tangible NTFP include food, feathers, bird nests, wild meat and animal parts. Furthermore, intangible NTFP include ecosystem services provided by the forests such as watershed, flora and fauna propagation, sustenance and protection, carbon sink, source of oxygen.

The certification of NTFP in natural and plantation forests offers opportunities such as:

- a. Providing companies and consumers with an alternative to the exploitative use of resources by highlighting the source and sound management practices associated with NTFPs;
- b. Ensures the sustainability of NTFP resources for the long-term and consistently providing for local livelihoods over time; and
- c. Providing a holistic approach in forest management practices while deriving additional income, and increasing awareness and motivation for careful planning in utilising forest resources.

The MTCS ST 1002:2021 *Malaysian Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management* (MC&I SFM) specifies the requirements for the certification of sustainable forest management system of a specified forest management unit (FMU), covering NTFPs either in natural forests or forest plantation. Currently, only production of timber has been included within the scope of certification under the MTCS.

The development of this interpretation would be useful to assist users particularly forest managers to expand the scope of products covered under the certification, hence allowing relevant forest-related stakeholders along the supply chain to benefit from the certification of all forest products, including NTFP originating from certified FMUs.

## Scope

The certification of NTFP covers products of biological origin other than wood which are derived from the forests, either natural or plantations.

As per the feedback provided by stakeholders, the following NTFPs have been highlighted based on the existing practices and supply chain:

- Bamboo - Any of the various woody or arborescent grasses (such as the genera *Bambusa*, *Chusquea*, *Dendrocalamus*, *Dinochloa*, *Gigantochloa*, *Phyllostachys*, *Racemobambos*, *Schizostachyum*, *Thyrsostachys* and *Yushania* of the subfamily *Bambusoideae*) of tropical and temperate regions which have hollow culms and thick rhizomes, shoots consumed for food and jointed culm used in building, furniture and utensils.
- Rattan - A climbing palm (especially of the *Calamus* and *Daemonorops* genera) with very long, tough stems used in furniture, wickerwork and as walking sticks.
- Natural rubber latex / rubber clumps - A viscous milky fluid or coagulated latex extracted from *Hevea brasiliensis*.
- Honey and/or honeycomb - Natural honey and/or honey comb produced in bee hives off cliffs and trees in the forest, or honey and/or honey comb produced in forest plantation settings with the control of bee keepers.

NTFPs covers a larger scope of products derived from the forests and are a valuable source of livelihoods for the local communities and indigenous peoples living in and adjacent to the forests. These guidelines shall not hinder the NTFP collection for sustenance by indigenous peoples as per the Indigenous Peoples' Rights in Principle 3 of the MTCS ST 1002:2021 *Malaysian Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management*.

## Definition of Key Terms

Term	Definition
Forest management / manager	The people/person responsible for the operational management of the forest resource and of the enterprise, as well as the management system and structure, and the planning and field operations.
Forest worker	An individual who is an employee of the FMU manager, a licensee, a contractor or processor, or an independent owner/operator performing one or more phases involved in the harvesting of timber from a license, or delivery of timber to a processor. In the context of this document, workers include both locals and migrants (foreign).
Non-timber forest produce / products	Products consisting of goods of biological origin other than wood, derived from forests.  <div style="text-align: right;">(Source: following FAO 2017)</div>

## Requirements for the Certification of Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP)

Requirement of MTCS ST 1002:2021 MC&I SFM	Guidelines for Certification of NTFP
<p><b>Indicator 1.6.1:</b> Availability of policies or statements of commitment to <b>forest management</b> practices consistent with these Principles and Criteria.</p> <p><b>Indicator 5.2.2: Forest management</b> strategy encourages local processing and diversifying the mix of commercial products derived from the forests.</p> <p><b>Indicator 5.4.1 (Natural Forest): Forest management</b> strategy that encourages the production of a mix of commercial forest products, including the utilisation of non-timber forest products and forest services, particularly by local community enterprises, provided that such use does not compromise the ecological health of the forests.</p> <p><b>Indicator 6.1.2:</b> Environmental impact assessments are carried out, including the potential impacts on rare, threatened endangered species of flora and fauna, and rare and vulnerable ecosystems, and the need for biological corridors in the FMU, appropriate to the scale and intensity of <b>forest management</b>; as well as consideration of the impacts on risks of fire and pollution or siltation of water courses and wetlands and forest carbon stocks.</p> <p><b>Indicator 6.2.3:</b> Existence of cooperation between <b>forest managers</b>, conservation organisations, local communities including indigenous peoples, research and academic institutions and regulatory authorities in implementing conservation and management activities.</p> <p><b>Indicator 6.2.4:</b> Hunting, fishing, trapping and collecting activities shall be controlled and unauthorised activities prohibited in the FMU.</p>	<p>The definition of forest management includes the provision for NTFP (see definition of <i>forest management / manager</i> and <i>forest management unit</i> in MTCS ST 1002:2021 <i>Malaysian Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management</i>).</p>
<p><b>Indicator 1.6.2:</b> Policies or statements are communicated throughout the organisation and its contractors, and are made available to the public.</p>	<p>The forest manager shall include NTFPs in these policies or statements, made available, and are communicated throughout the organisation and</p>

Requirement of MTCS ST 1002:2021 MC&I SFM	Guidelines for Certification of NTFP
	its contractors, and are made available to the public.
<p><b>Indicator 2.1.1:</b> Availability of documentation of <b>legal status</b>, and established forest use rights of the land or forest resources within the relevant federal, state and local laws in the FMU.</p>	<p>The forest manager shall ensure the availability of legal document(s) or consent letter for the collection of NTFP in the certified areas.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 4.2.1:</b> Up-to-date information on all applicable laws and/or regulations covering occupational safety and health of <b>forest workers</b> shall be disseminated to them in Bahasa Malaysia and/or English.</p> <p><b>Indicator 4.2.2:</b> Availability of management policies addressing the occupational safety and health of <b>forest workers</b> including work-related risks, in accordance with current legislation and/or regulations.</p> <p><b>Indicator 4.2.3:</b> Appropriate safety and operational equipment in good working condition, including operational procedures, shall be made available to <b>forest workers</b> in the work place.</p> <p><b>Indicator 4.2.4:</b> Forest managers shall maintain up-to-date safety records in compliance with all applicable laws and/or regulations covering health and safety of <b>forest workers</b>.</p> <p><b>Indicator 6.2.5:</b> <b>Forest workers</b> and local communities shall be made aware of endangered, rare and threatened species of forest flora and fauna found in the FMU.</p> <p><b>Indicator 6.6.3:</b> <b>Forest workers</b> shall be aware of and comply with the procedures on the use of approved chemicals in the forest.</p> <p><b>Indicator 7.3.1:</b> Forest managers shall clearly define and assign specific roles to and responsibilities of the <b>forest worker</b> to ensure effective implementation of the forest management plan.</p>	<p>The definition of forest workers includes workers involved in identifying, harvesting and processing activities of NTFP (see definition of <i>forest worker</i> in MTCS ST 1002:2021 MC&amp;I SFM).</p>



Requirement of MTCS ST 1002:2021 MC&I SFM	Guidelines for Certification of NTFP
<p><b>Indicator 7.3.2:</b> Availability of programmes to train <b>forest workers</b> to their respective roles for proper implementation of the forest management plan.</p>	
<p><b>Criterion 2.2:</b> Local communities with legal or customary tenure or use rights shall maintain control, to the extent necessary to protect their rights or resources, over <b>forest operations</b> unless they delegate control with free, prior and informed consent to other agencies and/or parties.</p> <p><b>Criterion 3.3:</b> Sites of special cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance to indigenous peoples shall be clearly identified in cooperation with such peoples and recognised by the forest management who shall ensure that the <b>forest operations</b> do not encroach the site in question.</p> <p><b>Criterion 3.4:</b> Indigenous peoples shall be acknowledged and compensated for the application of their traditional knowledge regarding the use of forest species or management systems in <b>forest operations</b>. This compensation shall be formally agreed upon with their free, prior and informed consent before the <b>forest operations</b> commence.</p> <p><b>Indicator 3.4.1:</b> Availability of documentation, if any, of traditional forest-related knowledge and practices of indigenous peoples in the use of forest species or management systems in <b>forest operations</b>.</p> <p><b>Indicator 4.4.1:</b> Forest managers shall evaluate, through consultations, social impact of <b>forest operations</b> directly affecting communities, and the people and groups directly affected by the <b>forest operations</b> shall have access to information on the results of the social impact evaluations.</p> <p><b>Indicator 4.5.2:</b> Appropriate mechanisms are employed to expeditiously resolve grievances, and provide fair and equitable compensation for any loss or damage affecting the local communities' legal or customary rights,</p>	<p>The term forest operations include the activities of harvesting and processing of NTFP.</p>

Requirement of MTCS ST 1002:2021 MC&I SFM	Guidelines for Certification of NTFP
<p>property, resources, or their livelihoods, caused by <b>forest operations</b>.</p> <p><b>Indicator 6.1.1:</b> Environmental impact assessments are carried out, including landscape level considerations, as well as the impacts of on-site processing facilities, appropriate to the scale and intensity of forest management operations and uniqueness of the affected resources, prior to commencement of <b>forest operations</b> in the FMU.</p>	
<p><b>Indicator 2.1.1:</b> Availability of documentation of legal status, and established forest use rights of the land or <b>forest resources</b> within the relevant federal, state and local laws in the FMU.</p> <p><b>Indicator 5.2.1:</b> Forest management practices encourage the optimal use of <b>forest resources</b>.</p> <p><b>Criterion 5.3:</b> Forest management shall minimise waste associated with harvesting and on-site processing operations and avoid damage to other <b>forest resources</b>.</p>	<p>The term forest resources include NTFP.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 5.3.1:</b> Implementation of <b>guidelines for reduced/low impact logging</b> to minimise damage to residual stand, and log extraction operations to minimise product wastage.</p>	<p>Forest managers shall ensure guidelines are available for the extraction/harvesting of NTFP to minimise damage to the residual timber stand and to minimise product wastage.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 5.6.2:</b> Records of quantity of timber and non-timber forest products harvested commercially shall be maintained, taking cognisance of their sustainability in the long-term.</p>	<p>The amount of NTFP harvested in the certified area shall be at a sustainable basis whereby harvesting/collection is below the natural growth/propagation rate of that particular NTFP harvested.</p> <p>The forest manager shall ensure that no timber or NTFP not selected for extraction/harvesting is not impacted by such activities.</p>
<p><b>Criterion 6.2:</b> Safeguards shall exist which protect rare, threatened and endangered species and their habitats (e.g. nesting, salt licks and feeding areas) including from exploitation for commercial purposes. Conservation zones and protection areas shall be established,</p>	<p>The forest manager shall ensure the protection of rare, threatened and endangered species, and their habitats are free from exploitation for commercial purposes, including their classification them as NTFP for extraction/harvesting and commercialisation.</p>

Requirement of MTCS ST 1002:2021 MC&I SFM	Guidelines for Certification of NTFP
<p>appropriate to the scale and intensity of forest management and the uniqueness of the affected resources. Hunting, fishing, trapping and collecting shall be controlled in accordance with applicable statutes and customary laws.</p> <p><b>Indicator 6.2.1:</b> Availability and implementation of guidelines to identify and protect rare, threatened and endangered species of forest flora and fauna, including features of special biological interest in their habitats such as seed trees, salt licks, nesting and feeding areas in the FMU.</p>	<p>The forest manager shall ensure the availability and implementation of guidelines to identify and protect rare, threatened and endangered species of forest flora and fauna, including features of special biological interest in their habitats, in order to ensure that they are not classified as NTFP for extraction/harvesting and commercialisation.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 6.5.2:</b> Implementation of reduced/low impact logging to minimise damage to the environment.</p>	<p>The forest manager shall ensure the availability and implementation of guidelines to ensure the harvesting of NTFP in the certified area will have minimal damage to the surrounding environment.</p> <p>The forest manager shall ensure that no timber or NTFP not selected for extraction/harvesting is not impacted by such activities.</p>
<p><b>Criterion 7.1 (d):</b> Rationale for rate of annual harvest and species selection, including non-timber forest products used commercially.</p>	<p>The forest manager shall provide a clear rationale on the rate of harvest determined for NTFP in the certified area.</p>
<p><b>Criterion 7.2:</b> The management plan shall be periodically revised to incorporate the results of monitoring or new scientific and technical information, as well as to respond to changing environmental, social and economic circumstances.</p> <p><b>Indicator 7.2.1:</b> Implementation of procedures to periodically revise the forest management plan, incorporating the results of monitoring or new scientific and technical information, the frequency of which shall be appropriate to the scale and intensity of forest management operations, so as to respond to changing environmental, social and economic circumstances.</p> <p><b>Indicator 7.2.2:</b> Forest managers shall be aware of new scientific and technical information,</p>	<p>The NTFP shall be part of the new scientific and technical information included in the revised management plan.</p>

Requirement of MTCS ST 1002:2021 MC&I SFM	Guidelines for Certification of NTFP
including any applicable traditional and indigenous knowledge pertinent to the management of the FMU.	
<p><b>Indicator 8.3.1:</b> Forest managers shall provide relevant documents to ensure that all forest products leaving the certified area can be identified (including volumes and types) so that their origin can be determined. Specific claims to communicate the origin of products are specified in <b>APPENDIX B.</b></p>	<p>The NTFP from the certified area that is leaving the FMU shall be accompanied by the relevant document(s) (removal passes) so that their origin can be determined.</p>