



## FOREST STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is a non-governmental, non-profit organization that promotes the responsible management of the world's forests.

Established in 1993 as a response to concerns over global deforestation, FSC is widely regarded as one of the most important initiatives of the last decade to promote responsible forest management worldwide.

FSC provides internationally recognized standard setting, trademark assurance and accreditation services for companies, organizations and communities interested in responsible forestry. It is a membership organization with a governance structure based on participation, democracy, equity and transparency.

The FSC logo and on-product labels have become the globally trusted mark for businesses and consumers looking for forest products that benefit people, the environment and that also provide ongoing business value.

### Our vision

The world's forests meet the social, ecological and economic rights and needs of the present generation without compromising those of future generations.

### Our mission

FSC shall promote environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial and economically viable forest management.

### The FSC solution

FSC uses certification to engage the market, driving recognition of the value of forests to improve social and environmental practices in forest management worldwide.

Forests provide us with clean water, fresh air and they even help to combat global warming. They also provide us with food, medicine and important natural resources such as timber. If managed responsibly, forests and plantations benefit forest dependent people and the global community at large.

However, in some countries as much as 80% of the timber is harvested illegally, often in violation of human rights and causing destruction of protected forests. A key factor behind the threats faced by natural forests is the perception by many societies that they lack economic value.

The extraordinary social and ecological value of forests in comparison to other land uses is often not considered. Forests are often converted to other land uses which lack many of the social and environmental values of forests but promise immediate higher economic returns.

FSC does not encourage exploitation of forests, but rather promotes the equitable incorporation of social and environmental considerations when decisions are taken to manage forests.

### How FSC makes a difference in the forest

To earn FSC certification and the right to use the FSC label, an organization must conform to all applicable FSC requirements. Because managing forests the FSC way means following the highest social and environmental criteria, it often requires managers to adapt their management and operations.



This is how FSC has a direct and permanent positive impact on the world's forests and the people living from, in and around the forest.

FSC has defined 10 principles and associated criteria that describe how forests have to be managed to meet the social, economic, ecological, cultural and spiritual needs of present and future generations.

FSC's standards have been proven to work across continents, forest types, sizes and ownership.

### FSC Principles for forest stewardship

1. Compliance with laws and FSC principles
2. Tenure and use rights and responsibilities
3. Indigenous peoples' rights
4. Community relations and workers' rights
5. Multiple benefits from the forest
6. Assessment of environmental impact
7. Management planning
8. Monitoring and assessment of management impact
9. Maintenance of high conservation value forests
10. Responsible management of plantations

### Tools for forest stewardship - credible international standards

At FSC IC, a team of experts facilitate the development, review and continuous improvement of FSC rules and procedures.

FSC's international standards provide the framework for the global FSC network to develop locally applicable standards that are internationally recognized and consistent. To ensure appropriate implementation of the FSC Principles and Criteria at the local level, FSC approves national, sub-national and regional standards.

FSC's standard-setting process is transparent, democratic and inclusive with many opportunities for the interested public to participate. It is this multi-stakeholder and interest-balanced process that has allowed FSC to become an important and recognized forum where innovative solutions have become possible with the equal support of environmental and social groups, as well as the corporate sector.

Periodic review of the standards allows FSC certification to remain effective, relevant and applicable in ever-changing market conditions, while still remaining true to FSC's core values.

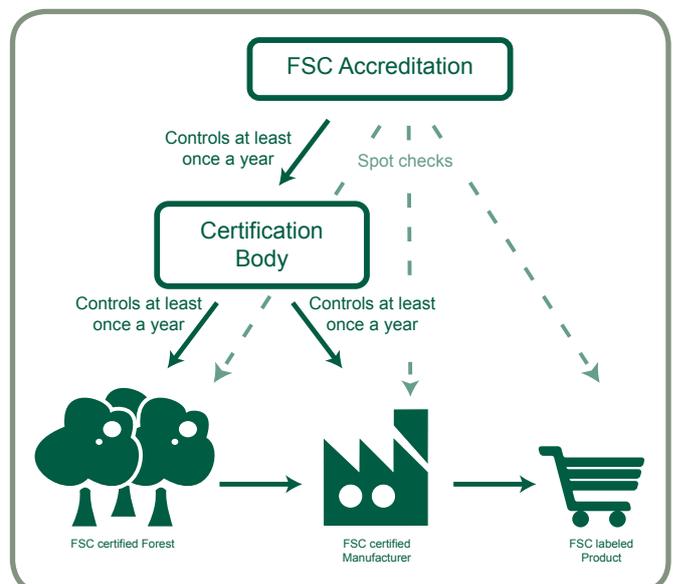
FSC is the only certification system in forestry recognized by the International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling Alliance (ISEAL) to follow best-practice in standard setting – the international reference for setting credible voluntary social and environmental standards.

### Independent certification

FSC does not issue certificates itself. The certification process is carried out by independent organizations called certification bodies. This allows FSC to remain independent from the assessment process and supports the integrity of the FSC certification system.

Certification bodies assess forest management and chain of custody operations against FSC standards. Each certificate holder is audited at least once a year and must fully comply with FSC requirements to achieve and maintain FSC certification.

Only FSC accredited certification bodies are authorized to evaluate, monitor and certify to FSC standards. To achieve FSC accreditation, certifiers have to comply with an extensive set of rules and procedures and verified by Accreditation Services International (ASI), the company managing the FSC accreditation program.





### **The FSC label - rewarding responsible forest practices**

FSC is a powerful branded trust mark and product labeling system that recognizes responsible forest management in the market place.

The FSC label provides a credible link between responsible production and consumption, enabling the consumer to make socially and environmentally responsible purchasing decisions.

FSC certification helps to protect a brand and reputation and it allows certificate holders to access highly environmentally sensitive markets.

#### **Types of certificates**

##### **Forest management (FM)**

FSC forest management (FM) certification is a way of ensuring that a forest manager's or owner's, careful and long-term forest management is recognized. Certification is voluntary.

Special options exist for smallholders and groups of forest operations.

To sell material from an FSC certified forest with the FSC logo, the forest manager must also achieve FSC chain of custody certification.

##### **Chain of custody (CoC)**

FSC chain of custody (CoC) allows credible tracking of FSC material from the forest, through all the production process, to committed retailers and consumers.

CoC certification is for companies that manufacture, process or trade in timber or non-timber forest products and want to demonstrate to their customers that they use responsibly produced raw materials. Certification is voluntary.

Special options exist for larger companies that wish to certify more than one site.

Only FSC CoC certified operations are allowed to label products with the FSC trademarks.

Increasingly, governments and other organizations specify FSC certified products in their purchasing policies. And because FSC has the only globally valid standard, it is also the only standard that is no barrier to trade under the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Almost everything made from wood and other forest products is available with the FSC label. The range of FSC products covers paper and lumber, furniture, jewelry, guitars, footballs, cosmetics and more.

#### **FSC market in figures**

In 2010, over 120 million hectares are FSC certified in over 80 countries around the world – the equivalent of roughly 5% of the world's production forests. FSC's current unprecedented growth rate is a response to market demand for FSC certified products. The value of FSC labeled sales is estimated at over 20 billion USD.

This demonstrates a large political and economic force that is endorsing and promoting the FSC system globally.

#### **Support FSC and be part of the solution**

There are many ways you can support FSC and help us to improve the management of the world's forests:

- As a consumer you can buy FSC certified products
- Businesses in the forest products industry can become FSC certified
- Promote FSC by using the FSC logo on your FSC certified products
- Everybody interested in the fate of the world's forests can become an FSC member and actively contribute to the future of the organization
- Have your say in the FSC standard development-process – for international and national standards
- And last but not least you can support FSC financially ([www.fsc.org/donate\\_support.html](http://www.fsc.org/donate_support.html))

A great number of strong partners and supporters have united to become a powerful network. Together we are working for better management of the world's forests.

**The FSC network: global and local**

FSC is nationally represented in more than 55 countries around the world through its decentralized network.

**FSC AC**, the overarching membership association, is located in Oaxaca, Mexico. FSC AC has three daughter companies: FSC IC, FSC Global Development and Accreditation Services International (ASI).

**FSC** is located in Bonn, Germany. **FSC IC** sets international standards, approves national standards and ensures the protection of the FSC trademarks. It approves National Initiatives, coordinates the activities of the National and Regional Offices and ensures consistent practices throughout the network. **FSC Global Development** supports the development of FSC markets, and strengthens recognition and correct use of the FSC trademarks. **ASI** manages the FSC accreditation program of certification bodies.

**National Standard Working Groups** support the development of national, sub-national and regional forest stewardship standards. They are often attached to FSC National Initiatives.

A **National Initiative** can be a Contact Person or Working Group; they are financially independent from FSC. National Initiatives promote FSC in their country by providing information, running marketing campaigns and supporting forest managers and manufacturers to use the FSC tool.

**National and Regional Offices** act as service centers for National Initiatives by providing training programs. They also support FSC processes in countries without National Initiatives.

**Nominated Agents** are individuals or organizations which play a fundamental role in the protection and monitoring of the FSC trademarks around the world. They issue, approve and control FSC logo use by non-certificate holders.

