



FSC Statement

Certification of natural forests

The increasing global demand for forest products continues to put pressure on the world's forests and inevitably results in parts of natural forests being used for production purposes. Much of the world's remaining natural forests are illegally exploited, poorly management or converted to other land uses, commonly resulting in severe degradation or complete destruction. FSC was established to address these very concerns.

FSC certification ensures that essential social and environmental criteria are required in forest management, and complements conservation strategies as part of global efforts protect and maintain the world's forests. The [FSC Principles and Criteria \(P&C\)](#) are recognized as the highest social and environmental standards for forest management worldwide. These fundamental values are developed by the global consensus on responsible forest management through strong multi-stakeholder processes. The FSC P&C are supported and endorsed by social, environmental and economic constituents in the Global South and Global North alike.

FSC certification requires that civil and indigenous rights are respected, areas of high social and environmental conservation value are maintained or enhanced, environmental impact of logging activities are reduced, rights of workers and indigenous peoples are respected, and harvesting must meet national laws and international treaties. When a forest manager demonstrates that they have met the FSC standards, certification brings economic benefits that can offer financially competitive alternatives to poor practice, illegal logging and conversion to other land uses.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is forest management certification?

Forest management certification is a way of verifying careful and long-term management of forests. FSC certification is voluntary and forest managers or owners can choose to comply with FSC standards, and agree to independent inspection to earn FSC forest management (FM) certification. FSC certification is carried out by accredited certification bodies which audit each FSC certificate at least annually. Any non-compliance with FSC requirements results in Corrective Action Requests (CARs) and the company is required to make the prescribed changes within a given time frame or its FSC certificate will be suspended or withdrawn.

What is FSC's role in the certification process?

FSC develops guidelines for responsible forest management through strong multi-stakeholder processes. FSC also accredits independent certification bodies to carry out certification activities in accordance with the FSC Principles and Criteria. FSC evaluates the certification body's



working procedures, their technical competence and expertise through a detailed accreditation process and regular surveillance under the FSC Accreditation Program ensures continued compliance with FSC accreditation requirements. The FSC Accreditation Program is managed by ASI-Accreditation Services International GmbH (www.accreditationservices.com).

How does FSC ensure that certification requirements are met?

The certification process is carried out by independent organizations called certification bodies. Before being able to certify according to FSC standards, certification bodies have to gain FSC accreditation. Accreditation controls the proper implementation of the FSC rules and procedures by the FSC accredited certification bodies. The company managing the FSC accreditation program is called Accreditation Services International (ASI). More information is available at www.fsc.org/certification.html or at the ASI website www.accreditation-services.com.

How does FSC respond to stakeholder concerns?

As a multi-stakeholder organization, FSC is committed to facilitating consistent and timely evaluation of complaints and appeals raised by stakeholders against decisions, performances or any other issues within the FSC scheme. FSC has effective mechanisms for addressing stakeholder concerns, including, among others, the Dispute Resolution System (FSC-STD-01-005) and the supporting documents. The FSC Dispute Resolution System supports stakeholders to express concerns they may have with the operation of the FSC system and to find the best way of resolving disputes. The commitment to engage in the FSC system is an important step for stakeholders to ensure that their concerns are brought to FSC in a constructive manner. More information is available online at <http://www.fsc.org/dispute-resolution>.

For more information, please visit www.fsc.org or contact your local FSC representative (<http://www.fsc.org/fsc-locations.html>).