

MEDIA KIT



What is FSC?

→ **Non-profit:**

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is an independent, non-governmental organization established to promote the responsible management of the world's forests. Since FSC's Founding Assembly held in Toronto in 1993 and its first certificates issued, a lot has been accomplished and much more needs to be done. In 25 years FSC has certified over 200 million hectares of forests, in over 80 countries worldwide.

→ **Mission statement:**

FSC promotes environmentally sound, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests.

→ **Guiding principles and cornerstone of FSC certification:**

FSC's vision is that the world's forests are responsibly used to fulfil the social, environmental, and economic needs of the present generation, without compromising those of future generations. It is towards this goal that FSC has developed a set of rules, called the FSC Principles & Criteria (FSC P&C). This rulebook—a first of its kind in forest management—defines best practice and helps global forest owners and managers work towards that goal. Any forest operation that seeks our endorsement must adhere to these [ten principles](#) before it can receive an FSC forest management certification.

Our [ten principles](#) cover issues ranging from environmental impact to community relations and workers' rights to monitoring and assessment processes. FSC also lays out a number of criteria

related to each principle, which provides practical ways of assessing whether they are being followed.

Our principles are applicable worldwide and relevant to different kinds of forest areas and ecosystems, as well as cultural, political, and legal systems. To help forest managers, owners and certification bodies interpret the latest FSC P&C (approved in 2015) for their region, we also developed the [International Generic Indicators](#) (IGIs).

In many countries, FSC standard development groups have developed [national forest stewardship standards](#) to interpret the principles and criteria specific to their national context.

→ ISEAL Alliance:

FSC is a member of the ISEAL Alliance, a global association that vouches for the credibility of the sustainability standards of its members, which in turn meet ISEAL's '[Codes of Good Practice](#)'. An ISEAL membership affirms measurable change through open, rigorous and accessible certification systems. Fairtrade International, Rainforest Alliance and UTZ are some others that are members of the Alliance.

a) Our Work:

Everyday, FSC works towards the care of our forests and those who rely on them: by protecting plant and animal species, ensuring Indigenous Peoples' rights, requiring forest workers' safety, and much more.

We achieve this through FSC certification, ensuring that forests around the world are responsibly managed—with certification being a voluntary, market-based tool, verified from forest origin through supply chain. Since the first FSC certificates were issued at our founding assembly in 1993, a lot has been accomplished. The FSC footprint now spans 200 million hectares of forests, across 80 countries, with almost 900 members.

That said, the challenge of climate change and dynamic social, environmental and economic factors, determine and ensure that we are constantly adjusting to the new realities of our world's forests. Taking these into consideration, FSC ensures sustainably-managed forests where a maximum area of forests are protected.

While certification has proven to be a powerful tool for change, we realise that our work doesn't end there. This is especially true for regions such as the tropics, where pressures beyond the forest drives degradation.

FSC realises that forest governance and economic systems in many parts of the world provide greater incentives for deforestation and related social inequities than they do for responsible forest management.

As part of FSC's Global Strategic Plan 2015-2020, we are committed to improving our certification system and aspire to use our unique convening strengths in new ways, to fulfil our mission of protecting our world's forests.

This two-dimensional approach—of reinforcing certification and using our core strength to promote responsible forest management—reflects FSC's leadership by action and its unique power as a convener for diverse groups to find positive impactful solutions, that are locally relevant for forests and its people.

b) Structure: FSC's unique chamber structure.

The FSC membership is composed of environmentalists, scientists, business leaders, forest managers, Indigenous Peoples, trade union representatives, and NGOs.

To give an equal say to these different voices, our membership is divided into three different chambers – environmental, social and economic, which are further split into sub-chambers of global North and South.

Voting on the motions is based on the three-chamber system, with equal voting power given to each chamber. The purpose of the chamber structure is to maintain the balance of power between different interests without having to limit the number of members.

→ Social Chamber:

In the forests we have workers, indigenous peoples, local people—they all have different roles and we should be able to understand and respect those roles. It's also enormously important that they all have equal rights.

→ Environmental Chamber:

FSC is very active in large forested countries like Canada, Russia and countries in the Congo Basin and the Amazon; and it is our endeavour to do all we can to secure them for future generations. We are aware of the role FSC needs to play, in addition to local policies for nature protection and the forest preservation.

→ Economic Chamber:

This chamber represents companies, the industry, trade associations and consumers who have a stake and interest in promoting and supporting sustainable forestry through FSC's robust and forward-looking policies on forest management and sourcing.

FSC by the Numbers

→ Area: **Over 200 million hectares certified**

→ Forest management certifications: **35,063 CoC certificates**

→ FM/Chain of Custody certifications: **1,595 FM/CoC Certificates**

→ Regions/Continents: **5 regions**

→ Offices (number of countries): **4 sub-regional offices, 5 Regional offices, 41 National offices**

FSC Certification: Benefits beyond business

FSC's standards reflect the sensibilities and concerns of all three of its chambers—social, environment and economic. Besides the positive impact that our standards have on the environment and the industry, FSC has a sturdy social component that seeks to contribute significantly to local development and improved relationships between logging companies and local populations.

According to an assessment of certified versus non-certified forest management units (FMU) in the Congo Basin by the [Center for International Forestry Research \(CIFOR\)](#), supported by the World

Wildlife Fund (WWF), FSC certification led to various improvements within FMUs, particularly with respect to worker well-being.

Among other examples, [the study](#) demonstrated that people of the Congo Basin living in FSC certified logging operations have better health and safety options (like medical facilities, health and life insurance), improved working conditions (like permanent contracts) and less conflict between local people and the forest management company.

As a result of being responsibly managed, FSC-certified forests reap benefits that are more holistic and inclusive—for the forests, the forest managers and the locals.

In May 2018, FSC launched a new Ecosystem Services Procedure. This procedure offers businesses and governments a new tool to demonstrate and communicate the impact they are having on the conservation and restoration of forest ecosystems (such as water, carbon, biodiversity, soil and recreational services) they work within.

The first FSC ecosystems services impact verification in the world was completed in October 2018, at an FSC site in Chile and the second was in December 2018 in Italy.

a) Types of certifications

→ **Forest Management (FM):**

An FSC forest management certification attests that the forest is being managed in a way that preserves its natural ecosystem and benefits the lives of local people and workers, all while ensuring it sustains economic viability.

Forest managers or owners must comply with the following:

- i) Maintain areas of environmental and social value
- ii) Protect the people, plants and animals that live in and around, and depend upon, the forest.
- iii) Respect Indigenous Peoples' land rights and enhance forest workers' rights.
- iv) Protect areas of high conservation value (HCVs). These may contain significant concentration of plant or animal species; rare, threatened, or endangered ecosystems; or areas of rare or outstanding biological, ecological, or social value.

A forest management certification is valid for five years, subject to annual checks to ensure that FSC requirements are continuously met.

→ **Chain of Custody (CoC):**

An FSC chain of custody certification verifies that FSC-certified material has been identified and separated from non-certified and non-controlled material, as it makes its way along the supply chain.

A chain of custody certification requires the forest manager or business to:

- i) Implement and maintain a CoC management system adequate to its size and complexity to ensure conformity to all applicable certification requirements, at all times.
- ii) Maintain up-to-date information about all suppliers whose materials are used for FSC product groups, including names, certification code (if applicable), and materials supplied.
- iii) Handle material in cases where there is risk of non-eligible inputs entering FSC product groups, the organization shall implement strict segregation methods.
- iv) Identify the main processing steps involving a change of material volume or weight and specify the conversion factor(s) for each processing step, in each product group or job order.

v) Ensure that sales documents (physical or electronic) issued for products sold with FSC claims are well recorded and documented.

b) What our labels mean

Depending on the levels of FSC-certified wood in your products, and the scope of your certificate, you may need to combine your chain of custody standard with additional standards—essentially, extra requirements you'll need to meet.

→ **FSC 100%:**

The FSC 100% label signifies that a product is made entirely from FSC-certified forest material. Research suggests one-third of all FSC-certified products are FSC 100% (FSC Global Market Survey Report 2014).

→ **FSC Recycled:**

The FSC Recycled label denotes that a product is exclusively made of reclaimed material. FSC Recycled wood must have at least 70 percent of post-consumer reclaimed material. No threshold applies for FSC Recycled paper.

→ **FSC Mix Label or Controlled Wood:**

The FSC Mix label lets people know that certified wood has been supplemented with non-certified materials. However, this non-certified material needs to adhere to a certain standard: either the reclaimed wood standard or the controlled wood standard.

By meeting this standard, a forest management company achieves controlled wood certification. This means that the material sourced has not been harvested illegally, in violation of traditional or civil rights, or in a way that threatens high conservation value (HCV) areas. Controlled wood must also not be taken from forests being converted to plantation or non-forest use, or from forests containing genetically modified trees.

Checks and Balances

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. It is towards this, that in addition to its stringent policies and standards, FSC has two main resolution procedures.

a) **Dispute Resolution**

FSC's dispute resolution unit reviews and resolves complaints or appeals submitted by stakeholders.

These complaints could be about a violation of one of the six elements in our Policy for Association or general complaints of misconduct against FSC standards by certificate holders, certification bodies, ASI or even FSC itself.

Grievances about the operation of the FSC certification system, the FSC network, the FSC accreditation programme or the performance of FSC accredited certification bodies may be directly submitted to the dispute resolution unit. However, general complaints must follow a process of direct engagement before it is accelerated to the unit.

For example, FSC encourages complaints about certificate holders or a certification body to first be addressed to the certificate holder or certification body in question. Only when no resolution is achieved through direct engagement, is it appropriate to escalate the dispute to

- (i) a certification body (when the dispute is with a certificate holder), or
- (ii) the Assurance Services International (ASI) (when the dispute is with a certification body).

Assurance Services International (ASI) is an independent organization that checks the conformity of certification bodies (Conformity Assessment Bodies or CABs). Being one of the world's leading bodies to verify the credibility of global sustainability systems, ASI assesses organizations issuing certificates for a range of standards and ensures that audits are conducted with competence and global consistency.

ASI has a global team of experts to monitor CAB performance at all stages of operations, which includes:

- Office assessments: Review management, competence and decision-making process of CABs.
- Field assessments: Audit CABs performance on ground.
- Report assessments: Check risk areas in a supply chain or risk-region.

b) Supply chain integrity programme (SCIP)

The supply chain integrity programme supports the FSC's supply chain function by streamlining response times and developing tools used by retailers, stakeholders and FSC to improve intelligence gathering.

SCIP creates an efficient and credible verification system which uses digital and emerging technologies; developing solutions for addressing false claims, audit checks and cost-effective certification.

Through the programme, FSC has been able to:

- Identify, investigate and address value chains with a high risk of false claims.
- Coordinate with Assurance Services International (ASI) to implement transaction verification requirements and test the best methods and tools for meeting these requirements.
- Develop and test FSC rapid response system for false claims and incidences.

SCIP, along with the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, is developing a global database of wood reference samples to use in isotope and DNA technology, tools which will eventually be used to combat the occurrence of illegal timber trade.

SCIP is also in the process of developing a volume matching tool (with ASI and support from FSC), a central incident database and a global brand protection toolkit.

c) Policy for Association (PfA)

FSC's Policy for Association, an expression of the values shared by organizations associated with FSC, defines the six activities that are unacceptable. These values act as a safeguard against organizations involved in activities that do not align with the spirit and mission of FSC.

These include:

- Illegal harvesting or trade in forest products;

- Violation of traditional and human rights;
- Violation of any of the ILO Core Conventions;
- Significant damage to high conservation values in forests;
- Significant conversion of forests to plantations or non-forest use;
- Planting or growing of genetically modified trees for commercial purposes.

PfA applies to all organisations associated with, or seeking to associate with, FSC—including those holding a contractual agreement with FSC, a license agreement, a cooperative agreement or a membership agreement.

FSC's Policy for the Association applies to situations where the unacceptable activity is occurring or has occurred; it also covers illicit activities by an associated organisation, that do not fall within the scope of its FSC certificate.

KIM CARSTENSEN



Kim Carstensen is the Director General of the Forest Stewardship Council, a position he has held since October 2012.

Mr. Carstensen has a proven track record as a global leader within the environment and development sectors. Prior to joining FSC, Mr. Carstensen managed Fair Green Solutions, an environmental strategy and sustainable development consultancy that, among other things, helped link the concepts of 'Green Economy' and sustainable development for clients in the Global South.

His strategic approach to environment and development issues comes from a long history of global leadership at WWF, most recently as the leader of WWF International's Global Climate Initiative. Here, he led the organization's development of nationally relevant climate change programmes in the world's key economies, and WWF's push for global climate action across governments and businesses.

Prior to this, Mr. Carstensen was the CEO of WWF Denmark, where he worked on issues related to global environment and development policy, and to environment and development projects in the Global South.

Mr. Carstensen's broad development experience also comes from his prior role as Deputy Chairman of the Board of Danida (Denmark's Official Development Assistance Agency), where he participated in broad discussions of development issues in all sectors, and from his academic training as a sociologist.

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