



FSC FOREST MANAGEMENT

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is an international certification and labelling system dedicated to promoting environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically prosperous management of the world's forests. FSC was created in 1993 to help consumers and businesses identify products from responsibly managed forests. FSC has developed a system of forest certification and product labelling that enables people to identify responsibly sourced wood, paper and other forest products.

What is forest certification?

As a forest manager or owner, certification is a way of ensuring that your careful and long term forest management is recognized. Certification is voluntary. It involves an inspection of the forest management by an independent third-party certification body to check that the forest passes the international agreed upon principles of good forest management. The timber can then carry the FSC label, guaranteeing that it comes from a well-managed forest and enabling you to pass on the benefits of certification to your customers.

Benefits of forest certification

- Receive the public recognition which responsible forest management deserves;
- Meet customer demands: Retailers & purchasers are increasingly concerned about where their products come from;
- Gain competitive advantage for your timber;
- Meet internal policy: certification helps forest managers to demonstrate to owners, investors and /or themselves that they are meeting their objectives of responsible long-term management.

Achieving FSC forest certification

1. Contact a third-party accredited certification body (=auditor).
2. Submit an application to the certification body and receive a price and timeline quote.
3. Complete an on-site audit.
4. Certification approval and receipt of FSC certification code (XXX-COC-#####) and trademark license code (FSC-C#####). Certificates are valid for a 5 year period).
5. Annual surveillance audit.

Canadian Forest Management Standard

All FSC forest management standards are based on FSC's International Principles & Criteria. At a regional level, indicators and verifiers are further developed in order to reflect the unique environmental and social requirements of the region.

Small and Low Intensity Managed Forests (SLIMF)

FSC certification is now more affordable and accessible to owners and managers of small forests and forests managed under low intensity systems under the SLIMF criteria in FSC Canada's forest management standard.

In Canada, small forests are considered to be those less than 1,000 ha in size. Low intensity forests are those with a harvesting rate of less than 20% of the mean annual growth in timber, and either an annual harvest or an annual average harvest of less than 5,000 cubic meters (averaged over the certificate lifetime). Forests used solely for harvesting non-timber forest products also qualify as SLIMF regardless of size or intensity.

FSC certification is carried out under a modified set of procedures which streamline technical requirements that forest managers need to meeting, including changes to sampling levels, simpler administration processes and a reduction in the number of reviews needed. Most importantly, this means a significant reduction in cost of FSC certification which can be an obstacle for small forest owners and managers.

Group Certification

FSC has created group certification as a way to provide access to certification for enterprises that already have a legal organization or support from an external organization, such as a trade association or cooperative. By centralizing the collective responsibilities of certification, group members can reduce the costs and administrative requirements of certification.

Non-timber Forest Products

FSC certification is certification of the forest as a whole system; not simply certification of the trees in the forest. This means that there is the potential for other forest products to carry the FSC Trademarks such as maple syrup, honey, fruit - the only limitation is what the forest produces.

Learn more

More details can be found on the FSC Canada website www.ca.fsc.org

Principles & Criteria

The FSC Principles & Criteria (P&C) describe the essential elements or rules of environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial and economically viable forest management. There are ten principles setting out this vision; each principle is supported by several criteria that provide a way of judging whether the principle has been met in practice. The ten FSC Principles require the forest owner or manager to do the following:

Principle 1: Compliance with Laws

Comply with all applicable laws, regulations and nationally-ratified international treaties, conventions and agreements.

Principle 2: Workers' Rights and Employment Conditions

Maintain or enhance the social and economic wellbeing of workers.

Principle 3: Indigenous Peoples' Rights

Identify and uphold indigenous peoples' legal and customary rights of ownership, use and management of land, territories and resources affected by management activities.

Principle 4: Community Relations

Contribute to maintaining or enhancing the social and economic wellbeing of local communities.

Principle 5: Benefits from the forest

Efficiently manage the range of multiple products and services of the Management Unit to maintain or enhance long term economic viability* and the range of environmental and social benefits.

Principle 6: Environmental Values and Impacts

Maintain, conserve and/or restore ecosystem services and environmental values of the Management Unit, and shall avoid, repair or mitigate negative environmental impacts.

Principle 7: Management Planning

Have a management plan consistent with its policies and objectives and proportionate to scale, intensity and risks of its management activities. The management plan shall be implemented and kept up to date based on monitoring information in order to promote adaptive management. The associated planning and procedural documentation shall be sufficient to guide staff, inform affected stakeholders and interested stakeholders and to justify management decisions.

Principle 8: Monitoring and Assessment

Demonstrate that, progress towards achieving the management objectives, the impacts of management activities and the condition of the Management Unit, are monitored and evaluated proportionate to the scale, intensity and risk of management activities, in order to implement adaptive management.

Principle 9: High Conservation Values

Maintain and/or enhance the High Conservation Values in the Management Unit through applying the precautionary approach.

Principle 10: Implementation of Management Activities

Implementation of Management Activities - Management activities conducted by or for The Organization for the Management Unit shall be selected and implemented consistent with The Organization's economic, environmental and social policies and objectives and in compliance with the Principles and Criteria collectively.