



**FORESTSTM
FOR ALL
FOREVER**

TOP TIPS FOR INTEGRATING FSC[®]-CERTIFIED PRODUCTS AND/OR MATERIALS



If you are ready to
meaningfully integrate
FSC-certified products and
materials into your business
but are not sure where
to start, **start here.**

If you are a larger brand or organization, you may want to **establish an executive commitment and an organizing/steering committee.**

An executive commitment sends a strong and clear signal to the entire organization about the importance of the change.

The organizing committee should include members from every level of the organization to ensure goals are reasonable and attainable, and to increase program buy-in.

You can then move on to these steps...

1

DEFINE YOUR REASONS WHY

This step clarifies and explains why your company/organization wants to establish or improve its sustainability commitments or procurement policies with FSC. It's important to consider how this change fits with your values, goals, and objectives.

Answer the following:

- Why are you committing to sustainable forest management and FSC?
- What does this commitment mean to you/your organization? Are you doing this in response to the customers?
- Is your commitment to FSC part of a broader environmental or sustainability commitment? If yes, how?

2

CONDUCT A SELF-EVALUATION

Analyze your current purchasing and consumption behaviour. This helps with goal setting and implementation plans.

- Who purchases paper/wood?
- What types of paper/wood are being purchased? In what quantities? At what cost?
- What purchasing policies exist, if any? Are there preferential contracts? Do we receive volume discounts? Is there centralized buying?
- Who has the authority to change current policies?
- Who are your current suppliers? Do they currently offer FSC-certified paper/wood? Have you checked the **FSC database** to ensure the company is certified?

Consumption:

- Who are the major users?
- What types of paper/wood are being used? For what?
- What quantity of paper/wood is being used?
- Are there any efforts in place to reduce, reuse or recycle paper/wood? If so, can they be improved? If not, what can be done to reduce, reuse or recycle them?

How to verify that your products are FSC certified

- Source from an FSC-certified supplier
- Check that the certificate is valid using our online database (search.fsc.org/en) and that it covers the right product category, e.g., 'paper' or 'indoor furniture'
- Specify FSC-certified materials when placing your order and let your supplier know that you need them to make an FSC claim, e.g., FSC Recycled or FSC 100% on the sales documents
- Check that the delivery note and/or invoice clearly identifies the FSC-certified product(s) and FSC claim and includes the supplier's FSC certificate code (e.g., XX-COC-000000)



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DEVELOP SPECIFICATIONS AND IDENTIFY SUPPLIERS

This is your chance to get clear on what you are looking for and to identify suppliers, existing and new, that can meet these requirements.

- Specify and document what characteristics are required of the various types of paper/wood your organization consumes, e.g., copy paper should contain a minimum 30% post-consumer waste content, FSC certified, etc.
 - ♦ Consider the various uses and purposes of the paper/wood you consume.
 - ♦ Different uses may be better suited to different papers, e.g., internal paper can have a higher grade of recycled content than published documents, etc.
- To ensure best practices are being employed, stipulate requirements for suppliers to possess third-party FSC certification in all tenders, for example:
 - ♦ “Tenderer shall be third party certified to FSC standards and offer FSC certified paper/wood”.
 - ♦ Samples of each item for which the tenderer intends to quote shall be submitted in a separate envelope/cover, superscribing “Technical Tenders”.
 - ♦ Shop around amongst existing and prospective suppliers to determine the degree to which they can offer FSC-certified products or materials based on your specifications.

46%

of global consumers know the FSC logo

62%

of them will choose an FSC-certified product over its non-certified equivalent.

80%

of consumers who know FSC say they're more likely to trust a brand if it offers FSC-certified products.

Important note for your Vendors or Suppliers

If you are informing vendors/suppliers of the requirement for FSC-certified materials, it is important to ensure that suppliers are aware that **both the product and the company itself (not just their supplier) must be FSC-certified** to maintain the FSC chain of custody.

Those tendering for projects requiring the use of FSC-certified materials should ensure that they hold FSC certification. This will enable them to provide the appropriate evidence of FSC certification to their contracting organisation.

For more information, please visit FSC Canada's website [here](#).



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SET GOALS

Setting goals that are **specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound** (SMART) is important.

Also, consider using a two-pronged approach. This allows all of your stakeholders to understand that it takes many **small, measurable actions to achieve overall program success**.

An example is to begin by setting the **final goals** (with timelines) you wish to achieve, e.g., 100% use of FSC-certified paper/wood by January 1, 2030. Then set **incremental milestones** (with timelines) that work towards the ultimate goal(s), e.g., 50% use of FSC-certified paper/wood by January 1, 2027.

These goals should consider:

- The breadth of the change, i.e., company or department-wide, regional or national level, etc.
- Amount and purpose of current paper/wood consumption
- Existing contracts with suppliers

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IMPLEMENT AND EVALUATE

With internal teams, develop and document a detailed action plan to ensure your goals are met.

- Establish an internal feedback and monitoring system to ensure continuous improvement and adherence to the policy.
- Periodically review these goals and objectives, e.g., assess what changes in consumption have been made:
 - ♦ What products are being purchased?
 - ♦ Do these products meet your specifications?
- What is the level of employee knowledge and/or commitment to the goals?
- Conduct regular supply vendor reviews, requiring all forest product suppliers to submit annual performance reports detailing their commitment to FSC.

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COMMUNICATE AND CELEBRATE

At every step along your FSC journey, it's important to communicate and involve your internal teams and then your external customers, suppliers, and stakeholders.

Be sure to always share:

- Why it's important,
- How you set your goals,
- What your goals are, and
- How everyone can support them.

With Suppliers:

- Let your current and prospective suppliers know your FSC goals and how they can support this.
- Encourage them to keep or get an FSC Chain of Custody (CoC) certification. Reach out to us to help at info@ca.fsc.org.

NEED MORE IDEAS? Download our Communicate Commitments & Promote FSC-certified Products Guide found in Supporting Resources.