



FOREST STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

Because Forests and People Matter

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is an international, not-for-profit, membership-based organisation that brings people together to find solutions which promote stewardship of the world's forests.

The organisation has created a respected system that develops internationally recognised standards for responsible forest management and an international accreditation program for independent third party Certification Bodies which certify forest managers and forest product producers to FSC standards.

To close the responsible circle of production, FSC has a logo and product label that helps consumers worldwide recognise organisations and products that support responsible forest management.

FSC's mission is to promote environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests.

From a simple idea, FSC has grown from its initial inception to become a global success. To date, over 50 million hectares of forests have been FSC certified.



What is responsible forest management?

Responsible forest management means forests are managed in a way that protects the water, soil and wildlife. It means communities, indigenous peoples, forest workers, industry players, forest owners – anyone who is affected by what happens to forests – agree on how the forest will be managed. And it means people can continue to work, live and earn an income from the forest.

Principles for Forest Stewardship

FSC has developed ten rules or principles that define responsible forest management. These principles are global – they can apply to any forest around the world – and they assure:

1. Compliance with laws and FSC principles
2. Tenure and use rights and responsibilities
3. Indigenous peoples' rights
4. Community relations and worker's 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

How does FSC promote responsible forest management?

Developing international policies and standards that promote responsible forestry

FSC develops international standards for forest stewardship that are widely endorsed by different stakeholders. FSC international standards take into account needs, concerns and aspirations of forest stakeholders.

The FSC International Center provides the framework for the development of national standards throughout the FSC network. This framework ensures consistency in all FSC national and regional standards.

Accrediting organisations supporting responsible forestry

To maintain the integrity of FSC standards, certification of forest managers and forest product manufacturers is carried out by organisations independent of the FSC International Center. These organisations are accredited and audited annually by the FSC Accreditation Program.

The FSC Accreditation Program also accredits National Initiatives that promote FSC's mission at the local level.

The FSC label: Rewarding responsible forest practices

The FSC checkmark and tree logo has evolved into an emblem for responsible forest management practices among forest stakeholders. Products from FSC certified forests that are covered by the chain-of-custody certificate, may be labelled with the FSC logo which serves as a further endorsement for certificate holders and an option for forest product consumers to demonstrate their support towards responsible forest management practices.



Certificate Types

There are three types of FSC certificates available from Certification Bodies.

Forest management certificates apply to operations managing forest lands.

Chain of custody certificates apply to manufacturers and processors of forest products. The Chain of Custody standards allow credible tracking of certified wood and wood products from certified forests through trade and manufacturing to committed retailers and consumers.

Joint forest management-chain of custody certificates are available.

These three types of certificates can be for **individual** forest operations or for **groups** of forest operations.

FSC Forest Stewardship Standards

Working together to define responsible forest management at local level

To ensure appropriate implementation of FSC Principles and Criteria at the local level, the FSC Accreditation Program accredits national and sub-national standards.

FSC forest stewardship standards are developed through the support of FSC National Initiatives. Forest stewardship standards define the key characteristics of responsible forest management within a country. They must address all of FSC's Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship.

National or sub-national working groups develop standards through an open, democratic process. The working groups are set up to include the views of all stakeholders, with an equal balance of social, environmental and economic interests.

Once written, forest stewardship standards are accredited by FSC and can be used for forest evaluations. FSC-accredited Certification Bodies use these standards to evaluate forests in that country. Forests that meet the requirements of the national standard can become *FSC certified*.

In countries that do not have accredited standards, Certification Bodies can use their own locally-adapted standard to evaluate and certify forest operations until a national standard is developed.

The FSC Network: Covering the globe

Our decentralised network of National Initiatives and Regional Offices covers 37 countries around the world.

National Initiatives: National Initiatives form the foundation of FSC's global network. A National Initiative can be a contact person, working group or permanent office promoting FSC in the country. National Initiatives provide information, support and services to individuals and organisations interested in FSC, and support the development of national or sub-national standards.

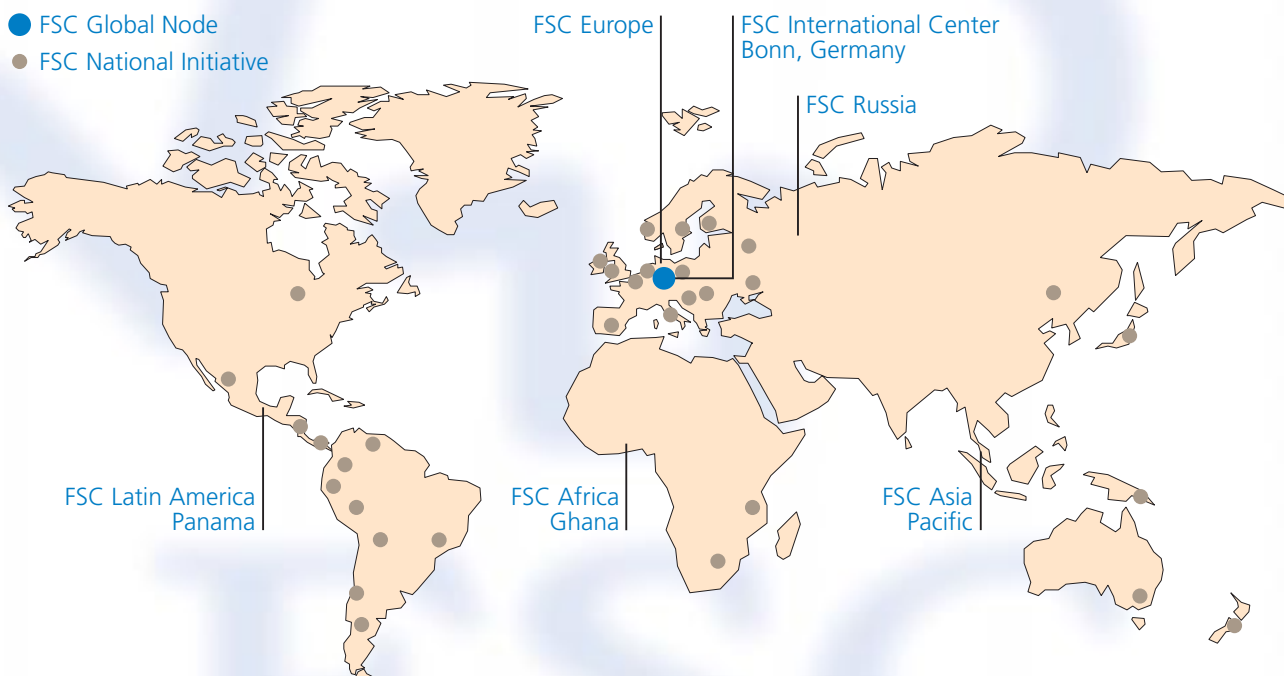
Nominated Agents: Nominated Agents are individuals or organisations which play a fundamental role in the protection and monitoring of the FSC trademarks around the world. They issue, approve and control FSC logo use by non-certificate holders.

Regional Offices: Regional Offices act as service centres for National Initiatives by providing training and coaching programs. They also support FSC processes in countries without National Initiatives. There are five FSC Regional Offices: Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and Russia. National Initiatives in Canada, China and



USA are also considered 'regions' because of their geographical size.

FSC International: Located in Bonn, Germany, FSC International coordinates the activities of the Regional Offices, and ensures consistent practices throughout the network.



Why is FSC unique?

Credible: FSC is the world's most rigorous forest product labeling scheme. It is the only forest label supported by the World Wildlife Fund, Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth, and by major forest product retailers.

Inclusive: FSC believes that respect for the views and needs of others is essential. Through open multi-stakeholder processes, FSC has helped give access, voice and vote to people from every stratum of life.

Democratic: FSC is governed by its members, who meet every three years to vote on the direction of FSC. Equal voting weight is given to social, environmental and economic chambers and Northern and Southern countries.

Global: FSC can be found in 77 countries all over the world. With headquarters in Bonn, Germany, five regional offices and 37 National Initiatives, FSC is a truly global network.

Local: The strength of FSC is at the local level. Through our standards development processes, people define and agree what responsible forestry means in their forests. The result is forest stewardship standards that are balanced, local and lasting.

Participation: Make a difference with FSC today

There are many ways to get involved in FSC activities.

Forest Stewardship Standards: Contact your National Initiative to become involved with the national and sub-national standards development process. If there is no National Initiative in your country, contact FSC International to find out how you can promote FSC in your area.

Policies: All FSC policies are developed with the input of stakeholders and interested groups and individuals. To comment on draft policies or to join a Review Committee, visit our website at www.fsc.org.

Accreditation: Stakeholders are consulted during the accreditation process and prior to an accreditation decision. After an accreditation decision is made, there is a two-month advertised appeals period before an accreditation contract can be signed. All FSC-accredited Certification Bodies must consult local stakeholders before awarding a forest management certificate.

Become an FSC member. Show your commitment to responsible forest management! Members set the vision of FSC, and have a voice in the direction FSC takes. For more information, contact membership@fsc.org.

Buy FSC products. By buying FSC certified products you are supporting responsible forest management around the world. Look for the FSC logo whenever you buy forest products.

