



FSC AND THE SOUTH

Because Forests and People Matter

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) brings people together to find solutions which promote stewardship of the world's forests.

Widely adopted and applied to local conditions internationally, FSC offers a credible system that provides equitable access to Southern and Northern countries. "Southern" countries include many of the countries of Eastern Europe, as well as those of the tropics. FSC has been actively engaging the Southern countries in the promotion of responsible forest management since its inception.

Engaging the South: Addressing issues with relevance to the South

In order to better meet forest needs in the South, in 2005 FSC has established an African regional office in Ghana and a Latin America regional office in Panama. A Regional Coordinator was appointed in the Asia Pacific region in 2003.

FSC has carried out many initiatives with particular relevance to the South in the last few years. Highlights include:

- Guidance on the interpretation of FSC Principles 2 and 3 relating to local communities and Indigenous Peoples with specific reference to challenges in the South
- Development of stepwise approaches to forest certification based on FSC's Controlled Wood standards, improving access to certification for forests in the South
- A full review of the FSC plantations policy, focusing on its application in the South as well as the North
- A communication program focusing on promoting uptake of FSC certification by small scale and low intensity forest operations in Latin America
- A major project, funded by the Global Environment Facility, to facilitate certification for responsible management in tropical High Conservation Value Forests (HCVF)
- Activities to develop social impact indicators in the South

What some people say of FSC in the South ...

"FSC in the South is not just about the certificate. It can provide a vision for the people. FSC in the South can give communities and indigenous peoples a voice and recognise they exist."

says David Kaimowitz, CIFOR Executive Director.

... how others have benefited from FSC in the South

Since 2004, FSC improved certification for small scale and low intensity forest operations has resulted in more than 40% savings on cost of certification, largely benefiting forest owners in the South.

Over 150 communities worldwide have received FSC forest management certification while more than 10,000 small forest owners have been certified as part of FSC group certification schemes.

Engaging the South: equitable representation in the FSC system

FSC was founded on the basis of a balanced representation of the Northern and Southern countries. There are presently more than 600 FSC members, with an almost equal number from the South and the North.

FSC's policies are developed through a democratic, transparent and inclusive decision-making process that involves the participation of all interest groups. Equal voting weight is given to three chambers representing social, environmental and economic interests from the South and the North. Members of the three chambers meet and

vote on the direction and activities of FSC at the FSC General Assembly held once every three years.

FSC has also strived to engage the South in its policy consultation process. This is evident from the Southern representation in various FSC's Working Groups including those for High Conservation Value forests, Small Scale and Low Intensity Managed Forests and Plantation Policy.

Increasing participation from Members of the South

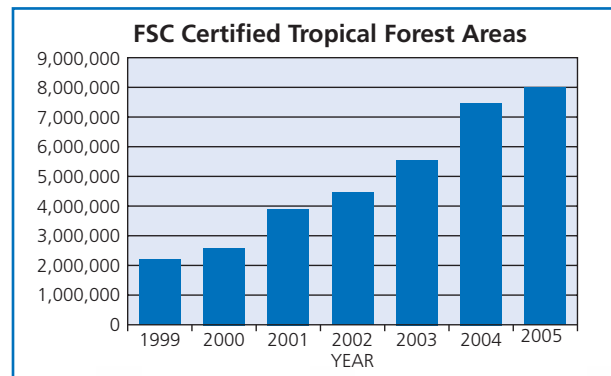
A workshop was conducted in 2005 as part of the FSC South-South process, to better engage the members representing the Latin American region at the FSC General Assembly. Aimed to actively address issues relevant to the South, the initiative has discussed and further developed proposed motions from participating members.

FSC's Progress in the South

FSC national standards and FSC certificates bring the confidence that forests are being managed responsibly and with the support of local communities, indigenous peoples and forest workers.

In a number of countries in the South, forest management operations have been established specifically to meet demand for FSC certified timber, leading to new value added markets that did not previously exist. FSC certification can also create demand for lesser known species and non-timber forest products (NTFP) that were not previously marketed for export.

- FSC is the largest international forest certification system and has been operating in the tropics since its inception.
- In 2005, 8 million hectares of the total FSC certified area was in the tropics.
- 47% of the FSC certified forest area is in the South, including Eastern Europe, representing almost half of FSC forest management certificates.
- Tropical forests have been certified using the FSC Principles and Criteria in: Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Namibia, Nicaragua, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Thailand, Uruguay, Venezuela, Vietnam, Zimbabwe and Zambia.
- FSC Membership in the South doubled between 2001 and 2005.



FSC Successes in the South

- FSC certification has been successful in promoting responsible forestry among the members of **The Peten Community Forest Association of Guatemala**. 2,300 members of the Association account for a total certified forest area of 450,000 ha.
- Undertaken by the **Foundation for the Development of Costa Rican Volcanic Mountain Range (FUNDECOR)**, FSC group certification has enabled people who live in Costa Rican forests to develop environmentally friendly approaches to forest management. This group of producers has contributed to half of the FSC certified wood in Costa Rica for a total timber export of over 50 million dollars during 2002.
- FSC certification of **Pueblo Nuevo, Durango**, a community based forest management operation in Mexico led to the first lumber sales from a forest community to a major international furniture company (News and Notes Dec. 2003)
- The creation of an eco-track buffer zone by **SiyaQhubeka Forests (Pty) Limited**, an FSC-certified forest operation in South Africa not only allows wildlife access to additional habitat and greater freedom of movement, but also creates job and business opportunities for local people.