

VOLUNTARY FOREST CERTIFICATION

Voluntary forest certification is a procedure from which a third party (auditor) independent from the producer and consumer gives written assurance that forest management and use, as well as the products produced from wood harvested in this forest, conform with certain requirements. It is the modern and effective instrument of sustainable forestry development all over the World.

WHAT IS FSC?

The Forest Stewardship Council is an international non-profit forest certification and labelling system that was established to offer a single, easily recognizable label for wood and forest products that consumers can trust. This label certifies that forest products come from responsibly managed forests

FSC'S VISION

The world's forests meet the social, ecological and economic rights and needs of the present generation without compromising those of future generations.

FSC'S MISSION

The FSC shall promote environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests.



This label certifies that forest products come from responsibly managed forest



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Environmentally appropriate forest management ensures that the harvest of timber and non-timber products maintains the forest's biodiversity, productivity and ecological processes. Socially beneficial forest management helps both local people and society at large to enjoy long-term benefits and also provides strong incentives to local people to sustain the forest resources and adhere to long-term management plans. Economically viable forest management means that forest operations are structured and managed so as to be sufficiently profitable, without generating financial profit at the expense of the forest resources, the ecosystem or affected communities. The tension between the need to generate adequate financial returns and the principles of responsible forest operations can be reduced through efforts to market forest products for their best value.

PRINCIPLES AND CRITERIA

The FSC Principles & Criteria is the basic document which describes 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 – The Organization shall comply with all applicable laws, regulations, national-ratified international treaties, conventions and agreements.

Principle 2: Workers rights and employment conditions – The Organization shall maintain or enhance the social and economic wellbeing of workers.

Principle 3: Indigenous peoples' rights – The Organization shall 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 – The Organization shall contribute to maintaining or enhancing the social and economic well-being of local communities.

Principle 5: Benefits from the forest – The Organization shall 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 social and environmental benefits.

Principle 6: Environmental values and impacts – The Organization shall maintain, conserve and/or restore the ecosystem services and environmental values of the Management Unit, and shall avoid, repair or mitigate negative environmental impact.

Principle 7: Management planning – The Organization shall 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 associates 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 Organization shall demonstrate that it towards achieving the management objectives, the impacts of management activities and the condition of the Management Unit, are monitored and evaluated proportionate to scale, intensity and management activities, in order to inform adaptive management.

Principle 9: High conservation value Organization shall maintain and/or the high conservation values Management Unit through appropriate precautionary approach.

Principle 10: Implementation of management activities – Management activities carried out by or for the Organization for the Management Unit shall be selected and implemented consistent with the Organization's environmental and social policy objectives and in compliance with Principles and Criteria collectively.

Source: FSC

THE IMPORTANCE OF FSC CERTIFICATION FOR AZERBAIJAN

Potential benefits

- Developing of sustainable forestry
- Control of forest logging and prevention of illegal cuttings
- Building of relationships between stakeholders
- Getting of certified wood or non-wood products
- International image improving

Existing challenges

- Difficulty to get direct financial benefit
- Necessity of legislation adjustment
- Need of National FSC-standard development
- Lack of forest monitoring

Opportunities for forest certification

- Concernment of most forest stakeholders
- Ratification and fulfilment of international conventions in environment protection of labour by Azerbaijan Republic
- Low forest cutting intensity which encourages development of forests with high economic and social value.

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