



# ▶ Forest Stewardship Council® Chain of Custody Certification (FSC®)

## What is FSC®

FSC® is an independent, non-governmental, not-for-profit organization established to promote the responsible management of the world's forests.

### Why should I get FSC® certified

Being FSC certified shows that you comply with the highest social and environmental standards on the market. As public concern about the state of the world's forests and timber resources increases, FSC provides you with a simple solution to complex environmental and social issues.

The FSC label is an effective way to get public and consumer recognition of your responsible practices. This gives you credibility with customers and business partners as well as financial institutions and watchdog organizations.

FSC certification helps to protect your brand and reputation and it allows you to access highly environmentally sensitive markets. Increasingly, governments and other organizations specify FSC certified products in their purchasing policies.

Your choice in purchasing FSC certified products will lead to even more forests being managed responsibly. By becoming an FSC certified supplier your company promotes social, corporate and environmental responsibility.

### About FSC®

Established in 1993 as a response to concerns over global deforestation, FSC is widely regarded as one of the most important initiatives of the last decade to promote responsible forest management worldwide.

FSC provides internationally recognized standard-setting, trademark assurance and accreditation services to companies, organizations, and communities interested in responsible forestry.

The FSC label provides a credible link between responsible production and consumption of forest products, enabling consumers and businesses to make purchasing decisions that benefit people and the environment as well as providing ongoing business value. FSC is nationally represented in more than 50 countries around the world.

### The Aim of FSC®

Forests provide us with clean water, fresh air and they even help combat global warming. They also provide food, medicine and important natural resources, such as timber and paper. If managed responsibly, forests and plantations benefit people – both people dependent on forests and the global community at large.

However, in some countries as much as 80% of the timber is harvested illegally, often involving the violation of human rights and destruction of protected forests. A key factor behind the threats faced by natural forests is the perception by many societies that they lack economic value. The

extraordinary social and environmental value of forests in comparison to other land uses is often not considered. In other words, forests are often converted to other land uses which lack many of the social and environmental values of forest but promise higher economic returns.

When a forest manager decides to become FSC certified, they must conform to all applicable FSC rules before earning FSC certification and the right to use the FSC label. This is how FSC has a direct and permanent positive impact on the world's forests and the people living from, in and around the forest.

### Who can become an FSC® member?

Anybody who supports the idea of improving forest management around the world can become an FSC member.

### How do I get FSC® certification?

FSC does not issue certificates itself. The certification process is carried out by independent organizations called certification bodies like Telarc. Telarc, in association with SAI Global assess forest management and chain of custody operations against FSC standards. Only FSC accredited certification bodies are authorised to issue FSC certificates.

Contact Telarc to give you an estimate regarding cost and time needed. Telarc will need some basic information about your operation. Telarc will provide you with information about the requirements for FSC certification.

A certification audit takes place to assess your company's qualifications for certification.

The data collected at the audit is the basis of the audit report based on which Telarc makes the certification decision.

If the certification decision is positive, you receive an FSC certificate. If the audit revealed that your operation is not yet in full compliance with FSC requirements, then you can go for further audits after you have implemented the action plans to close any nonconformities documented in the audit report.

FSC certificates are valid for five years. Telarc will conduct annual surveillance audits to verify your continued compliance with FSC certification requirements.

These steps are the same independent on whether you want to become forest management or chain of custody certified.

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