

The Gold Standard of Forest Management

FOREST STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL®



Forest Stewardship Council is the gold standard of forest management because it does the following:

Protects water quality.

FSC is the only standard to specify expanded protection for rivers, lakes and other water bodies from direct impacts, erosion and chemical runoff, where laws or industry-based best management guidelines are insufficient to protect water quality.

Prohibits highly hazardous chemicals.

FSC is the only standard to prohibit the use of some of the most hazardous pesticides, herbicides and other chemicals that are still widely used in the US and Canada.

Limits clearcuts to protect forest ecology.

FSC is the only standard to require that ecological functions and values remain intact after harvest. Large clearcuts are not allowed where they threaten the ecological integrity of the forest.

Protects high conservation value forests, such as rare old growth.

FSC is the only standard with clear requirements to protect high conservation value forests. In areas where old growth is rare, the extent and values associated with old growth are strictly protected in an FSC-certified forest. Other certification programs do not require protection of old growth on certified forestlands.

Prevents loss of natural forest cover.

FSC is the only standard to restrict deforestation, including the conversion of biodiversity-rich natural forests to monoculture plantations or non-forest uses. No other certification program restricts forest conversion.

Protects customary rights of indigenous people and local communities.

FSC is the only standard to explicitly require forest managers to uphold and protect the customary rights and resources of indigenous people. And FSC is the only standard to ensure that forest managers assess and address the impacts of forest operations on local communities.

Governs in a democratic and transparent way.

FSC is the only forest certification system governed by an open membership (General Assembly) where interests are equally balanced by economic, social and environmental chambers. Other certification programs do not have open memberships and are governed only by self-appointed boards, limiting meaningful participation by environmental and social justice organizations.