

The FSC Plantations Review

- a summary

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Content

- Brief background
- Outline of the review process
- The recommendations of the Policy Working Group
- Next steps
- Some impressions and lessons learned

Background

- Growth of FSC - more plantations certified
- Increasing concerns that:
 - standards favour plantations over natural forests
 - standards unclear and open to interpretations
 - CBs not rigorous enough
- Criticism of globalisation and large monocultures
- 2002 FSC GA requested "concrete guidance on interpretation of Principle 10"
- FSC Plantations Review launched Sept 2004

Process (1)

- 'Member-driven' first phase to identify key concerns and policies for addressing them
- Policy Working Group based on chamber self-selection of 12 representatives
- FSC-balanced with 4 people from each chamber (2 North + 2 South)

Process (2)

- 5 PWG meetings over 18 months
- Consultations with chambers
- GA 2005 stakeholder meeting
- Open consultations on draft report
- Final report with very strong consensus

PWG report

- Recommendations related to various components of the FSC system
- Downloadable from:
fsc.org/plantations

1. Adopt a Social Management Systems approach that:

- ensures 'good neighbour' relationships
- contributes to development and poverty reduction through local involvement
- upholds workers' and indigenous peoples' legal and customary rights
- includes participatory assessments of social impacts

2. Maintain ecosystem integrity (P6.3)

- Prevent-mitigate negative effects
- Focus on the MU level – in the landscape
- Continuum from plantations to natural forests
- The more impact - the more mitigation
 - assess both set-asides and managed stands
 - consider the conservation context
 - take account of local communities' needs
 - identify the managers' sphere of influence

3. Improve stakeholder consultation

- Consultation must be a continuous management activity!
- Managers must be proactive and reach out to affected stakeholders
- Provide guidance to managers about mechanisms for resolving conflicts

4. Adopt a continuous improvement approach to use of chemicals

- Acknowledge that chemicals will not be phased out in the short perspective
- Focus on proactive reduction of use and negative impacts
- Implement integrated chemicals management and best practises

5. Urgent need to improve:

- Consistency of CBs work
- Guidance and training for CBs
- Monitoring of CBs performance
- Complaints procedures
- Ensure that CBs rotate their auditors

6. Analyse FSC's approach to conversion

Problems:

- Current rules cause much frustration
- FSC's objectives are unclear
- Some criteria may be contradicting

Recommendations:

- Evaluate the effects of the current policy and of potential changes
- Clarify current policies for granting exceptions and for addressing conversion of other ecosystems

7. Input to the review of the FSC P&Cs:

- Develop one common integrated set of P&Cs that apply to all management units, both forests and plantations
- Keep FSC open to operations across the full continuum - from low-impact natural forest management to high-intensity, short-rotation plantations

Overview of the second phase

- Four teams of 4-6 technical experts approved by the BoD July 2007
- No personal links to the PWG

A: Raising the bar on social responsibility

B: Maintaining ecosystem integrity

C: Continuous Improvement approach to chemicals

D: Investigating the impacts of P10.9 (conversion)

Second phase draft outputs so far:

- Proposals for revision of the P&Cs
- Generic indicators to improve consistency
- Best practise IPM guide, on-line resource center for managers
- Framework for analysing changes to 10.9

(First draft of revised FSC P&Cs expected late spring 2008)

Some lessons learned

- There are no shortcuts to consensus
- Much depends on balanced representation, time and committment!
- Clear ToRs necessary for all participants
- Chamber consultations may need support
- Outside professional facilitation essential

Conclusions

- Unique learning exercise for all involved
- Mind-expander and bridge-builder
- Expensive, difficult and often frustrating...
- ...but also a prime example of the commitment and focus on participatory process that sets FSC apart!

Thank you!