



Environmental Investigation Agency

An FSC Ally for Stopping Illegal Logging

by Gary Dodge, Ph.D., consultant to FSC-US

FSC-US has recently initiated a working relationship with the Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA), a Washington, DC-based organization dedicated to exposing crimes against wildlife and the environment. One of EIA's focuses is stemming the international trade of illegally harvested wood. Illegal logging is a major destructive force socially, economically, and environmentally—with effects including theft of vital community resources, destruction of priority conservation habitat and threatened species, and loss of national revenue from unrealized sales of public resources.

The collaboration comes at an opportune moment when the FSC has increased attention to illegal logging. The relationship will result in facilitating implementation of the legality component of the Controlled Wood standards as well as bolstering the application of FSC certification in timber imports. EIA has recently facilitated the introduction of new U.S. House legislation on illegal wood, the Legal Timber Protection Act, which may significantly shift incentives for U.S. importing companies to demonstrate forest and chain-of-custody certification. EIA has suggested that FSC certification is a useful mechanism for demonstrating legality within the pending U.S. legislation on illegal timber.

Harvesting trees within the structures of local, national, and international laws has always been a central component of

the FSC standards. The FSC Principles and Criteria clearly mandate that managers comply with all laws and regulations, demonstrate long-term tenure of the land, and recognize customary use and usufruct rights on the lands. Until recently, however, the non-certified wood inputs used in products bearing percentage-based FSC labels were not tracked. The new Controlled Wood standards, which primary producers must comply with in 2007 and all COC certificate holders must comply with in 2008, includes avoidance of wood that is at high risk for being logged illegally as one of the five risk categories. With the implementation of the new Controlled Wood standards, FSC has made a significant step in strengthening its position against illegal logging and in demonstrated effort to stem the international problem.

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Standards Revision Process

ANNOUNCING FSC MEMBER AND STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

This summer, FSC-US will be holding informational meetings to brief members and stakeholders on the ongoing process to revise the FSC-US regional standards. These regional meetings will also be an opportunity for interested parties to learn more about the many exciting developments in FSC that have taken place over the last year.

Please mark your calendars and join us at the following meetings:

New England	June 26	Concord, NH
Lake States	June 29	Minneapolis, MN
Southeast	July 12	Atlanta, GA
West Coast	July 24	Sacramento, CA
Pacific Northwest	July 27	Seattle, WA

A detailed agenda, exact meeting times and locations will be announced soon on our website at www.fscus.org/standards_criteria/revision_methodology.php

The methodology for revising FSC standards is being circulated for review and comment. The comment period will be from May 22nd to July 31st, 2007. Comments on the final assessments of the FSC regional standards or any other aspect of the standard revision process can be submitted via the website. Written comments are also welcome and can be sent to: FSC-US, 1155 30th St. NW, Washington, DC 20007.

Standard Revision Process

The Forest Stewardship Council has initiated the process to revise the set of FSC standards that cover forests in the U.S. An independent review of the nine regional standards has been completed and circulated for public comment. FSC-US is now embarking on the process to revise these standards based on this review. A number of issues that were raised during the review have been considered by the FSC-US Board of Directors and a methodology for moving forward with the revision has been developed. The methodology can be downloaded here on our website at www.fscus.org/standards_criteria/revision_methodology.php

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FSC In the News

FSC has recently been featured in a number of media outlets, including a front page feature story in a Sunday edition of *The Washington Post*. These articles and videos are all available in the News & Media section of our website: www.fscus.org/news/media.php

IN PRINT

Modern Woodworking

January 2007

"Getting on Board with Green"

CRO Magazine

February 2007

"Paper Chase: The role of the corporate responsibility officer in sustainable paper choices"

Fortune Magazine

March 5, 2007

"In Our Hands: The future of our endangered forests in North America depends on how dedicated corporations pitch in to help Mother Nature"

Associated Press

March 20, 2007

"Final Potter will be long, but easy on the trees"

The Bugle

The magazine of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation

March/April 2007

"Sustainable Forestry and the Fate of Private Timberlands"

The Washington Post

April 1, 2007

"Corruption Stains Timber Trade"

New York Times

April 17, 2007

"Home Depot to Display an Environmental Label"

Popular Mechanics

May 2007

"The Timber Racket: Illegal Logging Decimates Global Forests But Consumers May Hold the Key to Stopping It"

Guitar Player Magazine

June 2007

"The Troublesome Truth about Sitka Spruce"

ON TELEVISION

NBC4 News Washington

Going Green Weekly Feature

March 13, 2007

"Green Awakening Taking Place in Paper Industry"

FACTS AND FIGURES

225M	Acres of FSC-certified forests globally (77 countries)
23M	Acres of FSC-certified forests in the United States
5657	Chain-of-Custody certificates issued globally (77 countries)
833	Chain-of-Custody certificates issued in the United States

ILLEGAL LOGGING

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"FSC is without doubt the most robust system out there, and the most practical way for consumers to address the problem of illegal logging."

Andrea Johnson, EIA

The illegal logging industry is influenced by both internal factors (local legal structures and governance) and external factors (demand, markets, and international trade regulation). EIA works at both ends. In wood-producing countries such as Indonesia or Honduras, EIA conducts investigations to expose illegal activities, and works to build the capacity of local partner organizations to document and campaign against illegal logging and timber industry corruption. The information derived from these investigations is central to the effectiveness of the FSC's new Controlled Wood standards and the development of the associated Risk Registry. EIA also focuses on the external factors, trying to change the dynamics of U.S. and European market demand that drives much of the illegal logging industry. If consumers ask for legally harvested wood, and if import laws restrict illegal wood, the reduced incentives to import wood harvested illegally will have immediate and positive consequence for community-owned forests, national parks, and revenue generation for governments of developing countries. It will benefit U.S. wood producers whose business is undercut by cheap illegal wood products. Further, it will benefit species that are in peril of local or global extinction and that merit special protection, including some high-volume timber species such as mahogany and ramin.

At present, the lack of any appropriate legal structures in the U.S. addressing import of illegally-harvested wood results in the U.S.'s virtual open door policy to wood that is known to be harvested outside the laws of foreign countries. EIA works on stemming this demand through both legislative and consumer avenues, including engagement with U.S. companies whom EIA's investigations reveal to be selling illegal wood. Currently, the group is focused on passing legislation in Congress that would help level the playing field for companies trying to do things right, and give U.S. government officials some clout when addressing high-risk shipments of wood.

Currently, if a species is not listed in CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) or the ESA

(Endangered Species Act), there is no barrier to its import—even in cases where it is known that the vast majority of wood of some species is systematically harvested outside the laws of foreign countries. EIA's analysis of trade data indicates that less than 0.5% of

wood imported to the U.S. is addressed under CITES, yet the U.S. International Trade Commission has estimated that as much as 30% of imported hardwood is from suspicious or illegal sources.

EIA has been involved in an effort to amend the Lacey Act, a law passed in 1900 to prohibit trade in illegally taken or transported wildlife. Although plants are partially included in the language of the law, full application to timber would require an amendment to include foreign plants. This amendment was introduced on March 12th to the House of Representatives as the Legal Timber Protection Act, H.R. 1497, led by Congressmen Earl Blumenauer (D-OR), Robert Wexler (D-FL), and Jerry Weller (R-IL). It has gained several additional co-sponsors, been endorsed by major environmental organizations, and is being studied closely by timber industry federations in dialogue with the bill's supporters.

The EIA feels that forest certification is a key tool to integrate into the implementation of CITES and an amended Lacey Act, as a way to facilitate the process of identifying legal timber and to reward certified companies for their efforts. For example, under Lacey, companies certified under an internationally recognized scheme may be considered to have undertaken "due care" to ensure that their wood sources are legal, protecting them from penalties under the Act. Within CITES, the EIA advocates using FSC certification as a mechanism to allow trade exceptions for timber species included in the Appendices. While there are currently no major timber species in Appendix I (the most restrictive category of trade), both mahogany (of Latin America) and ramin (from Indonesia and Malaysia) are in Appendix II, and several species including Spanish cedar are now under consideration for inclusion.

Further, EIA has found shortcomings in other certification systems. "FSC is definitely the gold standard," states Andrea Johnson of the EIA in Washington, DC. "We are independent monitors with no policy for exclusive advocacy of any certification scheme. But FSC is without doubt the most robust

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ILLEGAL LOGGING

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system out there, and the most practical way for consumers to address the problem of illegal logging.”

The recent implementation of the Controlled Wood Standards, and its component of illegal logging, means that FSC is fulfilling its commitment to stakeholders of keeping illegally harvested wood out of all FSC-labeled products. For the standard to achieve its goals concerning illegal logging, violation of traditional and civil rights, conserving high conservation values, conversion, and use of genetically-modified organisms, FSC-US recognizes the benefits of establishing relationships with expert organizations such as the Environmental Investigation Agency. This win-win relationship between FSC and the EIA benefits FSC through recognition and promotion of its status as a leading certification program. Additionally, EIA's research on illegal logging is key for the Controlled Wood Resource Center. In return, partnership with FSC will help EIA achieve their goals of stemming the wide-ranging and negative social, economic, and environmental effects of illegal logging.

This article was written with substantial assistance from Andrea Johnson, EIA Forests Campaigner in Washington, DC. Readers who are interested in learning more about or supporting the Legal Timber Protection Act should contact the EIA (email andreajohnson@eia-international.org). EIA's new website, www.eia-global.org, showcases its U.S. campaign work, and complements www.eia-international.org

STANDARDS REVISION

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Consideration of New Issues to Include in FSC-US Regional Standard

One objective for these meetings will be to present and review potential new issues that the revised standard must consider. A number of issues, such as off highway vehicle use, were identified in the comments received on the Standards Review Process as issues that were not included in the original regional standards. We request that members and stakeholders send us descriptions of any new issues that they feel need to be considered to be included in the revised standards ahead of the meetings. This will allow these issues to be presented and discussed.

For those members and stakeholders that are unable to attend these meetings, the FSC-US Board of Directors encourages you to review the methodology, comment and sign up for updates on the development of the FSC-US standards.

Comments can be submitted online at: www.fscus.org/standards_criteria/methodology_comments.php

If you are interested in attending one the meetings, please register online at: www.fscus.org/standards_criteria/meeting_registration.php

To receive updates on the standards revision process, please sign-up here: www.fscus.org/standards_criteria/methodology_updates.php

FSC House Design Contest

HOUSE FEATURING FSC-CERTIFIED PRODUCTS TO BE ON DISPLAY AT GREENBUILD 2007

The FSC House project, developed by Forest Products Solutions of Portland, OR, will provide homebuilders, architects, developers, remodelers, homeowners and other building professionals with

a venue to learn about how their green building projects can incorporate FSC-certified wood and, in return, improve forest management standards worldwide. FSC-certified wood products have long been the standard of responsible forest products within the building industry and new FSC-certified products are being developed every year.

The FSC House will be constructed in a 20'x20' booth space at the USGBC's GreenBuild Conference and Expo in Chicago, IL, November 6-8, 2007, and will offer attendees an up-close and personal experience with FSC-certified products. To ensure that the FSC message reaches far and wide throughout the design and construction industry, Forest Products Solutions has developed an FSC House Design Contest for the Emerging Green Builders (EGBs).

Terry Campbell, consultant for Forest Products Solutions, stated, "Emerging Green Builders represent the future of not only the green building industry but the planet. Connecting these emerging professionals with the right options for responsible wood based products, whose origins are truly sustainable, is an important evolution for the green building movement and the success of the FSC system in the forest. We know that education is the key to market transformation, and the FSC House project is another step in that education process."

The FSC House Design Contest is a national competition open to individuals and small teams from university level students (of any discipline and level) to those with less than five (5) years experience in the building industry. One winning project will be selected in early July 2007; the individual or a representative from the winning project team will be awarded with a plane ticket and full conference badge to the GreenBuild Conference.

Several companies who manufacture and distribute FSC-certified products have stepped forward to make this design contest possible. Part of the challenge with this contest will be developing a house that can fit in a 20'x20'x10' exhibit floor space while showcasing over ten building products. Other elements that will challenge prospective FSC House design teams include providing education for conference attendees, considering how to efficiently ensure that people flow through the house, and designing a house that is easy to transport. The winning design will be selected by a multi-disciplinary committee in early July 2007, and the house will be built in Portland, OR in September 2007.

Anderson Hardwood Floors is one of the FSC certificate holders that has sponsored the FSC House project. Don Finkell, President and CEO of Anderson, said "Anderson Hardwood Floors is committed to protecting our environment for future generations. It is our pleasure to support and encourage the young designers and builders competing in the FSC House Design contest. Through such partnerships, Anderson Hardwood Floors and the Forest Stewardship Council can ensure the resources we enjoy today will be available tomorrow."

Other FSC certificate holders that are sponsoring this project include: Anderson Hardwood Floors; Certified Forest Products; Columbia Forest Products; Ecotimber; Hayward Lumber; Loewen Windows; Panel Source International; Sierra Forest Products; Tembec Forest Products; VT Industries; and Western Wood Products.

To learn more the FSC House project and the rules and regulations governing this design contest go to: www.fschouse.com.

All applications must be received by 5:00pm (PST), Friday, June 29th, 2007.

**GREEN
BUILDING**



FSCHOUSE

OUR MISSION: Create a marketplace that promotes well-managed forests by ensuring forestry practices that are environmentally responsible, socially equitable, and economically viable.