

SEVEN questions and answers by Mathieu Auger-Schwartzberg,  
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# The significance of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)

Who can become a member of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and what are the membership benefits? What can FSC do for FSC certified concession holders and for concession holders who are not? What can FSC do for forest communities and national governments in Central Africa? How is independent, third-party FSC certification set up?

## 1 Who can become a member of the Forest Stewardship Council? What are the criteria to become a member?

Members of the Economic chamber need to principally have a commercial interest in forest management, the production, processing or commercialisation of forest products, or in the activities of the FSC organisation. Applicants with economic interest must have demonstrated an active commitment to implementing the FSC Principles and Criteria in their operations. Members of the Environmental chamber need to have a principal purpose and interest in the protection, preservation or conservation of the natural environment. Members of the Social chamber need to have a principal purpose and interest in socially beneficial forestry.

## 2 What are the benefits of membership of the Forest Stewardship Council?

### Stronger together.

FSC is an exceptional organisation with over 800 committed members from across the globe, working together to find solutions to the problems facing forests and the people that depend on them.

### Decision-making power.

Members are the highest decision-making body of FSC. Members have equal power to make decisions that drive the organisation towards its vision and mission.

### Access to advance information.

Members of FSC enjoy first-hand information about new developments in certification, including participating in the development of policies, consultation processes, reviews of standards and regular audit consultations.

### Corporate citizenship.

As a business, FSC membership is a clear statement of commitment to responsible forestry.

### Partnerships and networks.

FSC offers a unique platform to engage with an exceptional group of organisations and individuals working together to address challenges in the forestry sector and develop new business opportunities.

### Positive influence on market trends.

Decisions made by FSC-members have increased the market for responsibly produced goods in the last 20 years.

### Direct participation in internal discussions.

Members have the possibility of participating in internal committees or being elected to the Board of Directors.



## FOREST STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

**The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is an independent non-governmental organisation that promotes environmentally sound, socially beneficial, and economically prosperous management of the world's forests.**

FSC was created in 1993 to help consumers and businesses identify products from well-managed forests. FSC sets standards by which forests are certified, offering credible verification to people who are buying wood and wood products. As of May 2016, more than 189 million hectares of forest have been certified according to FSC standards (13 per cent of the world's production forests), and 30,000 forest management and chain of custody certificates have been issued, worldwide. FSC members include some of the world's leading environmental non-governmental

organisations (WWF and Greenpeace), businesses (Tetra Pak and Mondi PLC) and social organisations (including REPALEAC in Central Africa - Network of Indigenous and Local Communities for the Sustainable Management of Forest Ecosystems in Central Africa), as well as forest owners and managers, processing companies and campaigners, and individuals.

### Three chambers

FSC membership has three chambers, that is to say environmental, social and economic chambers, which have equal rights in decision making. Moreover, to ensure that FSC has a globally fair representation, members represent either the northern or southern subchambers.

Source: [www.ic.fsc.org](http://www.ic.fsc.org)