

Note on TPAC's Research on FSC International

January 2013

Mid 2013 the Timber Procurement Assessment Committee (TPAC) will start its periodical reassessment of FSC International. In 2008, when the system was first assessed by TPAC, FSC received a positive final judgement from the Committee. The vast majority of TPAS principles and criteria were fully addressed by FSC. However, over the years, critique regarding FSC was expressed in the public domain claiming that the certification system does not guarantee sustainable forest management in all regions. Because of these concerns TPAC decided to conduct a research of FSC International in preparation of its periodical reassessment.

TPAC's research focussed on the functioning of FSC in Russia and Malaysia and the FSC complaints procedure. In addition, TPAC researched the functioning of the so-called FSC interim standards, which are standards that have been developed by a certification body instead of a national standard setting body.

TPAC findings, covering themes as certification body quality, biodiversity and indigenous peoples rights, were presented and discussed with FSC International in August 2012. Following this meeting FSC decided to take advantage of TPAC's research and to make several adjustments in its system.

TPAC will include the findings of the research in the upcoming official reassessment of FSC International. The so-called stakeholder forum will be part of this process - as required by TPACs regulations. Stakeholders will be invited to participate on this forum and share their knowledge on the functioning of FSC International with the Committee. The invitation for the forum will be sent out in spring 2013.