



FSC® CERTIFICATION IN KENYA

Working with Government to take care of Kenya's forests

FORESTS IN CRISIS

Kenya's forests are being depleted at an unprecedented rate. The Global Forest Watch indicates that between 2001 and 2019, Kenya lost 342,000 hectares of forest cover largely attributed to pressure from charcoal production, agriculture expansion, unregulated logging and urbanisation.

Deforestation deprives Kenya of revenue. It is estimated to have costed the Kenyan economy a combined total of 12.4 billion Kenyan shillings (USD 145 million) in 2009 and 2010.

Ministry of Environment and Forestry estimates an annual sustainable wood deficit of approximately 16 million cubic metres, expected to increase to 34.4 million cubic metres by 2030.

Government of Kenya, therefore, needs to take bold steps to address the existing challenges, reverse the loss of its forests and bridge the supply-demand gap.

FORESTS CORE TO KENYA'S DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

Kenya's forests cover approximately 4.1 million hectares which is 7.2 per cent of its total land area. The forests contribute about 33 per cent income to households and 70 per cent of Kenya's domestic energy requirements.

Forest goods and services contribute about 3.6 per cent to Kenya's gross domestic product (GDP) and support other sectors particularly agriculture, fisheries, livestock, energy, wildlife, tourism, trade and industry that contribute between 33 to 39 per cent to GDP.

The country's five main forests 'water towers' provide 75 per cent of Kenya's water resources, are important biodiversity hotspots and act as carbon sinks.

GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO PROMOTE RESPONSIBLE FOREST MANAGEMENT

Government of Kenya is taking positive steps to ensure sustainable forest management of its forest resources in line with the National Forest Policy.

The Government of Kenya through its ongoing forest restoration program is committed to increase the national tree cover to 10 per cent of the country's total land area by 2022.

The Government is committed to restore 5.1 million hectares of degraded land, as contribution to the global effort to mitigate climate change under the African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR100).

Government of Kenya is also rehabilitating its five water towers to increase forest cover and land productivity, enhance resilience to climate change and increase benefits to communities from forest and agriculture production.

Kenya developed its own FSC Interim National Standard as basis for implementing responsible forest management using the FSC certification system. The standard will be applicable to all forest operations in Kenya seeking FSC certification for forest management.

This is where Government of Kenya's partnership with FSC is important and the process of certification is duly explained.



WHAT IS FSC CERTIFICATION?

FSC certification confirms that forests are being managed in a way that preserves biological diversity and benefits the lives of local people and workers, while ensuring they sustain economic viability.

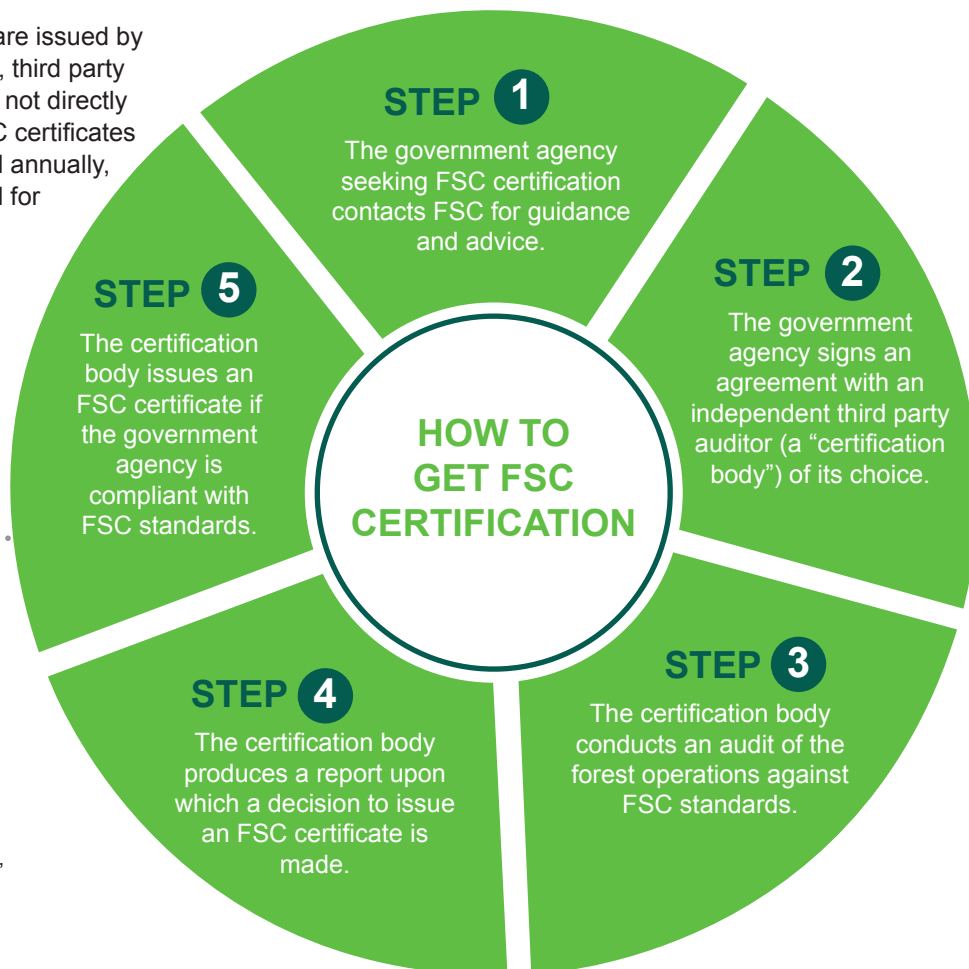
The FSC system monitors how forests are managed. It puts in place mechanisms to label and trace timber and other products all the way to the consumer. It does this through two kinds of certification:

- ➔ **Forest Management Certification** confirms that individuals, governments and private companies are managing their forests in a way that protects water, soil and wildlife, benefits the wellbeing of local communities and workers while ensuring they sustain economic viability. As of January 2021, Kenya had no forest management/chain of custody certificates.
- ➔ **Chain of Custody Certification** ensures that FSC certified materials and products are checked at every stage of processing from the forest all the way to the consumer. As of January 2021, Kenya had nine certificates.

HOW DOES GOVERNMENT OF KENYA OBTAIN FSC CERTIFICATION?



Certificates are issued by independent, third party auditors and not directly by FSC. FSC certificates are reviewed annually, and are valid for 5 years.



If you're not successful, the certification body will issue corrective actions to implement, and once successfully implemented, a certificate is awarded.

Images: Kenya Forest Service (KFS)

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