



FSC™ CERTIFICATION IN RWANDA

Opening opportunities, creating benefits for businesses

GROWING DEMAND FOR WOOD AND RELATED PRODUCTS IN RWANDA

Rwanda aspires to reach Middle Income Country status by 2035 and High-Income Country status by 2050, which gives it impetus for growth.

Government of Rwanda considers forestry as one of the key pillars for sustainable development and climate resilience in line with its Forest Investment Programme.

As the country rolls out its industrialization agenda, demand for forest products and services continues to grow mainly driven by government projects and businesses in construction, furniture, packaging, pulp and paper to meet the needs of its growing population.

THE NEED FOR SUSTAINABLE SOURCING OF WOOD PRODUCTS

According to Rwanda Water and Forestry Authority, Rwanda is a wood scarce country.

Rwanda's wood demand exceeds supply by a 2:1 ratio, projected to reach 7.5 million tonnes by 2026.

Moreover, a 2019 GIZ market analysis report indicates that most of the wood available on the Rwandan market is of poor quality.

Businesses need to be part of the solution to protect forest resources and improve the quality of wood on the Rwandan market, by preferring to buy wood products from sustainably managed/FSC certified sources.

FSC CERTIFICATION: SUPPORTING BUSINESSES TO THRIVE

FSC certification is trusted by businesses worldwide as the sustainable choice to deliver better outcomes for forests, people and markets – today and for future generations. This is because:

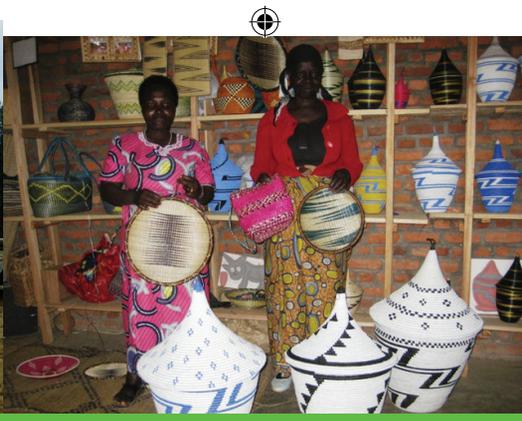
- > FSC is endorsed by big brands in businesses and by NGOs;
- > FSC is the global gold standard in forest certification;
- > FSC provides an inclusive platform to engage stakeholders.

By adopting FSC certification, businesses in Rwanda can:

- ➔ **Gain market access and competitive advantage:** FSC certification can help businesses in Rwanda gain stronger and more diverse customer base and strengthen their competitive advantage on regional and international market.
- ➔ **Enhance public image:** The FSC brand enhances the reputation for businesses and increases the confidence of customers that the wood products they are buying come from responsible sources.
- ➔ **Meet the requirements of investors:** FSC certification provides assurance to investors that businesses take care of the environment and the wellbeing of communities and workers.

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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, Rwanda had 10,000 hectares of certified forest and one forest management/chain of custody certificate.
- ➔ **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, Rwanda had no certificates.

HOW DOES A BUSINESS IN RWANDA 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: Valens Uwizeyimana

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