FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Woolworths signs the Forest Stewardship Council Vancouver Declaration

27 October 2017

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is proud to announce that Woolworths South Africa has become the first African company to sign “The Vancouver Declaration” which was launched on 10 October 2017 at the FSC General Assembly.

The Vancouver Declaration is an ambitious new initiative to increase the use of materials from responsibly managed forests and allows businesses who use these natural products to pledge their commitment to increase responsible sourcing.

Feroz Koor, Head of Sustainability for Woolworths Holdings Limited, says, “We are proud to be the first African retailer to sign the FSC’s Vancouver Declaration. FSC is a best-in-class certification system that enables us, and our suppliers to ensure that forest products are not sourced from illegal timber logging operations. This ultimately ensures the protection of natural forests and promotes environmental protection in commercial forestry”.

As the world’s leading forest certification organisation, the FSC label guarantees that harvested trees are replaced or allowed to regenerate naturally, and that key biodiversity-rich sites are not destroyed when forest products are sourced. Established in 1993, the organisation represents a market-based solution to address concerns around global deforestation. To become FSC certified, operations have to meet a rigorous set of standards and criteria that promote responsible forest management across the full supply chain, from forest to consumer.

Chris Burchmore Regional Director for FSC Africa, said: “We are very happy that Woolworths responded to our call of supporting this declaration. This is signifying their commitment to using FSC-certified forest products, helping to protect both our forests and the planet our hope is to see many more African companies also signing the declaration.”

Global companies like IKEA, H&M, SIG, Marks and Spencer, Jysk, Mitsubishi Paper Mills or Fuji Xerox have already pledged support to the initiative. The aim is to get more businesses across the entire supply chain on board.

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About FSC

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is a global not-for-profit organization dedicated to promoting 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 and sets standards by which forests are certified, offering credible verification to people who are buying wood and wood products. Currently almost 200 million hectares and more than 57,000 businesses worldwide are certified to FSC standards. For more information visit www.fsc.org

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