

used in the company's own website advertising and on company stationery. The most commonly cited reasons for a company to have FSC certification are

- the fulfilment of the customer demand for FSC certified products
- the development of new markets through FSC certified products
- good image by marketing the FSC trademarks
- fulfilment of the company's high demands in relation to responsible production

The FSC certification is recognised by the large environmental organisations.

BACKGROUND FSC® COC CERTIFICATION?



The FSC (Forest Stewardship Council®) represents a certification scheme for responsible forest management, which is used worldwide. The connected supply chain is also certified to protect the material flow from the certified forest to the certified product. Consumers can thus deliberately opt for a labelled product.

The FSC is an independent member-based organisation with the aim of promoting responsible global forest management. FSC relies on the principle of sustainable forest management through ecological, social and economic consensus. Annual inspections by independent certification bodies, like GFA, ensure compliance with forest management and the correct use of certified materials in certified products.

FSC COC certification is required if you wish to sell FSC certified products to your customers. This requirement applies to all companies which take legal ownership of the certified goods. For the annual inspections by a certification body, the certified companies present the status of purchased materials for the certified products and provide a plausibility of quantities produced (e.g. via industry standard conversion factors or job-related documentation of the amounts). The aim of COC certification is to prevent the uncontrolled mixing, exchange or multiplication of certified material from forestry companies within the supply chain. Certified companies may thereby continue to produce and sell non-certified products.

THE WAY TO FSC® CERTIFICATION?



Different certification setups are offered according to your company's organisation. Fill-in our questionnaire under "Request Proposal" on www.gfa-cert.com and receive a free non-binding offer of a certification tailored to your needs.

In principle, the following points are important in your decision-making process and preparations going forward:

Scope of certification (sites)

For a single site certification, please choose a single certification with a unique certificate number. If you wish to have multiple sites certified, a multi-site certification of all sites with a single certificate number may be of interest.

The choice of systems

If you only use certified materials for your certified products, you can be certified according to the "transfer system" and transfer the certification of the materials used to your product (e.g. for commercial or printing companies). If you intend to mix certified and non-certified materials under controlled conditions, you can be certified according to the "percentage system" or the "credit system" (common in the paper industry, wood-based industry or sawmills).

Outsourcing

Should parts of your work processes be allocated to external service providers, these activities are included in the scope of your certification. Here, a distinction is made between low and high risk by material mixing activities. In case of high risk situations, the external service provider needs to be included in the audit activities.

When you have chosen the adequate form of certification, you can begin to prepare your company. The relevant FSC standards form the basis for the requirements to be met. We are happy to send you these free of charge upon request. A brief overview of the most important points during preparation:

- Designation of responsible staff
- Preparation of documented procedures (e.g. FSC manual)
- Staff training
- Determination of the audit date for the initial audit

Immediately after your acceptance of our certification proposal we will provide you an auditor for your company, with whom you can directly arrange an audit date for the initial audit. The audits are often concluded in one day. After completion of the audit, the auditor creates an audit report which is then evaluated at our Hamburg offices. After successful certification, you can then sell FSC certified products, provided that these have been manufactured according to the FSC requirements. In future, annual surveillance audits will monitor the correct implementation of your FSC procedures.

Through our regionally distributed network of Auditors, we are able to keep travel costs to a minimum and can also ensure flexible scheduling of audits. The duration of a certification process in accordance with FSC depends on the size and complexity of your operations and the products to be certified. With the appropriate operational arrangements, the GFA usually carries out the process within 4 to 8 weeks.

Should you have questions, please contact us by phone or via the contact form on our homepage.

YOUR DIRECT CONTACT

Torge Petersen

Phone +49 40 52 47 431 150

t.petersen@gfa-cert.com