

Sustainable for Whom?



**FSC and Boreal
Communities
– Summary**



Market-based certification of forest management is the latest effort by civil society to internalize the environmental and social costs of wood production by endorsing a green label for products that have been produced in a manner reflecting broad environmental and social standards. The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) in particular has received enthusiastic support from environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOs) as international forest policy initiatives, voluntary agreements and permissive legislative environments have failed to produce progressive, measurable change in the forestry industry. In the last few years, there has been a strong campaign to increase the numbers of both buyers and producers of FSC-certified wood. FSC is intended to reform and "green"

"The type of mainstream environmentalism being espoused by governments and leading development agencies.... has been somewhat limited in scope and beneficiaries. What may be labeled 'environmentalism for nature' and 'environmentalism for profits' tend to hold sway, while a third facet which is essential to sustainable development, namely 'environmentalism for people' often comes a poor third."

Peter Utting



the forestry practices of forestry operators within a multi-stakeholder framework, mutually agreed upon between environmental and social NGOs, industry, labour, and Indigenous Peoples' organizations. As a voluntary scheme to green forestry practices, the FSC has so far had varied success, based on the strength of regional standards and the ability of the certifiers and stakeholders to hold the certified companies accountable to FSC standards.

The purpose of the study is to examine regional policy and legal conditions which must exist in order for market-based certification to reward both green and equitable forestry, which works for the environment while providing meaningful work and economic livelihoods for local people. Opportunities and challenges of forest management operations in Canada and Sweden, which are both FSC-certified and beneficial to local populations, are documented in order to analyze those policy frameworks that are most supportive of locally beneficial forest management.

Canada and Sweden provide an interesting comparative base because both countries have Northern, resource dependent communities with high unemployment and yet are global leaders in the timber trade. Many of the forestlands surrounding these communities are heavily managed for timber extraction but are also extensively utilized by locals for non-



In a few countries such as Sweden, FSC has become one of the dominant avenues to forestry reform vigorously pursued by both NGOs and Indigenous Peoples, with approximately 43 per cent of productive forest land certified, including State-owned land and all of the major private forestry operations. In Canada, only 0.015 per cent of the country's forested land base is certified.

timber forest products. Another similarity is the lack of economic infrastructure, which could capture and circulate economic benefits within the community. Many communities, for instance, lack processing facilities, value-added industries, banks, and a variety of shops. One very large difference, though, is in the legal protections of Indigenous forest use. While Indigenous land and treaty rights are enshrined in section 35 of the Canadian Constitution (though usually not implemented until contested), Sweden has yet to codify comprehensive laws relating to Indigenous land rights.

The questions examined in this study include the following: what are the policy and legal frameworks which are most likely to deliver social benefits? How can FSC help boreal communities and companies foster local social benefits? What other tools are needed? How can NGOs best promote equitable forest management?

Socially-beneficial Forestry

Forestry which is most responsive to multiple uses within a community and which is based upon shared values is likely to be within a communal access regime – based upon ownership and/or control of the resource base. FSC, in its principles and criteria, aims to promote, "...environmentally responsible, socially beneficial and economically viable management of the world's forests, by establishing a worldwide standard of recognized and respected Principles of Forest Stewardship." The Forest Stewardship Council has been particularly successful in promoting communal forestry in Mexico and Central America; Mexico and



Guatemala together hold over 73 per cent of all communal FSC certificates. In terms of systemic change, however, the record is less impressive as communal operations comprise less than 3 per cent of all certified hectares of forests worldwide. In fact, industrial operations in the North comprise a majority of certified forests; 42 per cent of these forestlands lie in Sweden alone (over 10 million hectares).

Sustainable development relies on community empowerment, whether or not communities have the flexibility to pursue their own agendas for resource development. Community sustainability, as a measurement of quality of life, can be determined by the adequate combination of four types of "capital": natural, social, human and physical.

All forms are required in order for a community to have flexibility and resilience in the face of change. For small communities in the boreal, this flexibility rests on the following underlying issues: rights to land, tenure and economic capacity.

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) defines a list of 10 principles and criteria that form the basis for the development of local and regional standards. Principles 2, 3, 4 and 5 deal with tenure issues, indigenous peoples' rights and community benefits.

PRINCIPLE #2: TENURE AND USE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Long-term tenure and use rights to the land and forest resources shall be clearly defined, documented and legally established.

PRINCIPLE #3: INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' RIGHTS

The legal and customary rights of indigenous peoples to own, use and manage their lands, territories, and resources shall be recognized and respected.

PRINCIPLE #4: COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND WORKER'S RIGHTS

Forest management operations shall maintain or enhance the long-term social and economic well-being of forest workers and local communities.

PRINCIPLE #5: BENEFITS FROM THE FOREST

Forest management operations shall encourage the efficient use of the forest's multiple products and services to ensure economic viability and a wide range of environmental and social benefits.



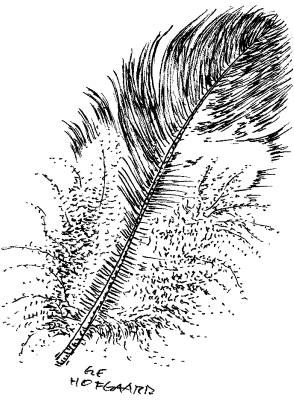
Case studies

When we discuss socially as well as ecologically beneficial forestry, we begin to look at two basic questions: who owns and controls the forest, and who benefits from its current use? This study follows four community case studies: Tåssåsen Sámi community (Sweden), the Algonquins of Barriere Lake (Canada), Pictou Landing First Nation (Canada), and the Drevdagen community (Sweden). Each community illustrates a different aspect of community survival and forest management in the boreal region. The full analysis of the case studies is available on the TRN website www.taigaescue.org.

The Sámi community of Tåssåsen has been challenged by private landowners contesting the community's customary right to graze their reindeer on private lands. This case study follows the community's struggle for recognition and analyzes FSC's potential for resolving the conflict.

Pictou Landing First Nation is a small Mi'kmaq community in Nova Scotia which manages the first Indigenous FSC-certified woodlot in Canada. The study traces the range of benefits the community receives and what institutional support has been instrumental in Pictou Landing's success.

Drevdagen is a small community which, despite lying adjacent to an FSC-certified forest managed by Sveaskog, has not been able to reap any significant benefits. This case study questions the social benefits which Drevdagen can access without more decision-making power.



The Algonquins of Barriere Lake retain many subsistence but no monetary benefits from timber harvesting on their traditional lands. This study looks at the delivery of potential benefits, promised through a comprehensive agreement signed by the community, Quebec and Canada. The study also analyzes the potential of FSC-certification to expedite implementation of the agreement.



Empowerment relies upon 4

Natural capital

land and resources

Social capital

employment opportunities
meaningful work
common vision
gender equity
wealth equity

Conclusions

Certification schemes such as FSC have been criticized by some for "depoliticizing" environmental problems and thus masking the underlying causes of forest degradation and deforestation. It is not within FSC's mandate to advocate for a revolutionary construction of relations between people, the State, the market and the land despite the fact that underlying causes require a toolbox of revolutionary as well as reformist politics. FSC should be one of the tools utilized by communities and NGOs but support for FSC needs to be balanced (with time as well as resources) by a concerted campaign addressing underlying causes such as tenure reform, violation of Indigenous rights and perverse incentives.

While FSC cannot and should not take the place of a rural development program, it has the potential



kinds of community "capital"

Human capital

education
health
income
age distribution

Physical capital

presence of several employers
home value
schools
variety of stores
healthcare

Based on Crabbe et al, 1995

to provide community leverage or to reinforce existing tenure agreements, whether positive or negative. If NGOs and the public want to "green" and socially improve large corporate tenure-holders, a credible development program for affected local communities must complement certification. FSC is a voluntary labeling scheme, and as such does not have the power to create jobs, help communities organize, or redistribute wealth in communities. In fact, very few large corporate tenure agreements on public or disputed lands provide social benefits in keeping with a moderate interpretation of FSC Principle 4 or 5. In short, making the jump from good intentions to progressive change will require substantial NGO support, State and regional movement, apart from corporate compliance with the FSC Principles and Criteria.





Recommendations

In order to meet the requirements of socially and ecologically beneficial certification, the following actors should:

FSC national initiatives and certifiers:

- * hold government and corporate operators on public lands to rigorous, quantifiable socio-economic thresholds since these lands and operations are directly and indirectly subsidized by the public
- * strengthen criteria for community consultations (ie. who is invited, what constitutes appropriate consultations?), especially regarding Indigenous communities



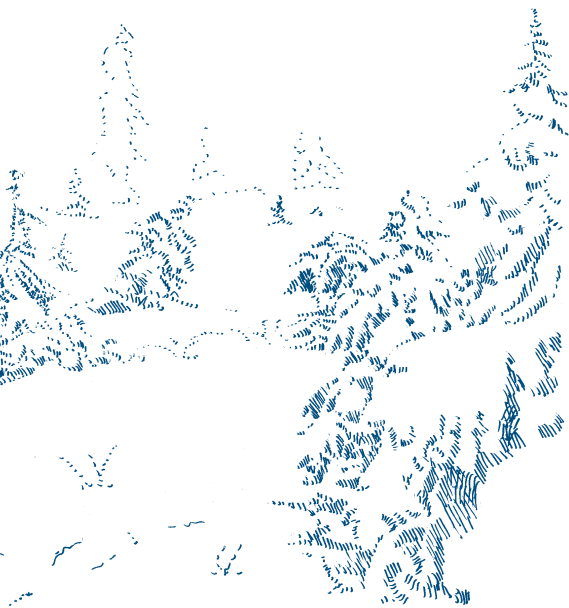
FSC bodies and NGOs:

- * supplement capacity-building support for communities' participation in FSC with capacity-building for resource decision-making in general

NGOs:

- * balance support for market-based initiatives and incentives with a concerted effort to expose and reform underlying causes of forest degradation since market tools cannot reform hidden or institutionalized subsidies
- * pressure governments to address Indigenous title, treaty and customary rights as a corollary to making forest management more sustainable
- * embark on an underlying causes campaign dedicated to reorganizing, redistributing, or retiring unsustainable tenure agreements

Full report available at <http://www.taigarescue.org/publications/reports.shtml>





Boreal Footprint Project



The Boreal Footprint Project (BFP) is an American participant of the Taiga Rescue Network. BFP aims to reduce Americans' ecological footprint

on the boreal forests of Canada and Alaska through education, advocacy and campaigning.

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Taiga Rescue Network (TRN)

is an international network of non-governmental organizations and indigenous peoples working for the protection and sustainable use of the world's boreal forests. TRN was established in 1992 to give voice to those wanting to see sensitive development in the boreal region. Today more than 180 organisations are participants of the network.

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Full report available at the TRN website.