

FSC GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Kota-Kinabalu, Malaysia, June 26 – July 01, 2011

SIDE-Meeting on:

Multi-actor approach for the promotion of FSC certification: Experience of the Congo Basin.

This meeting should be organized by FSC-Regional Office for Africa in collaboration with the Congo Basin Forests Partnership (CBFP) and The Inter-African Forestry Industry Association (IFIA)

Presentations

The following people should make presentations during this event:

- FSC-Africa: Elie Hakizumwami, Regional Director for Africa, FSC
- IFIA-ATIBT: Hervé Bourguignon
- WWF/GFTN: Representative from GFTN
- CIB: Dominique Paget
- WCS: Tim Rayden

Facilitation

- CBFP: Cléto Ndikumagenge

1. Abstract

Since Rio, Congo Basin countries supported by partners are committed to responsible forestry and credible certification of forestry operation. Thanks to the multi-actors approach involving public sector, private sector, civil society, research institutions and individual experts to promote forest certification, significant progress have been recorded with about 4.6 million of hectares of logging concessions certified FSC and more than 5 million hectares progressing towards FSC certification. This side event will share to the participants attending the General Assembly, their experience in promoting forest certification in the Congo Basin countries.

2. Background

Since 1999, the Heads of State of Central African countries committed themselves through the Yaoundé Declaration and the Central African Heads of States Treaty respectively signed in March 1999 in Yaoundé and February 2005 in Brazzaville, to the principle of biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of Central African forest ecosystems, including among others, the promotion of internationally recognized certification systems as tools for sustainable management of the forests,

and to develop capacities of human resources for their implementation. This commitment received support from partners from public (government), private sector and civil society.

Progress made in the sub-region since the past 6 years shows that key forestry actors have effectively adhered to the process of promoting responsible forestry. Currently more than 5 million hectares are FSC certified while many other hectares are progressing. This was possible thanks to the establishment of effective partnership in the sub-region that involves key actors of forestry sector (governmental organizations, forestry industry, NGOs, research institutions, environmental NGOs, development organizations) which helped to jointly work together to promote FSC certification in the Congo.

Promoters of certification in the Congo Basin are convinced that logging and timber trade carried out in compliance with the rules of sustainable management can play an important role in the preservation of forest ecosystems, fight against illegal logging and illegal timber trade, provision of sustainable economic benefits to the companies and countries concerned, while offering the forest-dependent communities the possibility to draw social and economic benefits in favor of the improvement of their livelihood. Further, they consider credible forest certification as an important tool that contributes to the harmonization of forest management practices in the Congo Basin.

Despite this encouraging progress, it is likely that the public is not yet sufficiently informed about the progress that has been made in the subregion in the area of forest certification and the key drivers that made this to happen despite complex social and institutional context.

This is reason why FSC-Africa Regional Office in collaboration with the Facilitation of the CBFP, IFIA should organize the side-meeting during the FSC General Assembly to be held in Kota-Kinabalu, Malaysia **from 26 June to 1st July 2011** to share the Congo Basin's experience with the promotion of responsible forest management and FSC certification.

3. Objectives of the meeting

The key objectives of this event are:

- To share to the GA participants the experience of Congo Basin with multi-actors approach to promote responsible Forest Management and FSC certification. The role of different key actors (logging company, development organizations, Environmental NGOs, and other service providers) should be described.
- To raise awareness about the need of contribution by different stakeholders to promote credible FSC certification in Africa in general and in the Congo Basin

in particular. Promotion of responsible forest management is not the matter of FSC alone. Within a complex socio-economic and institutional context, the involvement of different actors in the process of FSC certification is very necessary.

- To highlight the link between FSC certification and the national/regional strategies such as the COMIFAC Convergence Plan and FLEGT/VPA. FSC certification constitutes a tool that stimulates the implementation of the existing national and regional strategies. It is also complementary to other initiatives.

4. Time:

The side event should be organized on the 27th June 2011 between 02:00 and 04:00 PM

5. Methodology:

The event should involve the power-point presentations which should be followed by the session of questions and answers as well as open debate on key issues related to FSC certification in the Congo Basin.