

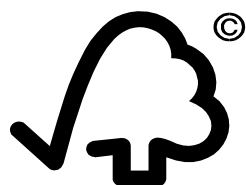
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SmartWood

Practical conservation through certified forestry

Forest Management
**Major CARs Verification
Audit**
Report for:

Brest Regional Forest Board
in
Brest oblast, Belarus

Audit Dates: 16-18 July 2007
Report Finalized: 20 September 2007
Auditors: Aliaksandr Zubkevich
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1. AUDIT PROCESS

1.1. Auditors and qualifications:

Aliaksandr Zubkevich, Main assessor, Belarus

Mr Zubkevich was a leading specialist in company Profitsystem, where he was responsible for wood harvesting, economic and organization issues and involved in FSC chain of custody certification. Mr Zubkevich has education of engineer-economist in timber industry. He has post-graduate education in Belarusian state technological university and writes a post-graduate dissertation on the topic: Organization and economic base of harvesting development in Belarus. Aliaksandr Zubkevich is trained with several programs in Poland and Sweden, where prepared scientific reports. Also he wrote some scientific articles regarding forest sector development in Belarus. Till 2005 Mr. Zubkevich led republican NGO involved in ecological issues and education in ecology. Now Mr. Zubkevich works for NEPCon as representative in Belarus. He participated in audits of Leskhozvez in Belarus and Poland.

Heorhi Kazulka, Assessor, Belarus

Dr Kazulka has comprehensive experience in forest ecology from his scientific work and for several years as employee of the State National Park "Belovezhskaya Pushcha", latest as Deputy General Director on Science and Research up to 2001. He has since been involved in a number of projects related to biodiversity conservation and forest ecology, and has publications on this issue. Dr Kazulka has participated in the WWF FSC training program in Romania in 2005 and in Lithuania in 2006. He participated in assessments of groups of Leskhozvez in Belarus.

1.2. Audit process and schedule

Date	Location / main sites	Main activities
16.07.2007	Brest RFB Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Documents review regarding major CARs implementation• Interview with key staff
	Telehanskij SFE office	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Documents review regarding major CARs implementation• Interview with key staff
	Telehanskij sawmill	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Documents review regarding FSC chain of custody• Interview with key staff• Facilities inspection

17.07.2007	Kalininskoe forest district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents review regarding major CARs implementation • Interview with key staff • Field inspection
	Vulkowskoe forest district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents review regarding major CARs implementation • Interview with key staff • Field inspection
	Baranovichi SFE office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents review regarding major CARs implementation • Interview with key staff
18.07.2007	Dobromyselskoe forest district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents review regarding major CARs implementation • Interview with key staff • Field inspection
	Sawmill in Dobromysl	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents review regarding FSC chain of custody • Interview with key staff • Facilities inspection
	lesnianskoe forest district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents review regarding major CARs implementation • Interview with key staff • Field inspection
19.07.2007	Brest RFB office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit results presenting
Total number of person days used for the audit: 6 = number of auditors participating 2 times total number of days spent for the audit 3		

2. AUDIT FINDINGS AND RESULTS

2.1. Changes in the forest management of the FMO

No significant changes in forest management happened since the last annual audit.

2.2. Stakeholder issues

Prior to the Major CAR verification audit the meeting with stakeholders was conducted. Representatives of Forestry Ministry of Belarus Republic, Institute of experimental botany, Belgosles, Belgiproles, Republican wood industry association presented. The main raised issues were dead wood and live biological value trees conservation on logging sites during logging operation, identification of 5% of representative samples of sites where no logging operations will be conducted. Forestry Ministry of Belarus Republic gave an instruction to RFBs and SFEs to identify sites which are hardly available for exploitation, where logging operations are not conducted. There is a problem with the labor safety manual, which is proposed to reconsider. Currently new requirements for technologies are being developed, where it is intended to include possibility to leave potentially dead trees. RFBs and SFEs are recommended to leave trees which don't threaten to life and health of workers.

Institute of experimental botany and organization Birdlife Belarus completed the work of mapping sites of HCVF, which results can be used by SFEs. From some stakeholders was an opinion that many conserved areas have been already identified in Belarus which can be used for conservation of necessary area of representative samples.

2.3. Certification Standards: maintenance of established performance

Audit was conducted according to the Interim SmartWood FM standard for Belarus, version 1.3 (25.07.2005). Also for chain of custody compliance SmartWood CoC standard Limited Scope (Dec 2005) was used.

2.4. Compliance with Major CARs

The section below describes the activities of the certificate holder to address each applicable major CARs issued during previous audit. For each major CAR a finding is presented along with a description of its current status using the following categories. The following classification is used to indicate the status of the major CAR:

Major CAR Status Categories	Explanation
Closed	FMO has successfully met the major CAR and addressed the underlying noncompliance.
Open	FMO has <u>not met</u> the major CAR; underlying noncompliance is still present.

CAR #: 04/06	Reference Standard #: FSC P&C 6.1.1, 6.3.6 and 6.3.7
Non-compliance: Major <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor <input type="checkbox"/>	Forest inventory organization note of Ivacevich SFE passed state expertise (e.g. logging is provided only in portages which are supported with brushwood etc). Seed trees and deciduous trees are left by 10 per ha. But safety measures instructions are not adjusted with nature protection policies. Field showed that on felling areas only small number of fallen trees, hollow trees and deadwood are marked.
Corrective Action Request: Group Managers and all certified SFEs included in the group must have evaluation of impact on environment, and in management plans should include activities on reduction of negative impact of harvesting operations before, in time and after operations. State forest enterprises must agree safety instructions with nature protection policy. To reduce negative ecological circumstances after fellings the following elements (or their parts) of forest ecosystem must be left standing (or on the site) in case if felling and transportation of these elements are not justified from the safety point of view and because of sanitary condition of stands: a) old trees and trees with hollows; b) dry trees and dead fallen wood (not less than 20 m3 per ha); c) seed trees of economically valuable species. State forest enterprises must elaborate and follow procedures on leaving at least 10 (5 in the case of broad-leaved) large live trees per hectare.	
Timeline for Compliance: Within three months after the report finalization	
Audit findings: Brest RFB and SFEs showed that such system has been integrated in existing	

forestry system. Forest management plan, Rules of timber harvesting in Belarus, some of the Belarusian standards and new technological map include the requirements of FSC standard. Field inspection of Telechanskij leskchoze showed that requirements concerning of hollow trees and leaving 10 trees for biodiversity are fulfilled almost everywhere and reflected in new technological maps. Dead trees still all harvested. There are no documents (procedures) which require that dead trees are left in cutting areas. In Baranovichi leskchoze field inspection showed that on the cutting area leaving only broadleaves trees and also no one dead trees. Interviews with rangers showed understanding of FSC requirements concerning leaving 10 trees and deadwood on cutting area.

During audits results presenting general forester of Brest RFB showed a draft letter which require to leave dead trees and 10 trees per ha on cutting area. This letter was approved the 23th of July for immediate implementation. RFB also provided the audit team with a new technological map of Baranovichi SFE which requirements to leave 10 trees per ha and deadwood on logging sites. Further, the RFB has developed a plan of internal audits of SFEs to ensure compliance with the requirements.

Status: Closed

Follow-up Action (if applicable):

CAR #: 06/06	Reference Standard #: FSC P&C 6.4.1, 6.4.2 and 6.4.4.
Non-compliance: Major <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor <input type="checkbox"/>	In Ivacevich SFE consultations about marking of representative ecosystem areas were made with National Academy of Sciences of Belarus scientists, they are identified and marked on maps. New Republic reserve "Hovanschina" (7 thousand ha area) is being organized, where no cuts were made yet. In accordance with legislation of the Republic of Belarus sanitary fellings can be made on all the sites including nature reserves, but in practice the fellings are not carried out in the reserves.
Corrective Action Request: Group Managers and all certified state forest enterprises included in the group shall identify representative sites of existing ecosystems in the process of consultation with state authorities, nongovernmental organizations and other stakeholders. Identified sites must be put on the maps and defined on the field and be kept in their natural conditions. Certified SFEs must juridical form and conserve defined representative sites of existing ecosystems on at least 5% of forest area. No felling can be made on the conserved representative sites.	
Timeline for Compliance: Within three months after the report finalization	
Audit findings: Brest RFB and certified SFE defined representative forests sites where all cutting are prohibited. The total square of these sites compose at least 5% of all SFE forest territory (5,7% in Baranovichskij leshoz) In the frame of a project of Global ecological found, UNO development program and Ministry of Forestry and with participation OF "Belgosles", Institute of experimental botany, NGO "Achova ptushak backaushchyny" a map of high conservation value forestry (HCVF) of Belarus has been developed. The results of this project were presented by SFE. In Baranovichskij leskchoze and Telehanskij leskchoze representative sites were selected on the base of the results of this project. Also selection was done on the base of consultation with local agency of nature resources and environment protection. All information about these sites will be transferred to forest management planning organization and will be included in the next forest management plan. Analyze showing how these sites present different types of forests of SFE were no conducted.	
Auditors concluded to close this CAR, but decided to issue one new minor CAR 01/07	
Status: Closed	

Follow-up Action (if applicable): See minor CAR 01/07

CAR–CoC - 01/06	Reference Standard: FSC-Pure COC # 3.1, 3.2, 9.1, 9.4
Non-compliance: Major <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor <input type="checkbox"/>	Brestskij RFB elaborated “Standards for marking production with FSC logo”. Brestskij RFB further elaborated and each SFE of the group approved “Instruction for identifying wooden production by origin” and “Standard of enterprise for certification FSC-pure production”. But these documents do not include procedures for regular monitoring of obeying by staff all necessary requirements of FSC and their implementation. Saw mill of Brestskij SFE can provide mentioned standard and production list, and such list can be found on SFE stand.
<p>Corrective Action Request: Brest Regional Forest Board and all the state forest enterprises included in the group shall elaborate regular monitoring procedures confirming that appropriate specialists follow and implement all the necessary FSC requirements. This includes in particular following procedures: Monitoring procedures on implementation of chain of custody requirements of FSC standard by appropriate staff. Special attention will be given to the following aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - That each sawmill will have written procedures covering all corresponding aspect of chain of custody standard. - That all the appropriate staff is duly instructed. Understand and follow FSC chain of custody requirements and rules. <p>Procedures for issuing corrective action request in case non-compliances are identified, including procedures to follow up identified non-compliances.</p> <p>Procedures for keeping monitoring records and results.</p>	
Timeline for Compliance: Within three months after the report finalization	
<p>Audit findings: Brest RFB has developed and provided all SFE new procedures (Instruction of chain of custody Smartwood standard fulfillment for FSC-pure products). Also additional training was conducted for personnel concerning above mentioned question. According this procedures monitoring of standard requirements fulfillment must be done by SFE every month. Auditors were presented documents confirming that. All responsible personnel have new procedures and knew requirements. Auditors concluded that activities of RFB are sufficient to close this CAR.</p>	
Status: Closed	
Follow-up Action (if applicable):	

CAR–CoC - 03/06	Reference Standard: FSC-Pure COC # 2.1 and 2.2
Non-compliance: Major <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor <input type="checkbox"/>	In Brestskij RFB specific training requirements for leading workers, responsible for implementing FSC requirements, have not been prepared. In Brestkij SFE not all leading workers passed the training and not all trainings for certifying were documented.
<p>Corrective Action Request: Group Managers and all certified state forest enterprises included in the group shall prepare specific training requirements for key staff to ensure compliance with FSC requirements. Special attention shall be given to the specialists responsible for the following aspects: preparation of sale documents, product labeling and promotion of certified products. SFEs shall demonstrate that all the key specialists are trained in accordance with specific training requirements. SFEs shall demonstrate that all the training activities are documented.</p>	

Timeline for Compliance: Within three months after the report finalization
Audit findings: Group manager and SFE developed special training programs for responsible personnel. All responsible personnel passed training and all training was documented. In RFB and SFE auditors saw minutes from training. Interview with responsible staff in RFB and SFEs confirmed that they are aware of FSC standard requirements
Status: Closed
Follow-up Action (if applicable):

Evaluation of CARs (if applicable)

2.5. New corrective actions and observations

CAR #: 01/07	Reference Standard #: 6.4.3, 6.4.4
Non-compliance: Major <input type="checkbox"/> Minor <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Brest RFB and certified SFE defined representative forests sites where all cutting are prohibited. The total square of these sites compose at least 5% of all SFE forest territory (5,7% in Baranovichi). MENTION EXACT PERCENT It has not been analyzed if these sites present all different types of forests of the certified SFEs.
Corrective Action Request: Brest RFB and SFEs included in the group shall conduct analyze of defined representative sites and ensure that these sites represent different type of forests of the SFEs. Brest RFB and SFEs included in the group shall ensure that no logging will take place in these areas.	
Timeline for Compliance: To be verified during second annual audit.	

CAR #: 02/07	Reference Standard #: Smartwood GS 8
Non-compliance: Major <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor <input type="checkbox"/>	Brest RFB controlled SFEs only regarding COC standard implementation. Brest RFB doesn't have a SFEs control system regarding their compliance with interim SmartWood forest management standard for Belarus. RFB didn't control group members regarding their implementation of forest management certification requirements and labor safety. Auditors concluded that Brest RFB don't provide efficient control of group SFE in concern with certification requirements.
Corrective Action Request: Group Manager shall prepare and implement procedures that ensure that all group members are regular monitored to ensure that they are meeting the FSC P&C and group membership requirements	
Timeline for Compliance: To be verified during second annual audit.	

CAR COC#: 01/07	Reference Standard #: SW COC standard Limited Scope (Dec 2005)
Non-compliance: Major <input type="checkbox"/> Minor <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Certified SFEs use a stamp with the certificate code on the invoices of special exporter "Bellesexport", where "Bellesexport" is defined as a seller and there are no references to certified SFE name.
Corrective Action Request: Brest RFB and SFEs included in the group shall ensure that all invoices for certified products include the name of the SFE as sellers.	

Timeline for Compliance: Effective immediately. To be verified at first annual audit after re-installment of certificate.

Audit observations

Obs #	Observation	Reference Std #

2.6. Audit recommendation and final CARs

Audit Conclusions:

- Major CAR (s) closed.
- No follow-up required
- New CAR issued (document new noncompliance in CAR table below)
- Major CAR (s) open, certificated suspended

Comments/ Follow-up actions at next audit:

During next annual audit will be check performance of new minor CAR and fulfillment of chosen principles of standard FSC

Finalized complete CAR List: