

Summary of the report by Martin Walter

Analysis of the FSC and PEFC Systems for Forest Certification using the FCAG 2008

In collaboration with the World Bank, WWF developed the Forest Certification Assessment Guide¹ (FCAG) in 2006, to assess the quality and credibility of forest certification schemes.

In recognition of the dynamic nature of forest certification, in 2008 WWF commissioned an assessment using the FCAG of the two global certification systems: the FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) and PEFC (Program for Endorsement of Certification Systems) to help WWF review its position on credible certification. The assessment focused on the rules set by these systems internationally, supplemented by an assessment of a sample of national FSC and PEFC standards/schemes, i.e. in Germany, Australia and Chile, to permit evaluation of elements that could not be assessed at international level.

The 2008 assessment showed few changes at the international level in either the FSC or the PEFC systems since the last assessment in 2005.

The table provides a visual summary of the assessment by presenting the percentage of fulfilled indicators per criteria for PEFC and FSC at international level as well as the national schemes. Where compliance with a criterion involved assessment of the national schemes in Australia, Germany and Chile, the percentage for the lowest-scoring national scheme is used in the table.

The table shows that there are considerable differences between the FSC and PEFC at the systems level. This is partly due to the different approaches used by the two systems – more international control for FSC versus more national autonomy for PEFC.

The lowest score for the FSC, on Criterion 3, stems from the use of interim standards where no national standards are in place. Where FSC-endorsed national standards exist, national FSC schemes score 100% for this criterion. Due to the central control structures within FSC, other national FSC schemes are unlikely to score below the scores for FSC in the table.

In the case of PEFC, the higher level of national scheme autonomy results in greater variability between national schemes. Thus, other national PEFC schemes could score higher or lower than the scores for PEFC in the table.

	PEFC	FSC
100% Fulfilled		
100% Not fulfilled		
70% or more fulfilled		
Less than 70% fulfilled		
Criterion 1 — Compliance with international frameworks for certification, accreditation, and standard setting	80%	80%
Criterion 2—Compatible with globally applicable principles that balance economic, ecological, and equity dimensions of forest management and meet Global Forest Alliance requirements	68%	91%
Criterion 3 — Meaningful and equitable participation of all major stakeholder groups in governance and standard setting	22%	72%
Criterion 4 — Avoidance of unnecessary obstacles to trade ²	no indicators	no indicators
Criterion 5 — Based on objective and measurable performance standards that are adapted to local conditions	100%	100%
Criterion 6 — Certification decisions free of conflicts of interest from parties with vested interests ²	no indicators	no indicators
Criterion 7 — Transparency in decision making and public reporting	36%	100%
Criterion 8 — Reliable and independent assessment of forest management performance and chain of custody	47%	89%
Criterion 9 — Delivers continual improvement in forest management	50%	100%
Criterion 10 — Accessible to and cost-effective for all parties	75%	100%
Criterion 11 — Voluntary participation	25%	100%

1. The FCAG is available at: <http://assets.panda.org/downloads/fcagfinal.pdf>

2. Criteria 4 and 6 have no specific indicators as these topics are covered elsewhere in the FCAG, specifically in C1.