



FSC COC Evaluation – process description

Forest Stewardship Council **Chain of Custody Certification**



1. QUOTATION & CONTRACT

To start the process, the applicant for FSC certification complete the form "Request for FSC CoC Quote" and send to DNV. After receipt of this information, DNV can give an estimate for the cost of certification. DNV will send the applicant a contract for FSC CoC Certification to sign.

2. APPOINTMENT OF TEAM LEADER / KEY CONTACT PERSON

A Team Leader is appointed and he / she will contact the client for the arrangement of the audit.

3. PRE-EVALUATION VISIT

Pre-evaluation is optional, but strongly recommended for complex organisations. It is often a one-day activity, where the auditor(s):

- Informs about the result of the document review.
- Reviews and discuss the requirements of the standard with the forest manager
- Verifies the scope – the definition of the customer's forest areas, products, activities, etc.
- Makes an analysis of the managers management system (if group or multiple)
- Reviews the level of implementation of the management system
- Issues non-compliances when discrepancies in the system are found
- Prepares for the Main Evaluation

3.1.1 Outcome of the Pre-evaluation visit

Auditor's comments on the:

- Documented management system, based on the applicable standards (i.e. if the documented material is sufficient to perform the Main Evaluation)
- Non-compliances (if any)
- Audit plan for the Main Evaluation

4. CERTIFICATION

4.1 Preparation prior to Main Evaluation

The Team Leader gather information from the client prior to the main evaluation.

4.1.1 Group and Multi-site certification

In addition to certification of one or more sites as part of the same operation, where all sites or operations included in the scope of the certificate have to undergo full evaluations by DNV, group or multi-site certificates may be issued. For multi site or group certification sampling of sites to visit has to be made based on a risk evaluation.

A Group Chain of Custody certificate covers several small enterprises acting as Chain of Custody operations under a group scheme.



A Multi-Site Chain of Custody Certificate covers several participating sites acting as Chain of Custody operations under a multi-site scheme. It is acceptable for an organization to hold a multi-site certificate for less than 100% of their sites. It is also acceptable for an organization to hold more than one multi-site certificate, where each multi-site certificate covers sites that meet the requirements for certification.

If the sets of sites proposed for certification are controlled by more than one central office, separate certification evaluations shall be carried out, and separate certificates issued.

The lead auditor will carry out an initial review of the organizations' documentation and an evaluation of the complexity and scale of the activities covered by the central office and any differences between sites.

4.2 Main Evaluation

At the Main Evaluation the Chain of Custody Management System of the manager/owner is reviewed, to secure that it covers all requirements of the applicable standards and is well implemented in the organisation.

The evaluation is performed on randomly selected samples that involve review and verification of documents and activities. As and when required, the personnel involved in these activities are interviewed on site. During the evaluation, the company is informed on the progress of the evaluation, including any non-compliance, if identified.

After the audit, a report is produced, highlighting the non-compliances found within the management system and recommendations for further improvements.

4.3 Non-compliances (NCs) and corrective actions

There are two levels of non-compliances (NCs): Major (Category 1) and Minor (Category 2).

A non-compliance is considered major if there is a doubt whether products meet the requirements for FSC labelling or where there is a clear risk of this happening.

A non-compliance may be considered minor if it is a temporary lapse that does not result in a risk that products fail to the requirements for FSC labelling.

After the main evaluation, the client analyses the non-compliances, identifies corrective actions and prepare a schedule to perform them.

4.4 Issuing the certificate

When the status of non-compliances has been agreed by the client and the auditor(s), an independent, technical review of the evaluation work and reports is made internally by the Certification Decision Entity.

If there are no NCs a certificate is issued. If there are only minor NCs, a certificate will be issued based on that corrective actions will be taken within a specified time frame. If there are major NCs, no certificate will be issued until these are corrected.

The validity of the certificate is 5 years.

After receipt of the certificate, it is possible to apply for use of FSC trademarks to your certified products.



5. SURVEILLANCE

5.1 Surveillance audits

Surveillance audits will be made at least annually. DNV prepares a plan for the surveillance visits. If the company has outsourced part of the working process, the surveillance audit must include a physical inspection of a sample of contractors included in the scope of the company's certificate.

The audit is performed in a similar way as the initial main evaluation and a report, including non-compliances found, is presented to the client.

If minor NCs are not corrected within agreed time frame, they will be upgraded to a major NC. If major NCs are not satisfactorily corrected, the certificate will be withdrawn.

5.2 Re-evaluation

According to FSC's regulations, the whole system must be evaluated towards the standard requirements at least once in a five-year period. This means that the ordinary surveillance visit is increased by a relevant number of man-days to include all clauses of the relevant standards.

The auditor re-verifies the scope of the certification and the whole Chain of Custody management system is evaluated.

A new certificate shall not be issued prior to closure of major NC's.

5.3 Withdrawal of certificate

If the requirements of the standard are not complied with, the certificate may be withdrawn. As a result of this no promoting/marketing materials that make use of DNV's and FSC's name, logo, certification mark or trademark will no longer be used. The certificate must be return to DNV.

6. UNSCHEDULED AUDITS

Applicable only when there are:

6.1 Major changes in the Management System

The client is required to inform DNV of any major changes to the management system after issuance of certificate.

6.2 Change in the scope of certificate

If the client wishes to change the scope of certificate, the request needs to be presented prior to scheduled surveillance/certification evaluation. DNV shall then decide if the request can be handled during the surveillance/certification evaluation and if not, an extra visit shall be arranged.

6.3 Complaints/serious deviations reported on the certified management system

If there is reason to believe that the Management System is not maintained in a correct way, e.g. at complaints or serious discrepancies, an extra audit shall be arranged.



7. CHANGES OF CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Before changing the certification requirements, due notice will be given in advance.

8. USE OF CERTIFICATION MARK AND LOGOS

Organizations who are certified by DNV Certification AB are entitled to use the certification marks of DNV Certification AB, according to DNV´s rules for use of certification marks.

The use of FSC-marks shall be in accordance with actual requirements from FSC.