



August 2008

## **FSC statement: Forests and climate change**

Forest ecosystems play a critical role in regulating the Earth's climate. At the same time most forest ecosystems are also threatened by climate change. To prevent harmful green house gas (GHG) emissions, global deforestation and forest degradation should be reduced immediately and halted by 2015<sup>1</sup>. Additionally, improved management and restoration of degraded forests should be implemented immediately to increase sequestration of atmospheric GHG. Efforts to stop deforestation, stop forest degradation, improve forest management and implement other forest-based mitigation activities should be seen in the context of being additional to, and not a substitute for, necessary reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from other sectors.

All forests and plantations should be managed in an ethical and responsible manner to credible social, environmental and economic standards. As a principle, FSC opposes all deforestation and forest degradation. FSC supports the maintenance and enhancement of carbon stocks in FSC certified forests and plantations as well as recognition being given to carbon stored in protected forests.

There is a need for affordable and credible methodologies and standards for assessing and monitoring avoided deforestation and forest carbon sequestration. Similarly there is the need to address operational issues such as 'additionality', 'permanence', and 'leakage' in forest carbon accounting as an international priority. FSC has a strong role to play in verifying both carbon and biodiversity benefits of responsible forest management. Over the last fifteen years, FSC has developed many of the auditing tools needed for such verifications.

FSC strongly supports recognition of the rights of local communities and Aboriginal and Indigenous Peoples, clarifying land tenure and use rights, participatory and transparent multi-stakeholder governance, and equitable benefit sharing for any carbon financing or trading frameworks or schemes.

FSC aims to promote the use or adoption of FSC's forest stewardship standards and certification system as a means to assure co-benefits and as a pre-requisite for any carbon financing or financial incentives for forest related climate change mitigation approaches, such as Avoided Deforestation (AD) or Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD).



As with any single forest use, carbon management cannot be separated from the many ecosystem services that well managed forests provide. The FSC system provides the context for which carbon management and carbon crediting can be harmonized with other uses and values of the forest.

---

<sup>1</sup> Based on the IPCC 2006 report that identifies 2015 as the year when emissions will need to be in decline if dangerous global temperatures are to stay less than two degrees above what they are today.