

ASSESSMENT AND INTERVIEW OF FSC CERTIFIED PROTECTED AREAS

August 12, 2014



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- Interview results
 - General feedback on the FSC certification experience
 - Costs and benefits
 - Strengths and weaknesses of FSC in protected areas
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OBJECTIVE

Understand the **motivations of certificate holders** that currently use FSC for conservation purposes, as well as the **benefits, opportunities and drawbacks** of the FSC certification system in the context of a protected area.

METHODOLOGY

■ **Interview preparation:**

Based on Rainforest Alliance's report on FSC certified protected areas, 19 certificate holders were identified. 8 of them agreed to participate in the survey.

■ **Conducting the interviews**

A questionnaire was sent in anticipation to the call and completed during an oral interview.

■ **Additional research**

For the 11 remaining protected areas, further research was conducted using two sources:

- The Rainforest Alliance "Table 1. List of FSC Certified Protected Areas"
- FSC's certificate holder database

OUTPUTS

Summary table

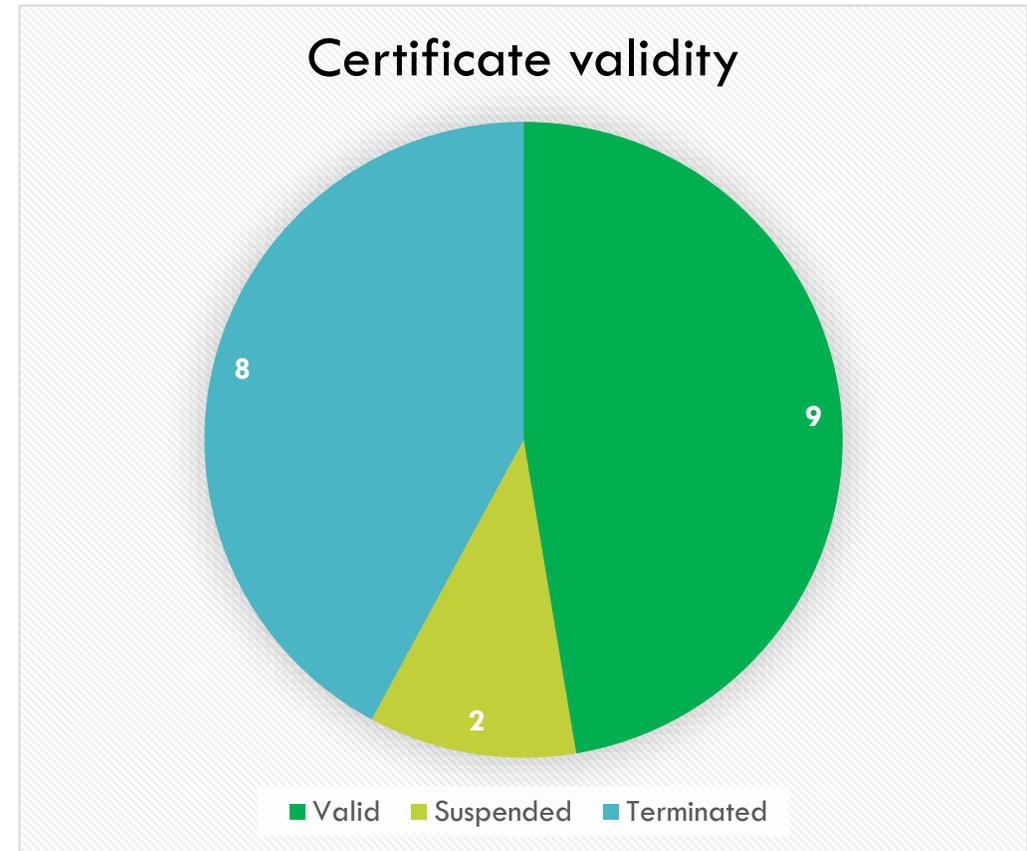
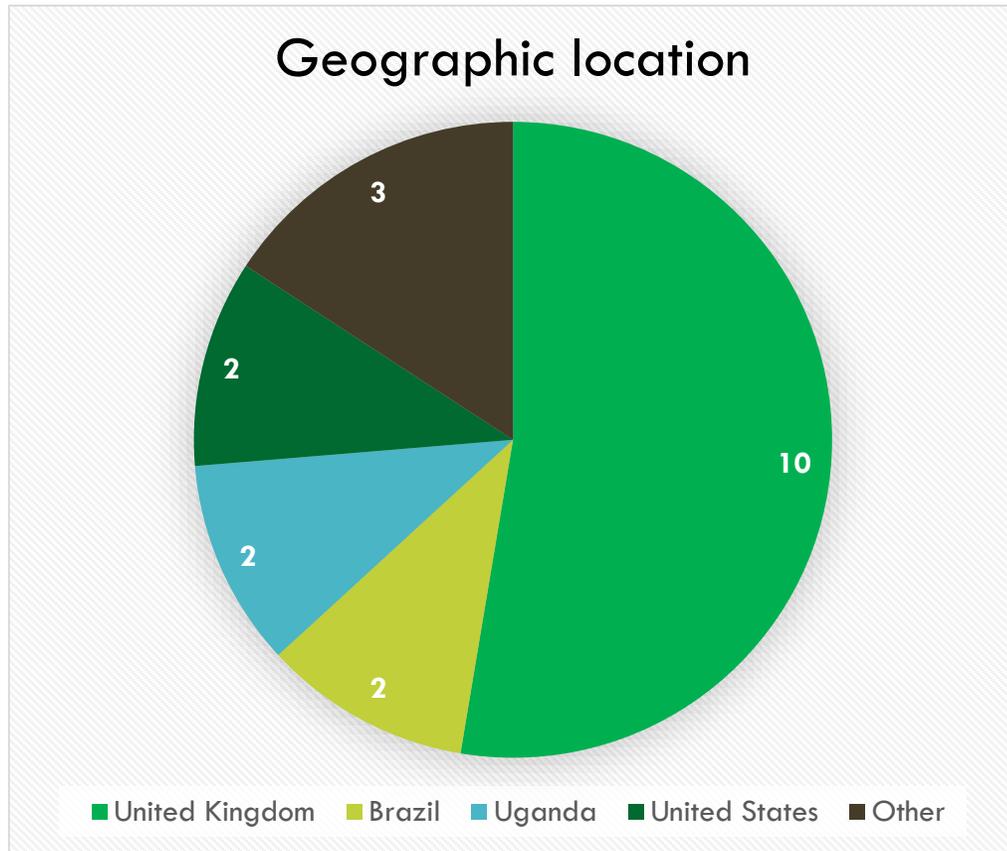
- Participant vs. non-participant protected areas
- General characteristics: country, PA size, certificate validity, etc.
- Purpose of certification

Summary of the interviews

4 question categories:

- General feedback on the FSC certification experience
- Costs and benefits
- Strengths and weaknesses of FSC in protected areas
- Conclusion (relevance of FSC certification in protected areas)

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE 19 PROTECTED AREAS



N.B. the term “terminated” means that the certificate is no longer valid. This could be the result of either FSC’s decision (non-compliance) or the protected area’s decision (non-renewal).

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE 19 PROTECTED AREAS

Name	Size (km ²)
Larkey Valley Wood (UK)	0,4
East Essex Environmental Agency (UK)	0,6
Sefton Council (UK)	1
North Somerset Council (UK)	1,6
Severn Gorge Countryside Trust (UK)	2,2
Cuerden Valley Park Trust (UK)	2,6
Severn Trent Water (UK)	12,5
City of Astoria (US)	15
Nacka Community Forests (SW)	20
Essex Wildlife Trust (UK)	29
Kamehameha Schools' Honaunau Management Area (US)	140
Cooperativa Mista dos Produtores Extrativistas dos Rio Iratapuru (BZ)	196
The Woodland Trust (UK)	240
Kibale NP (UG)	795
Vereniging Natuurmonumenten (NL)	1 000
Mount Elgon NP (UG)	1 121
Garden Route NP (SA)	1 600
National Trust (UK)	2 500
Comunidade Kayapo na Terra Indigena do Bau (BZ)	15 435

INTERVIEW RESULTS: GENERAL FEEDBACK

❖ Objectives of FSC certification among the 8 participants

- Obtain a local government grant (3 PA, all in the UK)
- For external communication purposes (3 PA)
- Comply with EU legislation (1 PA)
- Benchmark with international standards (1 PA)

N.B. 5 out of 8 certificate holders have certified only the forested part of their protected area.

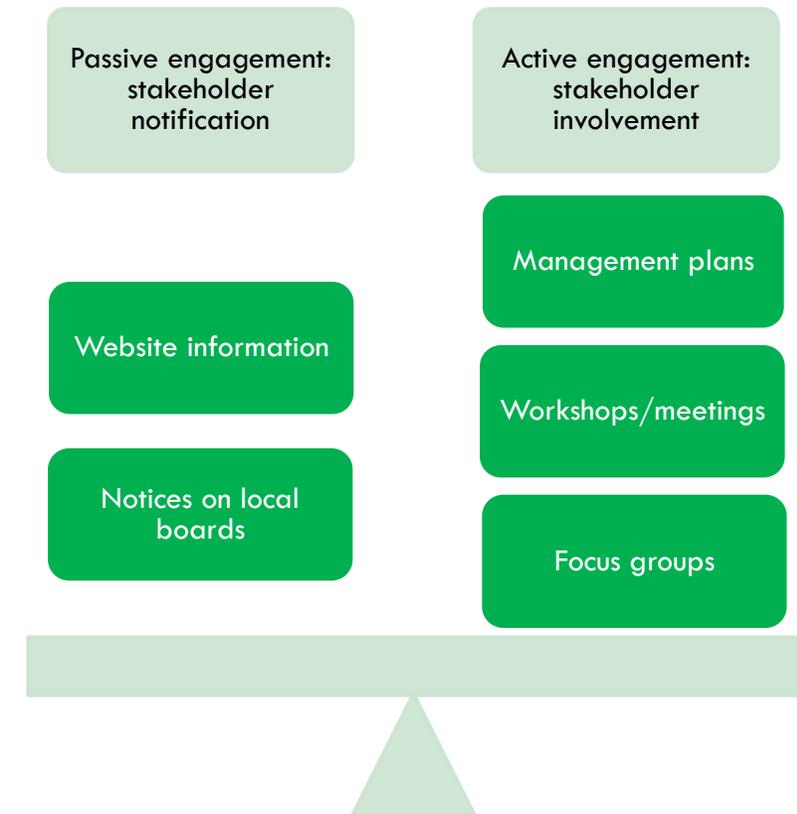


❖ Objectives of FSC certification among the 11 non-participants

- Protect indigenous people (2 PA)
- Harvesting of NTFP (5 PA)
- Commercialization of timber (4 PA)
- “Strict” conservation (no harvesting or sale of NTFP/timber) (3 PA)

INTERVIEW RESULTS: GENERAL FEEDBACK

- ❖ All of the 8 participants asserted that FSC certification had **fully met their expectations**.
- ❖ The majority (5) said that **implementation had been easy**. Those who found it difficult either had a large protected area (for eg. with multiple sites) and/or a high number of staff members to cover.
- ❖ Very few participants (2) used the help of an **external consultant** to reach compliance with FSC standards.
- ❖ The majority of participants (6) **involved external stakeholders** at some point of the FSC certification process. However the types of involvement and the types of stakeholders involved vary greatly from one PA to another.
- ❖ In general, **local communities and neighbors** are informed and/or consulted by the PA.



INTERVIEW RESULTS: COSTS AND BENEFITS

- ❖ All of the 8 participants said that the main cost was **the audit**. 4 of them added that FSC certification led to important administrative and staff costs. None of them seem to have incurred costs to implement significant changes in management operations.
- ❖ None of the participants stated that FSC certification had improved conservation management practices on the ground. Most of them were motivated by **external communication and reputation** related reasons.
- ❖ 2 protected areas however observed that their certification had had positive impacts on **overall PA management standards** in their respective countries (SA and UK).
- ❖ 3 British protected areas represent a separate case as their certification is directly linked to the obtention of a **government grant**.
- ❖ The majority of participants (6) sell **timber products**. Some also sell non-forest products such as meat, bird seeds and farm produce.

The British “badger logo” for wildlife trusts



INTERVIEW RESULTS: STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF FSC CERTIFICATION FOR PROTECTED AREAS



3 most cited strengths:

1. International standards
2. Dynamic tool
3. Regular, independent audits and verification procedures



3 most cited weaknesses:

1. Cost
2. Time-consuming administrative work
3. Too focused on forestry (not conservation specific enough)

INTERVIEW RESULTS: RELEVANCE OF FSC FOR PROTECTED AREA CERTIFICATION

❖ All of the respondents believe that FSC certification is relevant for protected areas, mainly because of the following reasons:

- It is necessary to have an **international standard**
- Certification enables **long term** conservation, regardless of government, staff and stakeholder changes
- It requires an **independent audit** and assures the public that the area is well managed

❖ However, many (4 PA) think that the current standard **should be adapted** to better fit the specific situation of protected areas:

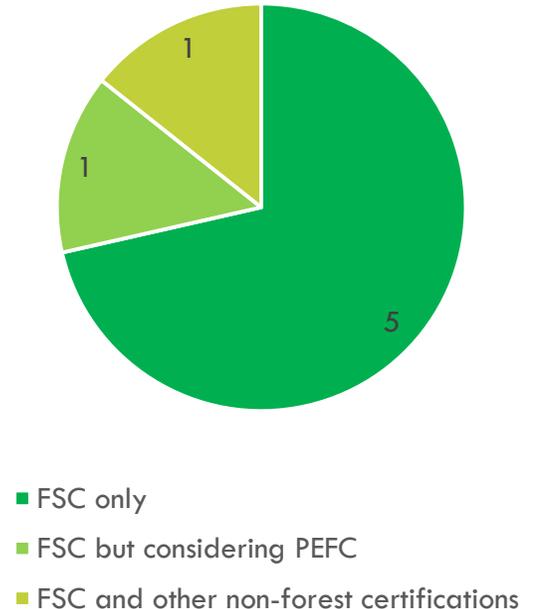
- Diversity of biomes
- No harvesting or sale of timber products
- Recreational values
- Reduced need for frequent audits
- Guidelines for conservation management
- Park systems vs. individual sites

INTERVIEW RESULTS: RELEVANCE OF FSC FOR PROTECTED AREA CERTIFICATION

❖ Desired benefits of a potential FSC certification for protected areas are:

- Higher management standards
- Higher credibility and reputation
- International recognition
- Enhanced landscapes and ecosystem services
- Networking opportunities to share best practices
- Ability to certify « wildlife friendly » products (i.e. products that come from protected areas)

Usage of certification systems



MAIN FINDINGS

- Although the interview sample was quite small, the participants' feedback is rather encouraging.
- In their opinion, the FSC brand is **legitimate, trustworthy** and has the necessary strengths to develop a global PA certification system.
- However, FSC will need to tackle the following **major challenges**:
 1. Adapt its standard to meet PA expectations: put more focus on conservation issues but remain flexible enough to cover the diversity of situations
 2. Adapt its procedures to reduce audit costs and the amount of paperwork
 3. Ensure that the certification will bring sufficient economic and financial benefits to the PA: for example, sale of by-products at a premium price, more efficient management operations, increased value of tourism activities.



Q&A

Thank you for your attention!

Any questions?