

**FOREST STEWARDSHIP
COUNCIL® UNITED KINGDOM
ANNUAL REVIEW 2022/2023**



**FORESTS®
FOR ALL
FOREVER**

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Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC) UK
is a charity dedicated to promoting responsible forestry in the UK.

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Welcome to our Annual Review for 2022/23

After two years of working primarily via webinars and online meetings, one of the pleasures of the last year has been the opportunity to reconnect with people, in person.

Our Annual Members' Meeting in the wonderful setting of Westonbirt Arboretum was a real reminder of what we have missed in recent years. As well as providing an opportunity for members to help us to develop our vision for UK forests, the tour of the arboretum and the lunch gave us chance to talk to each other in a relaxed and informal setting, so hard to recreate via Zoom!

The FSC General Assembly finally met in Bali, two years later than planned. Members were able to join remotely but there was, as ever, a real benefit to being there in person and I found it inspiring to witness the commitment of our members to reach consensus, even on challenging issues.

In January 2023, we joined the Soil Association for a training workshop for members of Timber Development UK (TDUK) where the enthusiasm of the participants was truly gratifying. We will continue to offer our online training and host webinars but there is certainly much to be gained being in a room with people, and we hope to do more of this in the future.

FSC is about forests, but it is also about people: those that live and work in the forest but also the people who support FSC – members, certificate holders, licence holders, trustees, staff and consumers – who share a common desire to ensure we have forests for all, forever.

Thank you to all of you for this continued support.



Rosie Teasdale
Executive Director, FSC UK



MEET THE TEAM

The Staff



Rosie Teasdale
Executive Director



Beth Bennett
Business Development Manager



Tallulah Chapman
Communications Manager



Dr Owen Davies
Forest Standards Manager



Amy Willox
Outreach Manager
Forests & Ecosystem Services



Rachel Hembery
Business Advisor



Olivia Bargman
Communications Officer



Maggie Cooper
Trademark & Licensing Officer



Jayne Hexley
Operations Officer



Carol Lord
Trademark Enforcement Officer



Georgina Davies
Administration Assistant



Holly Dillon
Project and Communications Assistant

The trustees



Dr Jon Kirkpatrick
Chair



Mike Bekin
Vice-Chair



Maura Poole
Treasurer



Dr Hubertus van Hensbergen



Dr Steve Jennings



Hubert Kwisthout



Dr Constance L. McDermott



John Tewson

ABOUT FSC

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is an international, non-governmental organisation dedicated to promoting responsible management of the world's forests. FSC's pioneering certification system enables businesses and consumers to choose wood, paper and other forest products made with materials that support responsible forestry. FSC forest management standards, developed by its stakeholders, provide the best possible assurance that forests are being responsibly managed.

Democratic and inclusive

We are governed by more than 1000 members and actively support Indigenous Peoples' rights. Members are drawn from social, environmental and economic interest groups to govern by consensus in a unique process.

Consistent and robust

All FSC-certified forests are managed in line with the same global principles, and our certificate holders and certification bodies are accountable and independently audited.

Credible and trusted

We consult stakeholders on changes to our standards, have a dispute resolution process and enjoy broad NGO support.

Global and recognised

We operate globally, our iconic logo is recognised, and we help governments and organisations to meet agreed sourcing standards.

Innovative and ambitious

We are the pioneers of forest certification, and we continue to innovate, whether that means certification in new sectors or using more efficient, digital tools.



MISSION:

FSC will promote environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests.

VISION:

The true value of forests is recognised and fully incorporated into society worldwide. FSC is the leading catalyst and defining force for improved forest management and market transformation, shifting the global forest trend toward sustainable use, conservation, restoration, and respect for all.



FSC IN NUMBERS

© FSC / Iván Castro

Worldwide FSC-certified forests (hectares):

195,350,810

Worldwide FSC promotional licences:

1,615

Worldwide FSC chain of custody certificates:

54,163

UK FSC chain of custody certificates:

2,236

UK FSC-certified forests (hectares):

1,655,530

FSC UK promotional licences:

123

Figures correct as of 1 April 2023

HIGHLIGHTS

FSC UK Communications Manager Tallulah Chapman and Outreach Manager Amy Willox visited Kinveachy Forest, guided by Will Anderson and Ewan Archer from Seafield & Strathspey Estates (see page 18 for our case study).



APRIL 2022

Jayne Hexley joined the FSC UK team as Operations Officer.



JUNE 2022

The revision of the UK's Forest Stewardship Standard passed another key stage, with the UKWAS Working Group signing off a pre-approval draft to be submitted to FSC International.

AUGUST 2022

Holly Dillon joined the FSC UK team as Project & Communications Assistant.



SEPTEMBER 2022 ▶

A joint webinar from SGS and FSC UK about Sustainable Packaging Futures discussed sustainable goals and targets, aiming to widen participants' knowledge of sustainably sourced products and certified materials.

The FSC UK Annual Members' Meeting took place at Westonbirt Arboretum. After two years of online meetings, staff, trustees and members were glad to be able to meet in person once again.



SEPTEMBER 2022 ▶

Companies, NGOs, influencers and people from all over the world came together for FSC Forest Week to highlight the value of forests and how choosing sustainably sourced products can help create resilient forests for the future. This year our theme was "Choose Forests. Choose FSC."



FSC members from around the world gathered in Bali for the 9th FSC General Assembly. Rosie Teasdale and Amy Willox attended the event from FSC UK, along with several UK-based members of FSC.



OCTOBER 2022 ▶

The FSC Furniture Awards ceremony took place at the ADI Design Museum in Milan.



OCTOBER 2022

FSC UK joined the Soil Association at The Building Centre, London, for a one-day training workshop for Timber Development UK (TDUK) members on FSC and UK Timber Regulations.



JANUARY 2023

FSC UK launched a survey of FSC-certified certificate holders in the furniture sector.

FEBRUARY 2023

Annual consumer survey conducted (see page 24 for results).



MARCH 2023

CERTIFICATION

Forest Management Certification

FSC certification provides credible third-party assurance that the management of woodlands is environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable. Our Principles and Criteria for forest stewardship run the gamut from legal compliance and management planning to community relations and High Conservation Values.

In the UK, FSC Forest Management Certificate Holders include the state forest services, charities such as the RSPB, Woodland Trust and National Trust, and private forestry companies. Most privately-owned certified woodlands are part of group schemes, in each of which a group manager takes overall responsibility for ensuring that all members meet certification requirements and members are externally audited on a sample basis.

Between April 2022 and April 2023, the total FSC-certified area in the UK grew from 1,625,847 hectares to 1,655,530 ha, an increase of 1.8%. The vast majority of this growth was in group schemes, with the combined number of members of all groups now standing at over 1,100.

UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS)

Working through a record-breaking number of consultation responses, the members of the UKWAS Working Group achieved consensus on a pre-approval draft of UKWAS 5 within their agreed timeframe.

The revised draft standard was considered by the UKWAS Steering Group at a meeting in June 2022, and largely accepted. The British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC) raised concerns about proposed restrictions on the use of lead ammunition. After further consideration of the evidence presented by BASC on specific challenges in relation to small calibre ammunition, the Working Group BASC agreed to a time-

limited exception for ammunition used for grey squirrel control.

The UKWAS draft standard has now been submitted to FSC International for consideration.

Chain of Custody Certification

FSC Chain of Custody Certification ensures that FSC-certified material has been identified and separated from non-certified and uncontrolled material as it makes its way along the supply chain, from the forest to the market. Any company involved in the processing or transformation of FSC-certified products must be FSC certified to allow them to apply an FSC label to their products and/or sell them with an FSC claim.

The 2022/23 retention rate for FSC chain of custody certificates in the UK was 91%. There was a slight decrease in the number of certificates from 2258 to 2236, due in part to businesses merging and/or joining group certificates. 156 new chain of custody certificates were issued between April 2022 and March 2023 and we were encouraged to see continued growth in the indoor furniture, paper and packaging sectors.

Project Certification

Individual objects or buildings of any size or scale that are built or renovated can seek FSC Project Certification. Project Certification can also be used for civil engineering projects and events such as exhibitions and festivals. Under this certification standard, several projects can be managed on a rolling-basis or a single project can achieve a one-time certification.

During 2022/23, three FSC project certificates were issued, to N2, Nova Evolved, comprising 160,000 sq ft of office space in Victoria, London (FSC®P001866), 'Greening the Estate' at Canary Wharf (FSC®P001950) and The Forge, the UK's first net zero carbon commercial building (FSC®P001855).



“We would highly recommend FSC certification, at the very least it’s a statement of intent and commitment to ESG principles, but it’s also a powerful tool for value, brand and reputation, and it’s helping win fit-out projects, contributing to JPA’s development and growth plans.”

Fiona Edwards, Head of Sustainability, JPA Workspaces (FSC®C171825)

Trademark licensing & enforcement

Licensing

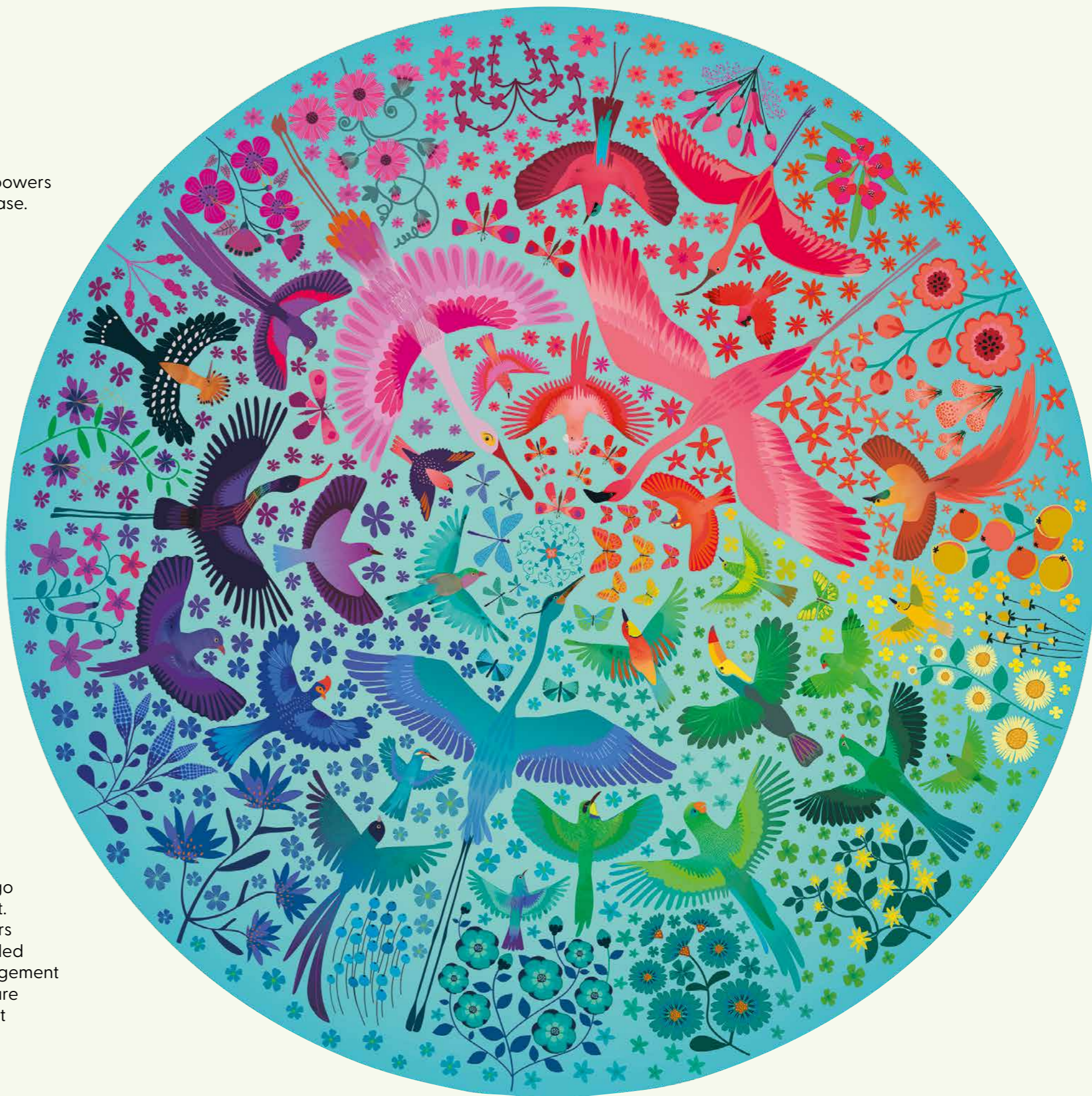
Consumers justifiably have high expectations that the forest-based products they buy are sourced responsibly and do not contribute to deforestation. Promoting FSC-certified products and packaging empowers consumers to make informed choices about the products they purchase. We encourage retailers, brand owners and other organisations to use the power of the FSC brand by creating their own unique and compelling promotional campaigns and materials. Through these tailored campaigns, businesses can communicate their commitment to responsible forest management to their customers – supported by the widely-recognised FSC trademarks.

For organisations that buy FSC-labelled products from an FSC-certified supplier and either use them in their business or sell them on unchanged, a Promotional Licence may offer an alternative to Chain of Custody Certification. 20 new licence agreements were issued by FSC UK during this period. At the end of March 2023, 123 FSC promotional licences were held in the UK, representing 7.6% of the licences held worldwide.

Enforcement

We take trademark infringement very seriously. The FSC logo, the name Forest Stewardship Council, the abbreviation FSC and the FSC Forests For All Forever brandmarks are all registered trademarks and there are strict controls on their use. Only companies holding an FSC certificate, or a Promotional Licence, are allowed to promote products commercially as FSC certified. Incorrect use of the FSC trademarks by FSC certificate and licence holders is categorised as misuse, while commercial use of the FSC trademarks by unlicensed organisations is categorised as infringement.

FSC UK resolved 343 cases of unauthorised trademark use between April 2022 and March 2023, 88% of which were infringements. 96% of cases related to off-product (promotional e.g. online) uses of the FSC trademarks and 37% of infringements included use of the FSC logo (the remainder being text-only). 3% of infringements were on-product. The FSC trademarks help to assure consumers and business customers that the products they buy come from well-managed forests, controlled sources or reclaimed materials. Protecting the trademarks from infringement and misuse helps to maintain the integrity of the FSC system and ensure that those who have invested time and resources in responsible forest management and sourcing are properly identified and rewarded.



Case file: Timber



Certificate holder: Palmer Timber Ltd.
Licence code: FSC®003612
Scope: Paperboard; Solid wood; Products from planning mill; Veneer; Wood panels; Engineered wood products; Wood for construction
Certified since: 1997

With 25 years of FSC certification, timber importer and distributor Palmer Timber is a company that has a commitment to sustainability running through the core of its business and operations.

The West Midlands company was founded in 1916 when William Henry Palmer purchased an old brick works and created a sawmill specialising in homegrown hardwoods. Over a hundred years later the company still trade from that very same site with Richard Palmer, the great grandson of William, the current managing director.

Palmer Timber have always been committed to sustainability within its supply chain. As the company grew and they began to import timber, particularly from Scandinavia where sustainability processes had been in place for over a hundred years, they began to understand and appreciate the importance of good forest management.

So, when the Forest Stewardship Council was formed in 1994, Palmer Timber understood how important the principles of the scheme were and looked to join at the earliest opportunity. With the company becoming

FSC certified in 1997, they celebrated their 25th anniversary in 2022.

“Being FSC-certified has opened so many doors for the company,” said Richard Palmer, “Thanks to our certification we have been able to supply timber and panel products to many well-known companies, from the Lawn Tennis Association to the WWF. We live in a world where environmental issues are front page news and it is imperative we take seriously the responsibility of ensuring the timber we supply to our customers is sourced both legally and sustainably. In fact, virtually all of our customers now insist that any material supplied to them is certified, so holding FSC certification has become absolutely

Certificate holder: Hadley Interiors Ltd.
Licence code: FSC®C176359
Scope: Indoor furniture; Outdoor furniture
Certified since: 2022

Hadley Interiors are a West Yorkshire based, bespoke joinery firm established in 2008, staffed by a talented team of experienced bench-joiners for the museum, heritage, commercial, and educational sectors.

The company feels privileged by its leading position in an industry that, when managed correctly, is inherently sustainable. It is this appreciation that led the company to formalise its commitment to sustainability through certification with the FSC. The company also felt that in an age where ‘greenwashing’ is rife, obtaining qualification from a globally recognised body complements the company’s high regard for authenticity.

Whilst Hadley sees that demand for FSC-certified products is growing, it is not yet universal. However, for those clients for whom it is a prerequisite, the benefits of being FSC

imperative for the growth of the business”.

To ensure their compliance at audit, Jason Mead, the company’s environmental officer, went through training to become an FSC lead auditor. *“Whilst I am obviously unable to undertake our own audits it solidifies our commitment to FSC”* said Jason, *“It also allows us to integrate additions to the standard, such as the new core labour values, with an understanding of what an auditor will be looking for. We have fantastic dialogue with both our certification body (Interface NRM Ltd) and FSC UK so, when we require additional advice or guidance, they are always there for us. Having support like that is imperative to the smooth running of our system.”*

certified are clear: the company has seen a marked improvement in its market position versus uncertified competitors. This in turn has led to an increase in turnover and profitability that has far outweighed the investment in time and resources required to establish the systems enabling the certification process. The certification is of particular importance during tender-based new business activities.

“With build and fit-out tenders, particularly to public bodies, a sustainable approach to production is a must-have and being able to demonstrate FSC certification is a fabulous base on which to make the case that our company takes its responsibility to our Environment seriously,” Hadley Interiors Managing Director, Jamie Lavin.

The main challenge the company faced in meeting the demands of the certification process was putting in place the administrative systems to support the chain of custody requirements. This involved placing additional roles and responsibilities on already gainfully employed staff members: *“However, given the ethical benefits underpinning the process, our teams were only too happy to get involved,”* said Lavin.

Case file: Paper



© James Cropper

Established in 1845, James Cropper is a market leader in advanced materials and paper products, based in the foothills of the English Lake District. Led by the Cropper family for six generations, the business has an international

workforce and an operational reach in over 50 countries.

James Cropper was the first in the world to upcycle disposable coffee cups, with their

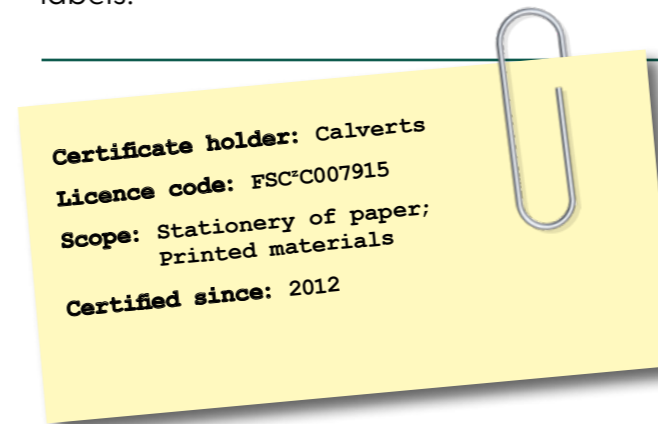
award-winning CupCycling® facility; their pioneering non-wovens and electrochemical coatings are essential components in hydrogen production and fuel cells, their bespoke colours and textures in paper are tailored to customer specification and their moulded fibre packaging is designed to replace single use plastics.

The Group operates across multiple markets from luxury retail to renewable energy. It is renowned globally for service, capability, pioneering and multi award-winning commitment to the highest standards of sustainability.

As part of that commitment, James Cropper became FSC certified in 2006, ensuring their fresh fibre sourcing supports responsible forestry. They sell FSC-certified papers and boards under the FSC Mix and FSC Recycled labels.

“FSC certification is completely aligned with the requirements of our major clients. As a company we set out to ensure all our suppliers operate to the same ethical and sustainable standards that we ourselves adhere to and the good, long-term, relationships we have with our suppliers has allowed us to buy certified pulp,” Adrian Dolan, Product Manager

James Cropper partner with some of the world’s most luxury brands, including the British fashion house Mulberry, a brand committed to innovative packaging solutions to reduce their impact on our planet. Using FSC Mix certified paper, the iconic Mulberry Green paper includes a unique source of post-consumer waste, including coffee cups processed through the CupCycling® facility.



Calverts is a workers’ cooperative established in 1977, based in East London. They specialise in high quality graphic design and sustainable print, and work with clients to deliver print and design solutions that are socially and environmentally responsible, as well as beautiful and effective. They print a variety of paper products such as books, zines, reports, and high-end stationery.

Calverts’ motivation for FSC certification was demand from clients. Holding certification has helped them to win work, for example, being awarded a contract with a local authority, where FSC certification was a mandatory requirement.

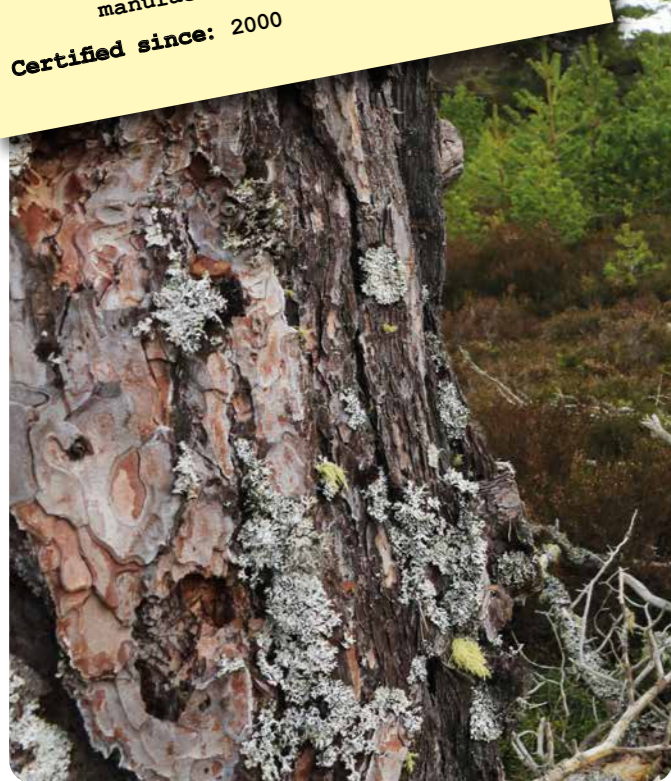
Their certification has also supported their entries to industry awards. They were finalists and came highly commended in the 2022 British Printing Industries Federation (BPIF) Book Production Awards for ‘Our Time On Earth’, an exhibition catalogue printed for the Barbican. The book used FSC-certified paper, a pioneering algae-based ink and adhered to high overall environmental standards, as set out by an ISO14001 Environmental Management System.

Certification helps Calverts to limit the environmental impact of their supply chain, of which paper is the biggest part. As FSC certification is voluntary, they regularly reach out for feedback from clients. One such client is Client Earth, who stated that ‘environmental good practice is extremely important to us and strong certification schemes like FSC make it much easier for us to choose suppliers with confidence’. Some clients promote the FSC certification of the products they source from Calverts by requesting they apply the FSC label, something that is encouraged, as it helps educate people about the FSC scheme.

Case file: Striking a balance for biodiversity

Certificate holder: Tilhill Forestry Ltd.
Licence code: FSC®C018469
Scope: Rough wood; Charcoal; Wood chips; Solid wood; Outdoor furniture and gardening; Other manufactured wood products
Certified since: 2000

©FSC UK



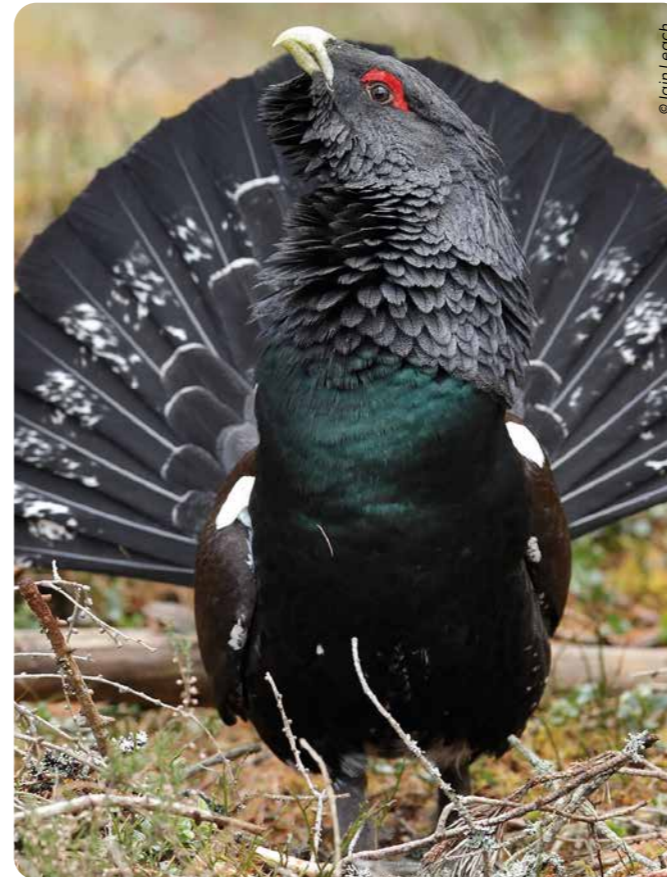
Will Anderson and Ewan Archer are stewards of the Seafield and Strathspey Estates, which have held FSC certification for more than 20 years under the Tilhill group scheme. On a bright Spring morning their office, the 23,000ha of these Highland Estates, comprising ancient Caledonian pinewoods, forest plantations, heather moors and a section of the Dunlain river, surely can't be bettered. But managing this landscape year-round, through all weathers, and often late into the night isn't easy. And this land, so altered over centuries by human hand, is vulnerable to change.

The Estate is home to a diversity of wildlife, ranging from red grouse and other upland species such as skylark, curlew, golden plover, lapwing, and mountain hare to a variety of species of birds of prey including buzzard, golden eagle, white-tailed sea eagle, hen

harrier, hobby, kestrel, merlin, peregrine falcon, red kite and sparrow hawks. Remnants of natural forest, most recently deforested primarily for the first world war effort and dominated by Scots pine, support species that rely heavily on this habitat, including Scottish crossbills, black grouse, and capercaillie.

The capercaillie, a large woodland grouse, reintroduced in the 19th century after becoming extinct, is now again at serious risk of disappearing from our woodlands. Strathspey has the largest concentration of leks (capercaillie breeding displays) in Scotland, but the population is contracting to this last stronghold. Concurring with the recent NatureScot Scientific Advisory Committee Review of Capercaillie Conservation and Management, Will and Ewan identify predation and human disturbance as key factors. But with much of UK wildlife under threat, and many species protected accordingly, this can see one or more threatened species competing for survival.

However, in one lek, which is worryingly close to human activity, capercaillie numbers are stable or even increasing. Surprisingly this lek, like many others, is to be found in a plantation rather than a natural forest, however, its resilience may be due in part to the undulating ground in the area, which provides excellent hiding places for the birds. Thinning has improved habitat structure, providing a mix of open canopy areas, to allow growth of the understory, especially blaeberry, needed to provide the insect diet of the chicks, and dense areas that provide cover. Indeed, enabling wildlife to access the whole range of habitats it requires to successfully complete its life cycle, is something Will and Ewan agree is key, the scale of the estate and the mosaic of landscapes it provides, allows for flexibility and a landscape approach to its management. Some interventions, however, are a more experimental. Like many birds, capercaillie need to consume gastroliths –



©Iain Leach

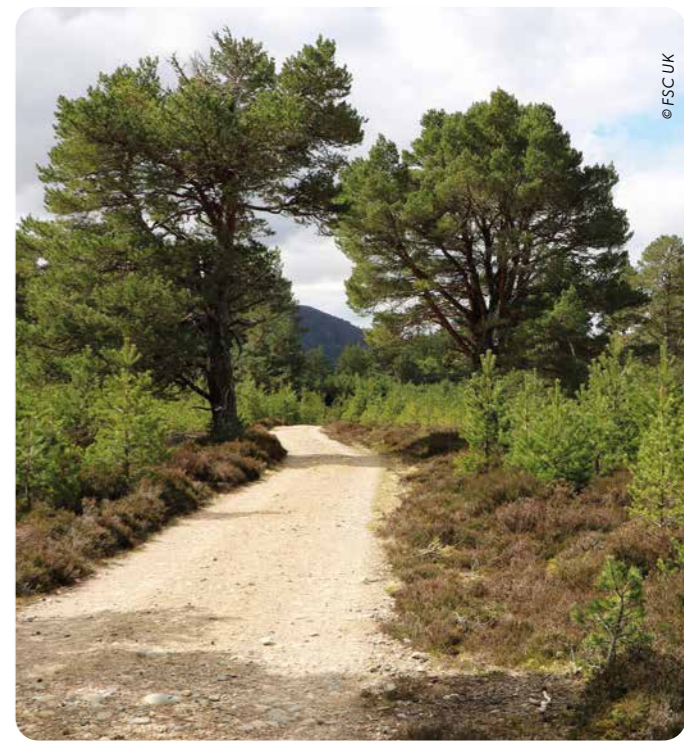
small stones to help them to digest their food. And so, Ewan has begun placing piles of quartz grit in safe locations for the capercaillie to discourage them from picking up grit from certain well used tracks, where they are more vulnerable to disturbance by people.

The biggest impact of FSC certification has been on record keeping, helping to ensure continuity between different forest managers. The auditing process is useful in providing new and different perspectives on issues and practices and encourages managers to question their approaches. This continual review and readjustment of monitored objectives, and the ability to meet demand for certified timber from mills are key benefits of certification for the estates, which comprise 10,800 certified hectares and both estates produce a combined 25,000 tonnes of timber each year.

Once prized predominantly for its hunting potential, much of The Estate's work still focuses on deer management, systematically reducing and maintaining deer numbers, in the absence of any natural apex predators of deer, in order to support natural forest

regeneration and strike a biodiverse balance. The estate values the deer as an important part of the habitat and managing deer numbers at an appropriate level is challenging but vital to provide a range of benefits. What's wrong with too many deer? Mainly, browsing – eating up the fresh young shoots of saplings – which, can lead trees to be damaged, deformed or killed, hampering growth and regeneration.

Deer fencing can be used to keep them out of vulnerable areas, but it's a problem for capercaillie, who can be killed if they fly into it. Instead, the use of fencing is minimised and the fencing that is used made more apparent to the birds by marking with wooden droppers. The deer are constantly moved around the estate, much as they would be by a natural predator, to reduce damage from browsing. Or at least, almost constantly – in harsh winters, when they seek refuge in woodland areas, they are allowed to rest to ensure their welfare and have, in some years, been fed to keep them away from sensitive regeneration. Overall, numbers are kept low, with just 2-5 deer per km. Those that are shot are quickly returned to the larder for processing, enabling The Estate to make an income from the sale of venison, another healthy and sustainable product from managed woodlands.



©FSC UK

Case file: Panels to puzzles



Certificate holder: Grant Westfield
Licence code: FSC®C128180
Scope: Wood panels
Certified since: 2015

© Grant Westfield

Since 1881, Grant Westfield has been dedicated to manufacturing exceptional interior building products in Edinburgh. Throughout the course of over 140 years, successive generations have upheld a shared passion for craftsmanship, high quality, and innovation. In 2003, they introduced Multipanel, the United Kingdom's leading bathroom wall panel and in over two decades sales have grown to over 1 million

square metres per year with over 8,000 panels manufactured a week for distribution throughout the UK and Northern Europe via merchants, bathroom showrooms, and leading online e-tailers.

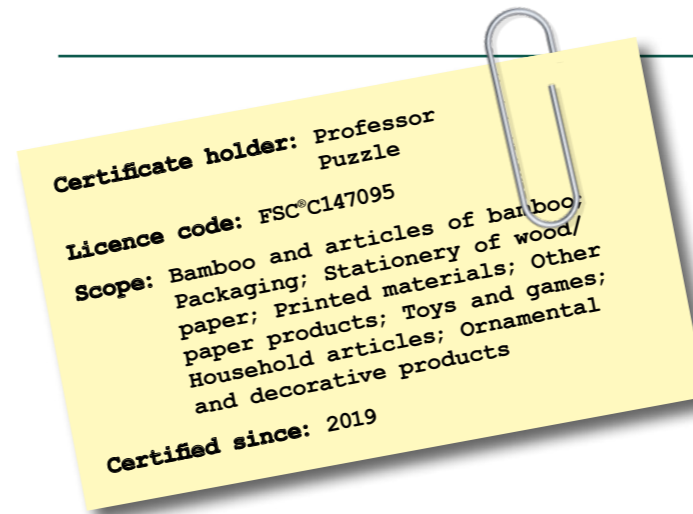
The launch of the Multipanel range aimed to offer a contemporary alternative to traditional tiles—one that not only boasts an appealing aesthetic but also ensures effortless

installation and convenient maintenance. The range has evolved significantly, now encompassing an extensive selection of cutting-edge designs. From trendy plain colours to realistic material reproductions, and most recently, their Tile Collection, which combines the look of tiles with the many advantages of wall panelling.

Multipanel is FSC-certified. This ensures the timber they use originates from responsibly managed forests and other controlled sources, and their finished products comply with globally recognised ecological, social and economic standards for complete customer assurance on responsible sourcing. Multipanel panels are 100% recyclable and they recycle 99% of post-production waste

into biomass materials. They have also achieved ISO 14001, demonstrating their commitment to the environment. Multipanel are proud members of Made in Britain and all wall panels are manufactured in their Edinburgh factory. Over 90% of their raw materials are sourced from the UK & Ireland, supporting the local economy and minimising our impact on the environment.

“When asked recently why we only use FSC-certified timber and high-pressure laminate in the manufacture of Multipanel, my response was simple, because we care! Using sustainable materials may cost more, but they don't cost the earth,” Sarah Law, Managing Director of Grant Westfield.



Certificate holder: Professor Puzzle
Licence code: FSC®C147095
Scope: Bamboo and articles of bamboo; Packaging; Stationery of wood/paper; Printed materials; Other paper products; Toys and games; Household articles; Ornamental and decorative products
Certified since: 2019

Professor Puzzle create a catalogue of games and puzzles for independent stores and major chains to select from, as well as supplying exceptional and inspiring ranges of custom products to the world's biggest retailers. Their current FSC-certified products include a wide range of bespoke puzzles and games for children and adults, including trivia sets, make-your-own craft kits, and wooden tabletop games.

Prompted by demand from their customer base, the decision to become FSC certified was “a no-brainer”. They had already started to investigate and use more environmentally friendly materials within the supply chain, so FSC certification was the natural next step. They received an overwhelmingly positive response, and their ability to supply FSC-

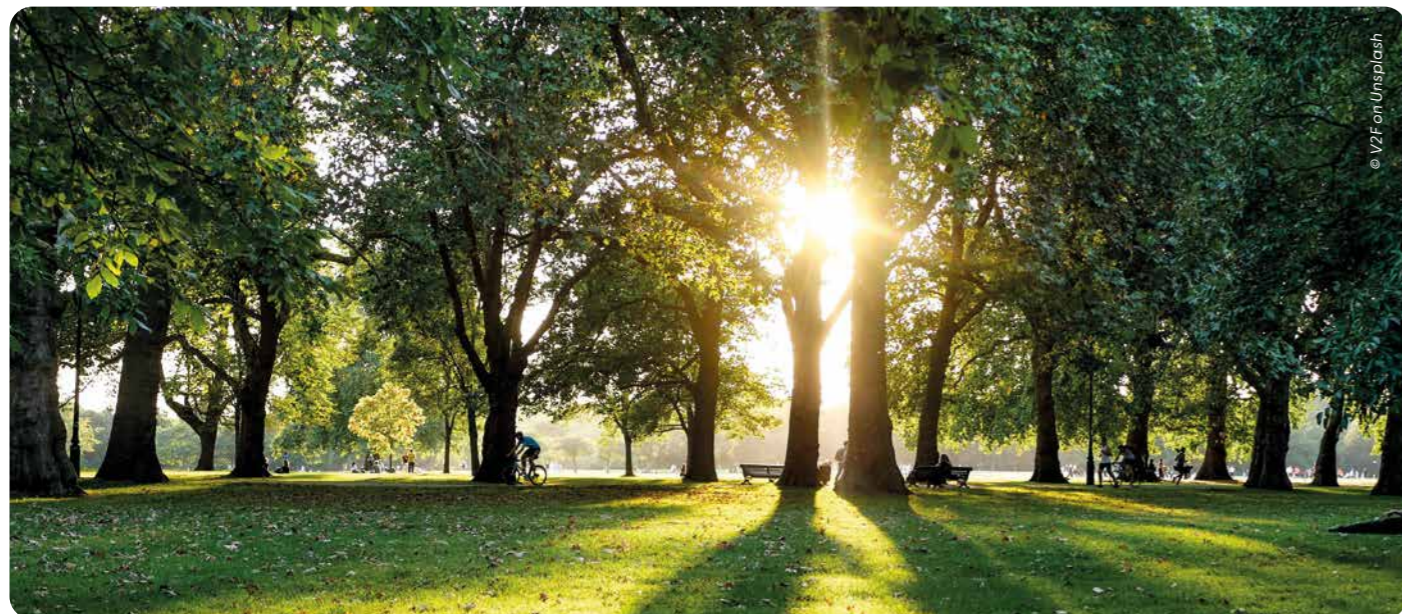
certified products dovetailed with customers increasing their requests for FSC products by 700% in the last two years.

“The momentum behind FSC is only going one way. Our customers increasingly want FSC products ourselves. FSC is one of those rare topics that everyone in every corner of the business is passionate about. All these factors help make our move towards FSC inevitable rather than challenging,” Ben Meldrum, Managing Director.

FSC certification has motivated Professor Puzzle to build an FSC-certified supplier base, supporting multiple factories in becoming FSC certified. This diversified supply base allows them to provide a wider range of products to their customers, whilst strengthening their wider company sustainability goals.

“I've been selling puzzles and games for over 14 years now and customers and us taking more of a lead in the market to become more sustainable is what is important. Having recently become a father, it makes me feel better about what we do in the world and for future generations,” Adam Langley, Sales Director.

Certification in the concrete jungle



In October 2022, a group of staff from FSC offices throughout Europe met in London to consider how Forest Management certification might work in urban forests.

Most people with an interest in FSC probably have a mental image of the sorts of places where our stewardship standards apply – the ‘forest’ in Forest Stewardship Council. But what about other land uses which have lots of trees but are less obviously ‘forest’, do our standards still work there? In particular, how well do FSC forest stewardship standards work when they are applied to the urban forest, including parks, gardens or even individual street trees?

That’s exactly what staff from FSC offices in Portugal, Spain, Italy, the Baltics and the UK wanted to discuss when they came together in London. Their conclusions might surprise some people – that while some of the language of our international and national standards is tailored to a conventional forest management context, with just a few tweaks to terminology and the addition of suitable guidance, most of the underlying concepts seem to work perfectly well in an urban context.

“This really is a testament to the skill of the people who have refined FSC’s Principles and Criteria over the years,” says Dr Owen Davies, Forest Standards Manager at FSC UK. *“They work incredibly well in such a wide range of*

forest settings – including some unexpected ones!”

The group felt that applying FSC standards in cities depends very much on how we understand the ‘management unit’. This is the spatial area or areas submitted for FSC certification, which must have clearly defined boundaries and be managed to a set of explicit long term management objectives which are expressed in a management plan. In an urban management unit containing only street trees it might be challenging to meet some FSC requirements, particularly in terms of identifying a proportion of the area of the unit which is managed primarily for conservation. But in a mixed management unit containing street trees, parks and woodland areas it might be possible to meet all FSC requirements. The group have suggested to FSC International that this could be a viable basis for our certification to cover all elements of the urban forest.

Certification of woodland in and around cities is nothing new, of course. The group was joined by Annabel Foskett, Nature Conservation Officer at Haringey Council. Haringey’s ancient woodlands have been FSC certified in the past, and Annabel is keen to bring them back into certification and to explore the option of making FSC verified ecosystem services claims.



“I’m a great believer in the power of auditing, and the importance of monitoring and evaluation in making sure that we deliver what we set out to achieve in a long-term plan to protect habitats, enhance biodiversity and increase resilience to climate change. FSC is a perfect fit for that, and ecosystem services verification could allow us to demonstrate how management activities are contributing to maintaining and enhancing the unique ecology of Haringey’s ancient woods as well as setting out a convincing and compelling narrative about our achievements.” Annabel Foskett, Haringey Council

The group also enjoyed a tour of Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, ably and engagingly guided by Ian Rodger from the Royal Parks. Managing land in the heart of London at such a scale (Hyde Park alone covers some 140 hectares) and balancing economic, environmental and social demands, it seemed obvious that FSC certification could work for the Royal Parks.

“Many people think of parks as quite formal, but actually the majority of our management is much more in tune with nature. We manage wildflower meadows, we retain deadwood, and we are even restoring natural drainage and waterbodies to alleviate flooding. FSC certification seems like an easy win, given the way we manage our parks.” Ian Rodger, Royal Parks

But why should urban forest managers pursue FSC certification? What might they gain? For one thing, independent third-party assurance might provide credible evidence to stakeholders of the quality of their management. The external audit process could also help to identify and resolve issues before they become serious.

And while most urban forest managers might not be focussed on timber harvesting, there are still opportunities through the FSC Ecosystem Services Procedure to attract funding to support management from growing markets for payments for ecosystem services.

And why should FSC take an interest in urban forests? There are many potential advantages in ensuring that our standards for responsible management are met, but the most obvious argument is that, with an increasingly urbanised global population, the concrete jungle will be crucial to us fulfilling our mission of forests, for all, forever.



Awareness and recognition



© FSC / All wood, cork, paper and packaging is certified (excludes towel, cookies, glass).

 **51%** would be prepared to pay more for an FSC-certified product

41% said they always or usually give preference to FSC-certified products.

Once the meaning of FSC was explained, 71% of all those surveyed, said they would be very or fairly likely to give preference to FSC-certified products in future. 85% of those who said they both recognised and understood the FSC logo, and 81% of those who recognise it and know roughly what it means, said they were likely to give preference to FSC-certified products.

However, only 38% of people claim to look for products that carry certification labels when they shop for forest-based products, suggesting that further promotion of certifications, beyond just labels such as FSC, may be beneficial to support consumers in meeting their ethical shopping preferences. 51% stated that they would be prepared to pay more for an FSC-certified product, with 28% prepared to pay up to 5% more and 10% prepared to pay up to 10% more.

Half of those surveyed were of the belief that all wood-based products available in the UK should be sustainably sourced, a further quarter thought at least some should meet this requirement. 60% thought that consumers have a responsibility to ensure that the products they buy, and the packaging they use, are responsibly sourced, but 71% held businesses responsible for the sustainability of their products and packaging.

Understanding of the FSC logo has more than doubled since pre-lockdown.

Awareness of the FSC logo in the UK has increased 45% since 2019¹, and the proportion of those claiming both good and rough knowledge of the logo has more than doubled. With data from the Office for National Statistics revealing that nature had supported people's well-being during lockdowns, perhaps more are becoming interested in and aware of how they can repay some of that support.

Our latest survey², conducted in March 2023, reveals that 77% of people in the UK now recognise the FSC logo. 25% said they know what it means (+ 5% on 2022), and a further 30% (29% in 2022) said they know roughly what it means.

30% of those who recognise the logo recall buying an FSC-certified product within the past 3 months, 19% within the past month.

77% recognise the FSC logo 

1. Before the UK national coronavirus lockdown in March 2020.
2. Survey conducted (21/03/2023 - 23/03/2023) in United Kingdom by Kantar via OnLineBus, a sample of 1,279 UK adults aged 16+ were interviewed.



Our vision for UK forests

FSC's global vision for responsible forest management, articulated through our international Principles and Criteria, is at the heart of everything we do for the world's forests.

However, that vision has to be broad enough to apply to every type of forest in every country; that's one of the main reasons we have national or regional forest stewardship standards, to set out the specific things we need to do in pursuit of that vision in a particular local context.

Driven in large part by our work on our own national forest stewardship standard – familiar to most forest managers as the UK

Woodland Assurance Standard, or UKWAS – FSC UK has identified the need for a clearer vision for UK forests to guide us at the country level.

The Principles and Criteria remain fundamental to our work, but to do our jobs well we need to have a definite sense of what they should lead to for UK woodlands, in our particular economic, environmental and social context. In short, (and bearing in mind that the impacts of our actions in the forest today will be felt over very long periods) if everyone embraced the spirit of the FSC Principles and Criteria, what should the UK's forests look like before the end of this century?

We believe that a clear vision for UK forests will help us to be more impactful in our work, more relevant and powerful in our advocacy and communication, and better able to inspire everyone in the UK to strive towards a common vision of forests for all, forever.

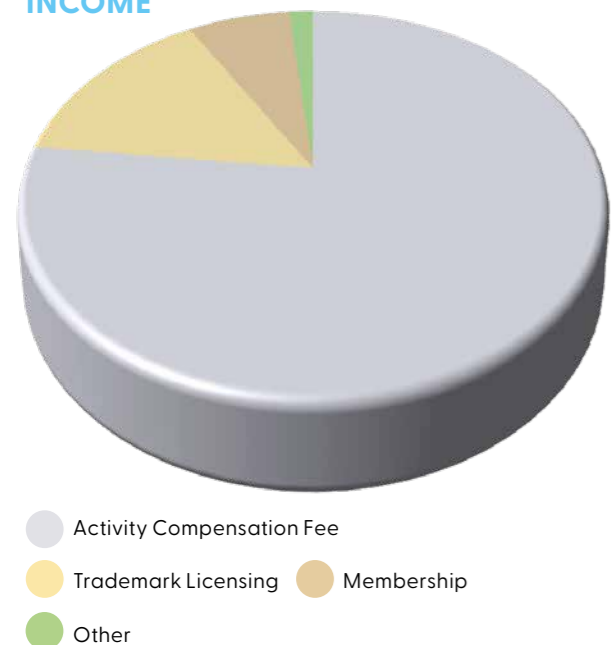
The FSC system is based on democracy and transparency, and the process to develop a vision for UK forests will be no different. To this end we shared some initial thoughts in our discussion paper, including those gathered at the 2022 FSC UK Annual Members' Meeting, on the potential form, contents and timescale of a vision, and invited stakeholders to provide comments on this.

If we find there is broad agreement on a particular theme, we will draft wording accordingly. On the issues where there are more mixed opinions, we will host topic specific discussions to try to build understanding and consensus.

All of this will feed into a draft vision which will be open for public consultation before the FSC UK Board makes a decision on the final version, planned for publication by 2025.

FINANCE

INCOME



Income

Over the 2022-23 financial year, income exceeded expenditure by £76,149. Trademark licensing revenue continued to increase, providing £82,266 of income during the reporting period. Membership income accounted for a further £37,653, a decrease from the previous year.

Most of the income is received under the Principal Cooperation, Service and Licence Agreement (the Activity Compensation Fee) with FSC Global Development. The ACF income is based primarily on a formula linked to the Annual Administration Fee charged to certified companies in the UK, but strategic funding is also allocated for specific projects. Some of these projects are managed by other FSC National Offices and the funding is received and administered by them. The income received indirectly from FSC Global Development through this strategic funding is included within the total ACF figure.

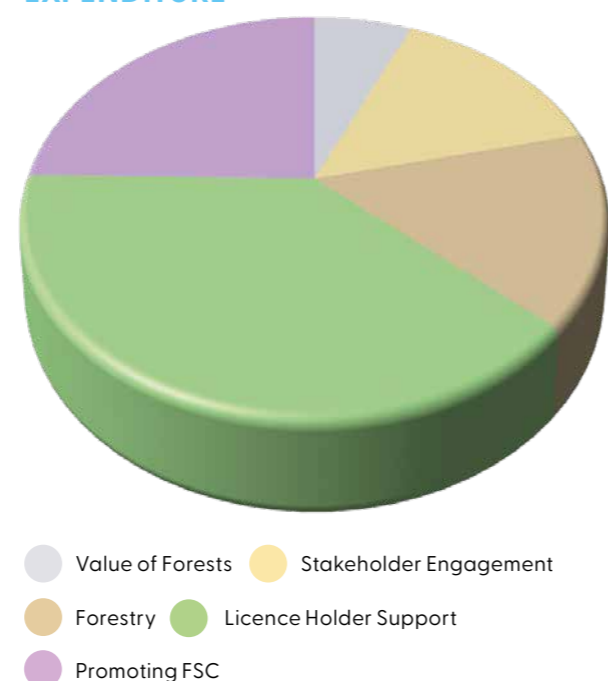
Expenditure

Expenditure was higher this year compared with last year (£480,907 compared with £401,321) primarily due to the increased size of the staff team as we seek to meet

the growing demands on the organisation. Travel, subsistence and event expenditure increased as the return to face-to-face meetings and events continued.

We expect expenditure to increase further in 2023/24 and the Board of Trustees is looking at how the organisation invests in projects that help deliver FSC's mission.

EXPENDITURE



Reserves Policy

The Board of Trustees considers the charity's requirements for reserves in light of the main risks to the organisation. A policy has been established whereby the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets held by the charity should be equivalent to 6 months' of expenditure.

The reserves are needed to meet the working capital requirements of the charity and, in the worse-case scenario, to cover the cost of closing the charity. The Trustees are confident that the charity would be able to continue at worthwhile activity levels in the event of a temporary significant drop in funding and that the estimated cost of closing the charity does not exceed 50% of the reserves.

UK MEMBERS

FSC pioneered a multi-stakeholder governance approach for forest certification almost 30 years ago. The FSC global membership network of 1,219 individuals and organisations across 91 countries* represents environmental, social, and economic perspectives equally. A democratic and participative voting system brings diverse perspectives together to find balanced solutions. In the UK, 20 organisations and 15 individuals are international members of FSC:

Environmental Chamber

- Born Free Foundation
- Fauna and Flora International
- Dr Florin Ioras (individual)
- Dr Steve Jennings (individual)
- Dr Jon Kirkpatrick (individual)
- Hannah Scrase (individual)
- Soil Association
- Matthew Wenban-Smith (individual)
- Woodland Trust
- WWF UK
- Zoological Society of London

Social Chamber

- Dr Marcus Colchester (individual)
- Andrew Heald (individual)
- Hubert Kwisthout (individual)
- Llais y Goedwig
- Dr Constance Lynn McDermott (individual)
- National Trust
- Ben Vickers (individual)

Economic Chamber

- Mike Bekin (individual)
- Stephanie Bishop (individual)
- Blueline Office Furniture
- BM TRADA
- Bound Oak Ltd
- Confederation of Forest Industries (CONFOR)
- Confederation of Paper Industries (CPI)
- Dr Hubertus van Hensbergen (individual)
- HSBC Holdings plc
- Kevin Jones (individual)
- Kingfisher plc
- Kronospan Ltd
- Lend Lease Europe
- Harry Mills (individual)
- Mondi plc
- Soil Association Certification Ltd
- Timber Development UK Ltd

*Correct as of 31 March 2023



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