

Exh 7 Brochure about certification of forest owners in Estonia

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This information is part of the CeFCo project, with the purpose to develop a model for certification of forest contractors in Denmark, Spain, Sweden, Bulgaria and Portugal respectively. The project will be carried out in a cooperation between NEPCon, The European Network of Forest Entrepreneurs (ENFE) and the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and national organisations. The project is supported by the Danish Forest and Nature Agency, Fundación Biodiversidad and the European Union CIP Eco-Innovation initiative (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eco-innovation/index_en.htm) which is part of the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme, CIP (<http://ec.europa.eu/cip/>).





Certified 'green' forestry services

Piloting certification of European family forest



- *The project Smallholder Certification in Estonia is clearing the way for FSC certification of small family-owned properties while developing the market for 'green' contractor services. The project is jointly implemented by Stora Enso, FSC and NEPCon. Two additional projects are following up on the pioneering results.*

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Forest contractors – key partners in responsible forestry

Forest contractors play a core role in forestry operations, as they typically carry out the most risky activities in terms of worker safety and environmental protection. Contractors who do a good job of minimizing those risks should get the recognition that they deserve on the marketplace. Fortunately, there is a growing market for 'green' forestry service operators due to the expansion of forest certification schemes such as FSC®.

Small operations – large impact

Based on growing consumer awareness as well as policy changes such as the US Lacey Act and the expected EU 'due diligence' approach, certified wood is becoming the obvious first choice for many public and private buyers. However, small family-owned operations face special challenges to enter the certified market.

Small-scale forestry is important in Europe, where more than 15 million private owners manage about 50% of the forest territory. Innovative solutions are needed in order to make certification an attractive option for owners of small properties.



“Certification helps us to take good care of the forest”

Anne Põrn-Põdra and her husband own about 12 hectares of forest in the North-Eastern part of Estonia. They have joined the FSC group scheme managed by Stora Enso, and rely on certified contractors for forestry operations in their forest.

The certification process was a positive experience. The requirements were reasonable and I learned something about forestry! The forest has a deep meaning for me – I have always lived close by the forest and that is where I go to be alone with my thoughts. The certification will help us to take good care of the forest. I also believe that it may even increase the economic value of our forest property.



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Pilot project: FSC certification of family forest in Estonia

In 2008 Stora Enso, WWF and NEPCon jointly initiated a project to address the needs of smallholders in order for them to benefit from forest certification. The project was approved as an FSC pilot project and the first field test of the new approach based on a combination of FSC group certification and SmartLogging certification of a group of contractors has been undertaken in collaboration between FSC, Stora Enso and NEPCon

Turning a problem into a solution

Complexity of the certification rules and the cost of certification are key challenges for small forest holdings that often lead to exclusion from forest certification schemes. Another important problem for the forest owner is the lack of ability to control forestry operations carried out by contractors.

Certification of forest contractors turns the problem into a solution: Not only does the forest owner get assurance that the FSC rules are respected during activities in the forest. The costs and work load of being FSC certified are even substantially reduced for the individual forest owner. If the use of certified contractors is combined with group certification, the work that falls on the shoulders of the individual property owner can be further reduced. In addition, certification of 'green' contractor services helps to develop the market for such services.

A successful pilot test of the concept resulted in a group of Estonian forest owners being FSC certified, in combination with SmartLogging certification of a group of forest contractors. In both cases, Stora Enso serves as the group manager.

SmartLogging is a global certification scheme for responsible forestry contractors developed by the Rainforest Alliance. The concept is adapted to the individual country and the applicable forest certification standards.

Why does Stora Enso support certification of small-scale forestry?

Stora Enso, one of the world's largest forest products companies, is an active project partner and is also financing the project. Margus Kuusk, Sustainability Manager of Stora Enso Wood Supply Baltic, says: *"We encourage certification of small-scale forestry operations as part of our general support to forest management certification. Small family forests are an important source for increasing certified wood supply in countries such as Estonia, where a large part of the forest is on private hands, and the average property size is very small. Involving professionals like contractors to ensure compliance with the FSC rules should help to increase the volume of certified wood on the market"*.



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Pilot testing the concept

The concept presented in this leaflet has already been pilot tested in Estonia, and is currently being rolled out in several other European countries. These activities take place in the framework of the following projects:

Smallholder Certification Project in Estonia is jointly implemented by Stora Enso, FSC and NEPCon. It is financed by Stora Enso and takes place in Estonia.

Certification of forest contractors - a shortcut to certification of small forest operations is jointly implemented by the Danish Association of Forest Contractors, Danish Forest Owners Association (Skovdyrkerne), and NEPCon. It is financed by the Danish Forest and Nature Agency and takes place in Denmark. In addition to the national FSC standards, the local PEFC standards are also included.

Certification of Forestry Contractors (CeFCo) is jointly implemented by European Network of Forest Entrepreneurs (ENFE), FSC, and NEPCon. It covers 4-6 European countries and is supported by the EU Eco-Innovation Initiative. This project seeks to achieve certification of contractors and forest operations in additional countries such as Portugal, Sweden and Bulgaria until 2012. Please refer to www.cefcoproject.org for more details and project updates.

For further information about these projects, please contact manager of NEPCon's project division Jan Peter Feil at jpf@nepcon.net.

The concept in brief

The key concept is to make certification easier for owners of small forests by combining group certification with the use of certified forest contractors. The forest owner is still formally responsible for compliance with all the certification rules, but ensures this mainly by engaging with a group manager and certified contractors. The individual operation thus has to deal directly with only a small part of the rules.

Group certification allows forest owners to share the cost and administrative burden of certification. The appointed group manager typically takes care of most of the administration, monitoring and reporting on behalf of the group.

Contractor certification, when adapted to local forest management certification standards, provides assurance for contractors' compliance with the applicable certification requirements. The monitoring of the contractors' work is left to the certifier.

Partners of the above-mentioned projects

