

ASI-ACCREDITATION SERVICES INTERNATIONAL GmbH

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FSC Annual Surveillance of SmartWood for 2007

Forest Management Audit to Mogilev Forestry Board,
Belarus
(SW-FM/COC-1864)

Date of audit: 09-12 July 2007

(Final)

	NAME	DATE
Report drafted by:	Guntars Laguns Maxim Yermokhin	September 2007
Reviewed by ASI:	Martin Walter	21 st September 2007
Reviewed by CB:	SW	23 October 2007
Finalized by ASI:	Guntars Laguns	14 November 2007
Report last updated:		

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1 Background

The operation audited by SW

Name of operation	Mogilev Forestry Board
Type of company	Group Manager scheme
Total area	554091.00 ha
Type of management	semi natural forests
Name of contact person	Vladimir Rajevskij
Address	Dom Sovetov, Pervomayskaya, 71, Mogilev
Country	Belarus
Phone number	+375222273615
E-mail address	MPLXO@tut.by

Brief description of the company

More information about the company can be obtained from SW Public reports, available on SW website.

http://www.rainforest-alliance.org/programs/forestry/smartwood/public_documents_country.cfm?country=8

The certification history

Pre-audit	13-16 June 2005
Main audit:	3-7 October 2005
Date of certificate issue	24 April 2006
Date of 1st surveillance	29 November-1 December 2006
Major CAR follow up audit (this audit)	9-12 July

ASI Audit Details

Purpose of audit	Annual SW FM surveillance audit
ASI lead auditor	Guntars Laguns
Local Expert	Maxim Yermokhin
Audit language	Russian

Audit agenda

08 July (Sunday)	
Evening	Meeting with local expert and CB team
09 July (Monday)	
AM	Opening meeting in HQ, follow up on CARs, document review
PM	Visit to the office of Osipovichi SFE (Osipovichi town). Review documents, developed instructions and evidence on major CAR correction.
10 July (Tuesday)	
AM	Visit to the saw-mill of the Osipovichi SFE

PM	Visit to the office of the Gluski SFE (Gluski town), as one of the group members. Review documents, developed instructions and evidence on major CAR correction. Site visits.
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11 July (Wednesday)

AM	Visit to the office of the Gluski SFE and sawmill, site visits
PM	Site visits
	Closing meeting in HQ
	ASI and SW closing meeting

People involved and met during the audit

CB	Tigran Martirosyan – NEPCo/SmartWood lead auditor, Kirov, Russia Heorhi Kazulka – Assessor, Belarus Aleksandr Zubkevich – Representative of NEPCo in Belarus
Operation	Mogilev Forestry Board staff members
Others	NA

Main documents and records reviewed

CB documents	SW Certification Assessment Report SW Public summary 2005 SW Surveillance Audit report 2006 SW Interim Standards for Assessing Forest Management in Belarus (July 2006) SW Follow up audit report 2007
Company's documents	Different management planning, operational and monitoring documents
Other documents	National regulations and different stakeholders' provided documents

2 Audit objectives and planning

The objectives of this forest management surveillance audit are:

1. Evaluation of certification body's performance in implementing the accredited certification system in accordance with FSC accreditation requirements.
2. Witness an audit team to determine whether or not the team:
 - a) adequately applies the procedures and instructions of the certification body;
 - b) members exhibit the characteristics of an auditor as detailed in ISO 19011;
 - c) has the required expertise of the sector in which the audit is being undertaken;
 - d) applies appropriate expertise in the correct sense;

- e) undertakes the audit effectively and draws correct conclusions.
- 3. Evaluation of the conformity of the certificate holder with FSC and certification body's certification requirements in so far as this is necessary to verify the performance of the certification body.
- 4. Evaluation of stakeholder comments or complaints ASI received in relation to this operation.

ASI annual surveillance audits are conducted as “*witness audits*” and are based on a sample of the valid certificates of the audited CB within the scope of accreditation. The number of audits per year is determined by ASI surveillance policy; sampling is based on the ASI sampling procedure.

Due to the nature of ASI surveillance procedures, audit evidence is only based on a sample of the information available and therefore there is always an element of uncertainty in the audit findings.

3 ASI stakeholder consultation process

The stakeholder consultation process employed by ASI consists of 2 parts:

- 1. public announcement of the audit on the FSC electronic fora and on the ASI website about one week prior to the audit to solicit stakeholder comments;
- 2. direct interviews with selected key-stakeholders mainly conducted by the contracted local expert prior, during and after the audit.

ASI did not receive any comments from consulted international or national stakeholders in regards to this certain audits. During the interviews which were performed by local expert, none expressed any issues to be verified by ASI audit team.

4 Audit findings related to CB performance

4.1 Structure and content of CB standard and its application

CB audit team in compliance with FSC-STD-20-002	No non-compliance identified.
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4.2 Local adaptation of CB standard

CB audit team in compliance with FSC-STD-20-003	No non-compliance identified
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4.3 Audit team

CB audit team in compliance with FSC-STD-20-004	SW audit team consists of three persons (lead auditor, local expert and NEPCon representative - auditor). Qualification of auditors and audit performance were evaluated
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	<p>against relevant FSC and <i>ISO19011: 2002 (E) Guidelines for quality and/or environmental management systems auditing requirements.</i></p> <p>ASI audit team considers that SW team was qualified to perform this audit in Belarus; however, there are still possibilities to improve SW auditors audit techniques, mostly related to the questioning techniques, interviews, communication of audit findings to client.</p> <p>ASI proposes REC.SW.FM.BY.2007.01</p> <p>No audit agenda was distributed and agreed with client prior the audit. Also, certified operation representatives where not properly informed of the time and place of the closing meeting.</p> <p>ASI proposes CAR.SW.FM.BY.2007.01 (ISO 19011, part 6.4)</p>
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4.4 Pre-evaluation

CB audit team in compliance with FSC-STD-20-005	No non-compliance identified
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4.5 Stakeholder consultation process

Compliance with FSC-STD-20-006	No non-compliance identified
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4.6 FM evaluation

CB audit team in compliance with FSC-STD-20-007	<p>SW team spent 3 days for this evaluation.</p> <p>Audit scope, setup as well as schedule seem to be appropriate to cover audit scope and to ensure evaluation of implementation of company's system which ensures appropriate field performance compliance with FSC requirements.</p> <p>SW audit team did not sample the forest areas for site visits independently, but let FMU staff choose sites to be visited during the audit.</p> <p>ASI proposes REC.SW.FM.BY.2007.02</p>
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4.7 The certification reports (main report and public summary)

CB audit team in compliance with FSC-STD-20-008 and FSC-STD-20-009	<p>ASI auditor reviewed SW report and consider that SW reports comply with FSC accreditation requirements.</p> <p>SW public summary reports are available on SW website both in Russian and English.</p>
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5 CB evaluation of certificate holder's compliance.

5.1 Principle 1

Certificate holder compliance with FSC Principle 1	At the time of the ASI audit, SW audit team had adequately evaluated compliance with FSC Principle 1 and no nonconformity was identified.
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5.2 Principle 2

Certificate holder compliance with FSC Principle 2	At the time of the ASI audit, SW audit team had adequately evaluated compliance with FSC Principle 2 and no nonconformity was identified.
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5.3 Principle 3

Certificate holder compliance with FSC Principle 3	NA
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5.4 Principle 4

Certificate holder compliance with FSC Principle 4	H&S problems (e.g. lack of PPE) were evident during the audit. SW has raised a CAR on this issue.
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5.5 Principle 5

Certificate holder compliance with FSC Principle 5	At the time of the ASI audit, SW audit team had adequately evaluated compliance with FSC Principle 5 and no nonconformity was identified.
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5.6 Principle 6

Certificate holder compliance with FSC Principle 6	ASI did not find any evidence that the certified operation has implemented systematic measures to ensure compliance with several Principle 6 requirements, e.g. 6.1, 6.2. SW has raised Major CARs on the issue on 2006 audit. This CAR was not closed during this audit, which resulted in suspension of certificate.
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5.7 Principle 7

Certificate holder compliance with FSC Principle 7	Lack of proper implementation of FMP, mainly in regards to Group Manager control was evident during the audit. SW has raised a CAR on this issue.
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5.8 Principle 8

<p>Certificate holder compliance with FSC Principle 8</p>	<p>Since there is lack of implemented system in FSC Principle 6 (e.g. 6.1, 6.2), subsequently there is a non-compliance with principle 8 in regards to for example, environmental part of monitoring requirements in Criterion 8.2.</p> <p>However, SW audit team did not identify any non-compliance with requirements stated in the FSC Criterion 8.2.</p> <p>ASI proposes REC.SW.FM.BY.2007.03</p>
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5.9 Principle 9

<p>Certificate holder compliance with FSC Principle 9</p>	<p>ASI did not find any evidence that the certified operation conducted a systematic assessment to determine the presence of the attributes consistent with High Conservation Value Forests on their territory (FSC Criterion 9.1) nor that the certified operation consulted with stakeholders on the identification of the High Conservation Values, and the management options thereof (FSC Criterion 9.2). Due to the non-compliance with FSC Criteria 9.1 and 9.2 there subsequently is also non-compliance with FSC Criteria 9.3 and 9.4. Altogether this constitutes a fundamental failure at Principle level.</p> <p>SW has raised Major CARs on the issue on 2006 audit. This CAR was not closed during this audit, which resulted in suspension of certificate.</p>
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5.10 Principle 10

<p>Certificate holder compliance with FSC Principle 10</p>	<p>NA</p>
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5.11 Chain of custody

<p>Certificate holder compliance with FSC chain of custody requirements</p>	<p>After reviewing company's procedures, it was evident that in the scope of the certified operation is included honey and birch sap, although no NTFP evaluation was performed by SW.</p> <p>SW raised a CAR on this issue with immediate effect.</p> <p>During the audit it was evident that another company has used certified operation certificate code on their sales invoices.</p> <p>SW raised a CAR on this issue with immediate effect.</p>
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5.12 Use of FSC trademark

Certificate holder compliance with FSC Logo use requirements	No non-compliance identified
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5.13 Decision making

Certificate holder compliance with FSC decision making requirements	<p>There are no clear the contractual obligations and legal relationship of involved parties in this certification project. At the stage of the audit apparently, Mogilev Forestry Board did not have any evaluation contract with SW affiliate NEPCon. Instead, NEPCon has a contract with one of the group members for evaluation with no reference to Group certification and evaluation of Group Manager. SW has signed a certification contract with Mogilev Forestry Board which in this case act as Group Manager. ASI assessor considers that there are no clear link between SW certification contract and NEPCon evaluation contract.</p> <p>ASI proposes RE.SW.FM.BY.2007.04</p> <p>SW has evaluated certified operation compliance with Major CARs after the defined timeline for compliance.</p> <p>ASI proposes CAR.SW.FM.BY.2007.02 (FSC-STD-20-008, part 8)</p> <p>In the Major CAR verification audit 2007 report auditors closed a CAR 14/06 and issued a new minor CAR 08/07 on similar issues.</p> <p>The following is taken from FSC standard requirements in FSC-STD-20-002:</p> <p>“The non-compliance may be down-graded to a minor non-compliance if the nature of the non-compliance now has the characteristics specified in paragraph 8.3.1.</p> <p>If the nature of the non-compliance still has the characteristics specified in paragraph 8.3.2 or 8.3.3 then the certificate shall be suspended or withdrawn.</p> <p>Repeated failure to take adequate action to correct a minor non-compliance would therefore result in the suspension or withdrawal of the certificate. “</p> <p>Thus, CAR may be downgraded, but not closed if full compliance with requested corrective action is not fully implemented. Repeated closure and issue of new CARs on same issues are not appropriate and in line with FSC system requirements.</p> <p>ASI has been already addressed this issue with SW in several occasions, see CAR.SW.OFF.2006.06.</p>
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	<p>No new CAR on this issue is raised; however, this aspect will be followed up with NEPcon managed SW certificates during 2008 audits.</p>
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5.14 Group manager scheme requirements

<p>Certificate holder compliance with FSC decision making requirements</p>	<p>During the audit it was evident that certified operation did not comply with FSC Group certification policy requirements, e.g. parts 3.1.4, 3.3 from FSC-POL-20-001.</p> <p>SW raised CAR on aspects related to Group Manager control</p> <p>There are no documented reasons in SW audit report why the evaluation does not include all the forest areas in which the applicant is involved.</p> <p>ASI proposes CAR.SW.FM.BY.2007.03 (FSC-POL-20-001, part 4.3.3)</p>
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Summary of nonconformities and observations

Major CAR(s)	Minor CAR(s)	Observations
0	3	4

See nonconformity reports (attached) for details.

Conclusion and recommendation

SW audit team conducted a systematic and well organized audit and identified covered almost all issues in a professional manner.

Based on the findings of this audit, the ASI auditor recommends to FSC AC the continuation of the FSC forest management accreditation for SW, subject to the timely closing of the nonconformities identified during the audit and specified in the nonconformity reports (attached).

Credits

The author would like to thank Peter Feilberg and other SW staff members, as well as staff from Mogilev Forestry Board for their cooperation and help in organizing this ASI surveillance forest management audit.

Other

All information in this report is confidential and may not be disclosed to third parties, with the exception of the information which is to be included in the FSC Audit Public Summary Report.

Terms and definitions

Nonconformity: The absence of, or the failure to implement and maintain, one or more management system requirements of the reference standards, or a situation which would, on the basis of available objective evidence raise significant doubt as to the credibility of the certificates issued by the applicant body. ASI procedures for nonconformity and corrective action requests are included in ASI QMS, procedure ASI-PRO-20-116 Corrective action procedure.

Note:

A “nonconformance” is a product that does not meet specifications;

A “nonconformity” is a process that does not meet specifications.

According to their severity, nonconformity is graded into three categories:

Major Nonconformity - CAR

“A systematic failure or significant deficiency -either as a single incident or a combination of a number of similar incidents- in a significant part of the quality system, or the lack of implementation of such a part, governed by applicable standards. A number of minor nonconformities against one requirement of the reference standards can represent a total breakdown of the system and thus be considered a major nonconformity.”

Minor Nonconformity – CAR

“An isolated or sporadic lapse in the content or implementation of procedures or records which could reasonable lead to failure of the system if not corrected. If a pattern of minor nonconformities occurs over successive assessments, it may represent a total breakdown of the system and a major non-conformance shall be issued.”

Observation or recommendation - REC ¹

“An area of concern, a process, document, or activity that is currently conforming that may if not improved, result in a nonconforming system, product or service. Observations shall be recorded in the audit report for the benefit of the customer.”

Attachments

Nonconformity reports (NCRs)

¹ **Note:** Observations are related to an area of concern, a process, document, or activity that is currently conforming that may if not improved, result in a nonconforming system, product or service. Thus, observations which are not considered by the CB may be upgraded to conditions in the following audit.

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NONCONFORMITY / CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUEST

REF. No.	REC.SW.FM.BY.2007.01	Date	19 September 2007
Nonconformity detected by (name of auditor)		Guntars Laguns	
Through (e.g. office audit, document review)		FM surveillance Audit 2007	
Observation	Status	<input type="checkbox"/> MAJOR <input type="checkbox"/> MINOR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OBSERVATION	
It is recommended that SW improves SW auditors audit techniques, mostly related to the questioning techniques, interviews, communication of audit findings to client.			
Normative Reference(s)	NA		
Comments:			

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NONCONFORMITY / CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUEST

REF. No.	REC.SW.FM.BY.2007.02	Date	19 September 2007
Nonconformity detected by (name of auditor)		Guntars Laguns	
Through (e.g. office audit, document review)		FM surveillance Audit 2007	
Observation	Status	<input type="checkbox"/> MAJOR <input type="checkbox"/> MINOR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OBSERVATION	
<p>It is recommended to SW to ensure that SW auditors sample the forest areas for site visits independently, and do not let FMU staff choose sites to be visited during the audit.</p>			
Normative Reference(s)	NA		
Comments:			

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NONCONFORMITY / CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUEST

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Nonconformity detected by (name of auditor)		Guntars Laguns	
Through (e.g. office audit, document review)		FM surveillance Audit 2007	
Observation	Status	<input type="checkbox"/> MAJOR <input type="checkbox"/> MINOR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OBSERVATION	
<p>Since there is lack of implemented system in FSC Principle 6, subsequently there is a non-compliance with principle 8 in regards to for example, environmental part of monitoring requirements in Criterion 8.2. However, SW audit team did not identify any non-compliance with requirements stated in the FSC Criterion 8.2.</p> <p>It is recommended for SW to carry full evaluation of “should” or “recommendation” FSC Criteria and record identified non-compliances with appropriate corrective action requests or observations.</p>			
Normative Reference(s)	NA		
Comments:			

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NONCONFORMITY / CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUEST

REF. No.	REC.SW.FM.BY.2007.04	Date	19 September 2007
Nonconformity detected by (name of auditor)		Guntars Laguns	
Through (e.g. office audit, document review)		FM surveillance Audit 2007	
Observation	Status	<input type="checkbox"/> MAJOR <input type="checkbox"/> MINOR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OBSERVATION	
<p>There are no clear contractual obligations and legal relationship of involved parties in this certification project. Mogilev Forestry Board did not have any evaluation contract with SW affiliate NEPCon. Instead, NEPCon has a contract with one of the group members for evaluation with no reference to Group certification and evaluation of Group Manager. However, SW has signed a certification contract with Mogilev Forestry Board which in this case acts as Group Manager.</p> <p>It is ASI recommendation to sign evaluation service agreement with certificate holder to ensure clear and formal link between evaluation activities and certification decision.</p>			
Normative Reference(s)	NA		
Comments:			

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NONCONFORMITY / CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUEST

REF. No.	CAR.SW.FM.BY.2007.01	Date	19 September 2007	
Nonconformity detected by (name of auditor)		Guntars Laguns		
Through (e.g. office audit, document review)		FM surveillance Audit 2007		
Nonconformity	Status	<input type="checkbox"/> MAJOR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MINOR <input type="checkbox"/> OBSERVATION		
No audit agenda was distributed and agreed with client prior the audit. Also, certified operation representatives where not properly informed of the time and place of the closing meeting.				
Normative Reference(s)	ISO 19011, part 6.4			
Corrective Action Request: SW shall implement appropriate measures to correct the nonconformity detected in this audit and described above within the given timeline. The measures shall be adequate to correct the current problems and to eliminating causes of nonconformities in order to avoid recurrence.				
Timeline for implementation		Next office audit		
Corrective Action implemented by Certification Body				
Here: describe action taken in detail				
Corrective Action evaluated by ASI				
Here: describe conclusion in detail				
<input type="checkbox"/> CLOSED <input type="checkbox"/> UPGRADED <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER DECISION*	Name auditor:		Date:	
Comments:				

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NONCONFORMITY / CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUEST

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Nonconformity detected by (name of auditor)		Guntars Laguns		
Through (e.g. office audit, document review)		FM surveillance Audit 2007		
Nonconformity	Status	<input type="checkbox"/> MAJOR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MINOR <input type="checkbox"/> OBSERVATION		
SW has evaluated certified operation compliance with Major CARs after the defined timeline for compliance.				
Normative Reference(s)	FSC-STD-20-008, part 8			
Corrective Action Request: SW shall implement appropriate measures to correct the nonconformity detected in this audit and described above within the given timeline. The measures shall be adequate to correct the current problems and to eliminating causes of nonconformities in order to avoid recurrence.				
Timeline for implementation		Next office audit		
Corrective Action implemented by Certification Body				
Here: describe action taken in detail				
Corrective Action evaluated by ASI				
Here: describe conclusion in detail				
<input type="checkbox"/> CLOSED <input type="checkbox"/> UPGRADED <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER DECISION*	Name auditor:		Date:	
Comments:				

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Nonconformity detected by (name of auditor)		Guntars Laguns	
Through (e.g. office audit, document review)		FM surveillance Audit 2007	
Nonconformity	Status	<input type="checkbox"/> MAJOR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MINOR <input type="checkbox"/> OBSERVATION	
There are no documented reasons in SW audit report why the evaluation does not include all the forest areas in which the applicant is involved.			
Normative Reference(s)	FSC-POL-20-001, part 4.3.3		
Corrective Action Request: SW shall implement appropriate measures to correct the nonconformity detected in this audit and described above within the given timeline. The measures shall be adequate to correct the current problems and to eliminating causes of nonconformities in order to avoid recurrence.			
Timeline for implementation		Next office audit	
Corrective Action implemented by Certification Body			
Here: describe action taken in detail			
Corrective Action evaluated by ASI			
Here: describe conclusion in detail			
<input type="checkbox"/> CLOSED <input type="checkbox"/> UPGRADED <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER DECISION*	Name auditor:	Date:	
Comments:			