ANNUAL REPORT 2015

Goals for 2015 were grouped under the following headings:

- Building a sound base for FSC in Finland
- Market linkages and communications
- Standard revision and strategy

Building a sound base for FSC in Finland

Increasing the number of members:

FSC Finland got four new members during 2015: two in the social chamber and two in the economic chamber. The new members are METO - the Forest Experts’ Association, The Outdoor Association of Finland, the company Tornator and The Trade Association of Finnish Forestry and Earth Moving Contractors. Three out of the four new members became members of the Board of FSC Finland in the annual meeting in March.

All members of staff are involved in promoting membership to new organisations. The benefits of membership – particularly linked to the standard revision – are communicated in all possible situations, and interest towards FSC is growing.

The office planned how to improve communications with members, especially those that are not on the Board. The website is updated frequently with important and interesting news items. A Newsletter to members was created as a new communications tool. This is used to keep members informed about FSC activities in Finland, as well as about international public consultations where comments from stakeholders are necessary.

This goal has been reached with good success.

Increasing the number of CoCs:

One staff member from FSC Finland participated in a training course for Lead Auditors, organised in January 2015 in Latvia. The aim of this was to strengthen the knowhow of our staff in dealing with questions related to the implementation of standard requirements (FM and CoC). The training course provided the office with a vast knowledge of how CBs interpret the FSC system. The knowhow as well as daily interaction with existing and potential certificate holders provides a great asset for the office as to being able to provide technical assistance related to certification processes.

This feeds directly into being able to assist potential CoC companies in their efforts to getting certified.

During 2015, FSC staff provided assistance to companies in their efforts in the FSC certification process and provided potential certificate holders with knowledge about the benefits of getting certified and being able to pass the claim of responsible forestry to the end-consumer.

In cooperation with FSC Denmark and FSC Sweden, the office organised a Branding and Marketing Masterclass. This served to increase interest of potential CoCs in FSC and also allowed existing CoCs to gain new perspectives on marketing with FSC. In addition, a fruitful meeting was organised with CBs working in Finland to share experiences between the office and the CBs.

This goal has been reached, but efforts for promoting CoC certification will increase in the coming years. In 2015 foundation work for being able to provide core services for CoC companies has been carried out.

Increasing the supply of FSC-certified wood:

Improving the knowledge about FSC within the forestry sector has been one of the main lines of work in 2015. FSC presence in forestry events has been missing earlier, but this year the situation has changed due to increased staff. As a result FSC is seen much more as a regular element on the forestry scene.

The training project for forestry professionals on FSC FM certification was a success. This project began in 2014. In 2015, four full day training events
were held in different cities around the country in January-February, with a half-day session in Helsinki in May (117 participants in total). The training material on Finland’s FSC FM standard created for the project is available for anyone interested on the fi.fsc.org website. The training project was funded by the Finnish Forest Foundation and FSC International.

As a new element not specified in the targets for 2015, staff members have used a lot of working time on group certification. Interpreting group certification guidelines to better fit the Finnish context and streamlining bureaucracy was identified as an essential task to be done in order for smallholder certification to really take off in Finland. A toolkit for group managers has been updated, including a set of document templates that can be utilised when setting up a new group.

A project for streamlining FSC group management of smallholders was commenced in 2015 with one of the group managers and discussions with another group manager on group management streamlining efforts have been ongoing, to pinpoint cooperation and assistance needs. In addition contacts with potential new groups have been kept up and their information needs have been answered as fully as possible. Work with existing and potential group managers will continue in 2016.

Although the targets 2015 specified a focus on forest owners with big forest holdings, this turned out not to be a feasible way of working. Creating market linkages and partnerships between forest owners and potential group managers as well as contacting SMEs has also been a difficult task in particular due to time constraints.

This goal has been partially accomplished.
**Market linkages and communications**

**Increase the amount of trademark license customers**

The trademark license programme has improved during the year and is now fully anchored in the office. Mapping of potential customers has been done, although acquisition on new license holders has been limited. Quality comes over quantity: although only one new trademark license has been contracted, discussion the company in question launched an outdoor marketing campaign including the FSC logo very noticeably, greatly increasing the visibility of FSC throughout the country. Discussions have been ongoing with other companies as well.

*This goal has not been fully reached, but the structures are now in place in the office for a good TSP service and to extend it to new clients.*

**Fundraise for projects and find sponsorships**

Fundraising and sponsorship possibilities have been sought from various sources throughout the year. Two project applications were submitted and considerable work has been put into planning a project piloting certification of ecosystem services. Although no new project funding has been secured by the end of the year, fruits of the work done in 2015 will hopefully be gained in 2016.

*The results of this goal will not be known until the beginning of the 2nd quarter of 2016.*

**Creating and implementing a communications strategy**

A comprehensive overhaul of communications planning and implementation was conducted during 2015. A more focused and outcome-oriented approach to communications was established. Strategic work and collaboration with other Nordic offices has influenced the method of initiating communications planning. Partnerships with organisations, whether NGO or corporate, have been seen as fundamental for delivering a strong message with wide audiences.

An internal communications plan has been compiled along with the external communications planning. Internal communications with the stakeholders of FSC Finland – a newsletter for members and another for certificate holders - has been seen as a valuable channel for creating trust and distributing salient information to organisations closest to FSC.

One focus area of the communications planning has been personal contacts to the media. A database of interested and influential medias and journalists has been produced.

The goal set for developing a more effective and outcome-oriented approach to communications has been accomplished. The development work will continue in 2016, but results from this work will yield from the beginning of the year already.

An external communication plan will be developed in 2016. The development of the plan was put on hold due to the need to align communications with the FSC Nordic strategic plan and the International Communication Plan.

*FSC Branding and Marketing Masterclass* was an event organised for companies to share experiences and learn more about how to use the FSC label as a stand alone marketing tool or something that enhances corporate social responsibility image of a company. The event was organised together with FSC Denmark, FSC Sweden, WWF Finland, Tetra Pak and Kinnarps.
Raising FSC’s profile and improving credibility by improving communications

Valuable cooperation has taken place with various organisations this year. As a concrete result, FSC was able to participate in the main forestry event of the year – the Forestry Fair – in a joint booth with WWF, reaching a vast audience with face-to-face discussions about responsible forestry with forest owners, consumers and company representatives. Communications planning on several communications campaigns have been initiated as of autumn 2015 with the aim of producing joint communications with selected members, license and certificate holders.

In order to increase awareness of FSC and to raise its profile, social media is increasingly used as a key tool for distributing knowledge about FSC for wider audiences. The FSC Finland webpage works as a supplementary source of information.

Standard revision and strategy

Standard processes run smoothly

One of the main challenges in 2015 has been the Control Wood National Risk Assessment. Engaging a facilitator did not help to resolve the problematic issues, although the control wood working group convened several times.

The IGI process and Finland’s FM standard revision is planned to be launched directly after the CW-process. A new half-time staff member was recruited for coordinating the process and for conducting the necessary background work. Preparatory work has been done during the last 5 weeks of the year.

The goal of smooth processes was not reached, and in the case of the CW NRA the end result is practically the opposite, despite the effort put into the process, its coordination and in communications.

Coordinate and engage with policies and programmes of FSC International

Start building a national strategy based on the international strategy

A great deal of work has been conducted on strategy in 2015, but on the Nordic level rather than the national level. A working group (consisting of chamber representatives) and office staff have given inputs at different times of the year into the joint Nordic strategy, which was approved by the Board of FSC Finland in December. Cooperation among the Nordic FSC offices continues to be very beneficial and fruitful for Finland.

This goal’s content changed during the year from a national to a sub-regional perspective, but the gist of the goal has been well accomplished.

Keep informed about the developments in FSC International

In 2015 it has been easier to follow developments in FSC International thanks to there being 3 part-time rather than 2 part-time staff members on board. Communications about major FSC processes to members and stakeholders has mostly taken place via the website, partly via the Newsletter.

FSC International staff visited Finland twice during the year. Both visits included meetings with chamber representatives and a field trip.

FSC Finland awarded Koskis Gård with an award called "the seedling of responsibility" for their outstanding work in promoting sustainable forestry.
meant that developments of FSC International were well communicated to FSC Finland board members, and the concerns of Finnish stakeholders were brought to the attention of FSC International.

The office staff participated in the FSC European Regional Meeting and the FSC Global Network Meeting with two staff members. A representative of FSC Finland also took part in a European Smallholder Network Meeting. This goal has not been accomplished to perfection, but very well considering previous years.

Take part in the “Transforming organization” process

FSC Finland has had a constructive role in the process on the European level and has consistently brought up the needs and contexts of northern boreal forest countries at FSC International. The Board of Directors of FSC International held its meeting in Finland in November. FSC Finland’s members and stakeholders had the possibility to engage directly with the international Board members and bring the particularities of Finnish forestry to their attention. The week of meetings was a resounding success. This goal was accomplished very well.
International members of FSC via Finland 2015

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Board of FSC Finland 2015

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<td>UPM-Kymmene</td>
<td>The Outdoor Association of Finland Anne Rautiainen</td>
<td>WWF Finland Jari Luukkonen</td>
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<td>Finnish Forest Industries Federation Karoliina Niemi</td>
<td>Wood workers’ Union Riina Simonen/Harri Hääkinen</td>
<td>Finnish Nature League Lauri Kajander</td>
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<td>Tornator Maarit Sallinen</td>
<td>Consumers’ Union Jenni Vainioranta</td>
<td>Greenpeace Finland Matti Liimatainen</td>
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<td>Metsä Group Oy Jussi Ripatti</td>
<td>Meto Erkki Eteläaho</td>
<td>Finnish Association for Nature Conservation Paloma Hannonen/Virpi Sahi</td>
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FSC Finland Office 2015

Anniina Kostilainen, Director of the Office (working time 30h/week)

Laura Kauppila, Head of Administration and Projects (working time 30h/week).

Lauri Ilola, Communications and Marketing officer (working time 30h/week)

Eveliina Puhakka, Forest expert (employed as of November 15th, working time 20h/week)

Trainees from the University of Helsinki: Felix Siivonen (summer), Viktor Harvio (summer), Noora Simola (autumn) and input for group certification toolkit from former trainee Satu Kilpinen.