



Distr.
GENERAL

TIM/SEM.1/2003/R.21 (Summary)
9 January 2003

Original: ENGLISH

Seminar on
STRATEGIES FOR THE SOUND USE OF WOOD
Poiana Brasov, Romania
24-27 March 2003

Forest certification in Romania and the market perspective

Session V

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Summary

The first discussions about forest certification were initiated in Romania in June 1998 when a workshop co-organised by the National Forest Administration, the World Wide Fund for Nature and the Forest Stewardship Council was attended by more than one hundred representatives of the main forest stakeholders. The dissemination of information about FSC certification increased significantly after the establishment of a working group for forest certification in late 1999.

In 2001 two state forest districts (Varatec and Targu Neamt, included in Vanatori Neamt Forest Park) applied for FSC certification and one year later the certificate was issued by Woodmark Soil Association for the first 31,600 ha of Romanian state forests, with an annual allowable cut of about 140,000 ha. The National Forest Administration intends to increase significantly the certified forest area in the coming years.

Beginning with 2000 several foreign and Romanian companies expressed their interest in buying FSC certified timber and timber products from Romania. In anticipation of the first forest management certificate two foreign investors in wood processing in Romania got the chain of custody (CoC) certificate in December 2001. By the end of 2002 other seven companies (out of

more than forty companies that showed interest in buying certified timber) were pre-assessed by an accredited certifier in view of chain of custody certification. Considering the foreign demand for FSC certified timber and timber products and the availability of certified timber it is expected that the number of companies CoC certified operating in Romania will increase significantly in the next period.

In spite of the ecological and social benefits of forest certification it appears that in a short term the main driving engine for forest certification in Romania will be the market demand.

Key words: forest certification, Romania, market perspective, Forest Stewardship Council, sustainable forest management
