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Promoting sustainable forest management

29 October 2004  
Luxembourg

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## Russia joins PEFC Council

Russia, the country with the largest forest cover in the world, has joined PEFC Council, the international framework for the endorsement of forest certification schemes. At its annual meeting today the PEFC Council General Assembly accepted the membership application submitted by the National Voluntary Forest Certification Council in Russia.

PEFC membership is the first step required before a forest certification system can apply for an official PEFC endorsement. This endorsement is only given after a thorough assessment and consultation process of a national system against the strict PEFC endorsement requirements.

“The enlargement of PEFC membership to the vast land area of Russia further strengthens the role of PEFC as an international network of independent national forest certification systems committed to promoting sustainable forest management” said Mr Henri Plauche-Gillon, chairman of the PEFC Council. “Russia’s resource is of global significance from an economic, environmental and social viewpoint. We therefore welcome this positive action for the promotion of sustainable forest management in Russia.”

Mr Nikolai Eremeev, President of the National Forest Certification Council in Russia, outlined the motives for the Russian application: “In a growing and globalising market for timber and timber products we have been looking for a forest certification system that provides credible third party certification, assures sustainability and builds on internationally recognized intergovernmental agreements. In addition we need a credible system that can give certified timber access to world markets. From the Russian point of view only the international PEFC framework fulfils these requirements and offers the necessary opportunities for the future.”

ENDS



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## Editors Notes

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### **Forest Certification:**

Forest certification is a process which provides an assurance mechanism to purchasers of wood and paper products that the wood used in the products comes from sustainably managed forest. Sustainably managed forest are those whose management implements performance standards based on internationally agreed environmental, social and economical requirements.

### **National Voluntary Forest Certification Council in Russia**

The National Voluntary Forest Certification Council in Russia is a non-profit organisation that was founded in April 2003 to promote SFM in Russia and to start a development process towards PEFC endorsement. Currently a wide range of stakeholders have joined the Council, among them organisations from forestry, forest industry, state forest organisations and research institutes, pulp and paper mills and trade unions. The annual harvest of round wood in Russia is about 168 million cubic meters. 22 % of world's forests are located in Russia.

### **PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes)**

PEFC is a framework for the mutual recognition of credible national or regional forest certification schemes that have been developed based on internationally recognised requirements for sustainable forest management. Since its launch in 1999, PEFC has become the largest forest certification umbrella organisation covering national schemes from all over the world, delivering hundreds of millions of tonnes of wood to the processing industry and then onto the market place from over 52 million hectares of certified forests. PEFC has strong grass roots support from many stakeholders including the forestry sector, governments, trade associations, trade unions and non-governmental organisations.

PEFC/01-00-01