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FSC Press Release – Advice note on wind turbines

There is a growing public interest in wind turbines, their social and environmental costs and benefits, and the role that they play in the global effort to reduce carbon emissions. Sweden, like many other European countries, has set ambitious targets to reduce its carbon emissions and investment in renewable technologies such as wind turbines will play an important role in this.

Over the past year a rise in stakeholder inquiries in Sweden and elsewhere regarding FSC's position on wind turbine establishment within FSC certified areas raised the need for FSC to clarify its position on the issue.

The result is FSC Advice Note *Wind turbine establishment within FSC certified areas*. This Advice Note, which is internationally applicable, was developed in consultation with stakeholders in Sweden and elsewhere and through field visits to affected regions.

The Advice Note recognizes that the establishment of a wind turbine within a forest entails a conversion of land (i.e. from forest or plantation to another use). So, if a certificate holder wants to establish a wind turbine on his property this establishment must comply with FSC's requirements on conversion (Criterion 6.10 of the Principles & Criteria).

Local stakeholders are given a powerful voice by this advice note, as the conversion requirements include a provision that conversion must receive strong local stakeholder support in order to take place.

If the conversion does not comply with Criterion 6.10, the possibility exists of excising that portion of land from the forest management unit. This must then follow the FSC Policy on Excision.

FSC is mindful of the pressing need to reduce global carbon emissions and believes that moving from fossil fuels to renewable energy plays an important role in this. FSC is committed to ensuring that where wind turbines are established in certified forests the conservation values of those forests are preserved. FSC is also committed to giving local stakeholders a voice in the process, which should be fair and transparent.

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About FSC

The Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC) is an independent non-profit organization that promotes environmental-ly sound, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests. FSC develops stand-ards, ensures monitoring of certified operations and protects the FSC trademark so that businesses and con-sumers can choose products that come from well-managed forests that meet the social, economic and ecologi-cal needs of present and future generations. For more information visit www.fsc.org.