



FSC® AND THE LOGISTICS SECTOR

Do you work in logistics? Are you transporting or storing FSC certified materials for your client? Find out below your responsibilities to ensure the FSC chain of custody remains intact.

What is FSC?

FSC provides global standards for forest management, which cover a balance of environmental, social and economic aspects. The well-being of forest communities and ecosystems is as important as replacing trees in ensuring the future of the world's forests. FSC is the only wood certification scheme endorsed by the major environmental charities, including WWF, Greenpeace and The Woodland Trust.

The FSC system also provides a way of tracking forest products through independently verified Chain of Custody certification. This has to cover every stage in processing, conversion, distribution and printing before the final product can carry the FSC label. If the chain is broken, no claims can be made.

Does the logistics company transporting FSC materials need to hold FSC certification?

Logistics companies transporting or temporarily storing certified products do not need to hold certification if they are not taking legal ownership of the certified products.

If a change of ownership takes place, with the logistics company taking legal ownership of the FSC certified products i.e. they invoice for the products in addition to the delivery service, the logistics company would need to hold Chain of Custody certification.

Although logistics companies do not need to hold certification or a trademark licence to transport FSC certified products, there are many benefits from opting for either certification or a trademark licence (see case study).

FSC certification offers many benefits, including:

- The use of the FSC trademarks to promote your responsibly sourced forest products.
- Passing on FSC claims to your customers.

Further benefits can be seen here:

<http://benefitsforbusiness.fsc.org>

What are the rules around storing FSC certified material?

Storage sites are exempt from Chain of Custody evaluations where they constitute 'stopping places' or intersections that form a part of the transport agreements between two Chain of Custody operations. In other words, where certain storage facilities are used (or rented) by transport service providers to fulfill a contractual agreement between two FSC certified operations, such sites should not be considered part of an outsourcing agreement.

Where, however, an FSC certified company contracts a transport service provider or the warehouse owner to store goods in the absence of an agreed delivery to a customer (and would then only place a delivery order at a later point in time, once a sales contract has been signed), such a scenario should be considered an extension of the storage site of the Chain of Custody operation and an outsourcing arrangement should be considered. An outsourcing agreement means that an uncertified company can be covered within the scope of a certified company to store the goods on the behalf of the certified company without the materials losing their certified status.

Case study: Maersk

Traditionally, shipping lines have had their containers fitted with tropical hardwood floors. The container industry uses approximately 1.2-1.5 million cubic metres of hardwood annually to meet demand for new containers.

Maersk Line is the leading liner shipping company in the world serving customers all over the globe. In 2011, Maersk Line announced a new policy to refrain from purchasing containers with floors made of uncertified tropical hardwood.

"Illegal logging is widely recognised as a serious threat to forests, people and wildlife. We feel obligated to use our purchasing power to push for higher standards and ensure that the timber we use for container floors come from responsible forestry," says Jacob Sterling, Head of Climate & Environment, Maersk Line.

Maersk have held FSC certification since 2011 and by now more than 30 percent of all Maersk containers are fitted with either FSC certified wood or bamboo floors. For further information, please click [here](#).