

# FSC Ireland SC Meeting

Thursday February 19<sup>th</sup> 2009, Thurles Action for Community Development, Thurles

## MEETING REPORT

**Present:** Sasha Bosbeer, John Jackson, Mick Keane, Declan Little, Ruth McGrath, Tony Mannion, Anja Murray, Geraldine O'Sullivan, Maria Cullen

**Apologies:** Peter Sweetman

**Observing:** Pat Neville, Aodhnait O'Carroll, Paula Tiller

**Facilitation:** Harriet Emerson

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### 1. Ground Rules

It was agreed to alter the fourth bullet point under "Conduct of Meeting", so that the last sentence reads "Flipchart notes on discussions at the meeting will be retained until the following AGM."

All present were reminded of the need for applying the Ground Rules in order to ensure an environment in which all can participate productively and with confidence. It was made clear that the facilitator is equally subject to the Ground Rules, and that all participants should raise issues that arise if the process is not working, as well as endeavouring to abide by the Ground Rules themselves.

### 2. Signing of Minute Book

The Minute Book was not available for signing at the meeting.

### 3. Welcome to Co-ordinator

The SC welcomed Paula Tiller as the new Co-ordinator. She gave a brief outline of her background and experience.

### 4. Update on chambers' meetings

The Environmental Chamber is awaiting receipt of the list of FSC Ireland members in this Chamber, prior to finalising arrangements for the sector's meeting.

The Social Chamber have discussed including an outdoor element to their event. This is likely to take place around mid-March.

The Economic Chamber is due to meet on the 16<sup>th</sup> of April. This meeting will be of the Steering Committee Chamber members.

### 5. Report on Standard Development Group

a.) Update on SDG Group Composition:

The Committee approved the changes to SDG group composition. Current SDG membership is as follows:

Economic Chamber: Steven Meyen (replacing Nuala Ni Fhlatharta), Mick Keane, Geraldine O'Sullivan, Paddy Purser.

Social Chamber: Peter Sweetman (replacing Monika Muller), Sasha Bosbeer, Kevin Birchall, Helen Lawless

Environment Chamber: Anja Murray, Ruth McGrath, Evelyn Moorkens, Cliona O'Brien/Siobhán Egan. (It was AGREED that Cliona and Siobhán who share the fourth seat could both attend meetings where another member of the Environment Chamber was not able to be present.)

b.) Suggested technical resource people

It was AGREED that the SDG should call on technical resource people for assistance it identifies as necessary, having notified its intention to the Steering Committee subsequently.

c.& d.) Progress & Discussion of Criteria & Indicators agreed by SDG

A graphical representation of the process involved in developing and agreeing the National Standard was discussed. Pat Neville offered to produce a digital graphic of this to post on the FSC Ireland website. It was noted that the SDG has agreed a schedule for delivering an initial draft standard. Concerns were raised over the workload on the SDG as a result of the timeframe for delivery of the Workplan. It was AGREED that an approach to funders for an extension could more easily be made once an initial draft standard has been generated.

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It was AGREED that the SC will be kept informed of the SDG's work, and will feedback comments to the Co-ordinator, who will collate these so that they can be addressed by the SDG when it revisits the complete initial draft, before this is submitted to the Steering Committee. (Feedback from the SC should be respectful and only given on important matters. SC members should seek clarification from the facilitator and other Chamber members on the SDG in relation to queries, before making feedback to the SDG.) At this point the Steering Committee will review the Draft, and meet to discuss this and agree any necessary changes, before the Draft is submitted for Forest Testing. Also at this point the Steering Committee will consider whether adjustment to the timeline for the Workplan needs to be made, and any related communications with FSC and the funding bodies.

It was CONFIRMED that the Steering Committee will not comment on SDG work at Steering Committee meetings until it holds the meeting(s) scheduled for discussion of the full draft submitted from the SDG, prior to forest testing.

#### d.) Status of existing draft standard and submissions made to the draft

The following point of clarification was AGREED: It should be made clear that the SDG is working on developing a draft standard anew, informed by what has gone before (Draft 3 and submissions thereon) and other information (FSC Standards, generic indicators and agreed National Standards).

It was AGREED that the letter to be sent to each of those individuals or groups that made a submission on Draft 3, shall explain the process through which FSC Ireland is now working under the new guidelines from FSC International, from whom advice and training has been received. The format of the draft generated under this process will look very different as a result of the requirements contained in the relevant FSC standards. It will also include the following text

“Your submission is being considered in tandem with all other submissions in the development of the new Draft Standard. This new Draft Standard will be put to public consultation later this year. You will be informed as soon as the new Draft is available. It will be available on the Web or in hard copy if required. If you feel, upon examination of this new Draft Standard, that there are outstanding issues from your submissions this can be dealt with either through a further submission on the points concerned, or by participation in the consultation forum.”

It was confirmed that submissions from the consultative forum and submissions that have come in from the general public will be treated and considered equally in the consultation process.

It was suggested that non-submitting members of FSC Ireland should receive a letter inviting them to join the consultative forum. Geraldine offered to send out an email to forestry companies with an electronic link, inviting them to join the consultative forum.

### **6. Revision of dispute procedure**

Peter has communicated to Sasha that the revision is almost complete and will be circulated prior to the next Steering Committee meeting.

### **7. Co-ordinator's report**

Paula reported on her activities during January (hard copy to follow). There is the potential for having FSC to host the FSC Ireland website, thereby reducing hosting costs, although it is desirable to also maintain the current domain name.

It was AGREED that Paula will visit FSC UK as soon as convenient to obtain as much information on fund-raising, communication with relevant agencies, forest owners and managers, and other aspects of certification.

As a potential starting point for items to be addressed in the Newsletter, a short brainstorming exercise generated the following points as positive achievements or aspects of the FSC Ireland's recent work:

- Communications between the different economic, social and environmental interests take place in a constructive environment.
- A constructive and open environment
- Improved communication with FSC International; FSC International are more aware of FSC Ireland's activities and are providing more input and support.
- Getting down to work on the standard.
- Agreeing the Workplan
- Setting a deadline

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- Peaceful co-existence
  - Funding is sound and enables action
  - AGM fieldtrip
  - Increased maturity in addressing challenges/ issues
  - Chocolate
  - Team spirit within the organisation “We are going to do the job!”
  - Chamber representation at SC and SDG; all are happy with this and coping with change.

## 8. Contact within FSC Network

- a) Sasha informed the SC that she had met with Charles Thwaites of FSC UK and also Hubert Kwisthout recently when in Wales and Bonn, respectively. She reported that Hubert Kwisthout is recommending that NIs consider the role of their country in forest products – whether primarily producer or consumer – and tailor their activities to that focus. Ireland, for example, is primarily a consumer country, and the NI should consider putting a greater emphasis on informing consumers and related promotion and support.
- b) ASI-CB-NI meeting March. Anja asked whether there were any issues that SC members want her to raise at this meeting. Geraldine raised the potential of the NI Forum on the Intranet for FSC in Ireland and wondered what further information might be available on this. Any information from the Dutch experience, and ideas on how to raise the profile of FSC in Ireland would be useful. In addition, it would be good to discuss with FSC possible means of responding to negative comments on the Irish situation on FSC Watch.
- c) European NI meeting. It was AGREED in principle to send a representative to this meeting.
- d) NI Network rep on FSC Board. Comments on the pre-circulated Terms of Reference are requested from SC members and/or support for the proposal, which should be communicated to Sasha by close of business on 24<sup>th</sup> February.
- e) It was asked whether there is any possibility of an environmental or green payment for forest owners that reach the FSC standard, beyond any added value obtained on timber products. It was requested that this be raised with FSC, although this issue is to be first discussed further by the SC.

## 9. Correspondence

- It was AGREED that the Controlled Wood Risk Assessment be submitted to NEPCON, and the SC will discuss whether or not to make this a formal submission (according to FSC-PRO-60-002 FSC Controlled Wood Risk Assessments procedure) at its next meeting.
- PEFC has approached Woodlands of Ireland about joining the scheme. Woodlands of Ireland has notified them that they are members of FSC and intend to continue to be.
- SRFB has not responded to communications about filling Igoe’s seat. In the absence of this, the Mountaineering Council of Ireland has been asked to consider whether they are willing to be co-opted to the Social Chamber.

## 10. Terms of Reference for internal financial audit group (IAG)

### Protocol re: travel, subsistence & related expenses for the SC and SDG

This was discussed and AGREED except point 1, which will be reconsidered by the audit group and represented to the Steering Committee.

### Terms of Reference

It was AGREED to defer consideration of the Terms of Reference for the IAG until the next Steering Committee meeting.

## 11. Planning for the AGM

It was AGREED that Paula will contact Ruth to ask her to clarify the requirements for planning and conduct of AGM and EGM meetings.

It was AGREED that the IAG will look at proposals for a change to the membership fee. These will be brought back to the SC for agreement, prior to presentation at the AGM.

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Revision to Memorandum & Articles of Association. An initial document has been generated and is being worked on by the sub-group set up to look at this.

## **12. Information for members and the public**

Proposals to promote certification amongst small forest owners have not progressed since the last meeting. It was AGREED that Maria, Tony & Geraldine will work on producing a white paper addressing certification for small forest owners.

It was suggested that actions to raise the profile of FSC need to be pursued. The opportunity of linking with Agri-Aware and other sector –specific groups (engineers, architects, RIAI, etc.) to increase profile and membership was raised. The Rough Guide to FSC was acknowledged as a good resource to raise profile.

Paula is going to contact the designer identified by Fran about production of the FSC Ireland brochure, whose contact details have now been identified. Clarification is being sought that the funding is still available and then production of brochure material can be pursued. It was noted that keeping in style with the FSC Int. website is important in development of the brochure. It was AGREED that the brochure shall be printed on FSC-certified paper. Turner's Printers in County Longford was mentioned as possible FSC Chain of Custody printers.

Pat has circulated a White Paper on Participation in FSC Ireland for comment.

## **13. Financial Report**

The treasurer presented a report of finances to date.

The meeting AGREED that the cheque signatories will be any two of the following Declan Little, Mick Keane and Geraldine O'Sullivan. The necessary mandate form will now be submitted to the bank.

## **14. Next SC meeting date & location**

It was AGREED that the next Steering Committee meeting will be in the end of April.

## **15. AOB**

There was discussion about the possibility of a meeting/conference with relevant agencies to raise the profile of certification. It was important to reach other groups also and the potential of art competition and participation in events such as the Ploughing Championship were identified as important.

Some research amongst timber processors about their policies and preferred demands for certified timber vs. uncertified timbers be carried out.