Accelarating China’s Forest Certification to Promote Sustainable Forest Management

Shi Feng
China Forestry Industry Association
China’s efforts and achievements in sustainable forest management

Opinions on accelerating China’s forest certification work

Recent work plan of the Forest Certification Center of SFA

Expectations for global forestry field’s support on China’s forest certification
Background Information

Environment and development are big issues widely concerned by international society, consequently protecting ecological environment and to realizing sustainable development become urgent and arduous task of the whole world.

As the world largest developing country, China occupies 6.5% global land area and has 21% world population, so it shoulders the essential task to maintain people’s livelihood, development, peace and prosperity in this area.
Aiming at current forest resource and ecological environment problems currently in the world, especially in China, Chinese government has taken the following measures to enhance forest resource conservation and to promote sustainable forest management and forest use:

Firstly, mobilize the whole society to carry out forest and wildlife resource conservation driven by the government and organized by forestry department.

Secondly, strive to cultivate forest resource. Since 1981, China has practiced a 27-year nationwide greening and voluntary tree-planting initiative.

Thirdly, intensify forest resource management and fight against forest resource damaging behaviors through administrative and legal means.

Fourthly, enhance sound development of forestry to promote sustainable utilization of forest resources, especially for transforming the utilization from natural forest to plantation.
Measure 1

1. Establish robust laws and regulations, carry out forest logging quota system and set up forest resource conservation responsibility system in governments of all levels.

Driven by government
Organized by forestry department

2. Invest RMB 200 billion yuan or so to carry out natural forest protection and wildlife resource conservation program in key areas.

3. Implement forest resources classification system, divide forests into ecological benefit forest, commercial forest and multi-function forest, and take compulsory protection measures for the former.

4. Prohibit any logging and trading activities, and has gained distinct successes up to now.
Measure 2

Since 1981, China has practiced nationwide greening and voluntary tree planting activity for 27 years.

Up to 2007, accumulatively 10.4 billion people have joined the voluntary tree planting activity across China and planted 49.27 billion trees. Assume on each mu land 200 trees can be planted, the greening area has reached 296 million mu (about 20 million hectares).

China cultivated forest hard through hill closing forestation, aerial seeding forestation and Plantation area. According to statistics, only artificial forestation conservation area nationwide has reached 30 million mu (about 54 million hectares) by the end of 2007.

Carried out forest management measures, e.g. enhanced cultivation of old, middle and young-aged forests, conducted pilot work of forest management scheme and promoted demonstration project of standardized industrial raw material forest base.
Intensify forest resource management and fight against forest resource damaging behaviors through legal and administrative means

SFA regulated and rectified forest resource logging management, forest land requisition and occupation, timber transportation, wildlife conservation and public security of forest area with relevant departments by specific actions or joint inspections.

Chinese forestry administration is of distinct characteristics, besides forest resource management department, there is a big powerful public security team, which takes the responsibility of public security of forest area and forest resource protection, also there is an armed forest police troop led by forestry department, which cooperates forestry administration department to take actions at any time.

To further implementation of Forest Law and relevant regulations, the Supreme Court and the Supreme Procuratorate successively carried out penalty measurement measures of several forestry-related cases and Judicial interpretation.
To promote sustainable utilization of forest resource and push forward sound development of forest industry.

**Promulgate**

**Key Points of Forest Industry Policy**

**Issue**

**Outline of Forest Industry Planning**

**Support**

Set forth a series of supportive policies for development of wood-based panel, wood pulp papermaking, industrial raw material forest base, economic forest and its processing, forest tourism, flower industry and bamboo industry.
Progress of China’s Forest Certification Work

In September 2001, SFA established China Forest Certification Leading Group, announcing their fundamental strategic thought to establish a China forest certification system to meet Chinese situation and international tradition on the basis of wide reference to international experience.
In recent years, SFA contacted and communicated with two major international certification schemes, FSC and PEFC, as well as organized domestic pilot work of forest certification;
In September 2007, China Forest Certification standard of Forest Management and China Forest Certification standard of CoC were issued, the two standards have referred to the world most popular standard—FSC Standard and its indicators, include 9 principles and over 100 criteria, as well as cover law and regulation framework, forest ownership, community and worker rights, forest management plan, forest management and production, biodiversity conservation, environmental impact, forest protection and forest monitoring;
To develop China’s forest certification work asap, the Party Group of SFA, based on the researches and explorations in the previous years, as well as the issued industrial standards, decided to organize selected personnel from China Forestry Industry Association and set up the Preparation Group of Forest Certification Center, in order to establish the first Chinese forest certification body and to carry out forest certification work in China asap.

Since August 2007, guided by the Certification and Accreditation Administration of the People’s Republic of China (CNCA), the Preparation Group finished literal materials, work staff employment and office improvement works, and formally reported to the CNCA review in October 2007;
CNCA supported forest certification work very much and has been concerning and guiding SFA for years to conduct relevant researches and standard development. Last year, it organized a “Forest Certification Technical Expert Group” led by its Certification and Accreditation Supervision Department, and participated by its Legal Department, Technological Standard Department, China Certification and Accreditation Association, China Accreditation Center and forestry departments. Upon consultation and communication between the two departments, CNCA and SFA plan to jointly issue document and formally initiate forest certification work.
Since China’s forest certification scheme is not established yet, forest certification has already spontaneously been introduced to China following the international trend. According to current knowledge, more than 700,000 hectares of forest and 300 timber processing enterprises in China got FSC and PEFC certificates from the two major international certification bodies, more enterprises are under the process of application and auditing up to the end of 2007. Although none of the certification bodies has obtained specific approval from the CNCA, and special charge permission from pricing department, we haven’t stopped them for their work was objectively helpful for China’s sustainable forest management. Once China formally initiated our own forest certification work, we will regulate and readjust domestic forest certification market, as well as standardize and deal with their market behaviors according to law in collaboration with CNCA.
Opinions on Accelerating China’s Forest Certification Work

1. Forest Certification is a set of practical standards of sustainable forest management for forest management organizations. The process of implementing forest certification is also a process to learn from forestry experts and to improve themselves.

2. Forest certification requires forest management not only to be sustainable, but also to meet environmental requirement, this will help protect deteriorating ecological forest environment in China, biodiversity and wildlife living environment.

3. Forest certification promotes sustainable forest management by market mechanism, which meets the world development trend and realistic requirement by Chinese forestry for better and faster development.

4. Establish China’s own forest certification system asap and participate in establishing international system to strive for international market share of forest products, as well as voice and decision-making rights on certification system, and maintain national interests, so as to improve China’s international status.
Recent Work Plan of the Preparation Group of the Forest Certification Center of SFA

According to the 2008 Work Plan of SFA, we will focus on the following works recently:

1. Cooperate with the State Certification and Accreditation Administration to promote relevant auxiliary works of China’s forest certification.

2. Finish the establishment of the first China forest certification body with top quality and at the highest speed.

3. After the certification body obtains approval, carry out forest management certification and forest product CoC certification with special highlights immediately.

4. Led by the State Certification and Accreditation Administration and the State Forestry Administration, establish China’s forest certification system asap and actively conduct international mutual recognition work.
Expectations for International Forestry Field’s Support on China’s Forest Certification II

We sincerely expect supports from international forestry field

- Support China to establish our own forest certification scheme asap
- Support the Forest Certification Center which will be established soon to carry out forest certification work
- Support us to build capacity required by conducting forest certification or human resource training
- Promote mutual recognition with sincere international forest certification scheme
Let’s join hands to promote China forest certification for better and faster development

Thank you!