



Image © Mihai Tamisala



Forest Certification for Ecosystem Services Project

An opportunity for forest managers

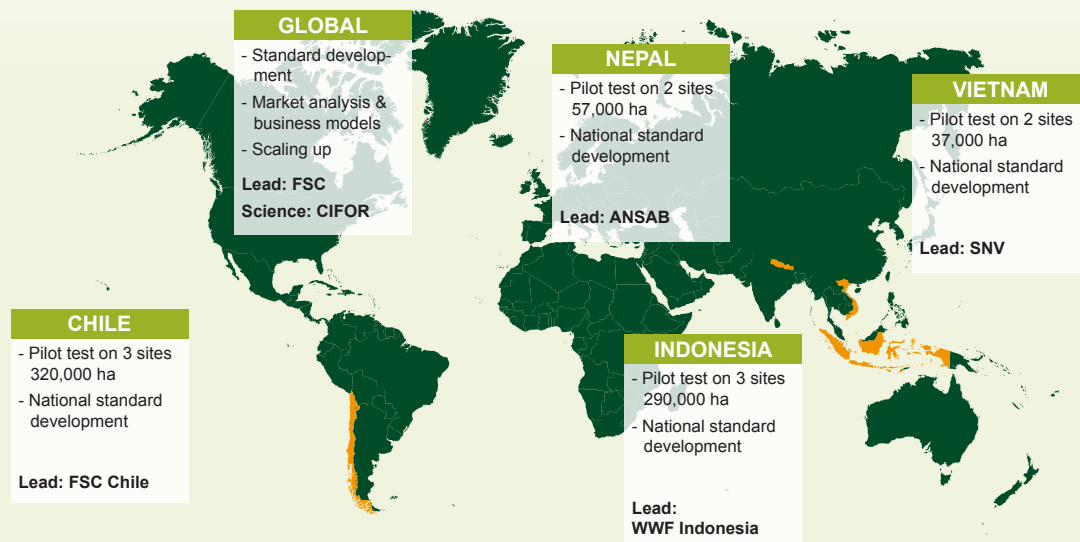
FSC® has pioneered forest certification as an innovative and market-oriented instrument to support responsible management of the world's forests. Strong organizational values and principles, such as balanced stakeholder participation, transparency, and North–South equity, are key to the approach.

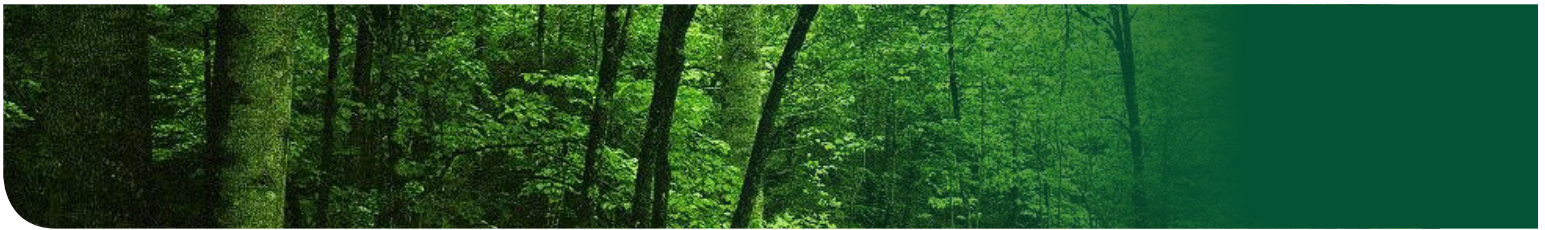
MAIN FOREST ECOSYSTEM SERVICES REWARDED THROUGH FORCES

- Biodiversity conservation
- Watershed protection
- Carbon storage and sequestration
- Recreational services

Scope of project

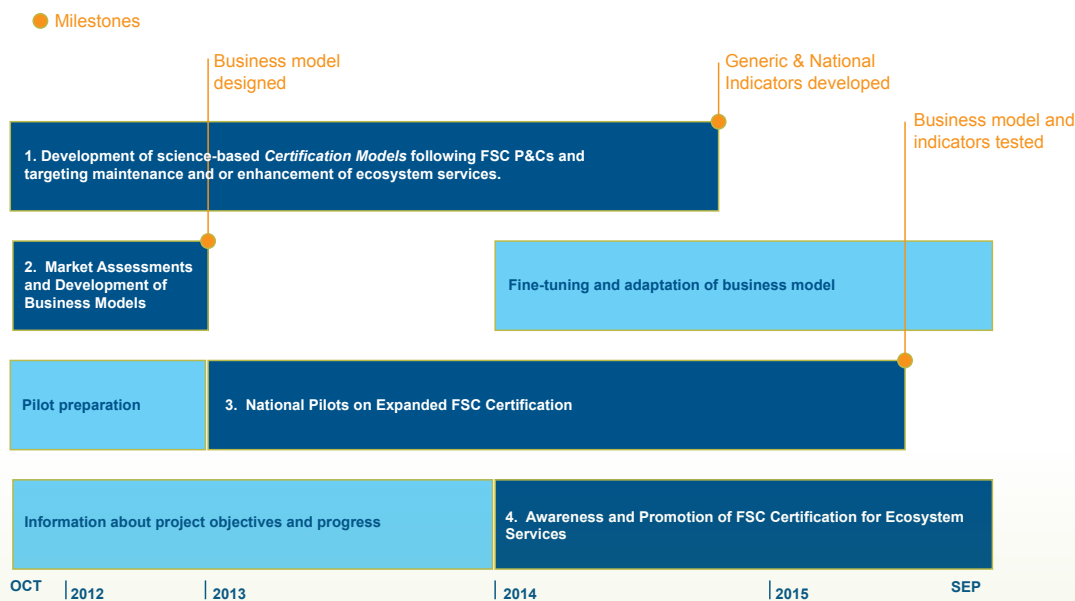
The **ForCES** – Forest Certification for Ecosystem Services – project examines the changes needed to the FSC system over a four-year period, 2011–2015, if FSC is to become a global leader in the certification of ecosystem services (ES). FSC and partner organizations will research, analyze, and field-test innovative ways of evaluating and rewarding the provision of critical ecosystem services, such as biodiversity conservation, watershed protection, and carbon storage and sequestration.





Pilot tests will be carried out at 10 forest sites under different socio-political and environmental conditions. A crucial factor will be the development of suitable compliance indicators, both at national and international levels. Newly developed impact indicators will be used to demonstrate positive outcomes and the achievement of social and environmental objectives.

By the end of 2015, FSC will have set in place an enhanced global system for forest managers, targeting key ecosystem services that have market potential. Demonstration sites for ecosystem services will have been certified. And the positive impacts and added value of FSC certification will have been demonstrated to forest operations and local communities.



Expected Outcomes

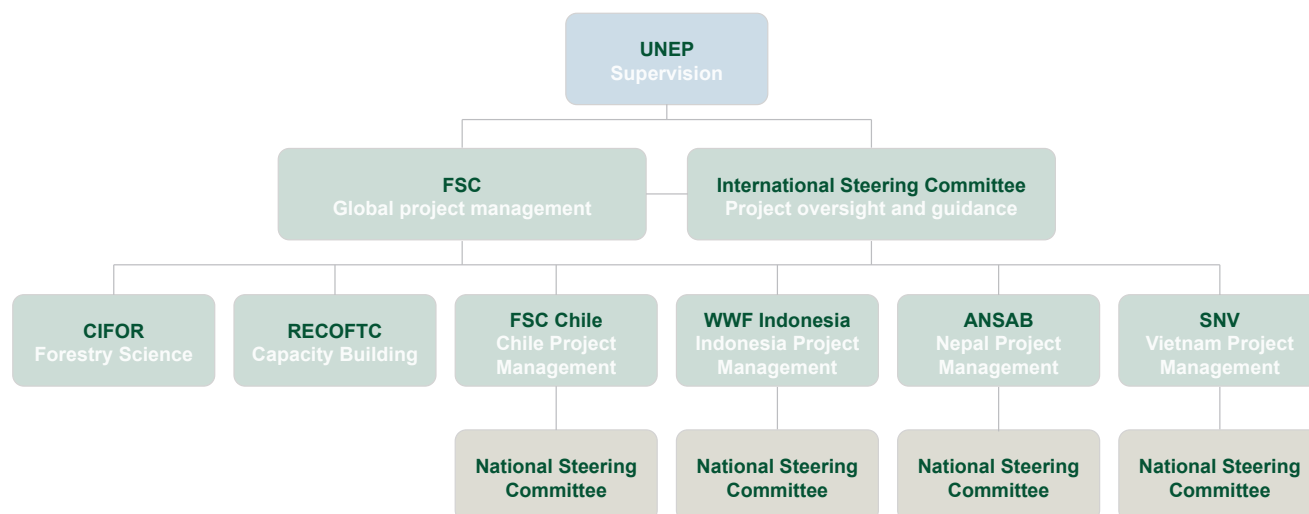
The following results are expected from the ForCES project:

- generic and national indicators for the management/monitoring of ecosystem services
- a methodology to assess social and environmental benefits of FSC certification
- a viable business model for rewarding the provision of ecosystem services.

Project partners

ForCES is supported by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), through the agency of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Implementation is handled by FSC, working with partners in Chile, Indonesia, Nepal, Vietnam and elsewhere as shown in the diagram below. An International Steering Committee and 4 National Steering Committees are in place to monitor project progress and budget as well as provide guidance when necessary.





Local benefits

For forest managers, users and communities, there is much to gain from participating in ForCES:

Capacity building on ES management and entrepreneurship. Forest stakeholders will gain knowledge of good ES management and advice on how to market these services. With appropriate ES management, forest users should enjoy improved ecosystem services in the long term, such as a more abundant and stable water supply and richer fauna and flora.

National ES standards. Key national stakeholders will develop an FSC National Forest Stewardship Standard. This standard will be adapted to the national legal, social and geographical conditions of forests and will focus on ecosystem services.

International outreach. Forest managers will benefit from a national standard, based on internationally recognized FSC Principles and Criteria. In the case of timber, FSC certification has already resulted in international market access and higher prices, as well as environmental and social benefits. The ForCES project will explore whether similar benefits could ensue from ES certification.

Zero costs for the certification audit. The FSC National Forest Stewardship Standard, to be developed in the course of the project, will be tested through forest management units taking part in the pilot schemes. At these sites, an independent organization will check forest management practices against nationally and internationally agreed indicators. Audit costs will be covered by ForCES. Successful forest management units may be issued with an FSC certificate, allowing forest products and services to be labeled with the internationally recognized FSC logo.

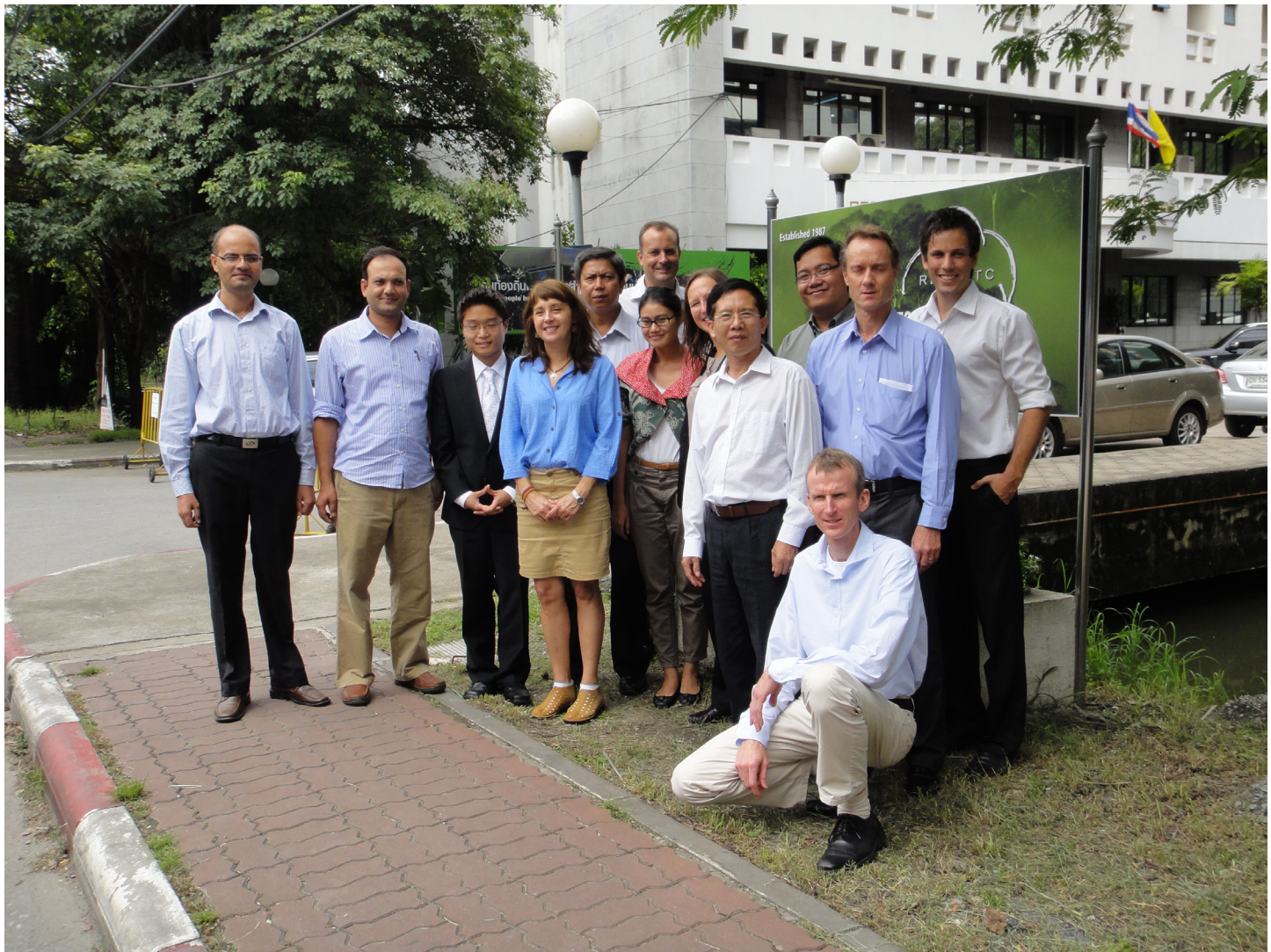




Useful links

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ForCES website: www.forces.fsc.org



ForCES project partners at the Inception Workshop in September 2011, Bangkok

