

Environmental requirements for the forest management standard and their contest in Ukrainian forestry enterprises

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Principle 6 of the FSC's Forest Management Standard states that the Organization shall maintain, conserve and/or restore ecosystem services and environmental values of the Management Unit, and shall avoid, repair or mitigate negative environmental impacts.

Investigations were conducted at forest enterprises of Ukraine, which are supervised by three certification bodies (NEPCon, SGS, "Forest Certification").

Not all enterprises have a full assessment of environmental values and monitoring with an indication of the necessary conservation measures in the management plan. The identification and recording procedures for registering rare and threatened species and mapping their habitats are not fully implemented.

The support of ecological functions and useful properties of the forest should also take place through the promotion of the reforestation process by natural means and the formation of mixed forests.

The enterprises take into account the results of the natural regeneration survey on the harvested sites, planted forests and native tree species of local origin.

In the enterprises subject to the State Agency of Forest Resources of Ukraine, there was no marked directional replacement of natural forests on the plantation.

In plain areas, final and sanitary clear cuttings dominates in areas and volumes of timber harvesting. The application of selective and gradual cutting systems is not given sufficient attention.

Foresters are finding it difficult to apply methods for identifying key habitats, their conservation and monitoring. There are complications with the allocation of key biotopes, their conservation and monitoring.

Sometimes, foresters fulfill this requirement at their own risk by ways: leaving the undergrowth of oak and birch trees on the harvested sites, groups of trees (especially around small reservoirs). Foresters do not realize that key elements should be indicated on technological cards.

Identification of key elements of foreststand that support biodiversity in forest ecosystems ("old trees", "trees with hollows", "dried up standing trees", "high hemp" and other) has not been widespread.

On the harvested sites key elements like as "seed-trees of economic-valuable species", "next tree generation" and "undergrowth" are excluded from the felling process.

Key elements such as "dry trees" and "trees with nests" were not selected at all. Dried up standing trees do not remain, as foresters consider them as emergency trees.

The fulfillment of the key requirements of principle 6 of the FSC's FM Standard has a formal character, especially with regard to minimizing the environmental impact, implying the natural dynamics of forest development, and biodiversity conservation.