



Practical conservation through certified forestry

Public Briefing Paper for FSC forest management certification assessment of Open joint stock company Vitebskdrev in Belarus

Introduction – The SmartWood Program of the Rainforest Alliance is conducting FSC forest management and chain of custody certification assessment of OJSC Vitebskdrev located in Belarus. This assessment will be carried out by NEPCon - a regional partner and the official representative of the SmartWood Program in Eastern Europe, Scandinavia and Russia. The forest management certification assessment is scheduled to be carried out in March-April 2012.

Scope of the assessment – The forest management certification assessment covers environmental, economic and social aspects of the forest management in the forest area managed by JSC Vitebskdrev, operating in Vitebsk region, Belarus. The assessment will cover a forest area of 190900 ha ha:

JSC Vitebskdrev branch “Bogushevski leshoz”

JSC Vitebskdrev branch “Gorodokski leshoz”

The assessment will be based upon the SmartWood Interim Standards for Belarus. To get a copy of the standards, please contact NEPCon on the address given at the end of the announcement or download a copy from www.nepcon.net. The SmartWood Program is accredited by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the assessment process will be conducted in accordance with the FSC requirements and SmartWood certification procedures.

Assessment Team Composition - The reassessment team will be led by Aliaksandr Zubkevich. The team members will be: Georgi Kozulko, Sigita Girdziusas .

Assessment Steps and Schedule – Following is a short description of certification process and a tentative agenda:

- ◆ Assessment organization – The NEPCon/SmartWood team will assemble in Minsk on first decade of March.
- ◆ Field assessments – The team will visit sites managed by JSC Vitebskdrev in March 12-17, 2012
- ◆ Stakeholder consultation – Throughout the fieldwork, the team will contact local stakeholders regarding JSC Vitebskdrev forest management in villages surrounding the forest area. This will include private interviews and discussions, and public stakeholder meetings.
- ◆ Public stakeholder meetings – NEPCon/Smartwood plan public stakeholder meeting in Minsk. Date, time, and location will be announced soon. All interested in this meeting contact NEPCon representative in Belarus.

- ◆ Final assessment briefing – Prior to departure the team will meet with JSC Vitebskdrev managers and other parties to finalize their data collection and present preliminary findings.
- ◆ Draft report production – The assessment team will produce a confidential draft report that will be circulated for comment to JSC Vitebskdrev.
- ◆ Certification decision – Upon receipt of comments on the draft report from JSC Vitebskdrev forest managers and other general stakeholder comments SmartWood will reach a certification decision.

Your input – As a part of forest management certification assessment we invite stakeholders to offer comment and feedback on JSC Vitebskdrev forest management in relation to the requirements of the forest management standard referenced above. We welcome input, either public or confidential, in whatever form is easiest and most secure for you. Your input will be valuable at any stage of the assessment process. We would, however, appreciate receiving your comments as soon as possible so we can consider these during the assessment. You can submit your comments in one of the following ways:

1. Call and tell your comments to Aliaksandr Zubkevich +375 29 7609639 (29 3807240)
2. Send written comments by mail, fax or email to Aliaksandr Zubkevich. Unless you specifically indicate so, your comments will remain confidential and shall only be used to evaluate forest management by the JSC Vitebskdrev.
3. Meet NEPCon/SmartWood assessment team during the assessment.

The source of any information provided will be kept confidential available to only the FSC and NEPCon/SmartWood staff.

Stakeholders who may wish to dispute any aspect of the forest certification process or decision can access SmartWood's dispute resolution procedures at www.smartwood.org,

NEPCon contact details:

- ◆ E-mail: az@nepcon.net
- ◆ Phone: +375 29 7609639 (29 3807240)
- ◆ Mailing address: postbox 5, 223011 Priluki, Belarus