

The role of FSC in Bulgaria

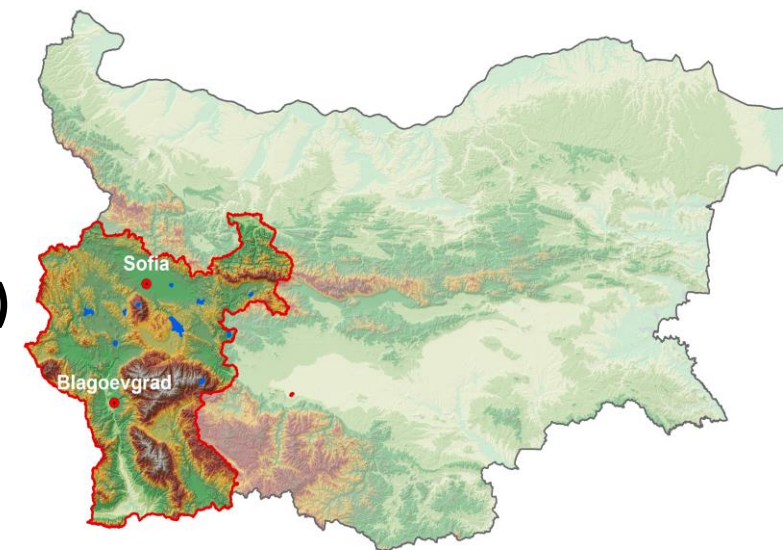
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"The Value of FSC to Europe's Public Forests" - Prague, Czech Republic - 11th October 2019.

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General information about the SWSFE:

- 1 of the 6 state forestry enterprises in BG
- 40 units (4 FSC-certified, 36 in certification)
- Area of state-owned forests – 680 000 ha (71%)
- FSC-certified area by 09.2019 – 140 000 ha
- Total forest volume – 110 000 000 m³
- Ratio of annual cut vs. forest increment – 69%
- Annual cut – 1 000 000 m³



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Main issues of public interest:

- Illegal logging
- Logging in water protection areas
- “Overharvesting” of forest wood resources
- Damage of forest roads used for tourism
- Export of unprocessed wood in huge quantities
- Garbage in forests

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FSC-certification in Bulgaria:

- **Key players:** WWF-IKEA-MONDI, top forestry scientists and experts, providing assistance for FSC-certification by education and HC VF mapping
- **Certified FMUs:** mainly state-owned FMUs, incl. one private and one municipal FMUs



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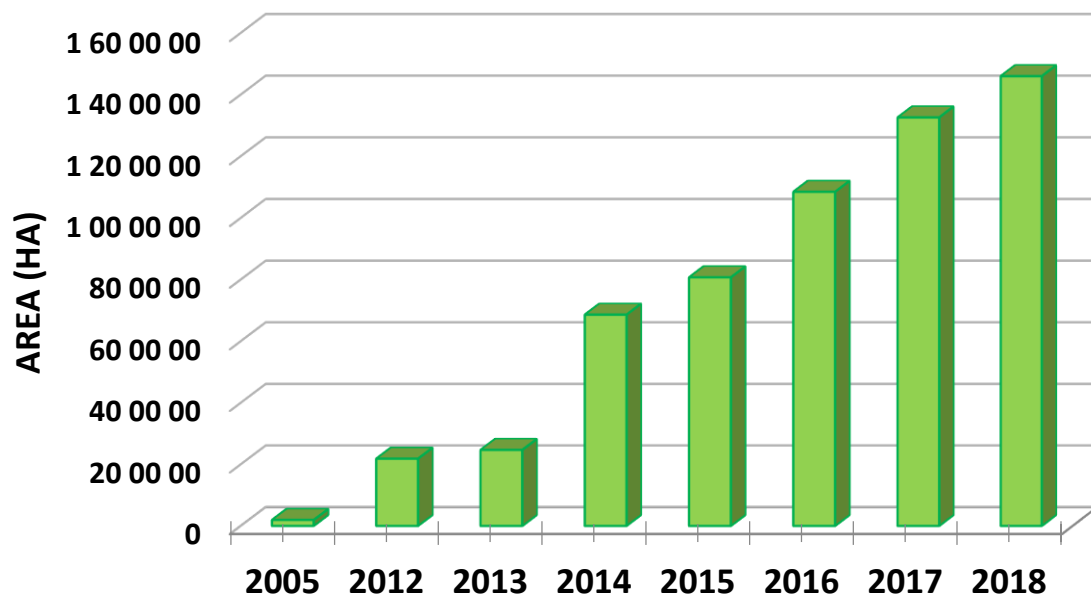
FSC-certification in Bulgaria:

- **Forestry Act (2011)**
(purpose of FSC; requirements for COC; N2000 regimes = FSC)
- **Strategy for the forestry sector in BG 2014-2023**
(Aim – 50% certified; 200 contractors certified; 160 wood processing units certified)
- **3rd Action plan on climate change 2013-2020**
(Aim – Group FSC-certification of 2 159 000 ha by 2020 – optionally SWSFE)

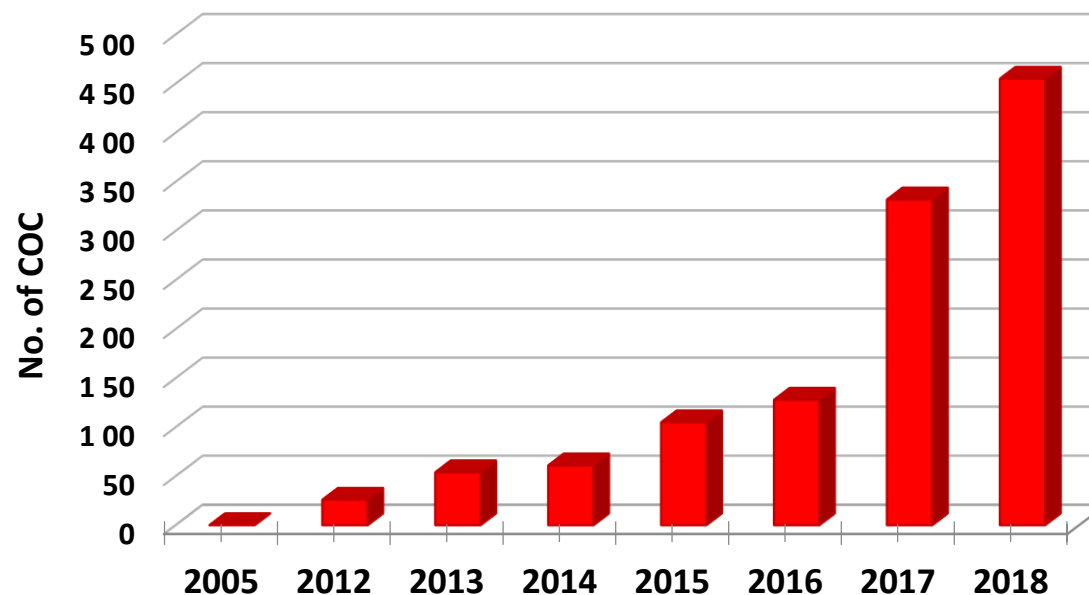


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AREA OF FSC-CERTIFIED FORESTS IN BULGARIA 2005-2018



NUMBER OF COC-CERTIFICATES IN BULGARIA 2005-2018



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Real benefits of FSC-certification in Bulgaria nobody knows about:

- Old-growth forest protection (10% of all state forests)
- Improved forest management and less illegal logging (all FMUs)
- Less garbage in forests (FMU Dospat)
- Increased accessibility of forest roads (FMU Yakoruda)
- Better safety equipment (FMU Trigrad)
- Improved communication with stakeholders (Plovdiv group)



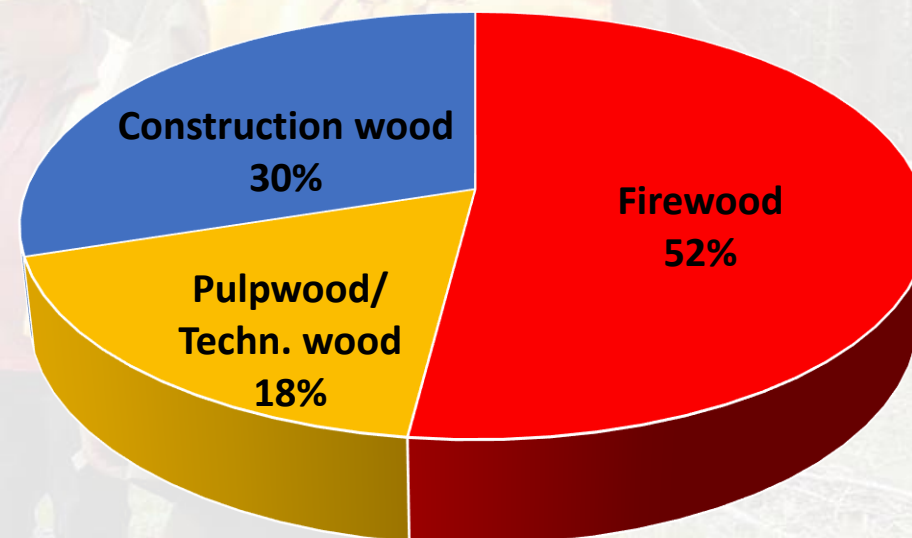
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Public opinion on FSC – lack of knowledge!

Forest administrators' perception of FSC:

+ Prestige

- Green lucrative scheme (no real independent control)
- Too much bureaucracy
- Certification imposed by law (e.g. COC)
- No real market for FSC-products (see graphic)
- No premium on wood price



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What has been done to improve and popularize the role of FSC to Bulgarian public forests:

- Promotion and education on FSC by WWF and forest scientists
- FSC-Fridays organized by WWF (incl. the Forestry Agency)
- Including forest certification in key legal documents
- Encouraging the participation of local stakeholders
- Press-releases on the results of FSC-audits (state enterprises)
- NGOs requiring more active role by ASI

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Proposals for enhancing the value of FSC for public forests:

- Regular **education** of the forest administrators
- Popularizing the role of FSC for **solving local issues** (incl. the role of stakeholders during audits)
- Promoting the documented **benefits of FSC for tourism, nature-protection, climate change**
- **Public registers/databases** with information about the documented benefits of FSC
- Make clear **how FSC makes difference** (sustainable forestry vs. Amazon clear-cuts)
- At least **30% participation of international auditors** during audits
- More **active role of ASI** as independent control body
- **Transparency of FSC-processes** for the general public (e.g. on-line HC VF maps such as on <http://gori.uzdp.bg/en>, press-releases and on-line information about the on-going audits, etc.)

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Thank you for your attention!

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Rila Monastery

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