



QUALIFOR PROGRAMME

Associated Documents

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Title	FM Main Assessment Report
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Issue	05
Issued by	Darius Sarshar
Date	05 April 2002

Forest Management Certification Report

Public Summary Information

Project Number:	7742-DE
Client:	Hessen Forest Dieburg Forestry Office
Country:	Hessen, Germany
Scope:	<p>Municipal and community forests: Dieburg, Eppertshausen, Gross-Umstadt, Gross-Zimmern, Messel, Münster, Reinheim, Rossdorf</p> <p>Forest of the Special Purpose Association, Waste Recycling South Hessen; private forest Christoph, private forest Scheuermann</p> <p>Total forest area: 4765 hectares</p> <p>Stadt- u. Gemeindewälder : Dieburg, Eppertshausen, Groß-Umstadt, Groß-Zimmern, Messel, Münster, Reinheim, Rossdorf;</p> <p>Wald des Zweckverbandes Abfallverwertung Südhessen (ZAS); Privatwald Christoph, Privatwald Scheuermann</p> <p>Waldfläche insgesamt : 4.765 Hektar</p>
Assessment date:	27 June, 21 – 23 August 2002
Certificate Number:	SGS-FM/COC-1300
Date of Issue:	22.05.03
Duration:	5 years
Forest type:	Semi-natural
Forest composition:	Mixed broad-leaved dominant
Species composition:	Beech, oak, pine, spruce
Land Tenure:	Communal and Private
Biome type:	temperate forest
Annual production/Annual Allowable Cut:	About 18,200 m ³
Forest products:	Roundwood, industrial wood, fire wood
Contact Name:	Forest Director Helmut Seitel
Address:	Ringstrasse 54 D-64807 Dieburg, Germany

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3. Report revisions	Required?			
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SECTION I - PUBLIC SUMMARY REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE

This report contains the results of the assessment of the forest management operations of the municipal and communal forests of Dieburg, Eppertshausen, Gross-Umstadt, Gross-Zimmern, Messel, Münster, Reinheim, Rossdorf, the Special Purpose Association Waste Recycling South Hessen and both private forests Christoph and Scheuermann. The forests are located in the forestry office area of Hessen Forest Dieburg Forestry Office in the Federal Republic of Germany. Dieburg, which has the coordinates of 49° 54' N and 08° 50' E, is about 20 kilometers east of Darmstadt and borders the Rhine plain in the west and the Odenwald in the east and belongs to the government district of Darmstadt in the state of Hessen. The assessment was conducted by the SGS QUALIFOR on June 27, 2002 and from 21 to 23 August 2002.

The purpose was to assess the operations against the requirements of the QUALIFOR Program, the SGS Group's forest certification program accredited by the Forest Stewardship Council.

The assessment covered all forest management operations in the following forest areas:

Enterprise		Forest Area (ha)
Forest of the city of	Gross-Umstadt	1197
Forest of the city of	Dieburg	877
Forest of the community of	Gross-Zimmern	732
Forest of the community of	Rossdorf	670
Forest of the community of	Münster	550
Forest of the community of	Eppertshausen	287
Forest of the community of	Messel	245
Forest of the city of	Reinheim	117
Private forest	Christoph	52
Forest of the	Special Purpose	23

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Private forest	Association South Hessen Scheuermann	15
Total		4765

Additional data, see: Appendix VI Table 1

Appendix VI Table 2

2. COMPANY BACKGROUND

The Hessen Forest Dieburg Forestry Office, as a state enterprise according to paragraph 26 of the State Budget Regulation and represented by the manager of the forestry office, has assumed the legal task according to the Hessen Forest Law of providing the service of forestry management and forestry technical district management for the communities, which are located in the official district of this forestry office, for their municipal and communal forests. This task is accomplished by the forestry office management with the support of five state forest district managers. From a technical forestry aspect, these state forest district officials are responsible to the forestry office management, which also conducts the sale of timber for the individual forest owners.

The public forest of the Special Purpose Association Waste Recycling South Hessen and both private forests, Christoph and Scheuermann, are also managed by the state forest officials from the Dieburg Forestry Office. As part of his responsibility for the management of forest resources of the above forest owners, the manager of the forestry office functions as the certificate holder.

Agreements have been made between the communal forest owners and the Hessen Forest Dieburg Forestry Office as the basis for the request for FSC certification. In a similar manner, the Dieburg Forestry Office has also been given the responsibility for having the FSC certification conducted for the Special Purpose Association. A corresponding request has also been made by both private forest owners.

In May 2002, the Hessen Forest Dieburg Forestry Office requested that the SGS begin with certification preparations for the forests of the above forest owners.

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3. FOREST MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

3.1. Bio-physical setting

The majority of the forest property, which is to be supervised by the Dieburg Forestry Office as part of the certification, is located in the plain in the southeastern part of the county of Darmstadt-Dieburg. The forest areas, which extend along a north-south axis for a distance of 21 km and eastwards for 13 km are primarily located in the plain and belong to the growth area of the Hessen Rhine-Main plain. The city of Gross-Umstadt is the only area in the growth area of the Odenwald.

On the plain, which has an elevation at Dieburg of 142 meters above seal level (ASL), the soil is formed from New Red clay, loam and alluvial and wind-blown sands. In the variegated sandstone of the Odenwald, with elevations up to 365 meters ASL, the loess mixture or loess layer increases on the lower slopes and the northeast slopes. The average annual temperature is about 8.5°C and is 15.0°C during the vegetation period. The precipitation during the vegetation period is approximately 350 mm and the annual amount is an average of around 700 mm. It is only in the Odenwald part that the precipitation is somewhat higher than on the plain.

The soil is deep to very deep, fresh to moist and has an average to very good supply of nutrients. Based on the site amplitude, the warm summer and mild winter climate with a long extended vegetation period, variations of natural beech forest societies, which include Fageten such as Luzulo-Fageten and Galio-Fageten, characterize the stand structures. On the other hand, variations of Fraxineten and Alneten are found on wet sites.

3.2. History of use

This area was not examined in detail. However, information about this can be found in the forest management plans and other cultural and historical works concerning the region.

The structures of the age-class forest, which to a degree grew from former composite forests, are to be gradually converted to continuous forest stands. In the clear-felling high forest increased emphasis was placed on obtaining structural timber until the seventies, but the harvesting of firewood is presently experiencing a boom.

3.3. Planning process

All communal forests and the forest of the Special Purpose Association fulfill the legal requirement of having a forest management plan according

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to the Hessen Forest Law in paragraph 19 sections 1 and 2. This also applies to the annual economic plans for the cities and the communities, which are required according to paragraph 19 section 7 as part of periodical planning.

Expert reports are available for both private forests as required by paragraph 19 section 3. These are planting enterprises, where management is conducted as necessary and according to requirements. Planning and implementation are documented.

3.4. Harvest and regeneration

Motor-manual procedures with the one-man motor saw are used in most cases for the timber harvest. The employment of the processor is limited to the young spruce and pine stands.

The felling is conducted towards the skidding tracks using conventional procedures and the preskidding to the forest road is done with a farm tractor or a special forest-towing vehicle.

The regeneration of the stands is achieved, with the exception of the calamity areas, by natural regeneration. Storm blowdown areas are reforested by planting for the most part. Regeneration attempts for beech using seeding were given up two years ago due to the lack of success.

3.5. Silviculture

The forest owner explicitly desires management with the goal of near-natural silviculture, which is an important silvicultural factor. These goals are defined in the valid forest management plans. Thus, the practice of clear felling in high forests is no longer found. No clear cutting was seen with the exception of blowdown areas and other calamity areas. The femel-type, small area felling concentrates on the selective cutting of target diameters and is going in the direction of a multistructured continuous forest.

Pure pine stands are to be underplanted with beech accompanied by opening up the canopy based on the age, if no natural regeneration occurs. In the long-term, the share of spruce and pine will decline with a continually growing share of beech. A target-stocking map would be useful for the desired selection of the tree species.

According to the present forest management plans and as samples taken during the assessment showed, "the site-adapted tree species selection, the emplacement of valuable broad-leaved trees, natural regeneration, the discontinuance of clear felling, the aim of stronger structured stands and the avoidance of unnecessary felling are components of the enterprise

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goals and silvicultural activities, which are heavily oriented on natural processes..."

3.6. Monitoring processes

The technical management at the district level in all of the forests, which are supervised by the forestry office, is the responsibility of five forest engineers, who are graduates from a technical college and who are technically responsible to the forestry office manager of the Hessen Forest Dieburg Forestry Office. Jurisdictional functions are the responsibility of the forestry office as the lower responsible forestry agency.

In the area of work safety, the forest districts and the contractors are subject to the provisions of the accident prevention regulations and the fulfillment of these regulations is also monitored by the Mutual Indemnity Association with respect to work safety, equipment used, safety clothing and work techniques.

Monitoring activities in connection with the management of the forests are accomplished at various levels. The district managers monitor the work of the forest workers, contractors and private solicitors and the district managers also conduct the annual safety instruction for the forest workers.

The implementation of the annual forestry planning and the monitoring of the measures taken are accomplished by the forest district management. The implementation is compared to the planning using natural items accounting.

In the area of timber sales, a comparison is also made of the harvested amounts and the amounts sold or unsold. General and specific data concerning timber sales are available to the certifier.

The mid-term planning, which is 10-year planning, is accomplished through the forest management plan. The management plans contain the results (efficiency review) for the past years, that is the expired period, and a comparison of these with planning goals and the annual allowable cuts and deviations are described and reasons given for these.

4. SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

4.1. Social aspects

All of those forest owners, who are consolidated through resource management, fulfill the legal obligation according to paragraph 5 of the Hessen Forest Law, to have their forests properly managed through the Dieburg Forestry Office for the good of the general public and according to

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forestry and landscape-management principles in a sustainable, technically competent and planned manner and thus preserving the use, protection and recreation effects through proper forestry measures. Actions are taken to insure that the sustainability of all forest functions is superordinate to the owners' interests as part of the social integration according to the Basic Constitutional Law.

Due to their location, the forests in the certification area of the Dieburg Forestry Office fulfill numerous functions, which serve to preserve and promote the ecological and social functions as well as the production of timber. The forest as an ecosystem is important for the environment as a sustained habitat for plants and animals, is a recreational area for people in the direct vicinity of the cities and communities and for the extended vicinity in the tricity area of Frankfurt, Aschaffenburg and Darmstadt; and for the industrial population centers of Rhine-Main including Mannheim and Ludwigshafen; acts as a water and air filter, provides immission protection, establishes the character of the landscape and offers noise and climate protection. The forest also supplies timber as a natural raw material and this is a very significant aspect as well.

The forest has a high value for the local population. In addition to the awareness, that the forest is a valuable resource in the sense of the protection of the above infrastructure services, the forest also possesses socioeconomic significance for the labor market due to the local jobs, which the forest provides, and these include seven forestry officials, technical personnel in the administration and 13 foresters, who are trained forest workers.

In addition to this, there are jobs provided by the timber processing industry, which exist in connection with the forest. The forest also provides further jobs for the contractors and their employees, who perform forest work. In particular, the forest provides a secure existence for two farmers, who skid timber in the forest.

4.2. Environmental aspects

In some of the forest areas, there are very near-natural, multistructured and species-diverse biocenoses with a high ecological importance for nature protection and biotope protection and in particular in the vicinity of the communal population areas. Protection and recreational functions as well as biotope mapping have been updated as part of the preparation of the forest management plans and measures for biotope and landscape management are listed. These include, the maintenance of unforested small structures, meadows, hedge structures, forest edges and the promotion of dead trees. There a total of 14 nature protection areas designated in the forestry office area, but they are not directly beside the forest.

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Individual dependent trees show the existence of the dying of the forest as a complex disease. Here, the forest provides protection against immissions from neighboring industrial population centers. Area-wide forest ecosystem studies and forestry environmental monitoring are conducted by the Hessen State Institute for Forest Management Planning, Forest Research and Forest Ecology and in connection with an Europe-wide continual monitoring program as well.

Stands, which were damaged by emissions and by the storms in 1990, were susceptible to secondary insect pests, climatic extremes and following blowdown. Damage from bark beetles has declined to a normal level in the meantime. Bright marble tortrix and geometer moths occur in oak at intervals, but do not threaten stands. Individual cases of heavy precipitation have led to some damage recently to forest paths, but have not produced the same degree of damage to the forest stands.

4.3. Regulations

The legal basis associated with the management of the forests is extensive and contains many regulations. In addition to federal laws in the areas of forest, nature, game protection, water protection and work safety, the following state laws are of importance. A small excerpt:

- Hessen Forest Law, Hessen AG Hunting Law
- Hessen Nature Protection Law, Hessen Field and Forest Protection Law
- Hessen State Planning Law, Hessen Waste Law, Hessen Road Law
- Hessen Neighbor Law, Hessen Road Law
- Building Code, Real Estate Transactions Law
- Animal Protection Law, Carcass Disposal Law
- Hessen Fishing Law, Protection of Ancient Monuments Law and others.

Reference is made to relevant instructions, regulations and ordinances, which are available for review from the management, and these include:

- Hessen Species Protection Regulation, Plant Protection Application Regulation
- Rabies Regulation
- Auxiliary Police Official Regulation
- Guideline for the Management of the State Forest (Ribes)

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- Principles and Recommendations for Near-natural Management in the Hessen State Forest
- Accident prevention regulations
- Collective bargaining agreement for forest workers, Expanded Assortment Piece Rate
- DVO for the Hessen AG Federal Hunting Law

5. LOCAL STANDARDS

The German FSC Standard dated November 28, 2001 was used as the local standard. Part I of the German FSC Standard contains the "Guidelines for Sustainable Forestry" and part II the corresponding "implementing provisions."

6. THE ASSESSMENT

6.1. Schedule

The assessment was preceded by a preassessment, which was conducted on 15 and 16 April 2002 by SGS QUALIFOR. This examined the management systems and identified any gaps that might preclude certification. Information gathered was used to plan the main assessment and identify key stakeholders.

The main assessment was carried out on June 27, 2002 and during the period 21 to 23 August 2002. A detailed schedule is shown in appendix I of the full report.

6.2. Team

- Lead Assessor: Graduated forester, assessor of the administrative class of the forestry service in Müllheim, Germany with more than 15 years of professional experience in the areas of forestry planning, timber harvesting, site evaluation, employment of machines, hunting; and forestry working areas such as plant sociology, nature protection and forest protection. A total of six certifications of forest management as coassessor and 25 assessments as the lead assessor and also conducted surveillance visits.

Curriculum vitae is provided in appendix II of the full report.

6.3. Peer Reviewers

Three independent specialists have been selected to review this report. The specialists have expert knowledge in the following areas: forest management, operational analysis and accounting, forest management

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plans, site mapping and forestry work in ecology and nature protection (species protection).

6.4. Process

The main assessment was conducted in the steps outlined below.

Preparation

The results from the preassessment and the local standard were used to prepare a project-specific checklist based on the generic QUALIFOR checklist.

Stakeholder notification

A wide range of stakeholders was contacted to inform them of the planned assessment and ask for their concerns about topics concerning forest management in the project perimeter. The organizations represent interests from the areas of the community and county administrations, nature protection associations and organizations, tourism organizations, sports and recreational clubs, forest contractors and hunting associations, the sawmill industry and timber trading. In addition, the local population was notified by the official news channels of the communities about the certification process. See appendix V of the full report.

Opening meeting

An opening meeting was held at the Dieburg Forestry Office. The scope of the assessment was explained and schedules were confirmed. See appendix I of full report for attendance sheets.

Document review

A review of the main forest management documentation was conducted to evaluate the adequacy of coverage of the QUALIFOR Program requirements. These documents included models, economic and management plans, schedules and procedures, instructions and monitoring activities.

Field assessments

Field assessments were conducted to determine how closely activities in the field complied with documented management systems and QUALIFOR Program requirements. Interviews with forestry personnel and contractors were conducted to determine their familiarity with and their application of policies, procedures and practices that are relevant to their activities. A randomly selected sample of stands was visited to evaluate practices with respect to the required performance levels.

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Stakeholder interviews

On-site discussions or telephone conversations were conducted with the stakeholders based on the answers received. The purpose of these discussions was to clarify the concerns presented and to assess the past reactions of the organization, which was assessed.

Summing up and closing meeting

At the conclusion of the field assessment, findings were presented to the company management at a closing meeting. Any areas of non-conformance with the QUALIFOR Program were raised as one of two types of Corrective Action Requests (CAR):

- **Major CARs** - which must be addressed and reassessed before certification can proceed
- **Minor CARs** - which do not preclude certification, but must be addressed within an agreed time frame and will be checked at the first surveillance visit
- **Issues** – these are presented, when improvements are possible and the danger exists, that a non-compliance could develop.

6.5. Sampling

In order to obtain a representative overview of all forestry enterprises, which were included in the certification in the Dieburg Forestry Office, all eight municipal and communal forests, the forest of the Special Purpose Association Waste Recycling South Hessen and the private forest, Christoph, were visited during the preassessment and the assessment based on random sampling with the district managers and, at times, the forestry office manager. As a whole, the sampling encompassed over 35 percent of the enterprise area and more than 80 percent of the typical sites and forest structures.

The following sites were visited during the assessment:

Dieburg municipal forest: Departments 37A2; 37A1; 36D2; 36C; 33A; 11B1; outside of the forest the maintenance of moor mat-grass in "Im Fallert"

Messel communal forest: Departments 29.0; 26C.O; 26A.O; 25.O.O; 18.0.0;

Münster communal forest: Departments 5A; 4A1; 11.0.0; 17A.0; 17B.1; 19A.0; 25. 01; 51.0.0; 52.0.0;

Groß-Umstadt municipal forest: Departments 21; 604; 6A; 6B; 24-26; 27; 3;

Rossdorf communal forest : Departments 66, 67

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7. ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Detailed assessment findings are included in the full report. For each QUALIFOR requirement, these show the related findings and any observations or corrective actions raised. The main issues are discussed below.

7.1. Findings related to the general QUALIFOR Program

PRINCIPLE 1 Compliance with law and FSC Principles

The forests, which are managed by the Hessen Forest Dieburg Forestry Office, are subject to the applicable laws and judicial decisions. Its activities are determined by general laws, legal standards and special forestry laws. From an international perspective, the European guideline for the preservation of natural habitats and wild plants and animals (Fauna, Flora, Habitat (FFH) Guideline) only has subordinate significance for the protection of beech in the one community of Eppertshausen with officially designated FFH areas on almost 20 ha.

The forest district officials have the currently valid laws as collections in some cases, but otherwise from the Dieburg Forestry Office by means of EDP. An overview of the relevant state laws is also contained in the appendix to the German guideline. See paragraph 4.3.

No information was found during the assessment, which would indicate any violation of the law by the forestry enterprises. No reports were received concerning unauthorized usage of the timber. The forest owners are aware of the tax and fiscal charge obligations. No information was found concerning the failure to pay any fiscal charges. No conflicts were identified between the FSC guidelines and the valid laws.

The forest owner accepts the FSC guideline. The corresponding amendment and modification of the goals in the forest management plan are to be made. See **minor corrective action request (CAR 07)**, principle 7.

PRINCIPLE 2 Tenure and use rights and responsibilities

The forest property is recorded in the land title registers and maps. Documents concerning the property are available to the owners and the cadastral office. The ownership relations and areas have been coordinated with the cadaster during the course of the preparation of the forest management plans and the forest area registers for the public forests have been updated. The property relations, boundaries and the

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division of the areas in the private forest are recorded in the expert's report on the enterprise. Associated maps were reviewed.

No civil firewood rights exist and there are also no customary law rights. Easements are documented. No disputes are known concerning ownership claims and rights of use. Hunting is clearly regulated by means of the leasing contracts.

The forest is accessible to the public based on existing laws.

A division of responsibilities plan prescribes the responsibilities for the management of the areas in the Dieburg Forestry Office. The technical forest service is the responsibility of the forest officials of the Hessen Forest and the management of all supported enterprises is in the hands of the forestry office manager, who has the authority to give instructions to the district managers.

The forestry office manager is responsible for the management and he also functions as the holder of the certificate in his capacity as the manager for all forest owners participating in the certification.

Minor Corrective Action Request No. 09:

As part of the resource management, the Hessen Forest Dieburg Forestry Office maintains a file containing member and area changes. In addition, important information, documents, notifications and discussions with certificate members, which concern FSC matters as part of the certification, are to be documented and placed in the file. The file is to be presented by December 15, 2002.

PRINCIPLE 3 Indigenous peoples' rights

Not relevant.

PRINCIPLE 4 Community relations and workers rights

Based on management contracts, the forest officials of the Hessen Forest Dieburg Forestry Office conduct the technical implementation of the district services. All district managers are responsible for the performance of the technical service and the work of forest workers employed by the communities. In addition, employees in the forestry office perform a proportional amount of administrative work associated with timber sales and the promotion of silvicultural measures and employees in the administrative areas (mayor's offices) also perform a proportional amount of the administrative work. Almost all employees are from the local area. Each employee and official has the opportunity to join a union.

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Negotiations with employers are regulated as part of the Personnel Representation Law, the basic collective agreements and the job descriptions. Mechanisms for the handling of employee complaints have also been established. The employment is for the entire year. The participation in advanced training and corresponding programs is possible through the Hessen State Forest Administration.

Issue:

In individual cases, forest workers suggested updated advanced training in practical work areas.

The forestry office trains administrative employees and forest high civil service candidates. Training as a forester (technical forest worker) is not being presently conducted. The forestry office had made an offer to have foresters trained to be forestry foremen and then as foremen to be able to train apprentices for the forest worker profession.

Issue:

The offer has not been accepted, but it should be continued in order to be able to train foresters later and thus to create traineeships and jobs in the rural area through technically qualified and regionally located personnel.

All forest workers are trained foresters. An examination showed that work is conducted according to the accident prevention regulations. Regular safety instruction is provided by the forest employees from the forestry office. A rescue chain with defined meeting points has been established. The safety equipment for the forest workers is provided by the forest owner.

Minor Corrective Action Request No. 05:

The rescue chain is clearly defined for forest workers in the case of accidents. A test of this chain has only been conducted in one community, but not in any other communities. The chain is to be tested area-wide based on coordination with rescue organizations. The conduct of the test is to be documented and, where necessary, improvements are to be made.

Issue:

A newly appointed safety representative in the forestry office has started work and prepared a new checklist. The intervals between visits, which have been long in the past, on-site in the districts should be shortened and

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visits, contents and results documented using the new checklist.

The preventive health measures are fulfilled by regular and documented medical checkups of the forest workers by the industrial medicine service.

Issue:

There has been an increase in tick bites and this increases the danger of Lyme disease. In order to allow the timely recognition of this dangerous infectious disease, blood tests should be conducted at more regular intervals and the best would be late each year.

Issue:

Consideration should be given, due to safety reasons and maintaining constant contact with workers and especially in the early part of the felling of hardwoods with poor visibility, to wearing safety helmets with radio communications.

Issue:

One hut does not have a first-aid kit and this is to be promptly supplied. The forest workers suggest the purchase of an eye flushing station.

The contractors, who are mostly from the region, are subject to the legal provisions. Appropriate work papers are presented before initial work. But, regular checks are not conducted.

Issue:

The forestry office should check the work papers at regular intervals as part of the recording of information about the contractors and their employees.

The forests under the supervision of the Dieburg Forestry Office provide important and popular recreational and leisure functions throughout the year. The forestry enterprise maintains a well-developed road network, which serves hikers and recreational sports enthusiasts as well. On weekends, an increased number of the people from the nearby population centers in the Rhine-Main area visit the forest. The forest is freely accessible to the public.

Forest functions have been mapped and are described in the forest management plans. Based on this, the social aspects and the expected services from the forests can be derived. In addition to recreation in designated landscape protection areas and a nature park, the forests

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serve primarily for the protection of the water and soil. In addition, forests with climate protection are designated in the forest management plan.

Cultural historic sites, which require special consideration from forest management, are particularly worthy of mention and these include the Messel Pit with a bordering forest belt, Roman excavations and mound graves.

Local stakeholders are known to the management. Reports were received primarily about cooperation with local nature protection and hiking groups, and clubs and schools. A list of the stakeholders contacted in writing is in appendix III.

PRINCIPLE 5 Benefits from the forest

The district managers, who are responsible for the technical implementation, and the forestry office manager, who is the manager of the enterprise, are intent upon the greatest degree of fulfillment of the legally prescribed tasks, assuring the services provided by the forest for the general public and the balancing of the interests of the general public and those of the forest owners. Thus, in fulfillment of their economic and service responsibilities, an attempt is made to achieve the optimal relation between expenditures and yield; and input and results.

All work, which is conducted in the forest, is entered in the annual accounting and proof according to expenditure and earnings. Double-entry accounting is to be introduced for the communities in 2003 using a program from the public administration. The annual economic planning is prepared by the forestry office and submitted to the community for approval. The economic planning for the communal forestry enterprises is included in the total budget for the particular community.

<p>Issue:</p> <p>Nature protection and social activities should be included in cost accounting. The assurance of, for example, ecological diversity could be placed in the balance sheet as ecological production costs and services provided in the sense of an ecological balance and recorded as costs and considered in the cost effectiveness of the forest.</p> <p>The development of parameters and reference values for ecological balance sheet purposes is more of a forestry policy and scientific task for the state forests and not of the communal forest owners.</p>
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Timber products are primarily used for commercial purposes in the communal and private forestry enterprises. The communities also receive income from the leasing of hunting districts. By-products such as

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ornamental branches and Christmas trees only play a small role seen from the marketing side. The harvested timber is marketed regionally in most cases. A list of the timber buyers is available at the forestry office. See the separation of certified timber, **Minor Corrective Action Request No. 08**, under principle 8. The number of private solicitors in the area of the trimming and clearing for firewood is increasing. The reaction here is to local demand. The timber harvested in the certification area amounts to about 18,200 cubic meters annually. In accomplishing this, the annual allowable cut set for each individual enterprise is not exceeded.

Issue:

In some cases, sold timber lies for a long time in the forest before the buyer transports it. In order to avoid forest protection measures and the loss of value of the timber due to extremely long storage, sales conditions and the transport logistics should be improved. The forest road should not serve as a cheap storage location for the buyer.

The income from the sale of timber and the earnings from the hunting leases are essentially comparable to the expenses for the harvest work by contractors, their own forest workers, the forest protection and forest management costs for the district management.

The hauling of the timber is done primarily by local skidding contractors.

Minor Corrective Action Request No. 04:

A polling of the skidding contracts showed that there were various standards for the equipment on the machine. Not all machines, which could use environmentally friendly biohydraulic oils, are actually using these oils. One communal machine has leaks. The machine standard and conditions are to be examined with respect to the state of technology and the use of environmentally friendly technology is to be requested. A report is to be prepared concerning inquiries, results and monitoring actions.

Minor Corrective Action Request No. 03:

Environmental safety precaution: Due to environmental and safety reasons, skidding contractors are to be strongly encouraged to take actions to have the capability to take quick safety precautions in case of leaking lines. To achieve this, a fiber mat or a foldable catch pan is to be carried on the machine (emergency set) at all times. This is to be monitored by the district manager. Not all skidding contractors carry the emergency set on their machines and this also applies to the community's own towing vehicle.

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Berries and mushrooms are not marketed. However, the mushroom collection activities are increasing and this is apparently not only for individual consumption of the forest visitors. See **Issue** under principle 6.

Issue:

Here actions should be taken to insure that no commercial collection by third parties is conducted and that the species diversity remains in the ecosystem balance through measures such as protection of the species and explaining the problem to the general public.

Waste that accumulates includes old fence material from game protection fences, other protective equipment, chain oil, motor saw chains, empty canisters and unauthorized waste disposal. In order to reduce waste, old fence material is given to recycling organizations. External waste is not systematically recorded because the quantities are small. The communities are required to dispose of waste. The district managers work with the particular timber yards.

The most significant element for the preservation of the value of the forestry resources in the communal and private forests is the application of silvicultural methods similar to those for the sustainable management for the state forest. These include the "Principles and Recommendations for Near-natural Management in the Hessen State Forest," which were issued in 1999 and are applicable for the district management in the communal and private forests in the Dieburg Forestry Office and which are actively implemented by the foresters.

PRINCIPLE 6 Environmental impact

Work is conducted in the Dieburg Forestry Office district according to the principles of natural forestry with the long-term goal of achieving a stable, layered and diverse forest structure with tree species of natural forest societies. Artificial regeneration is the exception and is limited to calamity areas, advance planting, underplanting or modifications. Mixed tree species are emplaced. Following the storms in 1990, a considerable number of areas have been left to succession.

Issue:

Continuing actions should be taken to insure that spruce or Douglas fir are not planted as large areas. The Douglas fir can certainly be substituted for spruce. But here the principle should be applied that the Douglas fir is not to be planted as a large are and if this is done then only on site-adapted locations and in groups or in clumps.

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Planting as an area of other foreign tree species is not conducted. No clear-cutting management has been carried out for years. In some cases, previous spruce, pine and Douglas fir reforestation areas were seen during the assessment. Plantings to this degree are no longer conducted today.

Issue:

Pure stands are to be converted into mixed stands in the long-term according to silvicultural capabilities. This includes spruce, Douglas fir and pine stands. Those stands, which are to be considered, are to be listed in a table and corresponding time frames with intended silvicultural measures, as found in the forest management plan and the growing-stock target map, are to be provided.

The forest management provides systematic consideration of biotopes as areas deserving protection in close cooperation with the nature protection associations and the lower nature protection agency. See remarks under principle 9.

Issue:

There is presently no special nature protection map, but this should be prepared as part of the next forest management plan.

The collection of mushrooms, which exceeds individual needs, is getting out of hand in some cases.

Issue:

Here, there is a need to cooperate with and provide clarification in coordination with official and honorary offices of nature protection organizations in order to provide species protection and maintain the species diversity in the ecosystem balance. There is also a need to contact the corresponding agencies and request that more systematic legal actions be taken.

The game pressure in the districts varies and hardly endangers the regeneration, but very restrictive observation should be continued. In the meantime, in all districts fenced indicator plots have been established on the basis of one per 100 ha. Information is to be gathered on regeneration, species diversity and the species spectrum in those areas not affected by game compared to the "free forest areas."

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Issue:

When evaluating the indicator plots and the free forest areas, a differentiation should be made between browsing by hoofed game and hares. Photo documentation would be advantageous for the evaluation of the development of the vegetation at certain points.

Minor Corrective Action Request No. 10:

The number of animals shot is to be increased at points in order to improve the game damage situation. In addition to the evaluation of the indicator plots, the silvicultural browsing expert reports and the plans for the numbers of animals to be shot for the districts are to be presented completely to the assessor. The successive modification of the hunting leases is useful.

Issue:

The presently planned browsing expert reports should not be made in the spring, but in late summer at a time, which would show the decisive summer browsing.

A strategy for the promotion and preservation of biotope trees and dead trees is being followed according to the "Principles and Recommendations for Near-natural Management in the Hessen State Forest" in the Dieburg Forestry Office without any limitations from the various forest owners.

For a community with over 1000 ha of managed forest area, reference areas must be designated. The other forest owners want to provide reference areas for their areas based on a voluntary obligation and thus to emphasize their identification with the FSC. At the present a total concept is lacking.

Minor Corrective Action Request No. 02:

A concept for the reference areas is to be presented at the next surveillance visit and is to be implemented in the next five years. Agreements on the areas are to be made with the assessor. The nature protection agency desires to participate in the designation of the areas.

Those communal forests, which were seen during the assessment, have good access through roads.

Issue:

In the private forest, however, there is a need to improve the road network and the connections to the existing paths.

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The existing access through skidding tracks to the stands is not complete for the entire area and therefore is to be supplemented in some parts before the planned harvesting measures. Based on a discussion during the preassessment, a workgroup was involved with the preparation of principles for establishing area-wide skidding track access as part of a memorandum for quality management.

Minor Corrective Action Request No. 01:

A significant part of the implementation of the access concept is a permanently set and documented area-wide skidding track access network, which is to be the only network used. Individual trafficable but undeveloped areas are to be completely developed by means of a permanently established skidding and area-wide track system. In particular before thinning measures are taken, the skidding track system must be examined and established with the inclusion of old existing skidding tracks. Markings are to be made before the timber harvesting work and permanently maintained (start and end points) so the skidding lines are used permanently and thus driving throughout the area is avoided. The intervals between the skidding tracks are to be maximized and connections to the roads are to be optimized. Documentation of this is to be presented.

The permanent use is to be guaranteed. This applies to contractors and in particular to private solicitors in the firewood area.

Minor Corrective Action Request No. 06:

The memorandum, which has been prepared, is to be supplemented so that private solicitors and contracts are obligated in writing and with their signature to use only the skidding tracks and not to drive in the stands on any other surface. The strict monitoring of this is the responsibility of the district managers.

The soil is being worked in the community of Messel as part of the officially directed removal of munitions from the Second World War. This is being done in order to decontaminate and detoxify the forest soil in areas, in which no forestry operations are conducted and where entry into the area is absolutely prohibited. No other working of the soil is being conducted. A mulching process, which was applied two years ago, for the promotion of the beech mast did not prove successful and was totally discontinued.

The protection of bodies of water and wetlands is being conducted. The "removal of spruce" from watercourses or the opening of water areas is being done successively during current operations. For larger measures, coordination with the lower nature protection agency is required. The

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maintenance of an extensive ditch system for the draining of areas in the stands was discontinued years ago.

Fertilizing is not being conducted anymore. Liming to produce soil amelioration is being conducted as part of the Hessen Promotional Guidelines. In doing this, areas such as open areas, cultures and wet biotopes are excluded.

Issue:

The liming to produce soil amelioration is to be conducted on the basis of and in connection with soil analysis. Actions are to be taken to insure that measures are only taken when the ph values are less than 4.2.

Biocides are not employed. The stored timber is also not being treated chemically. Gene modified seed and plants are not used.

Waste is collected and disposed of at the communal waste disposal facilities. In order to reduce waste, a multiuse system has been developed. This applies both to containers for fuels and lubricants and to paint spray cans, which are returned to the dealer after they are used.

Issue:

Consideration should be given to the centralized storage of special fuels in other communities as is done in Münster. This would eliminate the need to dispose of many smaller packing drums.

Clearing of areas and the conversion of areas are not planned by the forestry enterprises. Plans for the conversion of areas for other projects are not known at the present time and would only be possible through the legally prescribed approval procedures along with the provision of replacement areas using an invasive compensation balance sheet. No plantation enterprises exist.

PRINCIPLE 7 Management plan

The most important management-related planning instruments in the municipal forest are the mid-term forest management plans, which are prepared for a 10-year planning period, and the management expert reports as well as the short-term annual economic plans for the communal forest. The forestry goals and specifically the management goals are defined in these mid-term plans.

The forest management plans are prepared for the corporation forest by the state enterprise Hessen Forest. The higher forestry agency, Government Presidium of Darmstadt, is responsible for the approval. This

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agency employs the state enterprise, Hessen Forest, as the technical inspection office according to paragraph 19.5 of the Hessen Forest Law. Private forests, which have less than 100 ha as a forestry enterprise, must prepare management plans or a management expert report as directed by the higher forestry agency according to paragraph 19.3. Both private forest enterprises have these available.

The forest management plan describes things such as owner relations, division of areas, forest resources with site conditions and forest functions etc. The mid-term plans also contain statements about the management system, silvicultural techniques, work planning and financial planning. In addition, an evaluation of the past forest management plan period is provided. Topographic base maps and economic maps are part of the forest management plan and show ownership relations and stand conditions.

The annual economic plans primarily contain the planned cost-effective activities and the tentative income from the sale of timber and other revenues.

The 10-year planned yield is determined based on the inventories conducted before the preparation of the forest management plan and the total standing volume data and the calculation of the growth increment. The annual allowable cut is based on the 10-year forest management plan and the planned annual activities. The management expert reports for the private forests describe the stands and measures, which are recommended by the expert, such as thinning targets.

The indicators, which are to be collected during the forest inventory as agreed upon in the FSC guideline, are lacking. In particular, this applies to the reference areas, the skidding track system and the biotope and dead tree concept, which requires quantification of the dead trees lying on the ground as well as the standing biotope and dead trees.

Minor Corrective Action Request No. 07:

The contents of the FSC guideline with its principles and criteria are to be integrated into the management guideline with its various goals including models and the hierarchy with goals and subgoals and the recognition of the management is to be enclosed to the existing forest management plans. The management goals are to be completed in accordance with the FSC and in accordance with FSC indicators such as reference areas, biotope trees and dead trees, hunting management and skidding track systems. Concepts and quantifications are to be prepared.

Forest management plans are normally revised every 10 years and management plans are prepared annually. Monitoring of the annual plans

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is accomplished when they are adjusted to the 10-year instructions in the forest management plan.

Issue:

In accordance with the continuous forest management, the next forest management plan is to substitute terms for existing terms such as age-class forest, intermediate yield and harvest cut.

Specific municipal and private forest data are subject to data protection and are not accessible by the general public. The data from the management plans is not available to the public. On the other hand, annual forestry reports provide data, which are not listed according to the individual communal forest owners. The economic plans are discussed and approved in the particular municipal parliament during an open session. Information can be obtained upon request from the city or community as the owners. Annual planning and implementation are presented annually at sessions.

PRINCIPLE 8 Monitoring and assessment

Monitoring actions take place at all levels of the forestry agencies. Forest workers are monitored by the district managers, which are subordinate to the forestry office manager. The activities of the forestry office are monitored by an area representative of the Hessen Forest in Kassel.

The division of responsibilities plan for the forestry office provides information on the areas of responsibilities of the employees. Monitoring of performance is based on the job characteristics and the areas of responsibility for the position.

Internal controls are mainly oriented on the proof of harvesting. Due to the intensive supervision of their own forest workers, the contractors and the private solicitors on-site, there is continual monitoring by the district managers of the fulfillment of the work instructions.

Work volume and capacities are calculated and evaluated as part of the forest management plan. Recommendations are derived from this.

Issue:

Efforts should be continued to maintain the existing forest worker level. In the case of free work capacities for short periods of time, attempts should be made to employ the forest workers in external enterprises at the cost of a third party and thus to fully employ the forest worker and thus to secure the jobs for the long-term. This is certainly to be seen in terms of long-term

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detailed silviculture, which will produce more work volume based on increased tasks.

Coordination between the district managers and the forestry office management is conducted as required. The monthly staff meetings in the forestry office serve as an information and monitoring instrument.

There is an annual comparison between the mid-term planning, which is the forest management plan, and the annual harvesting planning and the implementation. Unexpected influences are reacted to spontaneously such as beetle monitoring, trimming and clearing after storms, removal of trees due to urgent need to maintain safety, corrections to the felling and recultivation as a supplement to succession are conducted according the current conditions such as after storm blowdown.

The economic plans must be followed. The fulfillment is documented individually both from a material and financial aspect. Deviations and corrections are discussed with the owners.

Timber is sold through the forestry office. Each trunk receives a number. Various trunks are consolidated into a lot and sold as lots. The forestry office maintains appropriate sales statistics. Information is maintained on quantities sold, grades and prices. By-products are documented including the revenues from these.

Minor Corrective Action Request No. 08:

Actions are to be taken to guarantee that the conditions exist for the separation of the sale of timber for the various forest owners according to certified and non-certified timber. Certified timber is to be clearly marked including the associated sales documents and the sales documents are to contain the corresponding certificate number.

Issue:

The use of the FSC certificate (log) is still to be developed.

Publication exists through the treatment of the annual forest budget in the municipal parliaments. When a new budget is to be established, the previous annual budget is analyzed. This analysis forms the basis for the new budget.

Upon request to the forest owner (communities), the documents for the forest management plan may be reviewed.

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PRINCIPLE 9 High Conservation Value Forests

As part of the natural forest reserve program in the state of Hessen, a search was made for relevant areas in the Dieburg Forestry Office, but without success. Therefore, no areas with a high conservation value and/or extraregional importance according to principle 9 were designated. There are no forest nature protection areas. Three smaller areas, which are surrounded by forest, are designated protection areas, however, the forest is not the reason for the protection. The Messel Pit is a world natural heritage (UNESCO), but the pit itself has no forest.

Biotope areas according to principle 6 are designated. The biotope mapping provides management measures. The forest management plans mention the express protection of ecologically valuable stands. Forests are purposely extensively managed in some cases.

The chapter titled Protection and Recreational Functions in section 3 of the forest management plan lists the biotope areas by department with subareas and describes protection measures. The measures are conducted in connection with current operations. Therefore, monitoring actions are conducted as required and not annually. This also applies to the ecological protection measures for species and biotope protection, which are listed in the forest development plan for the city of Dieburg, and for the protection of cultural historical cities (Roman findings).

It is only in the Eppertshausen municipal forest that almost 20 ha are designated as an FFH area. These are alder areas in flood areas, which could fit the concept of reference areas.

<p>Issue:</p> <p>The examination of the alder areas is to be made as a contribution to the reference area concept.</p>

PRINCIPLE 10 Plantation

Principle 10 does not apply because no plantation management is conducted and is not planned for future management. Principle 10 is not relevant.

The establishment of non-natural, pure stands of the same age on large areas is past history. The development from planted, same-age pure stands to near-natural forest stands is in progress and is documented in the silvicultural planning and its implementation. See the information under principle 6.

Christmas tree cultures exist only on small individual areas and the total area, on which Christmas trees were planted, amounts to 1.5 ha (0.03%).

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7.2. Issues raised by Stakeholders

The following concerns of the stakeholders were presented to the responsible representatives of the applying organization and discussed. If measures are required, these will be examined during the first surveillance visit.

Issue Raised	Response
General German Bicycle Club: sees a need for cooperation and improvement concerning the posting of signs, maintenance and duty to maintain safety in the forest. In the interest of the recreational function, the paths should be blocked for as short a period as possible during harvesting work.	The suggestions were discussed with the forestry office management.
Odenwald Club: sees the certification as very positive and is ready to cooperate.	This view was passed on to the forestry office.
The Sawmill Brothers Weigel: greets the certification and will provide support.	The forestry office has the associated correspondence.
Wildlife Preservation Society Böllenfalltor: the Wildlife Preservation Ring manager was informed about the FSC certification. There were no objections. No problems are expected.	The forestry office manager and the district managers were informed.
During a personal discussion, the timber skidding contractor, Lohnes, expressed positive feelings about the FSC certification and is willing to have himself COC certified.	The company maintains close contact with the district managers and the forestry office. Continual efforts are being made to optimize the skidding work according to FSC requirements.
The lower nature protection agency of the Darmstadt-Dieburg county: desires participation in the	The forestry office has agreed to the participation in the selection of areas to be taken out of production.

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designation of reference areas.	
The Darmstadt Government Presidium: is positively inclined towards the FSC certification and desires to participate in the designation of the reference areas.	The forestry office has agreed to the participation in the selection of areas to be taken out of production.

7.3. Issues raised by Peer Reviewers

This report was reviewed by three independent peer reviewers. The following points were raised.

Issue Raised	Response
The view is presented, that for the contractors, who are employed, conservation premiums should be introduced for working in a manner, which preserves the stands.	"Conservation premiums" mean that the normal work is not done in a conserving manner! It is not acceptable that for a required and necessary standard – namely for working in a manner that conserves the stand – premiums are paid. One should more likely consider deductions for work, which is not conducted in a conserving manner.
In view of the high number of private firewood solicitors, it is requested that the monitoring actions, in particular to insure travel is restricted to the skidding tracks, be intensified.	The monitoring actions are being intensified and in addition all private solicitors must sign a memorandum containing rules of conduct in the future.
The suggestion was made to make photo documentation to show the transition from the clear-felling high forest to the continuous forest.	In principle possible. Start in the summer of 2003. The picture of a typical clear-felling high forest can hardly be found anymore because near-natural forestry has been practiced for many years.
In view of the intensive use of the recreational function of the forests, it appears to be important to fulfill the duty to maintain safety in a systematic manner and to delegate the control down to the forest workers.	The duty to maintain safety is systematically fulfilled and the forest workers are integrated. Delegation of this to the forest workers cannot be done because this would have to include the delegation of the responsibility. The responsibility

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	remains with the district managers.
Where special soil compaction and perched groundwater occur, the use of horses for the hauling of timber should be given priority. Otherwise, on soils, which are in danger of compaction, only machines with a low ground pressure (limit of 50 Kpa) are to be used. Monitoring actions are necessary.	Soils, which are inclined to form perched groundwater, are extremely rare in the areas to be certified. See the documents on soil mapping. The areas are either entirely excluded from the timber harvest or traveling on skidding tracks is only conducted during suitable weather conditions. Due to the potentially low work volume, skidding with horses in the population center area is not an alternative due to the lack of supply.
One peer reviewer feels that it is necessary to give priority to contractors with advanced technology compared to the local contractors with old technology.	Agreed in principle, however, continual operational readiness must be insured by readily available, meaning local, contractors.
From a silvicultural aspect, it is suggested that the selection of the tree species should be optimized based on up-to-date site mapping.	This is obvious and a daily activity. The site mapping is current and technically good.
The increase in diseases due to tick bites is to be taken seriously. In this area, tests and measures should be take at the slightest symptoms of a disease and if these tests and measures are not covered by the health insurance then this as an obligation of the employer.	The employees are comprehensively informed about the danger of tick bites. They are also strongly encouraged to enter tick bites in an accident book and to have themselves tested immediately, if a suspicion exists, otherwise regularly for Lyme disease. This is done by the family doctor or the company doctor. Costs do not have any relevance.
Satisfied forest workers can only be in the own interest of the enterprises. Advanced training requests and purposeful requests for the improvement of work conditions such as an eye flushing station should therefore be fulfilled.	Requests for advanced training are fulfilled as a matter of principle. The health and safety related work conditions are to be improved continually. An eye flushing station has not been discussed yet either as a thought on the part of the forest owners or as a request from the forest workers. The purchase

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	would not be a problem.
<p>One peer reviewer feels that the usefulness is very low and questions economic goals (with negative operating results). He therefore asks about the cost effectiveness and if flexible marketing strategies are being used and if savings can be made in the personnel area.</p>	<p>In the forest areas, which are due for certification, about 300,000 cubic meters of storm blowdown occurred in 1990. Damaged forest edges and defective forest structures were and are the results of this. Greater felling on these areas would have led to further destabilization. The planned cuts in the forest management plans, which are five years old on the average, are appropriate for the enterprises and correspond to the desires of the forest owners. The enterprises are achieving – following clear deficits in the past years – a balanced budget or a profit. This is not always an expected result for the communal forests in a population center area. This will only be possible through "flexible marketing strategies" and the sale by "one source" and adjusted personnel levels. The number of forest workers for each forest owner has declined in the past five years by five employees. The goal is the employment of a sufficient number of one's own qualified regular forest workers.</p>
<p>One peer reviewer agrees with the assessor that the biotope mapping should be integrated into the enterprise map system as a working basis for the district management.</p>	<p>As part of the next forest management plan, each enterprise is to prepare its own nature protection map, which is to include the biotope mapping.</p>
<p>The question was raised about the local importance of the forest and the nature protection elements in the forest.</p>	<p>The functions and the tasks of the forest are recorded in the forest function mapping and nature protection elements are contained in the biotope mapping and/or the forest development plan. The forestry management planning</p>

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	integrates the protection of the nature protection elements. See the answer above.
The question was raised about a plausible reference area concept and it was emphasized that the forestry office has a particularly large responsibility concerning the assurance of biological diversity.	<p>The reference area concepts for the individual forest owners will be prepared as part of the next forest management plan and must be implemented for the city of Gross-Umstadt. All other participating communal forest owners are also basically willing to voluntarily designate additional reference areas and to take them out of production. The selection of the areas is done in coordination with the forest owner, the certifier and the forestry office. The nature protection agency participates.</p> <p>High biological diversity and stability of the forests are the goals of the forest owner and thus the guideline for the activities of the forestry office.</p>
One peer reviewer asks about the influence of wild boar on the forest vegetation in the region.	In principle, positive due to the soil wounding and the promotion of natural regeneration.
The question was raised about the credible proof of the implementation of the numbers to be shot and the possibilities the forestry office has to exert meaningful influence on the individual forest owner and the entire area of the region.	<p>Some hunting leases require the "physical proof." The monitoring of this is conducted by the district manager.</p> <p>Influence on the hunting groups is achieved through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • joint excursions, discussions, cooperative work of the forestry office in the Wildlife Preservation Society • close integration of the forest owners in the hunting discussion • assumption of "function positions" in the hunters'

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	<p>group by district managers and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> extensive integration of private hunters in the state supervised hunts. <p>The hunting leases are to be replaced upon expiration by a "model," which has been prepared by the forestry office. Physical proof, game damage compensation etc. are obligatory in this model.</p>
<p>The question was raised about detailed structural data per enterprise, which would provide as a whole a better internal enterprise picture and thus complete the assessment report.</p>	<p>The SGS QUALIFOR process for forest resource management is not intended to provide a picture of the individual enterprise. Thus, in his report, the assessor provides a comprehensive overview of the sum of the forest owners in the certification area, which are supervised in the Hessen Forest Dieburg Forestry Office in a uniform and equally weighted manner as a consolidated group. Thus, the implementation of the corrective measures and all monitoring actions apply not only to the individual member, but also to the entire certification area.</p>

8. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

8.1. Strengths

The following strengths in the forest management practices of the Hessen Forest Dieburg Forestry Office are particularly worth mentioning:

- Great involvement in silviculture activities
- Forest district management and forestry office management have high degree of technical competence.
- Very good cooperation with the assessor for the FSC certification process. Very good preparation and preparation of the documents.

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- Discussion of the FSC contents in workgroups through the forestry office
- Voluntary participation in the quality management (QM) and integration of the district managers in the preparation of QM memorandums
- One area of concentration is the public relations work at the forest district level and
- at the forestry office level, planning of a forest experience center
- High valuation of the forest in the population center of Rhine-Main with particular importance given to recreation
- Close cooperation and good exchange of information with stakeholders
- Very good quality of work of the forest workers for the timber harvest and the contractors for timber skidding

8.2. Weaknesses

Ten Minor Corrective Action Requests (CARs), as described below, were raised. In the following table the requirement number refers to the indicator used in the QUALIFOR Program to test each criterion from the FSC P&C.

CAR No	QUALIFOR requirement (FSC P&C)	Description
1.	D-6.5.1; 6.5.2; 6.5.3	Skidding tracks: there are still individual trafficable areas, which have not been fully developed, and these are to be developed and completed with a permanent skidding track system throughout the area. In particular before thinning measures are taken, the skidding track system must be examined and set with the integration of old existing skidding tracks. Markings must be made before the harvesting work begins and must be permanently maintained so that the established skidding lines are also used permanently and thus driving throughout the area is avoided. The intervals between the skidding tracks are to be maximized and connections to roads are to be optimized. Documentation of this is to be presented.
2.	6.4.1 – 6.4.3	Reference areas: for a community with over 1000 ha of forest management area, it is required that reference areas be designated. The other forest owners want to participate voluntarily. A concept for the reference areas

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CAR No	QUALIFOR requirement (FSC P&C)	Description
3.	5.3.1; D-6.5.4	<p>is to be presented at the next surveillance visit and this is to be implemented in the next five years. Coordination for the areas is to be made with the assessor. The nature protection agency desires to participate in the designation of the areas.</p> <p>Environment and safety precautionary measures: due to environmental and safety reasons, the skidding contractor is to be strongly encouraged to be capable of taking appropriate safety precautionary measures in the case of defective lines. Thus, a fiber mat or a foldable catch pan (emergency set) is always to be carried on the machine. This is to be monitored by the district manager. Not all skidding contractors carry the emergency set and the municipal towing vehicle does not carry one either.</p>
4.	5.3.1; 6.5.4	<p>Polling of the skidding contractors showed that there are varying standards for the equipment on the machines. Not all machines, which could use biohydraulic oils, use these environmentally friendly oils. One municipal machine has leaks. The machine standard and condition are to be examined with respect to the state of the technology and the possible use of environmentally friendly technology is to be requested. A report is to be prepared on inquiries, results and monitoring actions.</p>
5.	4.2.1	<p>Rescue chain, testing functioning: the rescue chain is clearly defined for forest workers in the case of accidents. A test of this chain has only been conducted in one community, but not in any other communities. The chain is to be tested area-wide based on coordination with rescue organizations. The conduct of the test is to be documented and, where necessary, improvements are to be made.</p>
6.	6.5.1; 5.3.1; 4.2.2	<p>In order to provide information to the numerous private solicitors, a memorandum is being prepared, which is to contain instructions for accident prevention, work procedures, minimum safety equipment, working under certain weather conditions and availability in emergencies etc. Staying on the skidding tracks, meaning the prohibition of driving throughout the area, leaving biotope trees and dead trees in the stand are to be added to this memorandum. This memorandum is</p>

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CAR No	QUALIFOR requirement (FSC P&C)	Description
7.	7.1.b2	<p>intended to provide the private solicitor with information and instructions on safety and forest work, which is to be done in a conserving manner, and is to be signed by the recipient acknowledging the receipt.</p> <p>The contents of the FSC guideline with its principles and criteria are to be integrated into the management guideline with its various goals including models and the hierarchy with goals and subgoals and the recognition of the management is to be enclosed to the existing forest management plans. The management goals are to be completed in accordance with the FSC and in accordance with FSC indicators such as reference areas, biotope trees and dead trees, hunting management and skidding track systems.</p>
8.	8.2.a1; 5.2.1	<p>Separation of certified timber: actions are to be taken to guarantee that the conditions exist for the sale of timber for the various forest owners as certified and non-certified timber. Certified timber is to be clearly marked including the associated sales documents and the sales documents are to contain the corresponding certificate number.</p>
9.	Resource Management 1.6.1; 2.1.1	<p>Member file: in order to provide an overview and documentation of FSC membership, the forestry office is to maintain a member file. Areas, transmission of information, internal assessments, agreements concerning FSC and contracts etc. are to be document and archived. The file is to be presented by December 15, 2002.</p>
10.	6.3.a3; 8.2.c2	<p>Hunting management: the number of animals shot is to be increased at points in order to improve the game damage situation. In addition to the evaluation of the indicator plots, the silvicultural expert reports on browsing and the plans for the numbers of animals to be shot for the districts are to be presented completely to the assessor. The successive modification of the hunting leases is useful.</p>

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9. CLOSE-OUT DETAILS FOR MAJOR CARs

No major corrective action requests were made. Therefore no measures need to be taken.

10. CERTIFICATION RECOMMENDATION

There being no open Major Corrective Action Requests, the assessor recommends certification of the

**Hessen Forest Dieburg Forestry Office
as the Certificate Holder for
the Cities and Communities of
Dieburg, Eppertshausen,
Gross-Umstadt, Gross-Zimmern,
Messel, Münster,
Reinheim, Rossdorf,
the Special Purpose Association
for Waste Recycling South Hessen,
the Private Forest Christoph,
and the Private Forest Scheuermann**

according to the Forest Stewardship Council's Principles and Criteria.

The outstanding Minor Corrective Action Requests do not preclude certification, but the Hessen Forest Dieburg Forestry Office is required to take the agreed actions to close out CARs before the first surveillance visit and to fulfill CAR 09 by December 15, 2002. The CARs 01 through 08 and CAR 10 will be verified by SGS QUALIFOR at the first surveillance visit to be carried out about six months from the date of the issuance of the certificate. If satisfactory actions have been taken the CARs will be closed out, otherwise Minor CARs will be raised to Major CARs.

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Prepared:	Checked:
Name: Eckart Lange	
Date: September 26, 2002	