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Forest Certification in the Turkish Forestry: An Assessment

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Aim of the study: Forest certification in the most simplistic way aims to ensure sustainable and good management of forest resources. Forest certification has now been an important part of forestry and forest industry in the globe. Turkish forests are owned and managed by the State in Turkey, specifically through the General Directorate of Forestry (GDF) operating under the Ministry of Forest and Water Works. The GDF is strongly hierarchical administration body with a well-distributed web throughout the country. Although forest certification has long been part of forest management in many parts of the world including Europe and US, it has recently been introduced to the Turkish forestry. Less than one-third of Turkish Regional Forestry Directorates have been involved in FSC so far. This paper discusses the experience gained through the certification process to the Turkish forestry with an emphasis paid to benefits and issues. Issues identified are in general terms discussed.

Material and Methods: Impact of forest certification on the Turkish forests has been assessed using the public summary reports of the certification surveillances and assessments for various Regional Directorates of Forestry in Turkey.

Results: Although Turkish forest agencies have had adaptation issues with certification process and requirements in the beginning, they have quickly adapted and improved on the problematic issues the certification assessments had pointed. Overall, the forest certification process has made significant contributions to the Turkish forestry both conceptually and practically. For instance, high conservation values and health and safety issues have demonstrated quite improvements over the years. The continuation of the forest certification process in the Turkish forestry is recommended.

Keywords: forest certification, Turkish forestry.