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Faber-Castell exceeds its target for sustainable forestry

FSC® certification for wood-cased pencils rising to 95% in this anniversary year

Faber-Castell counts as the world's major manufacturer of wood-cased pencils, with over 2,000 million per year (both black-lead and colour pencils). In 2008, the company – which celebrates its 250th anniversary this year – joined the Global Forest & Trade Network (GFTM), an organisation within the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). GFTM offers a platform for innovative companies which feel a responsibility to encourage environmentally and socially compatible forestry. GFTM members are committed to traceability in the procurement of timber and paper, and an increasing proportion of FSC®¹-certified products in their range.

By joining GFTM, Faber-Castell committed itself to raising its proportion of FSC®-certified timber resources from about 80% at that time to 90% by the year 2012. That target was in fact exceeded by mid-2010. 95% of all the wood used by the entire Faber-Castell group of companies is now certified to the stringent criteria of the FSC®. The remainder also comes from monitored sustainable forests. That guarantees environmentally compatible, economically viable, and socially responsible conditions of forestry. Faber-Castell thus has the highest quota of FSC® timber in the entire stationery business and can be regarded as a pioneer – and not simply in this sector of industry.

The significance of timber resources – not just for the company but also for the environment – has long been a concern of the Chairman and CEO, Count Anton Wolfgang von Faber-Castell. Over two decades ago he started a unique afforestation programme in the south-east of Brazil. The forests have now grown to 10,000 hectares (100 sq.km) but are not used purely for timber production. Some 2,700 hectares of woodland are left in their natural state as a habitat for flora and fauna, including some species threatened with extinction. These forests in Brazil were awarded the FSC®-FM (Forest Management) seal of environmental quality in 1999. In addition, all the Faber-Castell Group's production sites around the world and all its sales companies have received the FSC®-CoC (Chain of Custody) certificate, so that the origins of all the wood, from felling the tree to packaging the pencils, can be traced with certainty.

¹ The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC®) is an international organisation whose certification system guarantees that the materials for wood and paper products have come from responsibly managed forests: clearly defined environmental and social standards must be maintained in the forestry operations.



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“It’s impressive to observe the commitment and the speed with which Faber-Castell has put into practice all our joint targets for its timber resources. So Faber-Castell has become an exemplary company in 2011, the year which the United Nations has declared the International Year of the Forests,” said Johannes Zahnen, a forestry expert with WWF Germany.

Besides the use of FSC®-certified timber and the active commitment to maintaining biodiversity, the entire life cycle of the products is based on ecological principles. Not just the application of environment-friendly water-based paint for the pencils, but also the choice of suppliers in accordance with their ecological commitment: those are examples of Faber-Castell’s environmental management.

A sustainable way of thinking has shaped the corporate philosophy for many generations, and continual improvements are something the company traditionally strives for. So Faber-Castell has set its goal for the 250th anniversary to increase still further in the coming years the already high proportion of 95% FSC®-certified timber, and will shortly be announcing a new eco-project in Latin America.

For more information:

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