



## RUSSIA AND GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

- ANALYSIS  
Russia and Global Governance in the Post-Western World 2  
By Andrei P. Tsygankov, San Francisco
- ANALYSIS  
Russia's Security Council Diplomacy and the Middle East 5  
By Mark N. Katz, Washington
- ANALYSIS  
Fostering FSC Forest Certification in Russia: Interplay of State and  
Non-State Actors 8  
By Maria Tysiachniouk, St. Petersburg

## Russia and Global Governance in the Post-Western World

By Andrei P. Tsygankov, San Francisco

### Abstract

Russia has historically strived to bridge principles of multilateral decision making with those of multipolar balance of power. Not infrequently, Russia's efforts to maximize power have been a response to failed attempts of entering Western-centered international arrangements, such as NATO and the European Union. Independently of those efforts, Russia also has sought to preserve the capabilities of a regional great power essential for securing its border and meeting other security challenges. In the world that is no longer ordered by the West, Russia will continue to emphasize the institutional primacy of the United Nations, while seeking to strengthen relations with both Western-centered and non-Western international organizations.

### Russia's Perspective on Global Governance: Multipolar Multilateralism

Russia has historically emerged as a regional great power with strong transcontinental ties and sustained influence in global affairs. Russian leaders have always been preoccupied with defending the country's long borders and cultural allies—Orthodox Christians in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, communists in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and ethnic Russians after the Soviet Union's disintegration. Meeting these challenges required that Russia develop power capabilities and be recognized as an influential player in both regional and global settings. Russia has therefore viewed a regional power status as a prerequisite for a sustained multilateral engagement and a concert of great powers as a basis for establishing a successful international organization.

Such combination of power and international engagement has assisted Russia in surviving in a region historically populated by some of the most powerful states on earth. Principles of multilateralism were in focus for Russian rulers since at least Alexander I in 19<sup>th</sup> century. Having defeated Napoleon, Alexander liberated the European continent and briefly seized Paris, but then withdrew his forces in an organized fashion and initiated the Holy Alliance as a way to preserve order and justice in the post-Napoleonic Europe. Instead of attempting to establish Russia's own hegemony, Alexander sought to create a multilateral security arrangement based on principles of autocracy. He therefore embraced anti-revolutionary Germany and Austria, rather than progressive France, as his role models. Soon, however, Russian rulers had to decide between the old monarchy-centered vision of the world and the new balance of power commitments. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, fearful of the rising Germany, Russia chose to cultivate relationships with France and Britain and ultimately entered World War I on the side of the Triple Entente. By entering the First World War, Nicholas II sought to comply with his alliance commitments and a vision of a just, Europe-based world order.

Even the Bolsheviks, with their radically different principles of world order, eventually came to accept that only multilateral institutions could prevent the rise of a future hegemonic power and provide a basis for international justice. Not only did they abandon the early efforts to overthrow the "bourgeois" governments in Europe replacing them with rapprochement and pragmatic cooperation with the West, but they also joined the League of Nations and championed a collective security system in Europe in order to prevent the rise of Fascism. Later, Soviet leaders participated in creating the United Nations, but they also expected a bigger role in shaping European security partly because the Soviet Union single-handedly won the most important battles against Nazi Germany, including the battles for Moscow, Kursk and Stalingrad, and contributed a much greater share of resources to the overall victory in the war. The other part of the reason had to do with Russia's belief in securing its position of regional influence. Although the Cold War and the communist ideology prompted Bolsheviks to develop global ambitions, they remained true to Russia's traditional aspiration to dominate the Eurasian landmass from the Far East to the Balkans and Eastern Europe.

Each time Russia failed in its multilateral diplomacy, it resorted to politics of multipolarity, balance of power, and alternative institutional arrangements. When collective security failed to contain Hitler, Russia signed a defense pact with Hitler hoping to isolate Russia from World War II or at least to buy enough time to prepare for it. In the Cold War era, Josef Stalin responded to the U.S.-proposed Marshall Plan by establishing the Communist Information Agency (Cominform) and brushing aside the Polish and Czech hopes to join the Plan. The Soviets then embraced the global "correlation of forces" strategy, which included the establishment of alternative institutions, such as the Warsaw Pact, and reflected their interest in balancing perceived dangerous influences from the Western powers and preserve Russia's independence in world affairs.

## After the Cold War

After the Cold War, Russia briefly experimented with the idea of joining Western-centered institutions, while abandoning its traditional regional ambitions and great power aspirations. Unlike Mikhail Gorbachev, who envisaged a global concert of different politico-economic systems, his successor Boris Yeltsin embraced the vision of gaining a full-scale status in transatlantic economic and security institutions, such as the European Union, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, International Monetary Fund, and G-7, and separating the new Russia from the former Soviet republics economically, politically, and culturally. This Western-centric vision proved unsustainable however because it both lacked domestic support and the Western nations were not eager to welcome Russia as an equal participant in their institutions. The decision by NATO to expand eastward in 1994 and to use force against Serbia outside the UN Security Council's jurisdiction in March 1999 signalled the power of the Western-centric world.

A dissatisfied Russia then revived the traditional course of advocating multipolarity, multilateralism and regional great power status. With Yevgeni Primakov as foreign minister, Russia pursued "multi-vector" policies, which meant that it would no longer unequivocally side with Europe or the United States at the expense of its relationships with key participants from the Eurasian continent, such as China, India, and the Islamic world. Russia was also proclaimed to be a distinctly Eurasian great power.

However, multilateralism did not fully yield to multipolarity, as Moscow continued to emphasize the centrality of the UN and work on strengthening Russia's role in traditional global governance structures. In July 1992, for example, it managed to join the G-7, despite the opposition from Britain and Germany. Russia also pursued an ambitious agenda of developing an economic union and a collective security pact with the former Soviet republics. Despite growing resentment toward NATO, it did not break its ties with the alliance and in May 1997 negotiated the establishment of Russia–NATO Council on a permanent basis. Russia also became a founding member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) that emerged out of a 1997 Russia–China treaty on border-troop reduction and included China, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan. The organization became prominent after September 11 by emphasising the need to address terrorism and security problems in Central Asia.

A similar pattern of failed attempts at multilateralism followed by a renewed emphasis on multipolarity took place under President Putin in the 2000s. Immediately after the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United

States, Putin sought to engage the Western nations into common international projects and security arrangements, but changed his approach as soon as he sensed that the West wanted to preserve Western-centric institutions and principles across the globe. As with Primakov, Putin's response did not really amount to replacing multilateralism with multipolarity. Rather, it was an attempt to assert Russia's right to participate in Western institutional arrangements. In particular, the Kremlin wanted to build joint security institutions with the West to replace the abandoned ABM treaty, join the WTO, and establish greater cooperation between NATO and the Moscow-initiated Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) in securing Central Asia from terrorism. This was at the heart of Putin's speech at the Munich Conference on Security Policy, in which he accused the U.S. of "unilateralism" and "disdain for the basic principles of international law."

After not receiving the sought-after recognition of his ideas, Putin moved towards strengthening Russia's cooperation with non-Western nations and institutions. For example, Russia stepped up its economic and military cooperation with China and the SCO. In June 2009, Russia also hosted the first summit of the leaders of the BRIC countries in Yekaterinburg, which resulted in a joint declaration on the establishment of an equitable, democratic and multipolar world order. For the first time, Russia's insistence on multipolar multilateralism was recognized prominently, albeit by non-Western powers. In addition—true to its desire to remain a regional power—Russia also sought to strengthen its control over the post-Soviet region, building pipelines in all geographic directions, raising energy prices for its oil and gas-dependent neighbours and working to develop Russia-friendly political and military relations in the region.

## In the Post-Western World

The 2008/9 financial crisis revealed that the world was now entering a radically new stage of development. Structurally, the world is still dominated by the US, with the Western powers (especially America) retaining their military dominance around the world, supported by their global superiority in political, economic and cultural terms. However, in terms of its dynamic trajectory, the world is becoming increasingly less Western-centric, even if the exact direction and end-result remain unclear. While the global economic crisis has severely undermined the Western-centered model of global economic expansion, the Russia–Georgia war also ended the West's monopoly on the unilateral use of force previously demonstrated by NATO's military attacks on Yugoslavia and the United States' invasion of Iraq. The

fact that Russia chose to use force in the Caucasus in defiance of the West has shown a de-centralization of the use of hard power and highlighted the difficulties facing the West as a result of the continuous expansion of NATO's geopolitical responsibilities at the expense of its political arrangements, such as in the case of the SCO and CSTO.

However, it is unclear whether this change will translate into the sort of multipolar multilateralism as currently favoured by Russia. Despite its relative decline, the West remains powerful enough to challenge this form of multipolar multilateralism. Russia is also faced with the rise of China and that of the other BRICS members. Multipolarity assumes Russia's ability to consolidate and project its power abroad, yet the country is faced with formidable domestic problems and is unlikely to emerge as an independent pole, or center of power any time soon. Russia does not have the global economic reach of China or India. Although it has recovered from its sustained economic depression of the 1990s, much of Russia's recovery has been due to the high oil prices, which complicated the government's attempts to reduce the country's over-reliance on its energy exports. In addition, the Russian state suffers from a wide-range of problems such as corruption and a failing demographic situation.

Under these conditions, the Kremlin is trying to cooperate with both Western and non-Western organizations, as well as its significant partners in Eurasia, whilst remaining critical of the unilateral use of force. This pragmatic foreign policy is facilitated further by the fact that Russia is a member of a wide-range of international and regional forums. As noted by the Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, solutions for Russia should come from "network diplomacy rather than entangling military-political alliances with their burdensome rigid commitments". Unable on its own to effectively respond to security challenges from NATO, Russia continues to develop coalitions with selected European and non-Western countries. For instance, acting jointly with

China, Russia vetoed the United States and Europe-sponsored UNSC resolutions regarding Syria. Fearful that such resolutions would lead to a military intervention and regime change in Syria, as happened in Libya, the Kremlin instead pushed for negotiations between Bashar al-Assad and the military opposition. The BRICS summit held in April 2012 in India further supported these negotiations over Syria.

On the other hand, Russia continues to value its participation in Western institutions and seeks to expand such participation. Following its military conflict with Georgia, President Dmitri Medvedev proposed a pan-European treaty to establish a new security architecture, in which Russia would become a fully-fledged participant. According to him, the fact that neither NATO, nor the OSCE were able to prevent the military conflict indicated the need for an improved security framework in Europe. In the economic arena, Russia's main focus remains greater integration with the EU's economy and the WTO. In late 2011, Russia finally completed its negotiations over its membership in the WTO. In East Asia, the Kremlin is also keenly interested in developing economic and security ties with South Korea and Japan in order to address the issue of a rising China.

Finally, Russia is taking advantage of a relatively favourable geopolitical environment to strengthen its institutional presence in Eurasia. In October 2011, most members of the CIS signed a free-trade agreement that would increase the intra-regional trade by removing various import and export duties. In addition, Putin proposed to build a new Eurasian Union between the CIS states. The Kremlin has also worked to consolidate its military presence in the region by constructing a new anti-terrorism center under the CSTO's auspices in Kyrgyzstan. In an apparent response to Arab-like uprisings, the CSTO also amended its mission by pledging to defend its members from internal "unconstitutional disturbances".

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## Russia's Security Council Diplomacy and the Middle East

By Mark N. Katz, Washington

### Abstract

Moscow values Russia's permanent membership on the UN Security Council for the ability that the veto-power this status gives it to project influence, as well as to deny Security Council approval to actions sought by others—especially the United States. But as Russia's Security Council diplomacy with regard to Iran, Libya, and Syria has shown, the Security Council can be a highly problematic arena for Russia. Moscow cannot prevent the U.S. and its allies from acting without Security Council authorization. Yet even when Moscow does allow a resolution authorizing the use of force to pass, Russia cannot control how the U.S. and its allies implement it. Finally, blocking passage of a resolution can serve to undermine Russia's influence and prestige instead of enhancing them.

Moscow values its permanent membership on the United Nations Security Council for the opportunity it provides Russia to pursue three aims that are highly important to it. First, it allows Russia to play an important role in shaping the international environment to its liking. Second, the veto power that Security Council permanent membership entails means that Russia can block any resolution of which it disapproves, thus necessitating that all other countries seeking the passage of a resolution obtain Moscow's cooperation in order to do so. Third, and most importantly, it represents international affirmation of Russia's status as a great power.

Despite this, Moscow has sometimes been unable to pursue these three aims successfully. Russia has not always been able to shape the international environment to its liking through the Security Council (indeed, the Security Council as a whole is often unable to do so). In addition, Russia's veto power has been obviated when certain governments—especially the United States—have acted outside the auspices of the Security Council. And when either of these things happens, Russia has not appeared to be the great power that it claims and wants to be seen by others as.

Moscow's Security Council diplomacy *vis-à-vis* Iran, Libya, and Syria has had mixed results. This article will discuss Russia's Security Council diplomacy in each of these three cases in order to elucidate the dilemmas and difficulties they have posed for Moscow's pursuit of its broader goals of shaping the international environment, leveraging its veto-power to obtain cooperation from others, and affirming Russia's status as a great power. As argued below, in each case, Russian diplomacy has succeeded in some areas, and yet failed in others. First, though, something needs to be said about the historical context in which Moscow conducts its contemporary Security Council diplomacy.

### Historical Context

In designing the UN Security Council, U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt envisioned that the principal

Allies that had fought against the Axis powers in World War II would use it as a cooperative forum for managing the problems of the post-war world. With the emergence of the Cold War, however, this expectation was soon dashed. Instead, the U.S. and the USSR often acted to block each other's Security Council initiatives through the exercise of their veto power. But since this veto power also allowed each permanent member to block any resolution aimed against it, the U.S. and the USSR both used force on several occasions without seeking Security Council approval, justifying their actions instead on another basis. During the Cold War era, then, the lack of Security Council approval did not prevent the U.S. from intervening in Vietnam and several other countries, nor did it prevent the Soviet Union from intervening in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Afghanistan.

Despite their ability to act outside of it with impunity, the Security Council was still important for both American and Soviet diplomacy. Each could use it to delegitimize the other through proposing Security Council resolutions that were popular internationally, but which the other superpower was expected to veto. For example, Moscow would frequently push for Security Council resolutions condemning Israel knowing that America would veto them, but also knowing that doing so would result in widespread condemnation of the U.S. in the Muslim world and beyond.

The low point in the USSR's Security Council diplomacy came in 1950 when Moscow was boycotting it over the refusal of the U.S. and its allies to allow the new Communist government in Beijing to take the place of the defeated Nationalist government at the UN when North Korea invaded South Korea. The U.S. and its allies took advantage of the USSR's absence to pass a Security Council resolution authorizing the use of force in response to this, thus increasing the legitimacy of the U.S.-led military response. Not surprisingly, Moscow has never allowed such a situation to arise again.

Even during the Cold War, however, the U.S. and the USSR sometimes acted cooperatively to pass Security Council resolutions aimed at resolving conflict. Two such instances were the passage of Security Council Resolution 242 aimed at resolving the 1967 Arab–Israeli War and Resolution 338 which sought to resolve the 1973 one. Nevertheless, the U.S. was able to exclude the USSR from playing any meaningful role in subsequent American-led Arab–Israeli peace efforts.

The high point of Soviet–American cooperation in the Security Council occurred in the wake of the August 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait when Washington and Moscow worked together to pass numerous resolutions against Iraq—including one authorizing the use of force against it. In the 1990s, though, Moscow came to regret its decision to approve Security Council economic sanctions against Iraq because it could not persuade the US to either lift or reduce them (thus impeding Russia’s ability to openly trade with and invest in Iraq—though it did do so more or less clandestinely).

More recently, Russia’s attempts to prevent the U.S.-led intervention in Iraq in 2003 through the UN Security Council also furnished mixed results. Although Russia—and many other countries—were unable to prevent the U.S. from intervening, their blockage of Security Council approval for this action did serve to delegitimize its actions thus succeeding in isolating the U.S. diplomatically. Wishing to avoid a re-run of the Iraq debacle, the U.S. (under President Bush as well as President Obama) has more recently placed greater emphasis on working within, rather than outside the Security Council in order to achieve its aims.

With this background in mind, we can now proceed to explain Moscow’s recent Security Council diplomacy with regard to Iran, Libya, and Syria.

### Iran

Russia’s Security Council diplomacy with regard to Iran has been highly conflicted. On the one hand, Moscow does not want Iran to acquire nuclear weapons. On the other, it also does not want force to be used against Iran either for fear of how this could negatively impact Russian interests. If Tehran believed that Moscow supported an attack against it, it might retaliate against Russia in several ways: supporting Muslim rebels in the North Caucasus, backing Azerbaijan instead of Moscow’s ally Armenia, and ending economic cooperation with Russia. Moscow, then, has no intention of supporting a UN Security Council resolution authorizing the use of force against Iran.

Increasingly, though, political leaders in Israel, the U.S., and elsewhere have been calling for Iran to be forcefully prevented from acquiring nuclear weapons even

without Security Council approval. Moscow opposes this as it could lead to harmful consequences for Russia. At worst, such an attack could lead to the downfall of the current Iranian regime followed by the rise either of a pro-Western one or of a virulently Islamist one hostile to both Russia and the West. Moscow does not want to see either of these developments.

Russia’s approach to the Iranian nuclear issue in the Security Council, then, has been to delay, but then approve the passage of watered-down (from the Western perspective) resolutions imposing increasing economic sanctions on Iran. Tehran has complained bitterly about Russian betrayal whenever Moscow has done this. Moscow, though, may see supporting successive economic sanctions resolutions against Iran as useful not in obtaining Iranian compliance over the nuclear issue (which, so far, has not occurred), but in persuading the U.S. in particular to continue the multilateral diplomatic approach and not abandon it in favour of the use of force against Iran outside the auspices of the Security Council.

If this is indeed the Russian strategy, it has worked fairly well up to now. It has not succeeded, however, in actually resolving the Iranian nuclear crisis. The risk for Moscow is that the more that America, Israel, Europe, and the Arab World feel threatened by the prospect of a nuclear Iran, the more support there will be among them for a forceful approach to Iran that bypasses both the Security Council and Russia.

### Libya

At the outset of the Arab Spring in 2011, internal security forces acquiesced to opposition demands for the removal from office of authoritarian rulers who had been in power for decades both in Tunisia and Egypt. In Libya, however, security forces loyal to Qaddafi violently beat back the widespread opposition to him that had sprung up, and appeared to be about to crush it altogether. It was at this point that demands arose both in the West and the Arab World for UN Security Council action to prevent this. Moscow’s initial reaction to these ideas was extremely negative. However, when the Arab League formally called for a Security Council resolution to impose a no-fly zone in Libya to protect the opposition there from annihilation, Russia (and China) abstained on the vote for the measure—thus allowing it to pass.

Almost immediately, though, Moscow began to complain that the U.S. and its NATO and Arab allies were exceeding the provisions of the resolution and actively aiding Libyan oppositionists in their efforts to defeat Qaddafi’s forces, topple his regime, and establish their own government. Much to Moscow’s consternation, America and its allies ignored Russian complaints and

helped the Libyan opposition accomplish each of these tasks. The lesson that the Kremlin learned from this experience is that once a Security Council resolution authorizing the use of force has been passed, Moscow cannot do much to control or affect the actions of the U.S. and its allies when they take the lead in implementing such a resolution.

### Syria

An Arab Spring-style revolt also erupted in Syria in 2011. Although the opposition there has been unable to topple the Assad regime, the regime has (so far) also been unable to completely crush the opposition. As with Libya, there have been calls—most notably from Saudi Arabia and Qatar—for the UN Security Council to take action to stop the crackdown in Syria. Determined to avoid a repeat of what happened in Libya, however, Russia (in conjunction with China) has this time refused to allow even economic sanctions against Damascus to be authorized by the Security Council.

In one sense, Moscow's Security Council diplomacy *vis-à-vis* Syria has been a success: Russia has blocked the U.S. and others from taking any meaningful action against the Assad regime with the imprimatur of the Security Council. But unlike in 2003 when the blockage by Russia and others of a Security Council resolution authorizing the use of force against Iraq served to delegitimize the subsequent American-led intervention of that country, Moscow's blockage of Security Council measures against the Assad regime has in fact resulted in Russia being seen as responsible for what is happening in

Syria both in the Arab World and the West. (Although China has also blocked Security Council action against the Assad regime, it has not incurred the international opprobrium that Russia has for doing so). The danger for Moscow in taking such an unpopular action is that governments as well as public opinion in other countries will be willing to see the U.S. and others take action in Syria outside the auspices of the Security Council. Should this happen, Russia would not be in a strong position to prevent it.

### Conclusion

As the recent Iranian, Libyan, and Syrian cases have shown, Moscow's Security Council diplomacy can face a difficult trade-off. On the one hand, if Russia cooperates with the West and its allies in passing Security Council resolutions that impose sanctions or authorize the use of force, Moscow cannot prevent America and its allies from exceeding what Russia regards as the limits of these resolutions—as occurred with regard to Libya. On the other hand, if Russia blocks Security Council resolutions sought by the West and its allies, it risks bringing down international opprobrium on itself (as occurred with Syria), as well as encouraging others to support action outside Security Council auspices by an American-led "coalition of the willing" (as may yet occur with regard to Syria and Iran). When this is the trade-off Moscow faces, the Security Council is less an arena where Russia can demonstrate that it is still a great power and more one in which its inability to act as one is displayed instead.

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## Fostering FSC Forest Certification in Russia: Interplay of State and Non-State Actors

By Maria Tysiachniouk, St. Petersburg

### Abstract

Since the early 1990s, the Russian forest sector has been undergoing profound change determined both by national reforms and patterns of internationalization. Although the newly emerged market economy in Russia has brought challenges to Russian forests, the cross-border influence of market forces has also encouraged the introduction of responsible forestry practices into Russia. Due to the efforts of NGOs, Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification has become part of Russian regulatory processes.

Although in Russia non-governmental actors are engaged in international networks and operate independently, they have to take into account governmental policies because Russia is a country with a strongly centralized state and all land, including forests, is federal property. All certification initiatives must to a certain extent involve the Russian government as a landowner and stakeholder. This article shows how NGOs have engaged the Russian government, as well as industry and the public, in FSC certification.

The FSC appears to represent a way of bringing the Russian forest industry into European markets and simultaneously of bringing the global practices of sustainable forest management into Russia. It is a mechanism for developing relevant trade policies, supporting environmentally responsible business, and instituting investment safeguards.

### Introduction: FSC Operation

FSC is a new mode of private governance, encouraging sustainability through market incentives. It is assumed to be powerful in promoting responsible forest utilization, fostering preservation of biodiversity, protecting rights of local communities and indigenous people.

FSC represents a voluntary certification system based on the principles of tripartite sustainable development, which presumes a balance of economic, environmental and social aspects in forest management. Companies that operate with FSC certification gain a certain premium and, most importantly, access to socially and environmentally sensitive markets. The FSC has developed several types of standards and has delivered two major types of certificates: the certificate of forest management (FSC-FM) and chain of custody (FSC-COC). The FM certificate guarantees that logging and other forest operations are carried out in compliance with the Principles and Criteria of the FSC Standard, taking into account economic, ecological and social components of sustainable forest utilization. The FSC-COC guarantees timber legality and shows that the path of the wood along the chain of custody has been monitored from the moment of logging through all the stages that lead it to the customer, including transportation, processing, and the manufacturing of goods using this wood.

The FSC includes national and regional offices. National offices have been opened in countries with large forest territories, such as Russia, Canada, USA, Mexico and China. Other countries are coordinated by FSC regional offices. The National Initiatives (national

FSC offices since 2010) are organized in the same way as FSC International and consist of social, environmental and economic chambers with equal representation. Their main purpose is to develop national standards, and together with the national FSC office, to govern the FSC process within nation-states. Principles and criteria are global, but indicators and verifiers are developed nationally. Indicators help to adjust the standard to national contexts.

FSC standards are not prescriptive and straightforward; there is a lot of space for negotiation and interpretation. The flexibility allows interpretations and negotiations on all levels, which helps to adjust the standard to local social, political and ecological environments. It also allows for the creation of a feedback loop to the transnational level and enables changes in the standard in cases where it does not fit the environment.

### FSC in Russia

The first FSC certifications in Russia came via market relationships. Three enterprises—Kosikhinski Forest, Altai Region with their processing enterprise Timber Production Pricebatch Ltd.; Koverninskiy Leskhoz, Nizniy Novgorod oblast; and Holz Dammers GmbH in Arhangelsk oblast—received their certificates without any help from the WWF or forest certification centers. Kozikhinsky Leskhoz started preparing for FSC certification in 1997 and received the certificate in 2000. The Paper Mill Volga started working on FSC certification of Koverninski Leskhoz in 1996 and received it in 2002. All three enterprises were certified privately in response

to requests for FSC certification from their western owners and partners.

In 1998, environmental organizations—WWF, Greenpeace, Social SEU, and the Biodiversity Conservation Center (BCC)—began to promote FSC certification in Russia through a series of initiatives. The WWF started the Association of Ecologically Responsible Forest Companies in 2000, as a “producer group”; at that time such groups were formed only in Russia and Brazil. Promotion of FSC certification continued through the WWF—World Bank Alliance project and later through WWF partnerships with IKEA and cooperation with regional forest business associations. The WWF-Model demonstration projects served as educational sites upon which to show how intensive and/or sustainable forest management schemes can work. In Russia, as in the case of other countries, development of the National Standard represents a forum of negotiations, in which actors interpret the general international standard and adjust it to specific Russian circumstances.

The National Initiative in Russia, composed of environmental, economic and social chambers, for a long time existed in the form of a Working Group on forest certification, which was created in May 1998 and was accredited by FSC-International in 2006. In parallel with the National group, four regional FSC certification working groups were organized over different time periods: in the Komi Republic, Arkhangelsk, Krasnoyarsk and the Far East. All these groups worked on FSC national and regional standards.

The process of creating and accrediting FSC National standards was a very long process and took more than 10 years. National standard developers had problems in keeping a balance between these two processes: changing the standard to adapt it to the conditions of the country, and keeping it within the framework of the global standard. In 2008, the 6<sup>th</sup> version was at last accredited with some corrective action requests.

The national FSC office in Russia was established in February, 2005, with initial funding provided by the European Union grant program. The FSC office in Russia is mainly engaged in the coordination of the FSC's activities in Russia and Commonwealth Independent States (CIS) countries, yet most of its work is related to Russia and work in the CIS became apparent only in 2009–2010. Their responsibilities include coordination of all work related to FSC certification within Russia, namely: the interplay between the National Initiative, the FSC-Russia Board of Directors, certification bodies, and stakeholders. The office conducts major informational work, it creates the database of certified companies, and spreads news from the FSC International Coordination Center among all interested parties in Russia. In

the office, all stakeholders can get information concerning new certification guidelines and methodology manuals on various certification aspects, information about training and other organized events. With its reorganization in 2010, the FSC office and the National Initiative became one organization, managed by the FSC-Russia Board of Directors with funding provided by FSC International and membership dues.

### Current State of FSC Certification

Russia is in second place globally to Canada in terms of the amount of FSC certified territories—of 10 major holdings, 9 are certified—and many smaller companies are in the process of certification. For the most part, FSC certification has been achieved by companies already operating in the European market. 117 Forest Management certificates (as of 02.05.2012) have been issued, and around 30 million hectares are certified. To date, support for certification varies by region. It is greatest in the European part of Russia, it is currently booming in Siberia and has only recently started in the Far East, largely owing to European buyers' demands for certified wood, who themselves came under pressure from nongovernmental organizations to meet certification demands. The high demand for non-certified wood from Asian markets, especially those in China, as well as the corrupted networks and illegal operations in both Russia and China, have prevented the fast development of certification in the Russian Far East. Of the 30 million certified ha, 70% of the certificates are issued in North Western Russia, 22% in Siberia and only 8% in the Russian Far East. A total of 215 chain of custody and 130 controlled wood certificates are issued (as of 02.05.2012). With the rapid growth of forest certification in Russia in the 2000s, the quality of the certificates became an issue. The FSC increased surveillance, and in the territories of approximately 1.9 million ha certificates were temporarily suspended in 2008–2012 until forest management practices improved.

### Interplay of State and Non-State Actors in the Process of FSC Certification

Certification is being advanced by non-governmental actors, i.e., environmentally responsible businesses and NGOs, that operate in the sphere of non-state governance of forest resources. Their relationship with state institutions has developed with some difficulties.

In Russia, there are inconsistencies between the Russian legislation and the FSC requirements. The new Forest Code adopted in December, 2006, disregarded innovations developed in the process of certification; that is why the discrepancy between certification and the Russian laws continues. In 1995, Russia ratified the

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) whose regulations are consistent with the FSC standard. Article 1 of the Forest Code of 2006 declares a commitment to the CBD requirements. However, the state has not developed adequate regulatory documents, which would ensure implementation. It is necessary to remark that since Soviet times, Russia has constitutively taken measures for maintaining biodiversity in wildlife and conservation. These measures, however, did not concern the sphere of commercial forest exploitation, while certification envisages regulation within this very sphere. This has led to contradictions with Russian legislation. For example, the concept of key biotopes, a requirement of the FSC, is not even mentioned in Russian Forest laws. Another example is that Russian legislation outlines that old growth forests should be preserved only when they belong to the first category of forests (those that are close to waterways, contain valuable species or are in specially protected areas). When forest companies lease territories for commercial forestry, these territories often contain old growth forests, forming relatively large intact forest landscapes, especially in the Arhangelsk, Komi, Karelia, Siberia and the Russian Far East. According to the FSC certification, these old growth forest landscapes belong to high conservation value forests and have to be preserved.

Another challenge for the FSC in Russia is the issue related to indigenous people. The reason for this is again a different understanding of key terms between Russian legislation and the FSC National Standard, in this case the term “indigenous people”. Russian legislation recognizes as indigenous only “Low-Numbered Populations of the North” (less than 50,000 people). The Russian FSC National Standard recognizes any community consisting of one or more ethnic groups as indigenous people, if they are engaged in traditional forest utilization.

Several forested regions of Russia are populated by indigenous peoples. Indigenous cultures throughout Russia — the Komi, Koryak, Itelmen, Udegeis, Chukchi in the north, and many others — have suffered greatly since the advent of Russia. In Tsarist times, the Russian Empire’s eastward expansion brought Christianity, as well as marauding Cossacks demanding tributes in fur from the native peoples.

Later, the Soviet policy toward indigenous peoples brought even more far reaching changes to their cultures and ways of life. The State Committee for Numerically-Small Peoples of the North, Siberia, and the Far East oversaw this policy, operating with the primary goal of turning the native people from aboriginal semi-nomads into fully place-tied citizens of a modern Soviet society. The policy of “centralization” moved subsistence-based community clans into more centralized villages. This

allowed the state to more efficiently deliver subsidies, which included bread, coffee, tea, sugar, and the other basics. After perestroika, subsidies halted abruptly, rural economies soured, and indigenous people became even more disempowered.

FSC certification has the potential to clarify and protect the rights of these people. However, the issue continues to be very complicated. Tensions and conflicts concerning indigenous peoples rights occur within almost all of the certified territories where these groups live. Some ethnic groups are not interested in being “qualified” as indigenous, while others, on the contrary, strive for recognition.

### FSC–State Relationships

FSC-Russia pays great attention to fence-mending with state bodies and strives to reach several goals as part of this interplay. It tries to lobby for necessary changes in national legislation, in order to eliminate tensions with FSC rules. For this purpose a working group was created to resolve the contradictions between requirements of FSC certification and the new Russian forest code, especially the issues concerning biodiversity, because this issue was the stumbling block for the companies during the process of certification. Having achieved some results, the working group, however, has not managed to resolve the problem once and for all.

A breakthrough in state–non-state actor’s mutual understanding took place at the Parliamentary hearings on “The legal basis of forest certification to ensure the legality of exports and imports of timber and processed wood,” which took place on 20<sup>th</sup> May, 2010. Parliamentarians, representatives of Rosleskhoz, the Ministry of Agriculture, the WWF, the FSC, and large holding companies used a participatory approach for the development of policy recommendations. Issues relating to the contradictions between the FSC requirements and Russian legislation were addressed. The Committee of Natural Resources, Nature Use and Ecology agreed to become a platform for negotiations between the different interest groups.

Shortly after the Parliamentary hearings, the working group on the harmonization of forest legislation with FSC standards was formed and had its first meeting. The FSC again received an opportunity to negotiate contested issues with the state authorities. However, since September 2010, the negotiations have been frozen due to a new reorganization of state agencies. The Public Forest Council convened under the jurisdiction of Rosleskhoz in April, 2011. The participants acknowledged the need to modernize forest legislation. Governmental officials and NGOs once again discussed contradictions between FSC requirements and the Forest Code

of 2006. They analyzed the conflicts that arise due to these contradictions and decided to intensify work on harmonizing Russian legislation with FSC standards.

### Fostering FSC Demand on the Domestic Market

Currently there is a very low demand for FSC products on the Russian market. Both the WWF and FSC aim to facilitate domestic demand for certified products through state policy. In 2008, the FSC national office, together with the WWF, started a campaign of promoting FSC certification in the internal Russian market. They organized an information-campaign with businesses and representatives of governmental structures to explain the advantages of certification. The most recent roundtables in 2010–2012 were organized with the aim of fostering green purchasing programs and policies in Russia.

Governmental agencies in Russia are generally responsive to the demands of large businesses; therefore, TNCs operating in Russia can significantly impact national policy. There are several companies in Russia that are driving FSC certification on the internal market and fostering visibility and recognition of the FSC trademark. Mondi Business paper Siktivkar Pulp and Paper Mill is producing office and printing paper called Snegurochka (Snow Girl). Three printers certified their chain of custody. The holding company Investlesprom produces paper packaging and one of its subsidiaries is involved in green building, based on FSC certified wood.

As has been the case with other countries hosting the Olympics, the Sochi Olympic Games in Russia are one of the major drivers of the internal FSC market, as the Olympic Committee requires the games to be green. In 2008, Rosleskhos and the President of the Russian Federation approved an agreement with the FSC that only certified wood will be used in construction projects in the 2014 Olympic Games in Sochi. In April 2011, the state agency Olympstroy (Olympic Construction)

switched to FSC certified office paper and furniture. Unfortunately in practice not all points of the agreement are fully implemented.

The national FSC office is continuing negotiations on converting all public purchases to FSC certified products. In May 2010, the State Council of the Russian Federation made a decision to make the state purchasing program more ecology minded, that if implemented will help foster demand for FSC products on the internal market. 2011–2012 is the second phase of the FSC campaign, in which major target groups are state bodies, retail stores and consumers, so there is hope that buying FSC products will be implemented in practice by state agencies.

### Concluding Remarks

Generally, FSC certification appears to have great potential as an economic instrument for the management of forests allocated to concession or rent. It can help strengthen forest governance structures, because it integrates the interests of producers, consumers, nature protection and effective participation of civil society. Internationalization of forestry and foreign investments may also help the Russian processing industry, which may in turn help address the problems of extensive forestry.

Certification in Russia occurred simultaneously with a period of general post-perestroika economic reforms. In the course of these reforms, infrastructure in forest settlements, which were traditionally supported by the forest enterprises in Soviet times, was transferred to governmental responsibility. Thus, local people's expectations about support from the companies turned out to be much higher than the businesses were able to provide, even under the conditions required by certification. The article shows that despite the resistance of state authorities, step by step the pressure of private authority on governance of Russian forests is increasing and making its way through the state regulatory system.

#### *About the Author*

Dr. Maria Tysiachniouk is currently chairing the Environmental Sociology group at the Center for Independent Social Research, St. Petersburg, Russia and doing intense field research on global governance of natural resources, including forests and oil. She holds a Master of Science in Environmental Studies from Bard College, NY, a PhD in Biology from the Russian Academy of Sciences and a Certificate in Nonprofit Studies from Johns Hopkins University. She has written more than 150 publications on topics related to transnational environmental governance and has had fieldwork experience in several countries, and regions, including the Barents. She has studied the role of transnational environmental organizations in promoting forest certification in Russia, Belarus, Brazil, South Africa, Western Europe and China.

#### *Recommended Reading:*

- Official Website of the Forest Stewardship Council, Russia, [www.fsc.ru](http://www.fsc.ru)
- Tysiachniouk, M. (2012) "Fostering Transparency in the Transnational Supply Chain: From Russian Forest Producers to Consumers in Europe and the USA", *Forest Policy and Economics*, available on line at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.forpol.2012.02.011>

## ABOUT THE RUSSIAN ANALYTICAL DIGEST

Editors: Stephen Aris, Matthias Neumann, Robert Ortung, Jeronim Perović, Heiko Pleines, Hans-Henning Schröder, Aglaya Snetkov

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