

# FOREST CERTIFICATION IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

## B.C. Products are from Sustainable Forests

Third-party forest certification demonstrates the rigour of the Province of British Columbia's (B.C.) forest management laws and documents the province's world-class sustainable forest management record.

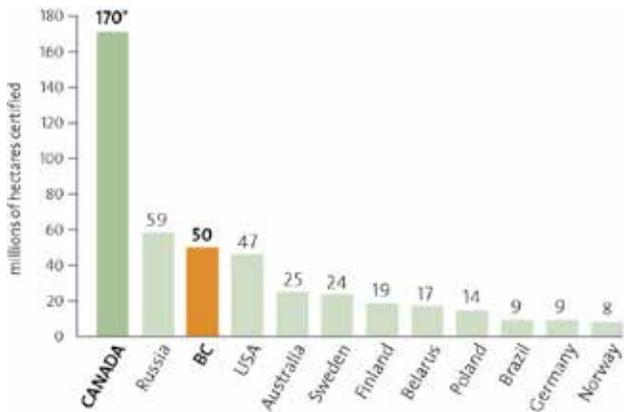
Canada is the international leader in forest certification with B.C. contributing more than any other province. Certification gives customers added assurance that B.C. forest products are from legal, sustainable sources.





# BRITISH COLUMBIA IS A LEADER IN THIRD-PARTY FOREST CERTIFICATION

## CANADA AND B.C. CERTIFICATION IN THE GLOBAL CONTEXT



\*Double counting of areas certified to more than one standard has been removed from this figure.

Above: Canada is the international leader in forest certification with B.C. contributing more than any other province.<sup>1</sup>



Photo: Michael Bednar

## Global Forest Certification

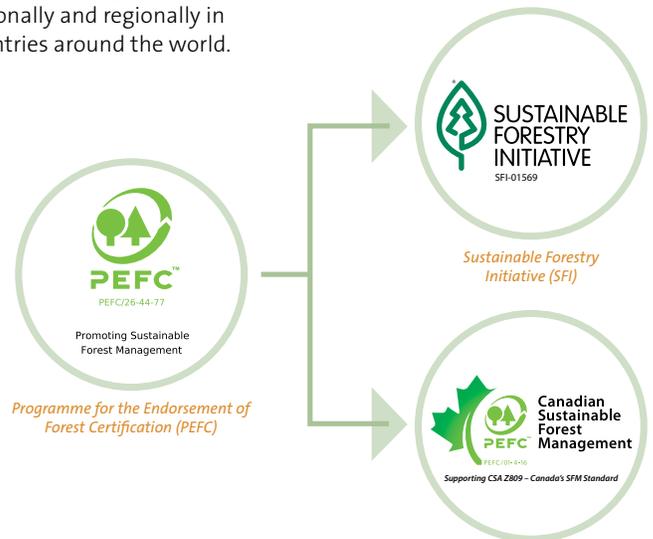
Certification is a market-based, non-regulatory forest conservation tool designed to recognize and promote environmentally-responsible forestry and sustainability of forest resources.<sup>2</sup>

Currently there are more than 50 forest certification standards worldwide, reflecting the diversity of forest types, ecosystems and tenures. There are subtle differences but most promote sustainable forest management through principles, criteria and objectives consistent with local government processes.

Two independent non-profit global programs endorse forest certification programs developed nationally and regionally in countries around the world.

### PROGRAMME FOR THE ENDORSEMENT OF FOREST CERTIFICATION (PEFC)

PEFC, the world's largest forest certification umbrella organization, has endorsed the **Canadian Standards Association's Sustainable Forest Management Standards (CSA)** and **Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI)** programs internationally. A non-government organization founded in 1999, PEFC has assessed and endorsed 42 national forest certification schemes, representing two-thirds of all certified forests, 307.5 million hectares (759.8 million acres) around the world.



Canadian Standards Association's Sustainable Forest Management Standards (CSA)



## B.C. Offers Added Assurance of Well-Managed Forests

B.C.'s forest industry is known around the world as a stable supplier of quality, legal forest products. In addition to B.C.'s comprehensive forest management laws, Canada is a world leader in third-party sustainable forest management certification.

### FOREST STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL® (FSC®)

**Forest Stewardship Council**, an international non-government organization, accredits national initiatives to develop regionally appropriate standards and endorses those standards as consistent with the globally applicable FSC Principles and Criteria. As of September 2018, 201.8 million hectares (498.7 million acres) in 86 countries were managed according to standards endorsed by FSC, as well as interim standards developed by certification bodies with the approval of FSC.



Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC)

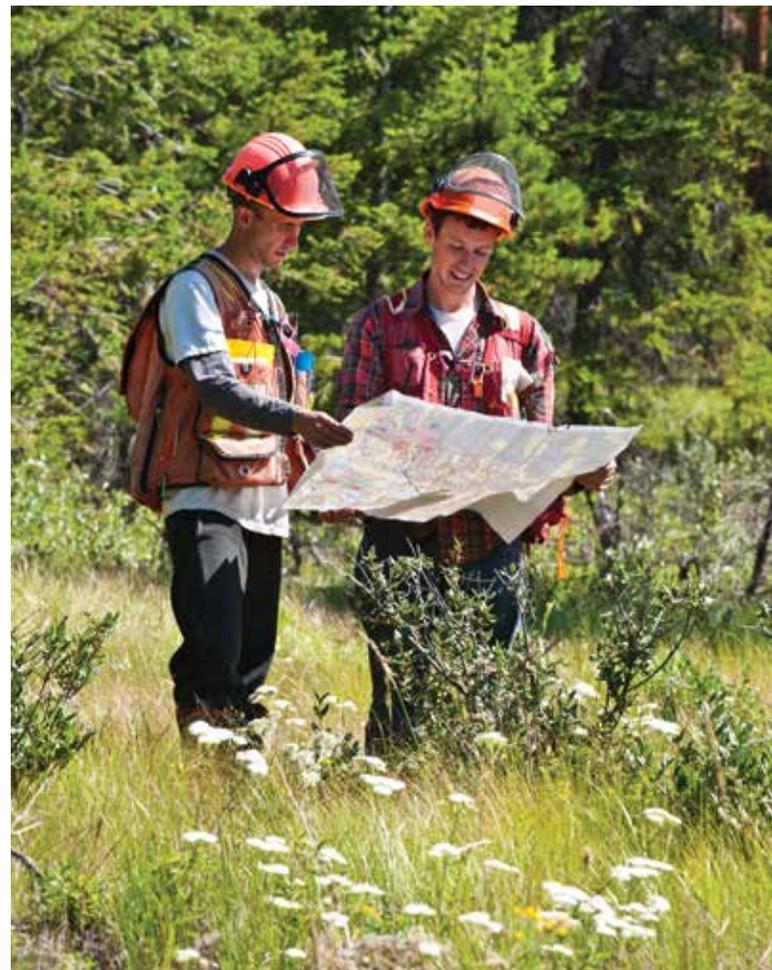
### BASICS OF FOREST CERTIFICATION

Third-party forest certification is a voluntary process that began in the 1990s in response to concerns about logging practices and forest conversion, especially in tropical regions.

Credible certification programs rely on third-party audits where independent auditors measure the planning, procedures, systems and performance of on-the-ground forest operations against a predetermined standard.

The audits, performed by foresters, biologists, socio-economists or other professionals, are conducted for certification bodies accredited to award certificates under each program. A certificate is issued if a forest operation is found to be in conformance with the specified standard. Annual surveillance audits ensure activities continue to conform to the standard.

The choice of a standard or standards depends largely on where a forest company sells its products and who it sells them to. In addition, some companies choose standards that are in tune with their operating environments.



*Third-party forest certification demonstrates the rigour of B.C.'s forest management regime.  
Photo: Michael Bednar*

# BRITISH COLUMBIA IS A STABLE SUPPLIER OF QUALITY FOREST PRODUCTS

## Certified Area in B.C. by Program

At the end of 2017, B.C. had 50 million hectares (123.6 million acres) of certified lands. Canada is the international leader in forest certification with B.C. contributing more than any other province. This includes:

27.2 million hectares  
(67.2 million acres)

Certified to the **Sustainable Forestry Initiative**



22.2 million hectares  
(54.9 million acres)

Certified to the **Canadian Standards Association's Sustainable Forest Management Standard**



1.4 million hectares  
(3.5 million acres)

Certified to the **Forest Stewardship Council®**



## Certification in B.C.

The three programs used in B.C. – CSA, FSC and SFI – all promote principles, criteria and objectives that are viewed around the world as the basis of sustainable forest management. Each has balanced governance, with boards representing environmental, social and economic interests and all revise their standards regularly through an open public process.

CSA, FSC and SFI evaluate for basic forest stewardship by ensuring that harvested areas are reforested, that laws are obeyed and that there is no unauthorized or illegal logging. Similar to B.C.'s regulatory regime, they all ensure biological diversity is conserved, timber is harvested sustainably and wildlife habitat, soils and water resources are conserved.

Many B.C. forest companies also have their manufacturing facilities and/or forest management certified to the requirements of the International Organization for Standardization CAN/CSA-ISO 14001 Environmental Management System (EMS) standard. While not a forestry-specific standard, ISO provides a framework a company can use to measure and improve its environmental performance.

*By asking for and choosing certified forest products from B.C., customers can help increase demand for certification and chain-of-custody labeling — and improve global forest management standards.*

*To find B.C. suppliers, visit: [naturallywood.com](http://naturallywood.com)*



## Legal Source of Fibre

A number of jurisdictions, including Australia, the European Union and United States, have introduced regulations to counter the import of illegally harvested timber, which is a critical international issue that undermines good forest governance.

While third-party forest certification is not automatic proof of compliance with these regulations, it does show that a company has taken proactive due diligence to eliminate illegal timber from its supply chain.

Customers worldwide trust Canada and B.C. as a reliable supplier of forest products from legal and sustainable sources, as B.C. has a negligible risk of illegal logging.

## Basics of Chain-of-Custody Certification

Optional chain-of-custody certification tracks raw materials from certified forests and other sources through each processing or manufacturing stage until the resulting product reaches the store shelf or end user. It also can be used to track characteristics such as the proportion of recycled and uncertified content.

The three certification programs used in B.C. all have optional chain-of-custody certification and associated on-product labels. The FSC and SFI programs have their own chain-of-custody standards

and CSA has adopted the PEFC chain-of-custody standard and PEFC labelling.

FSC, PEFC and SFI all allow their labels to be affixed to forest products containing a mix of certified, uncertified and/or recycled content according to their labeling standards.

The chain-of-custody process can be used to show that wood as a whole is more environmentally friendly than other alternatives by demonstrating that the entire process is monitored, verifiable, and transparent.<sup>3</sup>



Timber harvesting operations in B.C. are held accountable through strict forest management planning and approval processes. Photo: Brudder



B.C.'s productive forests are a rich and diverse source of wood. The attractive grain, colour and strength of B.C. wood species are ideal for interior spaces. Forest Sciences Centre, University of British Columbia. Photo: Don Erhardt

# COMPARING FOREST CERTIFICATION STANDARDS

The information contained below has been summarized from publicly available sources to provide an introductory guide to forest certification. Readers can obtain more detail from those sources, which are listed at the end.

**CANADIAN STANDARDS ASSOCIATION SFM STANDARD**  
(CAN/CSA-Z809-08, approved May 2010)

**FOREST STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL PRINCIPLES & CRITERIA**  
(FSC-STD-01-001 V5-1)

**SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY INITIATIVE STANDARD**  
(SFIS 2015-2019)

## CONSERVE BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AND PROTECT SPECIES AT RISK

Conserve and maintain ecosystem, species and genetic diversity; ecosystem productivity and resilience; and habitats for native species and species at risk. (Criterion 1 and Element 2.1)

Conserve biological diversity through protection and maintenance, restoration or enhancement of forest regeneration and succession; genetic, species, and ecosystem diversity; productivity of forest ecosystems; and species at risk. Establish conservation zones and protection areas to protect species at risk and habitats. (Criteria 6.1-6.10)

Manage quality and distribution of wildlife habitats and implement stand- and landscape-level measures that promote a diversity of habitat and successional stages and conserve forest plants and animals, and aquatic species. Protect threatened and endangered species. Improve sustainable forestry practices through training and education and landowner outreach. (Forest Management Standard Performance Measures 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4)

## PROTECT AND MAINTAIN SPECIAL SITES (Biological and cultural)

Respect legislated protected areas; cooperatively identify and manage sites of special geological, biological and cultural significance for the long term. (Elements 1.4 and 6.2)

Protect representative samples of natural ecosystems, sites of special significance to indigenous peoples, and rare and endangered species and habitats. Maintain or enhance high conservation value forests. (Criteria 3.3, 6.2, Principle 9)

Manage ecologically important and special sites and manage for unique qualities. Protect sites that are ecologically, geologically or culturally important, including forests with exceptional conservation value. Respect Indigenous uses of non-timber forest products on private and public lands. (Forest Management Standard Performance Measures 6.1 and 8.2 and 8.3)

## USE OF CHEMICALS

In the public participation process, address the use of pesticides, related regulations and integrated pest management. (Criterion 1 discussion)

Strive to avoid use of chemical pesticides. (Criteria 6.6 and 10.7, FSC-STD-30-001)

Minimize use of chemicals and prohibition on the use of WHO type 1A and 1B pesticides. (Performance Measure 2.2)

## USE OF GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS

Reforestation programs are free of genetically modified organisms. (Element 1.3)

Prohibit use of genetically modified organisms. (Criteria 6.8)

Research on genetically modified trees must comply with legislation and international protocols. (Forest Management Standard Performance Measure 10.2) GMO materials are not allowed in SFI labeled products. (SFI Policy on Forest Tree Biotechnology)

## MAINTAIN SOIL AND WATER RESOURCES

Conserve soil and water resources by maintaining their quantity and quality in forest ecosystems. (Criterion 3)

Maintain and enhance watersheds and fisheries. Protect water resources. Conserve soils and minimize forest damage during harvesting, road construction and other disturbances. (Criteria 5.5, 6.5, 10.6)

Maintain long-term forest and soil productivity. Protect water bodies and riparian zones. Meet or exceed best management practices to protect water quality and riparian areas. (Forest Management Standard Performance Measures 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 11.2)

## ENSURE HARVEST LEVELS ARE SUSTAINABLE

Manage the forest to produce a sustainable flow of timber and non-timber benefits. (Criterion 2, Element 5.1)

Rate of harvest is not to exceed what can be permanently sustained. (Criterion 5.6)

Ensure that harvest levels are sustainable and consistent with appropriate growth-and-yield models. (Forest Management Standard Performance Measure 1.1)

## NO WOOD FROM ILLEGAL OR UNAUTHORIZED SOURCES

Meet or exceed all relevant legislation, regulations, policies and other requirements. (SFM requirements 4.2; SFM System Requirements 7.2, 7.3.3 and 7.5.1)

Respect all national and local laws, administrative requirements, and international treaties and agreements. Protect areas from illegal harvesting and other unauthorized activities. (Criteria 1.1, 1.2, 1.5)

Comply with applicable federal, provincial, state, and local forestry and related environmental laws, statutes, and regulations. Avoidance of controversial sources, including illegal logging. (Forest Management Standard Objective 9; Fiber Sourcing Standard Objective 12)

## REFOREST HARVESTED AREAS AND PROTECT FOREST LANDS FROM DEFORESTATION AND CONVERSION

Reforest promptly using ecologically suitable species. Protect forests from deforestation where ecologically appropriate. (Elements 2.1, 2.2 and 4.2)

Maintain ecological functions such as forest regeneration and succession. Do not convert forests to plantations or non-forest except in specified, limited circumstances. (Criteria 6.3 and 6.10)

Reforest sites within specified time limits, using ecologically appropriate species. No conversion to another forest cover type unless justified, no forestlands converted to non-forest use. When sourcing fibre in North America, educate landowners on reforestation and afforestation. (Forest Management Standard Performance Measures 1.2, 1.3, 2.1 and 12.1)



CANADIAN STANDARDS  
ASSOCIATION SFM STANDARD  
(CAN/CSA-Z809-08, approved May 2010)

FOREST STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL  
PRINCIPLES & CRITERIA  
(FSC-STD-01-001 V5-1)

SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY  
INITIATIVE STANDARD  
(SFIS 2015-2019)

**PUBLIC OUTREACH,  
TRAINING AND  
RESEARCH**

Implement a public participation process for the development of strategies, values, objectives, indicators, targets and other topics of relevance for all elements in the standard including monitoring progress.

Consult with affected people about management planning for forest operations. Train forest workers on local laws, international agreements and implementation of management plan.

Invest in forestry research, science and technology. Improve sustainable forestry practices through appropriate training and education, improve professionalism of wood producer. Participate in public planning processes for operations on public lands. (Forest Management Standard Objectives 11 and 12 and 13)

Educate public participants and general public on forest ecosystems. Train workers about sustainable forest management. Conduct research where needed to ensure that plan is meeting habitat requirements. (Element 6.5, Clause 7.4.2; Annex A.5 Public participation requirements)

Offer training and other services to local communities. Conduct research to support monitoring program. (Criteria 4.1, 4.3, 7.3 and 8.2; FSC-STD-20-006)

**ABORIGINAL  
RIGHTS AND/OR  
INVOLVEMENT**

Contact Aboriginal communities and encourage involvement. Understand and respect Aboriginal values, knowledge and forest uses, and title, treaty, and other rights after seeking their input. (Clauses 5.2, 7.2 and 7.3.3; Elements 6.1 and 6.2)

Allow indigenous peoples to control forest management on their lands unless they delegate control with free and informed consent. Do not diminish indigenous rights. With their cooperation, identify and protect sites of significance to indigenous peoples and compensate them for application of traditional knowledge. (Principle 3)

Recognize and respect indigenous peoples' right. Comply with all local and national social laws. Confer with indigenous peoples on public lands. (Forest Management Standard Objectives 8 and 9)

**REQUIRE PUBLIC  
DISCLOSURE**

Make Sustainable Forest Management Plan, annual report, and audit findings publicly available. (SFM system requirements Clauses 7.4.3 and 7.4.5)

Require that a summary of the management plan, results from monitoring and audit summaries are publicly available. (Criteria 7.4 and 8.5 and FSC –STD-20-007b Forest certification public summary reports)

Public summary audit reports are prepared by the auditors and posted on the SFI website. (Forest Management Standard Performance Measure 14.1)

**REQUIRE THIRD-PARTY  
AUDIT**

Conduct annual surveillance audits and periodic re-certification audits according to international standards. Auditors must be accredited by a member of the International Accreditation Forum such as the Standards Council of Canada, and follow guidelines for environmental management systems auditing that conform with ISO standards. (Introduction 0.5, 0.8, Scope 2; Annex B Certification framework, ISO 19011 and ISO 17021)

Conduct annual surveillance certification audits and re-certification audits every five years according to international standards and policies. Auditors must be accredited by Accreditation Services International. Lead auditors must be certified under ISO or equivalent requirements. (FSC-STD-20-001, ISO Guide 65, ISO 19011, ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and OHAS 18001)

Conduct annual surveillance audits and re-certification audits every three years according to international standards. Auditors must be accredited by a member of the International Accreditation Forum such as the Standards Council of Canada. (SFI Audit Procedures and Auditor Qualifications and Accreditation; ISO 19011 and ISO 17021)

**CHAIN-OF-CUSTODY  
OPTIONAL  
CERTIFICATION**

Track certified material from forest to final product using PEFC chain-of-custody standard. PEFC label must indicate if product contains a mix of fibre – which must be recycled, from certified forests, or from other responsible sources. Label may only be used if certified plus recycled content is at least 70% and product contains no virgin fibre from controversial or illegal origins. (Chain of Custody PEFC ST 2002:2013)

Track certified material from forest to final product using FSC chain-of-custody standard. FSC label must denote 'MIX' if product contains a mix of fibre – which must be recycled, from certified forests, or from other responsible sources. Label may only be used if certified-forest and recycled content meets a minimum requirement (usually 70%) and product contains no virgin fibre from controversial or illegal origins. (FSC-STD-40-004 and FSC-STD-50-001)

Track certified material from forest to final product using SFI chain-of-custody standard. SFI label must indicate how much of the product is recycled, from certified forests, or from other responsible sources. To use label product must not contain virgin fibre from controversial or illegal origins. SFI fiber sourcing standard applies to materials for inclusion in SFI-labeled products that come from non-certified lands. (SFI Chain-of-Custody Standard; SFI Fiber Sourcing Standard)

**LABEL EXAMPLES**



**WEBSITES**

[www.pefccanada.org](http://www.pefccanada.org)  
[www.csasfmforests.ca](http://www.csasfmforests.ca)

[www.ca.fsc.org](http://www.ca.fsc.org)

[www.sfiprogram.org](http://www.sfiprogram.org)

## Finding Certified Products

Increasingly, governments, corporations and consumers are seeking paper, wood or other forest products from third-party certified, responsibly-managed forests. Certification enables businesses and consumers to make informed choices about the products they buy, and drive demand for forest practices that keep forests healthy for generations to come.

Many organizations have created forest product procurement strategies so their suppliers know they will only buy products from legal and sustainable sources. In many cases, these strategies specify suppliers and products that are certified to a credible program such as CSA, FSC or SFI.

B.C. and Canadian companies are using chain-of-custody certification to prove that their products come from legal and responsibly-managed forests. B.C. and Canada are world leaders in forest certification and can provide buyers with quality certified products that meet any need, from lumber and furniture to paper and pellets.

### PRODUCT CERTIFICATION HAS BECOME MORE IMPORTANT

*A 2016 survey of forest product customers found that “forest products suppliers increasingly face demands from customers and these requirements are mostly related to certifications. Thus, most of the companies surveyed (73%) state that forest certifications are important when it comes to choosing forest products.”<sup>4</sup>*



Above: B.C. wood suppliers offer a range of quality wood products in both construction and appearance grades. Photo: Michael Bednar



Left: In B.C., 7.5 billion seedlings have been planted since reforestation efforts began in the 1930's.

Right: In addition to B.C.'s regulatory compliance and enforcement regime, independent auditors measure performance on the ground against the predetermined certification standards. Photos: Brudder

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

CANADIAN STANDARDS ASSOCIATION [www.csagroup.org](http://www.csagroup.org)  
CSA SFM USER GROUP [www.csasfmforests.ca](http://www.csasfmforests.ca)

FOREST STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL  
FSC International [www.ic.fsc.org](http://www.ic.fsc.org)  
FSC Canada [www.ca.fsc.org](http://www.ca.fsc.org)

SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY INITIATIVE [www.sfiprogram.org](http://www.sfiprogram.org)

PROGRAMME FOR THE ENDORSEMENT OF  
FOREST CERTIFICATION  
PEFC International [www.pefc.org](http://www.pefc.org)  
PEFC Canada [www.pefccanada.org](http://www.pefccanada.org)

CANADIAN COUNCIL OF FOREST MINISTERS [www.sfmcanada.org](http://www.sfmcanada.org)  
Statement on Forest Certification Standards in Canada

CERTIFICATION CANADA [www.certificationcanada.org](http://www.certificationcanada.org)  
Certification Map of Canada

About 50% of wood products exported from Canada come from British Columbia's sustainably managed forests. This publication is part of the 'Forest Facts' series, published by Forestry Innovation Investment, the Government of British Columbia's market development agency for forest products.

To learn more about other B.C. forest facts, visit:

**naturallywood.com**

Cover photo: B.C. is known around the world as a stable source of quality, legal forest products. Photo: Brudder  
The wood grain featured at the top of this factsheet is western larch.

Endnote: <sup>1</sup> Certification Canada: [www.certificationcanada.org](http://www.certificationcanada.org) as of Dec 31/16 <sup>2</sup> Pinchot Institute [www.pinchot.org](http://www.pinchot.org) <sup>3</sup> Dovetail Partners, Inc. [www.dovetailinc.org](http://www.dovetailinc.org) <sup>4</sup> Customer Market Acceptance Survey, Leger, March 2016 [www.fpac.ca](http://www.fpac.ca)