

# LEGAL SOURCE OF QUALITY FOREST PRODUCTS

## British Columbia's Forest Products

Customers worldwide trust Canada as a reliable supplier of forest products from legal and sustainable sources. With an extensive and rigorous system of forest governance, Canada has a negligible risk of illegal logging.

A study comparing environmental forest practice regulations in jurisdictions around the world found British Columbia (B.C.), Canada has some of the toughest regulations backed by well-developed enforcement regimes.<sup>1</sup>



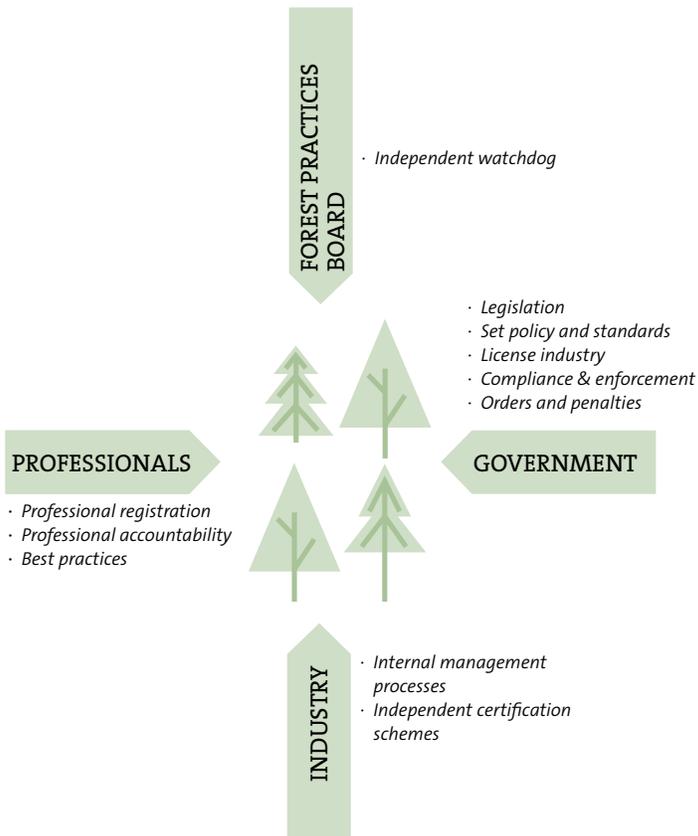


# BRITISH COLUMBIA IS A RELIABLE SUPPLIER

## B.C.'s Forest Management

In B.C., legally sourced products are supported through the province's multi-faceted sustainable forest management regime which includes stringent laws, skilled forestry professionals, comprehensive monitoring, compliance and enforcement.

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES



Top Left: Forest Practices Board auditors make sure B.C.'s strict forest laws are being followed. Photo: B.C. Forest Practices Board

## Laws and Regulations

Companies and forest professionals in B.C. are held accountable for their practices through strict forest management planning and approval processes, laws and regulations, monitoring, and enforcement.

### B.C. FOREST AND RANGE PRACTICES ACT

About 95% of B.C.'s 55 million hectares (136 million acres) of diverse forest land is publicly owned. All timber harvesting operations on public lands must comply with the results-based *Forest and Range Practices Act*.

The Act requires forest stewardship plans that demonstrate how activities will be consistent with objectives set by government for soils, timber, wildlife, water, fish, biodiversity and First Nations (Aboriginal) cultural heritage resources. It also specifies requirements related to activities such as road construction, forest health, reforestation and silviculture. Before government approves a plan, companies must invite and consider comments from the public, local communities, stakeholders and First Nations.

### B.C. FOREST ACT

The *Forest Act* governs rights to harvest public lands. Government issues cutting permits to companies that set out the boundaries of the area approved to be harvested. Timber from public and private lands is conspicuously marked before it

is removed from the cut site. This is to prevent illegal logging as the log source is identifiable as it is transported to its destination such as a sorting yard or manufacturing facility. Possession of unmarked or incorrectly marked timber can lead to fines of up to \$500,000 and imprisonment of up to two years.

### OTHER B.C. LEGISLATION

Forest managers must meet requirements under other provincial laws related to everything from the use of pesticides to protection of fish habitat. Some examples include:

- The *Heritage Conservation Act*, which protects cultural and heritage resources such as pre-1846 archeological sites and artifacts, including culturally modified trees altered by First Nations people as part of their traditional use of the forest.
- The *Foresters Act*, regulates the practice of professional forestry, and is enforced by the Association of B.C. Forest Professionals.
- The *Private Managed Forest Land Act*, which applies to soil conservation, protection of water quality, protection of fish habitat, and reforestation on private managed forest lands.
- The *Drinking Water Protection Act*, which regulates water suppliers and sets out the requirements for a safe and reliable supply of drinking water.



## Independent Watchdog

The Forest Practices Board serves the public interest as the independent watchdog for sound forest and range practices in B.C., reporting its findings and recommendations directly to the public and government.

Activities include:

- Auditing forest practices of government and licence holders on public lands;
- Auditing the appropriateness of government enforcement;
- Making recommendations for improvement to practices;
- Conducting special investigations; and
- Investigating complaints.



*By choosing forest products from British Columbia, Canada consumers can be assured they are purchasing forest products that are from legal and sustainable sources.*

### CANADIAN LAWS AND REGULATIONS

While provinces like B.C. have authority over forest management, forest activities must comply with national legislation such as the *Species at Risk Act* and the *Fisheries Act*, as well as international agreements Canada has signed.

## Compliance and Enforcement

British Columbia has a multi-faceted compliance and enforcement regime to ensure its strict forest laws are being followed. The B.C. government's natural resource officers have the authority to enforce a broad range of environmental and natural resource laws.

Penalties for offences such as unauthorized harvesting, damaging the environment or failure to properly reforest a harvest site, can include fines from \$5,000 to \$1 million and imprisonment from six months to three years.



*British Columbia is a reliable supplier of forest products from legal and sustainable sources. Photo: Brudder*



*All timber harvesting operations on public lands must comply with the results-based Forests and Range Practices Act. Photos: Brudder*

## Voluntary Forest Certification

Canada is the international leader in forest certification with B.C. contributing more than any other province. The province has 52 million hectares (128.5 million acres) certified to one of three internationally recognized forest certification programs – the Canadian Standards Association’s Sustainable Forest Management Standard, the Sustainable Forestry Initiative and the Forest Stewardship Council.

All three programs promote principles, criteria and objectives that are viewed as the basis of sustainable forest management around the world – such as harvesting timber sustainably, replanting harvested areas with native species, conserving biological diversity and maintaining wildlife habitat, soils and water resources. They require that forest operations meet or exceed applicable laws and regulations.

These forest certification standards complement B.C.’s sustainable forest management regulatory regime.

*A 2009 research report stated that “Canada (British Columbia and Ontario) and Australia (New South Wales) are the countries with the most demanding legislation on the studied elements.”<sup>5</sup>*

## Illegal Logging

Globally, illegal logging is a serious threat to forests. It leads to the loss of wildlife habitat and public revenues, and is an economic disincentive to sustainable forest management.

Global concern has led to actions to avoid the export of illegally harvested forest products such as the amended *Lacey Act* in the United States<sup>2</sup>, the European Union’s Timber Regulation<sup>3</sup> and Australia’s Illegal Logging Prohibition Regulation.<sup>4</sup>

British Columbia is a trusted supplier of legal forest products from sustainable sources, something that has been confirmed by two independent reports.

B.C.’s comprehensive regulatory and enforcement regime ensures the risk of illegal logging in B.C. is negligible.<sup>1,5</sup>



*Companies and forest professionals in B.C. are held accountable for their practices through strict forest management planning and approval processes. Photo: Moresby Creative*

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

ASSOCIATION OF B.C. FOREST PROFESSIONALS [www.abcfp.ca](http://www.abcfp.ca)

B.C. FOREST PRACTICES BOARD [www.bcfpb.ca](http://www.bcfpb.ca)

B.C. MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS [www.for.gov.bc.ca](http://www.for.gov.bc.ca)

Compliance & Enforcement  
Forest and Range Practices Act  
Legislation & Regulations

CANADIAN COUNCIL OF FOREST MINISTERS [www.sfmcanada.org](http://www.sfmcanada.org)

British Columbia Forest Governance  
Canada’s Legal Forest Products  
Position on Illegal Logging

CERTIFICATION CANADA [www.certificationcanada.org](http://www.certificationcanada.org)

NATURALLY:WOOD [www.naturallywood.com](http://www.naturallywood.com)

Certified Forests  
Comparison of Selected Forest Certification Standards (2009)

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 B.C.’s legal and sustainable forest products and other forest facts, visit:

**naturallywood.com**