

COMPARING SFI AND FSC CERTIFICATION STANDARDS

PROVIDING BETTER CHOICES FOR THE PLANET



The following matrix provides a comparative guide to the SFI and FSC standards.

| CRITERIA | SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY INITIATIVE | FOREST STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL | |
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| PROGRAM GOVERNANCE | | | |
| BOARD OF DIRECTORS | SFI & FSC US have three chamber boards that represent environmental, economic and social interests. FSC Canada has a four chamber Board. There is strong diversity on all three Boards. | | |
| THIRD-PARTY AUDITS | SFI, FSC US and FSC Canada require mandatory 3rd party audits with accredited certification bodies. | | |
| TRANSPARENT STANDARD DEVELOPMENT PROCESS | SFI, FSC US and FSC Canada include public consultation, developed by multi-stakeholder working groups in their standard development processes. | | |
| PERFORMANCE BASED OUTCOMES | SFI and FSC both use outcomes-based criteria and indicators as well as a prescriptive criteria and indicators to achieve sustainable forest management. An outcomes-based approach ensures certified organizations have a process in place to achieve specified objectives. | | |
| FOREST MANAGEMENT | | | |
| | <u>SFI 2022 FOREST MANAGEMENT STANDARD</u> | <u>FSC US FOREST MANAGEMENT STANDARD – 2010</u> | <u>FSC CANADA NATIONAL FOREST STEWARDSHIP STANDARD (NFSS) – 2018</u> |
| SCOPE OF THE FOREST MANAGEMENT STANDARD | SFI has one forest management standard. It applies only in the US and Canada. The SFI Forest Management Standard represents 30% (YE 2021) of the total global area of certified forest. | The FSC US National Standard applies to forest management activities in the United States, except Alaska, Hawaii and the US territories. | The FSC Canada NSFF applies to forest management activities in Canada except: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Forests less than 1,000 hectares (2,471 acres) in size.• Forests with a harvesting rate less than 20% of the mean annual growth in timber, and an annual harvest less than 5,000 m3.• A forestry operation managed by a local government, community group, First Nation or community-held corporation with a total area less than 80,000 ha (200,000 ac) in size. |
| REFORESTATION | SFI requires certified organizations to promptly reforest after final harvest within two planting seasons or within five seasons if using natural reforestation. (Objective 2) | Requires reforestation practices to maintain or enhance plant species composition (Principle 6) | Requires regeneration to establish vegetative cover in a timely fashion to pre-harvest or more natural conditions. (Principle 10) |

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| FOREST MANAGEMENT | | | |
| AFFORESTATION | SFI prohibits afforestation where ecologically important natural communities, endangered species, or native natural communities would be negatively impacted. (Objective 1) | <i>No requirements that address afforestation.</i> | <i>No requirements that address afforestation.</i> |
| CONSERVES BIODIVERSITY AND OLD GROWTH | SFI requires certified organizations to protect areas of high biodiversity such as old growth, threatened and endangered species, and critical wildlife habitat. SFI requires certified organizations to monitor the impacts of management on Forest with Exceptional Conservation Value. (Objective 4) | Management activities in high conservation value forests maintain the attributes which define these forests. (Principle 9) Management practices maintain the area, structure, composition, and processes of old growth stands where they exist. (Principle 6) | Requires the maintenance of a range of species, ages, spatial scales and regeneration cycles appropriate for the landscape values in the region. (Principle 6) |
| PROTECTS ENDANGERED SPECIES | SFI requires certified organizations to protect G1 and G2 species and threatened and endangered species. They must also address the conservation of ecologically important species and natural communities. (Objective 4) | Requires safeguards to protect rare, threatened and endangered species and their habitats. (Principle 6) | Requires the protection of rare species and threatened species and habitats through measures for their survival and viability. (Principle 6) |
| PROTECTS WATER QUALITY AND QUANTITY | SFI requires certified organizations to protect the water quality and water quantity of rivers, streams, lakes, wetlands, other water bodies. (Objective 3) | Requires guidelines to control erosion and protect water resources during harvesting and road construction. (Principle 6) <i>No requirement to address water quantity.</i> | Requires the protection or restoration of natural watercourses, water bodies, and riparian zones. Organizations must avoid negative impacts on water quality and quantity. (Principle 6) |
| RECOGNIZE AND RESPECT INDIGENOUS PEOPLES RIGHTS | SFI requires certified organizations to recognize and respect Indigenous Peoples' rights and traditional knowledge. SFI also requires training of personnel and contractors to ensure they are competent to fulfill their responsibilities under Objective 8 of the Standard. (Objective 8) More than 40 First Nations and Tribes have more than 10 million acres / 4 million hectares certified to the SFI Forest Management Standard, more than any other standard. | Requires that the legal and customary rights of indigenous peoples to own or manage their lands and resources are recognized and respected. (Principle 3) | Requires identification and respect of Indigenous Peoples legal and customary rights of ownership, and management of lands and resources. (Principle 3) |

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| FOREST MANAGEMENT | | | |
| CHEMICAL USE | <p>SFI requires certified organizations to prioritize the use of integrated pest management and requires the minimization of chemical use, least-toxic and narrowest-spectrum pesticides.</p> <p>SFI bans WHO 1A and 1B pesticides, except where no other viable alternative is acceptable. Pesticides under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants are prohibited. (Objective 2)</p> | <p>Requires the promotion, development and adoption of environmentally friendly non-chemical methods of pest management and to strive to avoid the use of chemical pesticides.</p> <p>Highly hazardous pesticides are prohibited. Exceptions are granted with site- specific justification and additional safety measures. (Principle 6)</p> | <p>Requires the use of integrated pest management and silviculture systems which minimize the use of chemical pesticides. The organization shall not use any chemical pesticides prohibited by FSC policy. (Principle 10)</p> |
| ADDRESSES FOREST CONVERSION FROM ONE FOREST COVER TYPE TO ANOTHER | <p>SFI requires certified organizations to conduct an assessment of the potential ecological impacts of the conversion. The conversion cannot significantly impact Forests with Exceptional Conservation Values, old growth forest, or forest critical to threatened and endangered species. (Objective 1)</p> | <p>Permits stand-type conversion provided the ecological functions and values are maintained intact. (Principle 6)</p> | <p>Permits stand-type conversion provided it is a limited portion of the forest area and does not damage or threaten High Conservation Values. (Principle 6)</p> |
| ADDRESSES FOREST CONVERSION TO NON-FOREST USES | <p>SFI prohibits lands that are designated for conversion to non-forest land use from inclusion in the SFI Forest Management certificate. Fiber derived from these excluded lands cannot count as certified forest content in any product bearing an SFI program label. (Objective 1)</p> | <p>Allows conversion to non-forest use up to a threshold of 2% of the management unit provided the conversion does not negatively impact a High Conservation Value Forest and enables a net conservation benefit. (Principle 6)</p> | <p>Allows area converted to non-forest up to a threshold of 0.5% of the area of the Management Unit in any one year, nor exceed more than 5% of the area of the Management Unit. (Principle 6)</p> |
| CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND MITIGATION | <p>SFI requires certified organizations to identify and address climate change risks, develop adaptation objectives and strategies, and identify and address mitigation opportunities in their forest operations. (Objective 9)</p> | <p>Selection of seed provenance should consider the risks associated with climate change. (Principle 6)</p> | <p>Regeneration activities consider climate change to promote the resilience of the future stands. (Principle 10)</p> |
| FIRE AWARENESS AND RESILIENCE | <p>SFI requires certified organizations to limit the susceptibility of forests to undesirable impacts of wildfire and to raise community awareness of fire benefits, risks, and minimization measures. (Objective 10)</p> | <p>Application of site-specific fuel management practices based on natural fire regimes, risk of wildfire, and public safety. (Principle 6)</p> | <p>Assess risks and implement activities that reduce potential negative impacts from natural hazards. (Principle 10)</p> |

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| FORESTRY RESEARCH | SFI requires certified organizations to invest in and integrate results from forest productivity, biodiversity, and climate change research into their forest management planning. SFI certified organizations have directly invested nearly \$1.8 billion in forest research since 1995. (Objective 12) | The requirement is for data collection to monitor harvest levels; growth rates, regeneration; environmental and social impacts of harvesting. (Principle 8) There is no requirement to invest in research. | <i>Does not have any criteria that require a company to support research of forest management including forest productivity, biodiversity, or climate change research.</i> |
| STAFF & CONTRACTOR TRAINING | SFI requires the training of personnel and contractors to ensure they are competent to fulfill their responsibilities and implementation of the Standard. SFI also requires the use of qualified logging or resource professionals and establishes criteria of what should be included in logger training and continuing education. More than 220,000 logging and resource professionals trained since 1995. (Objective 13) | Requires that forest workers receive adequate training and supervision to ensure proper implementation of the management plan. (Principle 7) | Requires workers to have job-specific training and supervision to implement the management plan. (Principle 2) |
| LANDOWNER OUTREACH & EDUCATION | SFI requires education of and outreach to forest landowners describing the importance of sustainable forestry. (Objective 14) | <i>Does not have requirements for public outreach, education related to sustainable forest management.</i> | <i>Does not have requirements for public outreach, education related to sustainable forest management.</i> |
| | <u>SFI 2022 FIBER SOURCING STANDARD</u> | <u>FSC CONTROLLED WOOD STANDARD (V. 3-1)</u> | |
| FIBER SOURCING | | | |
| SCOPE | The SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard applies to manufacturers that purchase forest fiber. Includes 11 Objectives that elevate procurement practices and environmental performance on tens of millions of acres of forestland as well as requiring certified organizations to avoid material from unacceptable sources. | FSC Controlled Wood Standard: Applies globally and has requirements for a due diligence system for FSC Chain of Custody certified organizations to avoid material from unacceptable sources. Risk Assessments: The Controlled Wood Standard requires the use of national risk assessments to determine if there is a risk of an organization obtaining material from unacceptable wood sources (i.e., from sites with specified risk). | |
| PROMOTION OF CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY | Requires measures for the promotion of the conservation of biological diversity. For sites where certified organizations purchase fiber direct from the landowner, they are required to conduct and incorporate the results of a Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value assessment. | US and Canadian Risk Assessments: For sites within a company's fiber supply area identified as having a specified (elevated) risk to the conservation of biological diversity, companies must participate in multi-stakeholder processes designed to address these risks. | |

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| FIBER SOURCING | | |
| PROTECTS WATER QUALITY | SFI requires certified organizations to provide guidance to landowners on use of best management practices to protect water quality, and track and to improve best management practice implementation over time. (Objective 2) | US and Canadian Risk Assessments: For sites within a company's fiber supply area identified as having a specified (elevated) risk to water quality, companies must participate in multi-stakeholder processes designed to address these risks. |
| PROMOTION OF REFORESTATION | SFI requires certified organizations to provide information and guidance to landowners on the benefits of reforestation after harvest. (Objective 6) | <i>No requirements for reforestation in the FSC Controlled Wood Standard nor the FSC US or FSC Canada National Risk Assessments.</i> |
| FORESTRY RESEARCH | SFI requires certified organizations to invest in and integrate results from forest productivity, biodiversity, and climate change research. SFI certified organizations have directly invested nearly \$1.8 billion in forest research since 1995. (Objective 5) | <i>No requirements to invest in research in the FSC Controlled Wood Standard nor the FSC US or FSC Canada National Risk Assessments.</i> |
| STAFF & CONTRACTOR TRAINING | SFI requires the training of personnel and contractors to ensure they are competent to fulfill their responsibilities and implementation of the Standard. SFI also requires the use of qualified logging or resource professionals and establishes criteria of what should be included in logger training and continuing education. More than 220,000 logging and resource professionals trained since 1995. (Objective 6) | <i>No requirements for staff and contractor training in the FSC Controlled Wood Standard nor the FSC US or FSC Canada National Risk Assessments.</i> |
| LANDOWNER OUTREACH | SFI requires certified organizations to provide education and outreach to forest landowners describing the importance of sustainable forestry. (Objective 7) | <i>No requirements for landowner outreach in the FSC Controlled Wood Standard nor the FSC US or FSC Canada National Risk Assessments.</i> |
| UNACCEPTABLE SOURCES OF FIBER | <p>SFI and FSC both require certificate holders to have a process in place to avoid unacceptable sources of fiber.</p> <p>SFI defines unacceptable sources as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest activities which are not in compliance with applicable state, provincial, federal, or international laws. • Forest activities which are contributing to regional declines in habitat conservation and species protection (including biodiversity and special sites, Alliance for Zero Extinction sites and key biodiversity areas, threatened and endangered species). • Conversion sources originating from regions experiencing forest area decline. • Forest activities where the spirit of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at work (1998) are not met. • Forest activities where the spirit of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007) are not met. • Fiber sourced from areas without effective social laws • Illegal Logging including trade in CITES (The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) listed species. • Conflict Timber. • Genetically modified trees via forest tree biotechnology. <p>FSC categorizes unacceptable fiber as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • illegally harvested • harvested in violation of human rights • high conservation value forest • forests converted to plantation or non-forest use • genetically modified fiber | |

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| CHAIN OF CUSTODY | | |
| SCOPE | SFI and FSC both have a Chain of Custody Standard that tracks forest fiber content through production and manufacturing to the end product. The SFI 2022 Chain of Custody Standard and the FSC Chain of Custody Standard have a global geographic scope. | |
| TRACKING SYSTEMS | SFI and FSC both use percentage and credit systems to calculate certified forest content. | |
| UNACCEPTABLE SOURCES OF FIBER | SFI and FSC both require certificate holders to have a risk assessment and due diligence process in place to avoid unacceptable sources of fiber. | |
| GENETICALLY MODIFIED FIBER | SFI and FSC both prohibit wood from GM trees to be included in products that use the label. | |

For more information, contact:

Jason Metnick, Senior Vice President, Customer Affairs

602-374-6539 | jason.metnick@forests.org

