



**SUSTAINABLE  
FORESTRY  
INITIATIVE**

**SFI-00001**

# **SFI 2022 Standards and Rules**

**October 7, 2021**

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# **SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION**

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## Why SFI Matters

### SFI'S MISSION

is to advance sustainability through forest-focused collaboration.

### SFI'S VISION

is a world that values and benefits from sustainably managed forests.

It is critical that we work together to ensure the sustainability of our planet. People and organizations are seeking solutions that not just reduce negative impacts but ensure positive contributions to the long-term health of people and the planet. SFI-certified forests and products are powerful tools to achieve shared goals such as climate action, reduced waste, conservation of biodiversity, education of future generations, and sustainable economic development.

SFI provides practical, scalable solutions for markets and communities working to pursue this growing commitment to a sustainable planet. When companies, consumers, educators, community, and sustainability leaders collaborate with SFI, they are making active, positive choices to achieve a sustainable future.

- Forests certified to SFI are essential to reducing the impacts of climate change because they absorb carbon from the atmosphere at impressive rates and are resilient to climate impacts. This means that SFI-certified companies are helping to mitigate the impacts of climate change through their use of SFI standards.
- SFI-certified forests are sustainably managed to provide habitats for multiple species, including species at risk. SFI standards take a multi-species approach, and SFI-certified companies are held to the highest level of species and habitat conservation.
- There is increasing demand for better packaging. One out of three Americans have actively tried to buy products packaged in something other than single-use plastic. Using the SFI label is a great way to let consumers know that the product comes from a sustainable source.
- There are environmental and economic benefits of building with wood. SFI-certified wood is an environmentally smart choice for construction and renovations because it is a sustainable, natural, and renewable resource. The SFI label means that the forest where the wood comes from is managed sustainably to ensure many benefits, from clean water to wildlife and a range of ecological and ecosystem services.

## Standards

People and companies are looking for better solutions to ease pressures on the planet — practical choices that will conserve nature, combat climate change, and cut waste and pollution. Choosing certified sustainable forest products protects species, combats climate change, reduces plastic pollution, and protects water supplies.

SFI standards have become the fastest growing, highly trusted solution in support of a growing need for products from the forest, and in response to the drive to reduce carbon pollution and waste. SFI is working to shape markets today and ensure that properly managed forests will continue to play a crucial role in keeping the planet healthy.

## **Four Certification Standards**

Getting certified to SFI is one of the best things that organizations can do to support the long-term sustainability of forests and ensure the multitude of benefits that forests provide for future generations.

SFI's standards provide an important solution to the long-term sustainability of our forests. With more than 375+ million acres/150+ million hectares certified by the end of 2020 and tens of millions more positively influenced through fiber sourcing, SFI has the scale and growth trajectory to ensure positive, forest-based outcomes in the marketplace.

- The SFI Forest Management Standard is the largest single forest management certification standard in the world. Among its requirements are measures to protect water quality, biodiversity, wildlife habitat, species at risk, and forests with exceptional conservation value.
- The SFI Fiber Sourcing Standard is designed for manufacturers that source from a variety of ownerships or that don't own forestland. It distinguishes SFI from all other forest certification organizations in that it governs how Certified Organizations procure fiber from non-certified forest landowners in a responsible way, including avoidance of controversial sources in the supply chain.
- The SFI Chain-of-Custody Standard is an accounting system that tracks forest fiber content through production and manufacturing to the end product. This standard also has measures to avoid controversial sources in the supply chain.
- The SFI Certified Sourcing Standard contains the requirements for Certified Organizations to use the SFI-certified sourcing claim and label. This standard also has measures to avoid controversial sources in the supply chain.

The SFI Standards require third-party independent certification audits by competent and accredited certification bodies for all four standards. All certification bodies must be accredited by a member of the International Accreditation Forum — ANSI-ASQ National Accreditation Board (ANAB) or the Standards Council of Canada (SCC).

## **SFI Labels**

Once certified, organizations can apply to use SFI on-product labels, which are globally recognized and show customers that products are responsibly sourced. Studies have shown that 52% of consumers are aware of the SFI label and 90% of those, trust it.

The SFI on-product labels provide a tool that allows producers to educate the market and consumers to make responsible purchasing decisions. SFI sourcing solutions, from certification through to the SFI label, provide choices that help support a circular economy, green building, resource renewability, and contribute to a sustainable future.

SFI Chain-of-Custody labels tell the consumer that the fiber in the product is from sustainably managed SFI certified forests and/or that it contains recycled materials. The SFI Certified Sourcing label does not make claims about certified forest content. Rather, it tells the consumer that the fiber in the product was purchased from responsibly managed forestlands. (See a description of all the [SFI on-product labels](#)).

## **Conservation**

There is a growing awareness that if we want to grapple with climate change, water quality, waste reduction, and species loss, taking good care of our forests is of fundamental importance. Unique among certification standards, SFI mandates innovative and impactful conservation research that builds knowledge and improves forest outcomes. We provide a value-added solution for customers of forest products who want to know that the companies they source from are contributing to conservation results that improve the health of the planet.

SFI's conservation work is inextricably linked with our standards and provides leadership, expertise, and resources in order to measure and scale the conservation outcomes on forestlands influenced by those standards. SFI's conservation approach helps provide solutions to sustainability challenges such as species at risk, migratory bird decline, forest health, and climate change. The SFI Conservation Impact Project focuses on quantifying the biodiversity maintained and recovered, the water purified, and carbon sequestered on SFI-certified forestlands, and those affected by SFI's sustainable sourcing. This work is guided by a network of conservation leaders and researchers to ensure credibility and transparency. The work is supported by SFI Conservation Grants, which support independent researchers seeking to improve understanding of the relationship between forest management and important conservation outcomes.

## **SFI and Climate Smart Forestry**

Climate change is consistently identified as a significant threat to the environment, business, and our collective way of life. Forests are universally cited as an essential nature-based solution because forests and forest products provide a significant opportunity to counter the impacts of climate change by sequestering and storing carbon.

Through our standards, our conservation impact work, our environmental education, and our extensive network, SFI has the scale to make a difference on climate change. *Certified Organizations* act as a driving force in addressing climate change impacts through sound, science-based natural resource management. SFI is in a strong position to elevate the role of sustainable forests in addressing climate change due to our global reach and our focus on communicating the important role forests play in relation to critical global issues.

## **SFI and Conservation Impact**

The motivations to measure conservation values are diverse: brand owners seek to understand the impact of their raw materials sourcing; conservation stakeholders can engage more effectively if they understand the values that certification can provide; and improved tracking will better equip SFI to provide sustainability related metrics, contribute meaningfully to conservation outcomes, and to ensure continual improvement.

For guidance on this work, SFI has convened a diverse group of scientists, drawn from academia, public agencies, the non-profit conservation community, SFI Certified Organizations and SFI leadership. The Conservation Impact Sounding Board helps ensure transparency and provides direct input into conservation project development. The Sounding Board relies on an open process that helps shape this important work and promotes interaction between project leaders and experts from a diverse variety of backgrounds.

## **Community**

Communities rely on forests for jobs and economic development, recreational benefits, and human health. These links between people and forests have always been important but are even more relevant in an increasingly connected and changing world. Our work is focused on nurturing a positive relationship between people who live near and work in forests, and the goals of a sustainable marketplace and healthy forests.

SFI works to promote the value of sustainable forests and build meaningful relationships in the communities where we operate. Our network helps drive our success by facilitating forest-focused collaborations that make an impact. Through our network we engage collaboratively on issues such as logger training, green career pathways, and Indigenous relations.

Thirty-four SFI Implementation Committees, that engage at the state, provincial or regional level work with local, forestry, and professional associations, universities, government agencies, landowner groups, conservation groups, and many others to promote SFI standards as a means to broaden the practice of responsible forestry and achieve on-the-ground progress. SFI is committed to building and promoting forest-focused collaborations rooted in recognition and respect for Indigenous Peoples' rights and traditional knowledge. Through networks and partnerships, we work across diverse communities, from urban to rural, to advance awareness of the social and health benefits of sustainable forests. SFI Community Grants promotes collaboration within the SFI network to support local communities' understanding of the value and benefits of sustainably managed forests.

## **Indigenous Relationships**

At SFI we respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples and believe our shared quality of life improves when forests are sustainably managed for current and future generations. These shared values allow for a strong and multi-faceted link between SFI and Indigenous communities across Canada and the U.S. SFI partners with leading organizations like the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business and Habitat for Humanity Canada's Indigenous Housing Partnership.

The SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard is aligned with Indigenous values, including rights, knowledge, and environmental considerations. The SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard recognizes and integrates the principles outlined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for the development or use of their territories. In adopting the SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard, Certified Organizations commit to building meaningful relationships with Indigenous Peoples, grounded in respect for their unique rights, traditional knowledge, representative institutions, and distinctive relationships with the forest. This includes training for personnel and contractors so that SFI-certified organizations are competent to fulfill their responsibilities with

respect to Indigenous Peoples rights, as they apply within each Certified Organization's operating jurisdiction and tenure type.

## **Education**

Building a next generation of leadership that will take responsibility for solving environmental challenges and market needs is one of the best investments a society can make. Project Learning Tree and Project Learning Tree Canada are initiatives of SFI. They advance environmental literacy, stewardship, and career pathways using trees and forests as windows on the world.

### **Project Learning Tree**

Project Learning Tree (PLT), SFI's environmental education program, educates teachers, community leaders, and youth about forests and the environment. PLT believes that through environmental education we can develop a new generation of leaders and environmental stewards prepared with the knowledge and skills to address complex environmental issues. Environmental education grows the ability of our youth to think critically, solve problems, and make informed decisions. It encourages youth to take action to keep our natural world healthy, our economies productive, and our communities prosperous and vibrant.

Since its inception, PLT has engaged in thousands of partnerships, including the North American Association of Environmental Education, the US Environmental Protection Agency, the US Bureau of Land Management, USDA Forest Service and the Corporation for National and Community Service. PLT operates programs that are locally relevant, impactful, and have measurable multiplier effects and SFI is always looking for new ways to spread the reach of PLT through strategic partnerships and joint initiatives.

### **Project Learning Tree Canada**

PLT Canada believes in a society that values and benefits from sustainably managed forests and the great outdoors. PLT Canada is committed to using the outdoors to engage youth in learning about the world around them — in rural, Indigenous, and urban communities — and advancing environmental literacy, stewardship, and career pathways using trees and forests as windows on the world.

Since 2018, PLT Canada has placed youth in over 3,000 Green Jobs and supported over 200 employers with wage matching across the country. These young people have gained valuable experience that will help them pursue careers as foresters, wildlife biologists, Indigenous knowledge coordinators, hydrologists, park rangers, and much more. Notably, in a traditionally male-dominated sector, PLT Canada has achieved gender balance in job placements. PLT Canada provides important support to Indigenous youth and others facing employment barriers.

Project Learning Tree Canada offers a 50% wage match to employers hiring youth into forest, conservation, and parks jobs. The jobs inspire leadership in forest stewardship, foster a passion for science-based research and education, and help youth gain skills and experience so they can transition successfully into future job markets. Green Jobs are considered positions that contribute positively to increasing sustainability in the forest, conservation, and parks sectors.





# SECTION 2

## SFI 2022 FOREST MANAGEMENT STANDARD

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## 1. General

### 1.1 Scope

#### **What the Forest Management Standard Does**

The *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* promotes *sustainable forestry* based on 13 *Principles*, 17 *Objectives*, 41 *Performance Measures* and 1,141 *Indicators*. These requirements include measures to *protect water quality, biodiversity, wildlife habitat, species at risk and Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value*.

#### **What the Forest Management Standard Covers**

The *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* applies to any *Certified Organization* that owns or has management authority for forestlands.

#### **Geographic Application of the Forest Management Standard**

The *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* applies to organizations in the United States and Canada.

### 1.2 Additional Requirements

*Certified Organizations* with *fiber sourcing programs* (acquisition of roundwood and field-manufactured or primary-mill residual chips, pulp, and veneer to support a forest products facility), must also conform to the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*.

Use of the *SFI On-Product* labels and claims shall follow Section 6 — Rules for Use of *SFI On-Product Labels* and *Off-Product Marks* as well as ISO 14020:2000.

### 1.3 References

This standard incorporates, by dated or undated reference, provisions from other publications. These normative and informative references are cited at the appropriate places in the text and the publications are listed hereafter. For dated and undated references, the latest edition of the publication applies.

#### **Normative References**

- i. ISO/IEC 17021:2015 — Conformity Assessment — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems
- ii. ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004 Standardization and related activities — General vocabulary
- iii. Section 8 — SFI Policies
- iv. Section 10 — SFI 2022 Audit Procedures and *Auditor* Qualifications and Accreditation
- v. Section 11 — Communications and Public Reporting
- vi. Section 14 — SFI Definitions

vii. Interpretations for the Requirements for the SFI 2022 *Program*

For the purposes of this standard, the relevant definitions given in ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004 apply, together with the definitions in the SFI Definitions (Section 14).

### **Informative References**

- i. ISO 14001:2015 Environmental Management Systems — Specification with guidance for use
- ii. PEFC ST 1003:2018 Sustainable Forest Management Requirements, November 28, 2018
- iii. PEFC ST 1002:2018 Group Forest Management Certification, November 28, 2018
- iv. Section 7 — Guidance to SFI 2022 Standards
- v. Section 9 — SFI Standards Development and Interpretations Process
- vi. Section 12 — Public Inquiries and Official Complaints
- vii. Section 13 — Optional Modules

## **1.4 Forest Management Standard Principles**

*Certified Organizations* believe forest landowners have an important stewardship responsibility and a commitment to society, and they recognize the importance of maintaining viable commercial, family forest, and *conservation* forest land bases. They support *sustainable forestry* on forestland they manage and promote it on other lands. They support efforts to safeguard private property rights, and to help all private landowners manage their forestland sustainably. In keeping with this responsibility, *Certified Organizations* shall have a written *policy* (or *policies*) to implement and achieve the following *principles*:

### **1. Sustainable Forestry**

To practice *sustainable forestry* means meeting the needs of the present while promoting the ability of future generations to meet their own needs by practicing a land stewardship ethic that integrates *reforestation* and the managing, growing, nurturing and harvesting of trees for useful products, and for the provision of *ecosystem services* such as the *conservation* of soil, air and water quality and quantity, *climate change adaptation and mitigation*, *biological diversity*, *wildlife* and *aquatic habitats*, recreation and aesthetics.

### **2. Forest Productivity and Health**

To provide for regeneration after harvest, maintain the health and productive capacity of the forest land base, and to *protect* and maintain *long-term* soil health and *productivity*. In addition, to *protect* forests from economically, environmentally or socially undesirable impacts of wildfire, pests, diseases, *invasive species* and other damaging agents and thus maintain and improve *long-term forest health* and *productivity*.

### **3. Protection of Water Resources**

To *protect* and maintain the water quality and quantity of water bodies and *riparian areas*, and to conform with forestry *best management practices* to *protect* water quality, to meet the needs of both human communities and ecological systems.

### **4. Protection of Biological Diversity**

To manage forests in ways that *protect* and promote *biological diversity*, including animal and plant species, *wildlife habitats*, *ecologically and culturally important* species, threatened and endangered species (i.e., *Forest with Exceptional Conservation Values*) and native *forest cover types* at multiple scales.

### **5. Aesthetics and Recreation**

To manage the visual impacts of forest operations, and to provide recreational opportunities for the public.

### **6. Protection of Special Sites**

To manage lands that are geologically or *culturally important* in a manner that takes into account their unique qualities.

### **7. Legal Compliance**

To comply with applicable federal, provincial, state, and local *forestry* and related environmental laws, statutes, and regulations.

### **8. Research**

To support advances in sustainable forest management through research, science, and technology.

### **9. Training and Education**

To improve the practice of *sustainable forestry* through training and education *programs*.

### **10. Community Involvement and Social Responsibility, and Respect for Indigenous Rights**

To broaden the practice of *sustainable forestry* on all lands through community involvement, socially responsible practices, and through recognition and respect of *Indigenous Peoples'* rights and *traditional forest-related knowledge*.

### **11. Transparency**

To broaden the understanding of forest certification to the *Forest Management Standard* by documenting certification audits and making the findings publicly available.

### **12. Continual Improvement**

To continually improve the practice of forest management, and to monitor, measure and report performance in achieving the commitment to *sustainable forestry*.

### **13. Responsible Fiber Sourcing**

To use and promote sustainable forestry across a diversity of ownership and management types in the United States and Canada that is both scientifically credible and socially, environmentally,

and economically responsible and to avoid sourcing from *controversial sources* both domestically and internationally.

## 1.5 SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard Objectives

A Summary of the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard Objectives* follows:

### **Objective 1. Forest Management Planning**

To ensure forest management plans include *long-term* sustainable harvest levels and measures to avoid forest conversion or afforestation of *ecologically important areas*.

**Why it Matters:** Ensures that we grow more trees than we harvest, guaranteeing that forests will last for future generations.

### **Objective 2. Forest Health and Productivity**

To ensure *long-term* forest *productivity* and *conservation* of forest resources through prompt *reforestation, afforestation*, deploying *integrated pest management* strategies, *minimized* chemical use, soil *conservation*, and protecting forests from damaging agents.

**Why it Matters:** Ensures that forests remain healthy and resilient which means better forest productivity including providing a reliable and renewable source of sustainably managed fiber for consumer products.

### **Objective 3. Protection and Maintenance of Water Resources**

To *protect* the water quality and water quantity of rivers, streams, lakes, *wetlands*, and other water bodies.

**Why it Matters:** Protects water quality and quantity helps provide safe and abundant drinking water for all.

### **Objective 4. Conservation of Biological Diversity**

To maintain or advance the *conservation of biological diversity* at the *stand-* and *landscape-* level and across a diversity of forest and vegetation cover types and successional stages including the *conservation* of forest plants and animals, *aquatic species, threatened and endangered species, Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value, old-growth forests* and *ecologically important sites*.

**Why it Matters:** Ensures that forests are managed to protect wildlife habitat and conserve biological diversity.

### **Objective 5. Management of Visual Quality and Recreational Benefits**

To manage the visual impact of forest operations and provide recreational opportunities for the public.

**Why it Matters:** Ensures that the public can continue to enjoy the aesthetic values and recreation opportunities of forests.

**Objective 6. Protection of Special Sites**

To manage lands that are geologically or *culturally important* in a manner that takes into account their unique qualities.

**Why it Matters:** Protects special sites that have important geological or cultural values.

**Objective 7. Efficient Use of Fiber Resources**

To *minimize* waste and ensure the efficient use of fiber resources.

**Why it Matters:** Ensures the economic well-being of communities that live and work near forests.

**Objective 8. Recognize and Respect Indigenous Peoples' Rights**

To recognize and respect *Indigenous Peoples'* rights and traditional knowledge.

**Why it Matters:** Recognizing and respecting the *Indigenous Peoples'* rights supports relationship building and shared benefits from sustainably managed forests.

**Objective 9: Climate Smart Forestry**

To ensure forest management activities address climate change adaptation and mitigation measures.

**Why it Matters:** Ensures that SFI-certified forests make an important contribution to addressing the effects of climate change.

**Objective 10. Fire Resilience and Awareness**

To limit susceptibility of forests to undesirable impacts of wildfire and to raise community awareness of fire benefits, risks, and minimization measures.

**Why It Matters:** Ensures that forests are managed proactively relative to fire risk in the face of climate change, so that they can continue to store carbon, provide *habitat* for *wildlife*, and are a source of clean air and water while protecting public safety and human health.

**Objective 11. Legal and Regulatory Compliance**

To comply with all applicable laws and regulations including, international, federal, provincial, state, and *local*.

**Why it Matters:** Compliance with all laws ensures the protection of the environmental and social values of forests.

**Objective 12. Forestry Research, Science and Technology**

To invest in research, science, and technology, upon which sustainable forest management decisions are based.

**Why it Matters:** Forest research means healthier, more productive forests.

### **Objective 13. Training and Education**

To improve the implementation of *sustainable forestry* through appropriate training and education *programs*.

**Why it Matters:** Training and educating foresters means forest management plans are more accurately implemented, ensuring the well-being of our forests.

### **Objective 14. Community Involvement and Landowner Outreach**

To broaden the practice of *sustainable forestry* through public outreach, education, and involvement, and to support the efforts of *SFI Implementation Committees*.

**Why it Matters:** Outreach and education improves the public's understanding of how important sustainable forestry is to local and global issues.

### **Objective 15. Public Land Management Responsibilities**

To participate and implement sustainable forest management on *public lands*.

**Why it Matters:** Protects the environmental, social, and economic values of public forests.

### **Objective 16. Communications and Public Reporting**

To increase transparency and to annually report progress on conformance with the *SFI Forest Management Standard*.

**Why it Matters:** Reporting the results of third-party audits increases the public's understanding of forest certification.

### **Objective 17. Management Review and Continual Improvement**

To promote continual improvement in the practice of *sustainable forestry* by conducting a management review and monitoring performance.

**Why it Matters:** Encourages continual improvement of sustainable forestry practices, a cornerstone of sustainable forestry.

## **1.6 SFI 2022 Forest Land Management Requirements**

### **Objective 1. Forest Management Planning**

To ensure forest management plans include *long-term* sustainable harvest levels and measures to avoid forest conversion or *afforestation* of *ecologically important* areas.

**Performance Measure 1.1.** *Certified Organizations* shall ensure that forest management plans include *long-term* harvest levels that are sustainable and consistent with appropriate *growth-and-yield models*.

Indicators:

1. Forest management planning at a level appropriate to the size and scale of the operation, including:
  - a. a *long-term* resources analysis;

- b. a periodic or ongoing *forest inventory*;
  - c. a *land classification* system;
  - d. *biodiversity* at *landscape* scales;
  - e. soils inventory and maps, where available;
  - f. access to and use of *growth-and-yield modeling* capabilities;
  - g. up-to-date maps or a *geographic information system (GIS)*;
  - h. recommended sustainable harvest levels for areas available for harvest; and
  - i. consideration of non-timber issues such as recreation, tourism, pilot projects and economic incentive *programs* to promote water *protection*, carbon storage, *bioenergy feedstock* production, or *biological diversity conservation*, or to address climate-induced ecosystem change.
2. Documented current harvest trends fall within *long-term* sustainable levels identified in the forest management plan.
  3. A *forest inventory* system and a method to calculate growth and yield is used to determine annual and/or periodic harvest levels.
  4. Periodic updates of *forest inventory* and recalculation of planned harvests to account for changes in growth due to *productivity* increases or decreases, including but not limited to: improved data, *long-term* drought, fertilization, *climate change*, changes in forest land ownership and tenure, or *forest health*.
  5. Documentation of forest management (such as: *planting*, fertilization, and thinning) consistent with assumptions in harvest plans.
  6. Assessment of the local or regional social, environmental, and economic effects of forest management operations contained in the forest management plan.

**Performance Measure 1.2.** *Certified Organizations* shall not convert one *forest cover type* to another *forest cover type* unless an assessment has been conducted to determine ecological impacts and provide appropriate justification.

Indicators:

1. *Certified Organizations* shall not convert one *forest cover type* to another *forest cover type*, unless the conversion:
  - a. does not convert *native forest cover types* that are rare, *ecologically important*, or that put any *native forest cover types* at risk of becoming rare; i and
  - b. does not create significant adverse impacts on *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value*, *old growth forests*, forest critical to *threatened and endangered species*, or *special sites* or *ecologically important* non-forest eco-systems; and
  - c. includes objectives for *long-term* outcomes that support maintaining *native forest cover types* and ecological function; and
  - d. is in compliance with relevant national and regional policy and legislation related to land use and forest management.
2. A proposed conversion deemed appropriate per 1.2.1, and which has considered impacts relative to scale, may be implemented subject to a landscape assessment that considers:



- a. a response to address *forest health* issues such as pests or pathogens, or proactive consideration of anticipated impacts of fire or climate change, reforestation challenges, or riparian *protection* needs, provided that such justification is supported by the *best scientific information*.
- b. site *productivity*, economics, and/or stand quality.
- c. ecological impacts of the conversion at the site and *landscape* scale, as well as consideration for any appropriate mitigation measures; and
- d. appropriate consultation with local communities, *Indigenous Peoples*, and other *stakeholders* who could be affected by such activities.

**Performance Measure 1.3.** *Certified Organizations* shall not have within the scope of their certification to this *SFI Standard*, forest lands that have been converted to non-forest land use.

Indicator:

1. Forest lands converted to other land uses shall not be certified to this *SFI standard*. This does not apply to forest lands used for forest and *wildlife* management such as *wildlife* food plots or infrastructure such as forest roads, log processing areas, trails, etc.

**Performance Measure 1.4.** *Certified Organizations* shall not afforest in locations which negatively impact *ecologically important natural communities, threatened and endangered species, or native natural communities* which could be at risk of becoming rare.

Indicator:

1. Any *afforestation* activity must include an evaluation of the proposed site to determine the presence of:
  - a. *ecologically important natural communities, or*
  - b. *threatened and endangered species, or*
  - c. *native natural communities* that could be at risk of becoming rare.
2. *Afforestation* shall not occur on that location if the evaluation determines a negative impact to:
  - a. *ecologically important natural communities, or*
  - b. *threatened and endangered species, or*
  - c. *native natural communities* which could be at risk of becoming rare.

## **Objective 2. Forest Health and Productivity**

To ensure *long-term* forest *productivity, forest health* and *conservation* of forest resources through prompt *reforestation, afforestation*, deploying *integrated pest management* strategies, *minimized* chemical use, soil *conservation*, and protecting forests from damaging agents.

**Performance Measure 2.1.** *Certified Organizations* shall promptly reforest after final harvest.

Indicators:

1. Documented *reforestation* plans, including designation of all harvest areas for either natural, planted, or direct seeded regeneration and prompt *reforestation*, unless delayed for site-specific environmental or *forest health* considerations or legal requirements, through

*planting* within two years or two *planting* seasons, or by planned *natural regeneration* methods within five years.

2. Clear criteria to judge adequate regeneration and appropriate actions to correct understocked areas and achieve acceptable species composition and stocking rates for *planting, direct seeding, and natural regeneration*.
3. *Plantings* of *native* or non-*invasive* naturalized *tree species* are preferred. In exceptional circumstances where *exotic tree species* are being planted, they should not increase risk to *native* ecosystems.
4. *Protection* of desirable or planned advanced *natural regeneration* during harvest.

**Performance Measure 2.2.** *Certified Organizations* shall have a *program* to *minimize* chemical use required to achieve management *objectives* while protecting employees, neighbors, the public and the environment, including *wildlife* and *aquatic habitats*.

Indicators:

1. Pest management shall be implemented through the use of *integrated pest management*.
2. *Minimized* chemical use required to achieve management *objectives*.
3. Use of *least-toxic and narrowest-spectrum pesticides* necessary to achieve management *objectives*.
4. Use of pesticides registered for the intended use and applied in accordance with label requirements.
5. The World Health Organization (WHO) type 1A and 1B pesticides shall be prohibited, except where no other viable alternative is available.
6. Use of pesticides banned under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (2001) shall be prohibited.
7. Supervision of forest chemical applications by state- or provincially trained or certified applicators.
8. Use of management practices appropriate to the situation, such as:
  - a. notification of adjoining landowners or nearby residents concerning applications and chemicals used;
  - b. appropriate multilingual signs or oral warnings;
  - c. control of public road access during and immediately after applications;
  - d. designation of streamside and other needed buffer strips;
  - e. use of positive shutoff and minimal-drift spray valves;
  - f. aerial application of forest chemicals parallel to buffer zones to limit drift;
  - g. monitoring of water quality or safeguards to ensure proper equipment use and *protection* of streams, lakes, and other water bodies;
  - h. appropriate transportation and storage of chemicals;

- i. use of spill response plans and chemical spill kits;
- j. filing of required state or provincial reports; and/or
- k. use of methods to ensure *protection of threatened and endangered species*.

**Performance Measure 2.3.** *Certified Organizations* shall implement practices that *protect* and maintain forest and soil *productivity* and *soil health*.

Indicators:

1. Process to identify soils vulnerable to compaction, and use of appropriate methods, including the use of soil maps where available, to avoid excessive soil disturbance.
2. Use of erosion control measures to *minimize* the loss of soil and impacts to site *productivity*.
3. Post-harvest conditions conducive to maintaining site *productivity* (such as: retained down woody debris and *minimized skid trails*).
4. Retention of vigorous trees during partial harvesting, consistent with scientific silvicultural standards for the area.
5. *Practices* that address harvesting and site preparation to *protect* soil *productivity* and *soil health*.
6. Road construction, skidding layout, and harvest plans designed to *minimize* impacts to soil *productivity* and *soil health*.

**Performance Measure 2.4.** *Certified Organizations* shall manage to *protect* forests from damaging agents, such as environmentally or economically undesirable levels of wildfire, pests, diseases, and *invasive species*, to maintain and improve *long-term forest health, productivity, and economic viability*.

Indicators:

1. *Program* to *protect* forests from damaging agents.
2. Management to promote healthy and productive forest conditions to reduce susceptibility to damaging agents.
3. Participation in, and support of, fire and pest prevention and control *programs*.

**Performance Measure 2.5.** *Certified Organizations* that deploy *improved planting stock*, including *varietal seedlings*, shall use best scientific methods.

Indicator:

1. *Program* for appropriate research, testing, evaluation, and deployment of *improved planting stock*, including *varietal seedlings*.

### **Objective 3. Protection and Maintenance of Water Resources**

To *protect* the water quality and water quantity of rivers, streams, lakes, *wetlands*, and other water bodies.

**Performance Measure 3.1.** *Certified Organizations* shall meet or exceed all applicable federal, provincial, state, and local water quality laws and meet or exceed *best management practices*.

Indicators:

1. *Program* to implement federal, state, or provincial water quality *best management practices* during all phases of management activities.
2. Contract provisions that specify conformance to *best management practices*.
3. Monitoring of overall *best management practices* implementation.

**Performance Measure 3.2.** *Certified Organizations* shall implement water, *wetland*, and *riparian protection programs* based on climate, soil type, terrain, vegetation, ecological function, harvesting system, state *best management practices (BMPs)*, provincial guidelines and other applicable factors.

Indicators:

1. *Program* addressing management and *protection* of water quality of rivers, streams, lakes, *wetlands*, other water bodies and *riparian areas* during all phases of management.
2. *Program* to *protect* water quantity during all phases of management.
3. *Programs* that address wet-weather events in order to maintain water quality such as: *forest inventory* systems, identification of wet-weather tracts and definitions of acceptable operating conditions.

### **Objective 4. Conservation of Biological Diversity**

To maintain or advance the *conservation* of *biological diversity* at the *stand-* and *landscape-*level and across a diversity of forest and vegetation cover types and successional stages including the *conservation* of forest plants and animals, *aquatic species*, *threatened and endangered species*, *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value*, *old-growth forests*, and *ecologically important* sites.

**Performance Measure 4.1.** *Certified Organizations* shall conserve *biological diversity*.

Indicators:

1. *Program* to incorporate the *conservation* of *biological diversity*, including *native species*, *wildlife habitats* and ecological community types at *stand* and *landscape* levels, through the use of *best scientific information* including the incorporation of research results.

2. Development of criteria and implementation of practices, as guided by regionally based *best scientific information*, to retain *stand-level wildlife habitat* elements such as snags, stumps, mast trees, down woody debris, den trees and nest trees.
3. *Program* to individually and/or through cooperative efforts such as *SFI Implementation Committees*, support diversity of *native forest cover types* and age or size classes that enhance *biological diversity*, by incorporating the results of analysis of documented diversity at *landscape* and ownership/tenure levels, to ensure the contribution of the managed area to the diversity of conditions that promote *biodiversity*.
4. *Certified Organizations* shall individually and/or through cooperative efforts such as *SFI Implementation Committees*, participate in or incorporate the results of credible, relevant state, provincial, or regional *conservation* planning and priority-setting efforts to conserve biological diversity and incorporate the results of these efforts in forest management planning. Credible priority-setting efforts include state and provincial *wildlife* action plans, state forest action plans, relevant *habitat conservation* plans, provincial *wildlife* recovery plans, Indigenous planning processes or ecoregional plans.
5. *Program* to address *conservation* of *ecologically important* species and *natural communities*.
6. Identification and *protection* of *non-forested wetlands*, including bogs, peatlands, fens and marshes, and *vernal pools* that are *ecologically important*.
7. Participation in *programs* and demonstration of activities as appropriate to limit the introduction, spread and impact of *invasive species* that directly threaten or are likely to threaten *native* plant and animal communities.
8. Consider the role of natural disturbances, including opening size, structural retention, the use of prescribed or natural fire where appropriate, and *forest health* threats in relation to *biological diversity* when developing forest management plans.

**Performance Measure 4.2.** *Certified Organizations* shall *protect threatened and endangered* species, *critically imperiled* and *imperiled* species, and *natural communities* (*Forests with Exceptional Conservation Values*), and *old-growth forests*.

Indicators:

1. *Program* to *protect threatened and endangered* species.
2. *Program* to locate and *protect* known sites flora and fauna associated with viable occurrences of *critically imperiled* and *imperiled* species and ecological communities, defined as *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value*. *Programs* for *protection* may be developed independently and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committees* and may include *Certified Organization* managers of *SFI-certified organizations*, cooperation with other *stakeholders*, or use of easements, *conservation* land sales, exchanges, or other *conservation* strategies.
3. Support of and participation in *programs* for the *conservation* of *old-growth forests* in the region of ownership or forest tenure.

**Performance Measure 4.3.** *Certified Organizations* shall manage to *protect ecologically important* sites in a manner that takes into account their unique qualities.

Indicators:

1. Use of information such as existing NatureServe or natural heritage data or expert advice in identifying or selecting *ecologically important* sites for *protection*.
2. Appropriate mapping, cataloging and management of identified *ecologically important* sites.

**Performance Measure 4.4.** *Certified Organizations* shall apply knowledge gained through research, science, technology, field experience and the results of monitoring of the effectiveness of conservation-related programs to manage *wildlife habitat* and contribute to the *conservation of biological diversity*.

Indicators:

1. Collection of information on *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value* and other *biodiversity*-related data through *forest inventory* processes, mapping, or participation in external *programs*, such as NatureServe, state or provincial heritage *programs*, or other reputable organizations. Such participation may include providing non-proprietary scientific information, time, and assistance by staff, or in-kind or direct financial support.
2. A *program* to incorporate data collected, research results and field applications of *biodiversity* and ecosystem research into forest management decisions.
3. Individually or collaboratively participate in or support research that demonstrates the *conservation* outcomes resulting from management strategies.

## **Objective 5. Management of Visual Quality and Recreational Benefits**

To manage the visual impact of forest operations and provide recreational opportunities for the public.

**Performance Measure 5.1.** *Certified Organizations* shall manage the impact of harvesting on *visual quality*.

Indicators:

1. *Program* to address *visual quality management*.
2. Incorporation of aesthetic considerations in harvesting, road, landing design and management, and other management activities where visual impacts are a concern.

**Performance Measure 5.2.** *Certified Organizations* shall manage the size, shape, and placement of clearcut harvests.

Indicators:

1. Average size of clearcut harvest areas does not exceed 120 acres (50 hectares), except when necessary to meet regulatory requirements, achieve ecological *objectives* or to respond to *forest health* emergencies or other natural catastrophes.
2. Documentation through internal records of clearcut size and the process for calculating average size.

**Performance Measure 5.3.** *Certified Organizations* shall adopt a *green-up requirement* or alternative methods that provide for *visual quality*.

Indicators:

1. *Program* implementing the *green-up requirement* or alternative methods.
2. Harvest area tracking system to demonstrate conformance with the *green-up requirement* or alternative methods.
3. Trees in clearcut harvest areas are at least three years old or five feet (1.5 meters) high at the desired level of stocking before adjacent areas are clearcut, or as appropriate to address operational and economic considerations, alternative methods to reach the *performance measure* are utilized by the *Certified Organization*

**Performance Measure 5.4.** *Certified Organizations* shall support and promote recreational opportunities for the public.

Indicator:

1. Provide recreational opportunities for the public, where consistent with forest management *objectives*.

## **Objective 6. Protection of Special Sites**

To manage lands that are geologically or *culturally important* in a manner that takes into account their unique qualities.

**Performance Measure 6.1.** *Certified Organizations* shall have a *program* to identify *special sites* and manage and protect them in a manner appropriate for their unique features.

Indicators:

1. Use of information such as existing natural heritage data, expert advice or *stakeholder* consultation, or consultation with *Indigenous Peoples* in identifying or selecting *special sites* for *protection*.
2. Appropriate mapping, cataloging and management of identified *special sites*.

## **Objective 7. Efficient Use of Fiber Resources**

To *minimize* waste and ensure the efficient use of fiber resources.

**Performance Measure 7.1.** *Certified Organizations* shall employ appropriate forest harvesting technology and in-woods manufacturing processes to *minimize* waste and ensure efficient utilization of forest resources where consistent with other *SFI Standard objectives*.

Indicator:

1. *Program* or monitoring system to ensure efficient utilization, using provisions such as:
  - a. management of harvest residue (such as slash, limbs, tops) considers economic, social and environmental factors (such as organic and nutrient value to future forests and the potential of increased fuels build-up) and other utilization needs;
  - b. training or incentives to encourage loggers to enhance utilization;
  - c. exploration of markets for underutilized species and low-grade wood and alternative markets (such as bioenergy markets); or
  - d. periodic inspections and reports noting utilization and product separation.

## **Objective 8. Recognize and Respect Indigenous Peoples' Rights**

To recognize and respect *Indigenous Peoples'* rights and traditional knowledge.

**Performance Measure 8.1.** *Certified Organizations* shall recognize and respect *Indigenous Peoples'* rights.

Indicators:

1. *Certified Organizations* shall develop and implement a written *policy* acknowledging a commitment to recognize and respect the rights of *Indigenous Peoples*. This *policy* shall provide reference to a *program* that includes:
  - a. use of available resources and information to identify the *Indigenous Peoples* whose rights may be affected by the *Certified Organization's* forest management activities.
  - b. recognition of the established framework of legal, customary, and traditional rights such as outlined in:
    - i. the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
    - ii. federal, provincial, and state laws and regulations
    - iii. treaties, agreements or other constructive arrangements among governments and *Indigenous Peoples*.
  - c. appropriate training of personnel and contractors so that the *Certified Organization* is competent to fulfill their responsibilities under Objective 8 of the Forest Management Standard.
2. The written *policy* shall be publicly available.

**Performance Measure 8.2.** *Certified Organizations* with forest *management responsibilities on public lands* shall confer with *Indigenous Peoples* whose rights may be affected by the *Certified Organization's* forest management practices.

Indicator:

1. *Program* that includes communicating with affected *Indigenous Peoples* to enable *Certified Organizations* to:
  - a. understand and respect *traditional forest-related knowledge*;
  - b. identify and *protect* spiritually, historically, or *culturally important* sites;
  - c. address the use of *non-timber forest products* of value;



- d. communicate through processes that respect their representative institutions, using appropriate protocols;
- e. provide opportunities to review forest management plans and forest management practices; and
- f. respond to inquiries and concerns received.

**Performance Measure 8.3.** *Certified Organizations* are encouraged to communicate with and shall respond to *Indigenous Peoples* whose rights may be affected by forest management practices on the *Certified Organization's* private lands.

Indicators:

1. *Certified Organizations* are aware of *traditional forest-related knowledge*, such as known cultural heritage sites, the use of wood in traditional buildings and crafts, and flora that may be used in cultural practices for food, ceremonies, or medicine.
2. Respond to *Indigenous Peoples'* inquiries and concerns received.

## **Objective 9. Climate Smart Forestry**

To ensure forest management activities address climate change adaptation and mitigation measures.

**Performance Measure 9.1** *Certified Organizations* shall individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committees* or other partners identify and address the climate change risks to forests and forest operations and develop appropriate adaptation objectives and strategies. Strategies are based on *best scientific information*.

Indicators:

1. Based on *best scientific information*, *Certified Organizations* shall identify climate change risks and prioritize them based on the likelihood, nature, severity of their expected impact to their forest lands or forest tenures.
2. *Certified Organizations* shall develop an adaptation plan to address priority climate change risks, via effective implementation of the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* requirements for potential adaptive management including:
  - a. periodic updates of forest inventory and recalculation of planned harvests as appropriate to account for changes in growth due to productivity increases or decreases, including improved data, *long-term* drought, fertilization, climate change, or *forest health*;
  - b. access to *growth and yield modeling* capabilities;
  - c. documented harvest trends within *long-term* sustainable levels identified in the forest management plan, and
  - d. appropriate research, testing, evaluation, and deployment of *improved planting stock*, including *varietal seedlings*.
3. *Certified Organizations* shall document how their adaptation plan objectives and strategies fit within broader regional climate adaptation strategies and plans, where they exist.

4. *Certified Organizations* shall report annually to SFI Inc. their progress towards achieving climate change adaptation strategies and plans.

**Performance Measure 9.2** *Certified Organizations* shall individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committees* or other partners identify and address opportunities to mitigate the effects associated with its forest operations on climate change.

Indicators:

1. Based on *best scientific information*, *Certified Organizations* shall identify and address opportunities to enhance the climate benefits associated with forest management operations on the forests they own or manage via effective implementation of the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* requirements such as:
  - a. Objective 2 – Forest Health and Productivity; Objective 10 – Fire Smart Forestry; and/or other silvicultural or operational *practices* to enhance the climate benefits associated with the forest operations.
2. Based on *best scientific information*, *Certified Organizations* shall identify and address opportunities to enhance ecosystem resilience for the forests they own or manage via effective implementation of the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* requirements including:
  - a. prompt *reforestation* or planned *natural reforestation* as per Indicator 2.2.1;
  - b. adequate regeneration and appropriate actions to correct understocked areas, and
  - c. evaluation for *afforestation* of areas that are not *ecologically important*, and
  - d. protection of desirable or planned advanced regeneration during harvest and the retention of vigorous trees during partial harvest.
3. Based on *best scientific information*, *Certified Organizations* shall develop a program to identify and address greenhouse gas emissions within their operational control.
4. *Certified Organizations* shall report annually to SFI Inc. their measures to mitigate climate change associated with forest operations.

## **Objective 10. Fire Resilience and Awareness**

To limit susceptibility of forests to undesirable impacts of wildfire and to raise community awareness of fire benefits, risks, and minimization measures.

**Performance Measure 10.1** On the forests they own or manage, *Certified Organizations* shall limit susceptibility to undesirable impacts of wildfire, promote healthy and resilient forest conditions through management techniques, actions and/or policies, and support restoration of forests following wildfire damage.

Indicators:

1. *Program* to evaluate the risk of undesirable impacts of wildfire and the role of fire on the forests they own or manage.

2. Use of *stand* and *landscape* level management techniques, actions and/or policies to promote *forest health* and resilience, and to mitigate the likelihood of undesirable impacts of wildfire, such as, prescribed fire, cultural burning, thinning, or hazardous fuel reduction where appropriate based on risk.
3. Use of management techniques to address wildfire damage, mitigate negative impacts to water and soils, and to promote forest restoration and future forest resilience.

**Performance Measure 10.2** *Certified Organizations* shall individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving government agencies, *SFI Implementation Committees*, Project Learning Tree, or other partners, engage in efforts to raise awareness of and take action towards benefits of fire management and minimization of undesirable impacts of wildfire.

Indicators:

1. Participation in, or support of, local, state, provincial, federal, or Indigenous fire management and prevention programs.
2. Participation in, or support of, programs to promote benefits of fire management, and raise awareness about the environmental, economic, and social risks of undesirable impacts of wildfire to values such as carbon emissions, water quality and quantity, air quality, species *habitat*, public safety, and human health.

## **Objective 11. Legal and Regulatory Compliance**

To comply with all applicable laws and regulations including, international, federal, provincial, state, and *local*.

**Performance Measure 11.1.** *Certified Organizations* shall comply with applicable federal, provincial, state, and local *forestry* and environmental laws and regulations.

Indicators:

1. Access to relevant laws and regulations.
2. System to achieve compliance with applicable federal, provincial, state, or local laws, and regulations.
3. Demonstration of commitment to legal compliance through *available regulatory action information*.

**Performance Measure 11.2.** *Certified Organizations* shall comply with all applicable social laws at the federal, provincial, state, and local levels in the country in which the *Certified Organization* operates.

Indicators:

1. Written *policy* demonstrating commitment to comply with social laws, such as those covering civil rights, equal employment opportunities, gender equality, diversity inclusion, anti-discrimination and anti-harassment measures, workers' compensation, *Indigenous*

*Peoples' rights, workers', and communities' right to know, prevailing wages, workers' right to organize, and occupational health and safety.*

2. *Forestry enterprises* will respect the rights of workers and labor representatives in a manner that encompasses the intent of the International Labor Organization (ILO) core conventions.

## **Objective 12. Forestry Research, Science and Technology**

To invest in research, science, and technology, upon which sustainable forest management decisions are based.

**Performance Measure 12.1.** *Certified Organizations* shall individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committees*, associations or other partners provide in-kind support or funding for forest research to improve sustainable management of forest resources, and the environmental benefits and performance of forest products.

Indicators:

1. Financial or in-kind support of research, collaboratives, or knowledge transfer to address key themes of relevance in the region of operations as identified by *Certified Organizations*, local *stakeholders*, communities and/or *Indigenous Peoples*. Examples could include, but are not limited to, the following topics:
  - a. climate change adaptation and mitigation;
  - b. water quality and quantity;
  - c. biodiversity, *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value*, and species maintenance and recovery;
  - d. *landscape* ecology;
  - e. Indigenous *traditional forest-related knowledge*;
  - f. *ecosystem services* or *non-timber forest products*;
  - g. community engagement;
  - h. *forest health* and *productivity*;
  - i. support for Forest Inventory Analysis (FIA);
  - j. SFI sponsored conservation research;
  - k. the role of forests in the bioeconomy, and
  - l. or similar themes which build broader understanding of the benefits and effects of sustainable forest management or sustainable supply chains.
2. Ensure that knowledge gained through research is shared, to the extent possible, to positively influence sustainable forest management.

**Performance Measure 12.2.** *Certified Organizations* shall individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committees*, associations or other partners develop, contribute to, or use national, state, provincial or regional analyses in support of their *sustainable forestry programs*.

Indicator:

1. Participation, individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committees* and/or associations at the national, state, provincial or regional level, in the development of information such as:

- a. regeneration assessments;
- b. *growth and drain* assessments;
- c. *best management practices* implementation and conformance;
- d. *biodiversity conservation* information for family forest owners;
- e. social, cultural, or economic benefit assessments; and
- f. *landscape-scale biodiversity* assessments which clarify the contributory role of sustainable forest management.

### **Objective 13. Training and Education**

To improve the implementation of *sustainable forestry* through appropriate training and education *programs*.

**Performance Measure 13.1.** *Certified Organizations* shall require appropriate training of personnel and contractors so that they are competent to fulfill their responsibilities under the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*.

Indicators:

1. Written statement of commitment to the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* communicated throughout the organization, particularly to facility and woodland managers, and field foresters.
2. Assignment and understanding of roles and responsibilities for achieving *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard objectives*.
3. Staff education and training sufficient to their roles and responsibilities.
4. Contractor education and training sufficient to their roles and responsibilities.
5. *Certified Organizations* shall have written agreements for the use of *qualified logging professionals*, or *wood producers* that have completed training *programs* and are recognized as *qualified logging professionals and/or certified logging companies*.

**Performance Measure 13.2.** *Certified Organizations* shall work individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committees*, logging or *forestry* associations, or appropriate agencies or others in the *forestry* community to foster improvement in the professionalism of *wood producers* specific to *qualified logging professionals*.

Indicators:

1. Participation in or support of *SFI Implementation Committees* to establish criteria and identify delivery mechanisms for *wood producer* core training courses that allow individuals to attain *qualified logging professional status*. These criteria shall address at least the following:
  - a. awareness of *sustainable forestry principles* and SFI's work across four pillars: standards, conservation, community, and education;
  - b. *best management practices*, including streamside management and road construction, maintenance, and retirement;

- c. awareness of responsibilities under the U.S. Endangered Species Act, the Canadian Species at Risk Act, *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value (critically imperiled and imperiled species and ecological communities)*, and other measures to *protect biodiversity and wildlife habitat*;
  - d. logging safety;
  - e. U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) regulations, wage and hour rules, and other provincial, state, and local employment laws, and
  - f. other topics identified by *Certified Organizations* and/or *SFI Implementation Committees* that improve their responsibilities in meeting the SFI 2022 standards.
2. Participation in or support of *SFI Implementation Committees* to establish criteria and identify delivery mechanisms for *wood producer* continuing education training courses that shall be taken by *qualified logging professionals* at least once every two years to maintain their status. The continuing education training course(s) shall address one or more of the following topics:
- a. awareness of *sustainable forestry principles* and SFI's work across four pillars: standards, conservation, community, and education;
  - b. *best management practices*, including streamside management and road construction, maintenance, and retirement;
  - c. *reforestation, invasive species management, forest resource conservation, aesthetics and special sites*;
  - d. awareness of rare forested *natural communities* as identified by provincial or state agencies, or by credible organizations such as NatureServe and The Nature Conservancy;
  - e. transportation issues;
  - f. business management;
  - g. public policy and outreach;
  - h. awareness of emerging technologies;
  - i. logging safety; or
  - j. other topics identified by *Certified Organization* and/or *SFI Implementation Committees* that improve their responsibilities in meeting the SFI 2022 Standards.

## **Objective 14. Community Involvement and Landowner Outreach**

To broaden the practice of *sustainable forestry* through public outreach, education, and involvement, and to support the efforts of *SFI Implementation Committees*.

**Performance Measure 14.1.** *Certified Organizations* shall support and promote efforts by consulting foresters, state, provincial and federal agencies, state or local groups, professional societies, *conservation organizations, Indigenous Peoples* and governments, community groups, sporting organizations, labor, universities, extension agencies, the *American Tree Farm System*<sup>®</sup> and/or other landowner cooperative *programs* to apply *principles* of sustainable forest management.

Indicators:

1. Support, including financial, for efforts of *SFI Implementation Committees*.

2. Support, individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committees*, education and outreach to forest landowners describing the importance and providing implementation guidance on:
  - a. *best management practices*;
  - b. *reforestation and afforestation*;
  - c. *visual quality management*;
  - d. *conservation objectives*, such as critical *wildlife habitat* elements, *biodiversity*, *threatened and endangered species*, and *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value*;
  - e. management of harvest residue (e.g., slash, limbs, tops) considers economic, social, environmental factors (e.g., organic, and nutrient value to future forests) and other utilization needs;
  - f. control of *invasive species*;
  - g. characteristics of *special sites*; and
  - h. reduction of wildfire risk;
  - i. use of *qualified logging professionals*, *qualified resource professionals* and/or *certified logging companies*;
  - j. awareness of SFI, and
  - k. reporting of inconsistent practices.
  
3. Participation in efforts to support or promote *conservation* of managed forests through voluntary market-based incentive *programs* such as current-use taxation *programs*, *Forest Legacy Program*, *conservation easements* federal, state, or provincial cost share programs, or SFI Conservation Grants.

**Performance Measure 14.2.** *Certified Organizations* shall individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committees* support and promote, at the state, provincial or other appropriate levels, mechanisms for public outreach, education and involvement related to sustainable forest management.

Indicator:

1. Periodic educational opportunities for the public promoting *sustainable forestry*, such as
  - a. field tours, seminars, websites, webinars or workshops;
  - b. educational trips;
  - c. self-guided forest management trails;
  - d. publication of articles, educational pamphlets, or newsletters; or
  - e. support for national, state, provincial, and local *forestry* organizations and soil and water *conservation* districts.
  - f. engagement and support of teachers and/or students through programs such as Project Learning Tree.

**Performance Measure 14.3.** *Certified Organizations* shall, individually and/or through cooperative efforts including *SFI Implementation Committees*, establish, at the state, provincial, or other appropriate levels, procedures to address concerns raised by loggers, consulting foresters, employees, unions, *stakeholders*, the public or other *Certified Organizations* regarding management that appears inconsistent with the SFI standards principles and objectives.

Indicators:

1. Support for *SFI Implementation Committees* (e.g., toll-free numbers and other efforts) to address concerns about apparent nonconformance.
2. Process to receive and respond to public inquiries. *SFI Implementation Committees* shall submit data annually to *SFI Inc.* regarding concerns received and responses.

### **Objective 15: Public Land Management Responsibilities**

To participate and implement sustainable forest management on *public lands*.

**Performance Measure 15.1.** *Certified Organizations* with forest management responsibilities on *public lands* shall participate in the development of *public land* planning and management processes.

Indicators:

1. Involvement in *public land* planning and management activities with appropriate governmental entities and the public.
2. Appropriate contact with local *stakeholders* over forest management issues through state, provincial, federal, or independent collaboration.

### **Objective 16. Communications and Public Reporting**

To increase transparency and to annually report progress on conformance with the *SFI Forest Management Standard*.

**Performance Measure 16.1.** A *Certified Organization* shall provide a summary audit report, prepared by the *certification body*, to *SFI Inc.* after the successful completion of a certification, recertification, or surveillance audit to the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*.

Indicator:

1. The summary audit report submitted by the *Certified Organizations* (one copy must be in English), shall include, at a minimum,
  - a. a description of the audit process, *objectives* and scope;
  - b. a description of substitute *indicators*, if any, used in the audit and a rationale for each;
  - c. the name of *Certified Organization* that was audited, including its SFI representative;
  - d. a general description of the *Certified Organization's* forestland included in the audit;
  - e. the name of the *certification body* and *lead auditor* (names of the *audit team* members, including *technical experts* may be included at the discretion of the *audit team* and *Certified Organization*);
  - f. the dates the audit was conducted and completed;
  - g. a summary of the findings, including general descriptions of evidence of conformity and any nonconformities and corrective action plans to address them, opportunities for improvement, and exceptional management; and
  - h. the certification decision.

The summary audit report will be posted on the [SFI Inc. website](#) for public review.



**Performance Measure 16.2.** *Certified Organizations* shall report annually to *SFI Inc.* on their conformance with the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*.

Indicators:

1. Prompt response to the SFI annual progress report survey.
2. Record keeping for all the categories of information needed for SFI annual progress report surveys.
3. Maintenance of copies of past survey reports to document progress and improvements to demonstrate conformance to the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*.

### **Objective 17. Management Review and Continual Improvement**

To promote continual improvement in the practice of *sustainable forestry* by conducting a management review and monitoring performance.

**Performance Measure 17.1.** *Certified Organizations* shall establish a management review system to examine findings and progress in implementing the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*, to make appropriate improvements in *programs*, and to inform their employees of changes.

Indicators:

1. System to review commitments, *programs*, and procedures to evaluate effectiveness.
2. System for collecting, reviewing, and reporting information to management regarding progress in achieving *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard objectives* and *performance measures*, including measures to reduce the negative impacts from forest management operations.
3. Annual review of progress by management and determination of changes and improvements necessary to continually improve conformance to the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*.



# SECTION 3

## SFI 2022 FIBER SOURCING STANDARD

October 7, 2021

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## 1. General

### 1.1 Scope

#### **What the *Fiber Sourcing Standard* Does**

The *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* promotes responsible *forestry* based on 13 *Principles*, 11 *Objectives*, 29 *Performance Measures* and 59 *Indicators*. These *fiber sourcing* requirements include measures to broaden the practice of *biodiversity*, use forestry *best management practices* to *protect* water quality, provide outreach to landowners and utilize the services of forest management and harvesting professionals.

#### **What the *Fiber Sourcing Standard* Covers**

The *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* applies to any organization with a *fiber sourcing* program that acquires roundwood or field-manufactured or primary-mill residual chips to support a forest products facility.

*SFI-certified organizations* that source all of their *primary sources* from forests certified to the *SFI Forest Management Standard*, *American Tree Farm Standard* or *CSA Z809 Standard* do not have to certify to the *SFI Fiber Sourcing Standard*.

*SFI-certified organizations* that do not own a manufacturing facility but who purchase roundwood for the purposes of reselling without a SFI claim are not required to certify to the *SFI Fiber Sourcing Standard*.

#### **Geographic Application of the *Fiber Sourcing Standard***

The *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* applies to organizations in the United States and Canada that procure wood domestically or globally.

### 1.2 Additional Requirements

*SFI-certified organizations* that own or have management authority for forestlands must also conform to the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*.

Use of the SFI on-product labels and claims shall follow Section 6 — Rules for Use of *SFI On-Product Labels and Off-Product Marks* as well as ISO 14020:2000.

### 1.3 References

This standard incorporates, by dated or undated reference, provisions from other publications. These normative and informative references are cited at the appropriate places in the text and the publications are listed hereafter. For dated and undated references, the latest edition of the publication applies.

## Normative References

- i. ISO/IEC 17021:2015 — Conformity Assessment — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems
- ii. ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004 Standardization and related activities — General vocabulary
- iii. Section 8 — SFI Policies
- iv. Section 10 — SFI 2022 Audit Procedures and *Auditor* Qualifications and Accreditation
- v. Section 11 — Communications and Public Reporting
- vi. Section 14 — SFI Definitions
- vii. Interpretations for the Requirements for the SFI 2022 Program

For the purposes of this standard, the relevant definitions given in ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004 apply, together with the definitions in the SFI Definitions (Section 14).

## Informative References

- i. ISO 14001:2015 Environmental Management Systems — Specification with guidance for use
- ii. PEFC ST 1003:2018 Sustainable Forest Management Requirements, November 28, 2018
- iii. Section 7 — Guidance to *SFI 2022 Standards*
- iv. Section 9 — SFI Standards Development and Interpretations Process
- v. Section 12 — Public Inquiries and Official Complaints
- vi. Section 13 — Optional Modules

## 1.4 Fiber Sourcing Standard Principles

*SFI-certified organizations* believe forest landowners have an important stewardship responsibility and a commitment to society, and they recognize the importance of maintaining viable commercial, family forest, and *conservation* forest land bases. They support *sustainable forestry* on forestland they manage and promote it on other lands. They support efforts to safeguard private property rights, and to help all private landowners manage their forestland sustainably. In keeping with this responsibility, *SFI-certified organizations* shall have a written *policy* (or *policies*) to implement and achieve the following *principles*:

### 1. *Sustainable Forestry*

To practice *sustainable forestry* to meet the needs of the present while promoting the ability of future generations to meet their own needs by practicing a land stewardship ethic that integrates *reforestation* and the managing, growing, nurturing and harvesting of trees for useful products, and for the provision of *ecosystem services* such as the *conservation* of soil, air and

water quality and quantity, climate change adaptation and mitigation, *biological diversity*, *wildlife* and *aquatic habitats*, recreation and aesthetics.

## **2. Forest Productivity and Health**

To provide for regeneration after harvest, maintain the health and productive capacity of the forest land base, and to *protect* and maintain *long-term* soil health and *productivity*. In addition, to *protect* forests from economically, environmentally and socially undesirable impacts of wildfire, pests, diseases, *invasive species*, and other damaging agents and thus maintain and improve *long-term forest health* and *productivity*.

## **3. Protection of Water Resources**

To *protect* and maintain the water quality and quantity of water bodies and *riparian areas* and to conform with forestry *best management practices* to *protect* water quality, to meet the needs of both human communities and ecological systems.

## **4. Protection of Biological Diversity**

To manage forests in ways that *protect* and promote *biological diversity*, including animal and plant species, *wildlife habitats*, *ecologically and culturally important* species, threatened and endangered species (i.e., *Forest with Exceptional Conservation Values*) and native *forest cover types* at multiple scales.

## **5. Aesthetics and Recreation**

To manage the visual impacts of forest operations, and to provide recreational opportunities for the public.

## **6. Protection of Special Sites**

To manage lands that are geologically or *culturally important* in a manner that takes into account their unique qualities.

## **7. Legal Compliance**

To comply with applicable federal, provincial, state, and local *forestry* and related environmental laws, statutes, and regulations.

## **8. Research**

To support advances in sustainable forest management through *forestry* research, science, and technology.

## **9. Training and Education**

To improve the practice of *sustainable forestry* through training and education *programs*.

## **10. Community Involvement and Social Responsibility, and respect for Indigenous Rights**

To broaden the practice of *sustainable forestry* on all lands through community involvement, socially responsible practices, and through recognition and respect of *Indigenous Peoples'* rights and *traditional forest-related knowledge*.

## **11. Transparency**

To broaden the understanding of forest certification to the *Fiber Sourcing* Standard by documenting certification audits and making the findings publicly available.

## **12. Continual Improvement**

To continually improve the practice of forest management, and to monitor, measure and report performance in achieving the commitment to *sustainable forestry*.

## **13. Responsible *Fiber Sourcing***

To use and promote sustainable forestry across a diversity of ownership and management types in the United States and Canada that is both scientifically credible and socially, environmentally, and economically responsible and to avoid sourcing from *controversial sources* both domestically and internationally.

### **1.5 SFI 2022 *Fiber Sourcing* Objectives**

A summary of the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard Objectives* follows:

#### **Objective 1. Biodiversity in Fiber Sourcing**

To address the practice of *sustainable forestry* by conserving *biological diversity*.

**Why it Matters:** Conserving biological diversity protects wildlife habitat and ensures healthy forests.

#### **Objective 2. Adherence to *Best Management Practices***

To broaden the practice of *sustainable forestry* through *best management practices* to protect water quality.

**Why it Matters:** Protecting water quality and quantity helps ensure safe and abundant drinking water for all.

#### **Objective 3. Use of Qualified Resource Professionals, Qualified Logging Professionals and SFI-Certified Logging Companies**

To promote and utilize *qualified logging professionals, qualified resource professionals and SFI-certified logging companies*.

**Why it Matters:** Training logging professionals helps landowners implement effective forest management practices.

#### **Objective 4. Legal and Regulatory Compliance**

To comply with all applicable laws and regulations including international, federal, provincial, state, and *local*.

**Why it Matters:** Compliance with all laws ensures the protection of the environmental and social values of forests.

### **Objective 5. *Forestry Research, Science, and Technology***

To invest in research, science, and technology, upon which sustainable forest management decisions are based.

**Why it Matters:** Investing in forest research means healthier, more productive forests.

### **Objective 6. *Training and Education***

To improve the implementation of *sustainable forestry* practices through appropriate training and education *programs*.

**Why it Matters:** Training and educating foresters means forest management plans are more accurately implemented, ensuring the well-being of our forests.

### **Objective 7. *Community Involvement and Landowner Outreach***

To broaden the practice of *sustainable forestry* through public outreach, education, and involvement and to support the efforts of *SFI Implementation Committees*.

**Why it Matters:** Outreach and education improves the public's understanding of how important sustainable forestry is to local and global issues.

### **Objective 8. *Public Land Management Responsibilities***

To participate and implement sustainable forest management on *public lands*.

**Why it Matters:** Protects the environmental, social, and economic values of public forests.

### **Objective 9. *Communications and Public Reporting***

To increase transparency and to annually report progress on conformance with the *SFI Fiber Sourcing Standard*.

**Why it Matters:** Reporting the results of third-party audits increases the public's understanding of forest certification.

### **Objective 10. *Management Review and Continual Improvement***

To promote continual improvement in the practice of *sustainable forestry* by conducting a management review and monitoring performance.

**Why it Matters:** Encouraging continual improvement of sustainable forestry practices, a cornerstone of sustainable forestry.

### **Objective 11. *Avoid Controversial Sources***

To manage the risk of sourcing fiber products from *controversial sources*.

**Why it Matters:** A due diligence system minimizes the risk of sourcing from controversial sources whether in the United States, Canada or offshore.

## 1.6 SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Requirements

### Objective 1. Biodiversity in Fiber Sourcing

To address the practice of *sustainable forestry* by conserving *biological diversity*.

**Performance Measure 1.1.** Promotion and *conservation* of *biological diversity*.

Indicators:

1. *SFI-certified organizations* shall address *conservation* of *biodiversity*, individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committees*, through a *Program* that includes one or more of the following:
  - a. promotion of *biological diversity* concepts utilizing information from organizations such as the World Resources Institute, The Nature Conservancy, NatureServe, Conservation International, State Wildlife Action Plans, State Forest Action Plans and assessments;
  - b. conducting local and regional level *landscape* assessments;
  - c. involvement with local or regional *conservation* efforts;
  - d. use of relevant information on *biological diversity* from credible sources (such as those noted above) in approved training and education programs; and
  - e. other credible approaches.

**Performance Measure 1.2.** Promotion and *conservation* of *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value*.

Indicators:

1. *SFI-certified organizations* shall conduct an assessment, individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committees*, of *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value*, defined as *critically imperiled* and *imperiled* species and ecological communities, within their *wood and fiber supply area(s)* and make the summary of the assessment available to *wood producers*.
2. Program to address *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value (critically imperiled and imperiled species and ecological communities)* for all harvest operations through fiber sourcing activities such as:
  - a. use of *qualified logging professionals, certified logging companies* (where available), and *qualified resource professionals*; or
  - b. training *program* for *qualified logging professionals* on how to recognize and *protect Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value*; or
  - c. through in-the-forest verification by *certified logging companies*; or
  - d. forest landowner outreach; or
  - e. *SFI Implementation Committee* involvement in the assessment of *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value*, and development of recommendations for *conservation*.
3. *SFI-certified organizations* shall conduct and incorporate the results of a *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value (critically imperiled and imperiled species and ecological*



communities) assessment to promote conservation of *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value* for *purchased stumpage*.

## **Objective 2. Adherence to *Best Management Practices***

To broaden the practice of *sustainable forestry* through *best management practices* to *protect* water quality.

**Performance Measure 2.1.** *SFI-certified organizations* shall clearly define and implement *policies* to ensure that facility inventories and *fiber sourcing* activities do not compromise adherence to the *principles* of *sustainable forestry*.

Indicators:

1. Use of written agreements for the purchase of raw material sourced directly from the forest is required and must include provisions requiring the use of *best management practices*.
2. *Program* to address adverse weather conditions.
3. *SFI-certified organizations* shall clearly define their *fiber sourcing policies* in writing and make them available to *wood producers*.

**Performance Measure 2.2.** *SFI-certified organizations* shall, individually or through cooperative efforts monitor the use of *best management practices* relative to scale.

Indicators:

1. A *verifiable monitoring system* to:
  - a. confirm that harvests of *purchased stumpage* comply with *best management practices*;
  - b. monitor the use of *best management practices* by *wood producers* supplying the *SFI-certified organization*; and
  - c. evaluate use of *best management practices* across the *wood and fiber supply area*.
2. Use of information from the *verifiable monitoring system* to maintain rates of conformance to *best management practices* and to identify areas for improved performance.

## **Objective 3. Use of Qualified Resource Professionals, Qualified Logging Professionals and Certified Logging Companies**

To promote and utilize *qualified logging professionals*, *qualified resource professionals* and *certified logging companies*.

**Performance Measure 3.1.** *SFI-certified organizations* shall promote the use of *qualified logging professionals*, *qualified resource professionals* and/or *certified logging companies* to improve *sustainable forestry* through their relationships with *wood producers* and landowners.

Indicators:

1. *Program* to promote the use of *qualified logging professionals*, *qualified resource professionals* and/or *certified logging companies* where available.

**Performance Measure 3.2.** *SFI-certified organizations*, through their relationships with *wood producers* and landowners, shall maximize the delivery of raw materials from *qualified logging professionals* and/or *certified logging companies*.

Indicator:

1. List of *qualified logging professionals* and/or *certified logging companies* maintained by an *SFI-certified organization*, state or provincial agency, loggers' association, or other organization.
2. *SFI-certified organizations* shall have written agreements for the use of *qualified logging professionals* or *wood producers* that have completed training *programs* and are recognized as *qualified logging professionals* and/or *certified logging companies*.

#### **Objective 4. Legal and Regulatory Compliance**

To comply with all applicable laws and regulations including international, federal, provincial, state, and *local*.

**Performance Measure 4.1.** *SFI-certified organizations* shall comply with all applicable federal, provincial, state, and *local forestry* and related and environmental laws and regulations.

Indicators:

1. Access to relevant laws and regulations in appropriate locations.
2. System to achieve compliance with applicable international, federal, provincial, state, or local laws and regulations.
3. Demonstration of commitment to legal compliance through *available regulatory action information*.

**Performance Measure 4.2.** *SFI-certified organizations* shall take appropriate steps to comply with all applicable social laws at the federal, provincial, state, and local levels in the country where the *SFI-certified organization* operates.

Indicator:

1. Written *policy* demonstrating commitment to comply with social laws, such as those covering civil rights, equal employment opportunities, gender equality, diversity inclusion, anti-discrimination and anti-harassment measures, workers' compensation, *Indigenous Peoples'* rights, workers' and communities' right to know, prevailing wages, workers' right to organize, and occupational health and safety which meet the spirit and intent of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998).

#### **Objective 5. Forestry Research, Science and Technology**

To invest in research, science, and technology, upon which sustainable forest management decisions are based.

**Performance Measure 5.1.** *SFI-certified organizations* shall individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committees*, associations or other partners provide in-kind support or funding for forest research to improve sustainable management of forest resources, and the environmental benefits and performance of forest products.

Indicators:

1. Financial or in-kind support of research, collaboratives, or knowledge transfer to address key themes of relevance in the region of operations as identified by *SFI-certified organizations* local *stakeholders*, communities and/or *Indigenous Peoples*. Examples could include, but are not limited to, the following topics:
  - a. climate change adaptation and mitigation;
  - b. water quality and quantity;
  - c. biodiversity, *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value*, and species maintenance and recovery;
  - d. *landscape* ecology;
  - e. Indigenous *traditional ecological knowledge*;
  - f. *ecosystem services* or *non-timber forest products*;
  - g. community engagement;
  - h. *forest health* and *productivity*;
  - i. support for Forest Inventory Analysis (FIA)
  - j. SFI sponsored conservation research;
  - k. the role of forests in the bioeconomy, and
  - l. or similar themes, which build broader understanding of the benefits and effects of sustainable forest management or sustainable supply chains.
2. Ensure that knowledge gained through research is shared, to the extent possible, to positively influence sustainable forest management.

**Performance Measure 5.2.** *SFI-certified organizations* shall individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committees*, associations or other partners develop, contribute to, or use national, state, provincial or regional analyses in support of their *sustainable forestry programs*.

Indicator:

1. Participation, individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committees* and/or associations at the national, state, provincial or regional level, in the development of information such as:
  - a. regeneration assessments;
  - b. *growth and drain* assessments;
  - c. *best management practices* implementation and conformance;
  - d. *biodiversity conservation* information for family forest owners; and
  - e. social, cultural, or economic benefit assessments.

**Performance Measure 5.3.** *SFI-certified organizations* shall individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committees*, associations or other partners broaden the awareness of *climate change* impacts on forests, *wildlife*, and *biological diversity*.

Indicators:

1. Where available, monitor information generated from regional climate models on *long-term forest health, productivity, and economic viability*.
2. *SFI-certified organizations* are knowledgeable about *climate change* impacts on *wildlife, wildlife habitats* and *conservation of biological diversity* through international, national, regional, or local *programs*.

## **Objective 6. Training and Education**

To improve the implementation of *sustainable forestry* practices through appropriate training and education *programs*.

**Performance Measure 6.1.** *SFI-certified organizations* shall require appropriate training of personnel and contractors so that they are competent to fulfill their responsibilities under the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*.

Indicators:

1. Written statement of commitment to the *SFI 2021 Fiber Sourcing Standard* communicated throughout the organization, particularly to facility and woodland managers, *fiber sourcing* staff and field foresters.
2. Assignment and understanding of roles and responsibilities for achieving *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard objectives*.
3. Staff education and training sufficient to their roles and responsibilities.
4. Contractor education and training sufficient to their roles and responsibilities.

**Performance Measure 6.2.** *SFI-certified organizations* shall work individually and/or with *SFI Implementation Committees*, logging or *forestry* associations, or appropriate agencies or others in the *forestry* community to foster improvement in the professionalism of *wood producers* specific to *qualified logging professionals*.

Indicators:

1. Participation in or support of *SFI Implementation Committees* to establish criteria and identify delivery mechanisms for *wood producer* core training courses that allow individuals to attain *qualified logging professional* status. These criteria must address at least the following:
  - a. awareness of *sustainable forestry principles* and SFI's work;
  - b. *best management practices*, including streamside management and road construction, maintenance, and retirement;
  - c. awareness of responsibilities under the U.S. Endangered Species Act, the Canadian Species at Risk Act, *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value (critically imperiled and imperiled species and ecological communities)*, and other measures to *protect biodiversity* and *wildlife habitat*;
  - d. logging safety;

- e. U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) regulations, wage and hour rules, and other provincial, state, and local employment laws, and
  - f. other topics identified by *SFI-certified organizations* and/or *SFI Implementation Committees* that improve their responsibilities in meeting the SFI 2022 Standards.
2. Participation in or support of *SFI Implementation Committees* to establish criteria and identify delivery mechanisms for *wood producer* continuing education training courses that shall be taken by *qualified logging professionals* at least once every two years to maintain their status. The continuing education training course(s) shall address one or more of the following topics:
- c. awareness of *sustainable forestry principles* and the SFI's work;
  - d. *best management practices*, including streamside management and road construction, maintenance, and retirement;
  - e. *reforestation*, *invasive species* management, forest resource *conservation*, aesthetics and *special sites*;
  - f. awareness of rare forested *natural communities* as identified by provincial or state agencies, or by credible organizations such as NatureServe or The Nature Conservancy;
  - g. transportation issues;
  - h. business management;
  - i. public policy and outreach;
  - j. awareness of emerging technologies;
  - i. logging safety; or
  - j. other topics identified by the *SFI-certified organization* and/or *SFI Implementation Committees* that improve their responsibilities in meeting the SFI 2022 Standards.

## **Objective 7. Community Involvement and Landowner Outreach**

To broaden the practice of *sustainable forestry* through public outreach, education, and involvement and to support the efforts of *SFI Implementation Committees*.

**Performance Measure 7.1.** *SFI-certified organizations* shall support and promote efforts by consulting foresters, state, provincial and federal agencies, state or local groups, professional societies, *conservation* organizations, *Indigenous Peoples* and governments, community groups, sporting organizations, labor, universities, extension agencies, the *American Tree Farm System*<sup>®</sup> and/or other landowner cooperative *programs* to apply *principles* of sustainable forest management.

Indicators:

1. Support, including financial, for efforts of *SFI Implementation Committees*.
2. Support individually or and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committees*, education and outreach to forest landowners describing the importance of and providing implementation guidance on:
  - a. *best management practices*;
  - b. *reforestation* and *afforestation*;
  - c. *visual quality management*;

- d. *conservation objectives*, such as of critical *wildlife habitat* elements, biodiversity, *threatened and endangered* species, and *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value*;
  - e. management of harvest residue (e.g., slash, limbs, tops) considers economic, social, environmental factors (e.g., organic and nutrient value to future forests) and other utilization needs;
  - f. control of *invasive species*;
  - g. characteristics of *special sites*;
  - h. reduction of wildfire risk;
  - i. use of *qualified logging professionals, qualified resource professionals and/or certified logging companies*;
  - j. awareness of SFI, and
  - k. reporting of inconsistent practices.
3. Participation in efforts to support or promote *conservation* of managed forests through voluntary market-based incentive *programs* such as current-use taxation *programs, Forest Legacy Program, conservation easements, federal, state, or provincial cost share programs, or SFI Conservation Grants*.
  4. *SFI-certified organizations* are knowledgeable about credible regional *conservation* planning and priority-setting efforts that include a broad range of *stakeholders* and have a *program* to take into account the results of these efforts in planning.
  5. *SFI-certified organizations* with *fiber sourcing programs*, either individually or collaboratively with *SFI Implementation Committees*, encourage forest landowners to participate in forest management certification *programs*.

**Performance Measure 7.2.** *SFI-certified organizations* shall individually or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committee(s)* support and promote, at the state, provincial or other appropriate levels, mechanisms for public outreach, education and involvement related to sustainable forest management.

Indicator:

1. Periodic educational opportunities for the public promoting *sustainable forestry*, such as
  - a. field tours, seminars, websites, webinars or workshops;
  - b. educational trips;
  - c. self-guided forest management trails;
  - d. publishing articles, educational pamphlets or newsletters; or
  - e. support for national, state, provincial, and local *forestry* organizations and soil and water *conservation* districts, and
  - f. engaging and supporting teachers and/or students through initiatives such as Project Learning Tree.

**Performance Measure 7.3.** *SFI-certified organizations* shall individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committees* establish, at the state, provincial, or other appropriate levels, procedures to address concerns raised by loggers, consulting foresters, employees, unions, *stakeholders*, the public or other *SFI-certified organizations* regarding practices that appear inconsistent with the SFI standards principles and objectives.

Indicators:

1. Support for *SFI Implementation Committees* (e.g., toll-free numbers and other efforts) to address concerns about apparent nonconformance.
2. Process to receive and respond to public inquiries. *SFI Implementation Committees* shall submit data annually to *SFI Inc.* regarding concerns received and responses.

### **Objective 8. Public Land Management Responsibilities**

To participate and implement sustainable forest management on *public lands*.

**Performance Measure 8.1.** *SFI-certified organizations* with forest *management responsibilities on public lands* shall participate in the development of *public land* planning and management processes.

Indicators:

1. Involvement in *public land* planning and management activities with appropriate governmental entities and the public.
2. Appropriate contact with local *stakeholders* over forest management issues through state, provincial, federal, or independent collaboration.

### **Objective 9. Communications and Public Reporting**

To increase transparency and to annually report progress on conformance with the *SFI Fiber Sourcing Standard*.

**Performance Measure 9.1.** An *SFI-certified organization* shall provide a summary audit report, prepared by the *certification body*, to *SFI Inc.* after the successful completion of a certification, recertification, or surveillance audit to the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*.

Indicator:

1. The summary audit report submitted by the *SFI-certified organization* (one copy must be in English), shall include, at a minimum,
  - a. a description of the audit process, *objectives* and scope;
  - b. a description of substitute *indicators*, if any, used in the audit and a rationale for each;
  - c. the name of the *SFI-certified organization* that was audited, including its *SFI* representative;
  - d. a general description of the *Certified organization's* forestland, fiber procurement and/or manufacturing operations included in the audit;
  - e. a summary of the *Certified Organization's* assessment for *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Values* within its *wood and fiber supply area*;
  - f. the name of the *certification body* and *lead auditor* (names of the *audit team* members, including *technical experts* may be included at the discretion of the *audit team* and the *SFI-certified organization*);
  - g. the dates the audit was conducted and completed;

- h. a summary of the findings, including general descriptions of evidence of conformity and any nonconformities and corrective action plans to address them, opportunities for improvement, and exceptional practices; and
- i. the certification decision.

The summary audit report will be posted on the [SFI Inc. website](#) for public review.

**Performance Measure 9.2.** *SFI-certified organizations* shall report annually to *SFI Inc.* on their conformance with the *SFI Fiber Sourcing Standard*.

Indicators:

1. Prompt response to the SFI annual progress report survey.
2. Record keeping for all the categories of information needed for *SFI* annual progress report surveys.
3. Maintenance of copies of past survey reports to document progress and improvements to demonstrate conformance to the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*.

### **Objective 10. Management Review and Continual Improvement**

To promote continual improvement in the practice of *sustainable forestry* by conducting a management review and monitoring performance.

**Performance Measure 10.1.** *SFI-certified organizations* shall establish a management review system to examine findings and progress in implementing the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*, to make appropriate improvements in *programs*, and to inform their employees of changes.

Indicators:

1. System to review commitments, *programs*, and procedures to evaluate effectiveness.
2. System for collecting, reviewing, and reporting information to management regarding progress in achieving *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard objectives* and *performance measures*.
3. Annual review of progress by management and determination of changes and improvements necessary to continually improve conformance to the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*.

### **Objective 11. Avoid Controversial Sources**

To manage the risk of sourcing fiber from *controversial sources*.

***Controversial sources* are defined as:**

- a. Forest activities which are not in compliance with applicable state, provincial, federal, or international laws.
- b. 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*).

- c. *Conversion sources* originating from regions experiencing forest area decline.
- d. Forest activities where the spirit of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at work (1998) are not met.
- e. Forest activities where the spirit of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007) are not met.
- f. *Fiber sourced from areas without effective social laws*
- g. *Illegal Logging* including trade in CITES (The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) listed species.
- h. Conflict Timber.
- i. Genetically modified trees via forest tree biotechnology.

**Performance Measure 11.1.** The *SFI-certified organization* shall have a process to access and collect information regarding the sources of its procured fiber.

Indicators:

1. The *SFI-certified organization* shall collect information on the source of the fiber, through a due diligence system to address the likelihood of sourcing from *controversial sources*. This includes:
  - a. Identification of tree species, or list of tree species potentially included, by their common name and or their scientific name where applicable.
  - b. Country and region of harvest of the fiber.
  - c. If requested by their customer, provide the information required in a. and b.
2. The *SFI-certified organization* can consider fiber low risk and exempt from due diligence when:
  - a. Procured from a supplier with a valid *SFI Section 2 (SFI Forest Management Standard)* certificate, or other *acceptable forest management standards*, that clearly indicates that the source is within the scope of the certification; or
  - b. Procured from a supplier with a valid *SFI Section 3 (SFI Fiber Sourcing Standard)* certificate that clearly indicates that the source is within the scope of the certification and/or the due diligence system; or
  - c. Procured from a supplier with a valid *SFI Section 4 (SFI Chain-of-Custody Standard)*, or *other credible chain-of-custody standard* certificate and/or due diligence system; or
  - d. Procured from a supplier with a valid *SFI Section 5 (SFI Certified Sourcing Standard)* certificate that clearly indicates that the source is within the scope of the certification and/or due diligence system

**Performance Measure 11.2.** The *SFI-certified organization* shall individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committee(s)* have a process to conduct a risk assessment.

Indicators:

1. The *SFI-certified organization* shall develop and implement a due diligence system (DDS) to manage the risk of sourcing fiber from *controversial sources* in accordance with the requirements of this standard.

2. The DDS risk assessment shall classify material into low- and high-risk categories.
3. The risk assessment shall be carried out at the regional level unless risk is consistent at the national level.
4. The *SFI-certified organization* shall review, and if necessary, revise its risk ratings on at least an annual basis.
5. The *SFI-certified organization* shall conduct a risk assessment before the first time of delivery for each new region of supply.

**Performance Measure 11.3.** The *SFI-certified organization* shall have a process to assess substantiated concerns.

Indicators:

1. The *SFI-certified organization* shall have a *program* to assess any substantiated concern. A substantiated concern is information supported by proof or evidence, indicating that fiber originates from *controversial sources*. Substantiated concerns can be concerns by third parties, as well as concerns of the *SFI-certified organization* itself.
2. The *SFI-certified organization* shall update its risk assessment to reflect substantiated concerns associated with a region of origin identified through internal data or public data.

**Performance Measure 11.4.** The *SFI-certified organization* shall have a process to mitigate the risk of sourcing controversial fiber from high-risk areas.

Indicators:

1. Where the risk assessment determines high risk, the *SFI-certified organization* shall implement a *program* to mitigate such risk and require a signed contract and/or self-declaration that the supplied fiber does not originate from *controversial sources*.
2. For each supply source where the risk is high, the risk assessment shall also identify the specific verifiable controls that the supplier has in place to substantially reduce the risk of sourcing fiber from *controversial sources*.
3. Where an *SFI-certified organization* receives fiber, and then learns the fiber is from *controversial sources*, if possible, the fiber shall be segregated and prevented from entering the supply chain. If fiber has already entered the supply chain and cannot be segregated additional corrective measures shall be implemented to avoid future controversial sources. If subsequent verification demonstrates that the risk of this fiber originating from *controversial sources* is low, the fiber can re-enter the supply chain.
4. The *SFI-certified organization* shall identify the verifiable measures to be implemented across the full supply chain for each source of supply identified as high risk to ensure that the supply is not from *controversial sources* which will include:
  - a. assessing the operating effectiveness of verifiable measures, through field-based verification.

- b. for direct sources, include field and document verification of *controversial sources* risk factors back to the forest units from which fiber is sourced.
  - c. for indirect sources, include site and document verification of suppliers (such as lumber suppliers, chip suppliers and wood yards) to establish the absence of *controversial sources* risk factors in their inputs and sample-based field verification of their supply sources back to the forest units from which they source fiber.
5. Where sampling is conducted as part of the verification *program*, the sampling *program* should be risk based to draw valid conclusions across all fiber inputs.

**Performance Measure 11.5.** The *SFI-certified organization* shall have a process to avoid *controversial sources*.

Indicator:

- 1. Where the verifiable measures in Performance Measure 11.4 are not considered to be effective in reducing the risk of receiving fiber from *controversial sources* to low, fiber from these sources shall be avoided.



# **SECTION 4**

## **SFI 2022 CHAIN-OF-CUSTODY STANDARD**

**October 7, 2021**

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## Part 1: General

### 1.1 Scope

#### **What the Chain-of-Custody Standard Does**

The *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard* is an accounting system that tracks forest fiber content through production and manufacturing to the end product. Companies can use Chain-of-Custody certification to track and communicate how much of their product comes from certified lands, certified *fiber sourcing*, *recycled content* and/or *non-certified forest content*.

#### **What the Chain-of-Custody Standard Covers**

The *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard* applies to any organization that sources, processes, manufactures, handles, trades, converts, or prints forest-based products.

A *wood producer* delivering roundwood or field chips direct from the forest to a manufacturing facility does not need to be certified to the *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard*.

An *SFI-certified organization* (such as a warehouse or distribution center) that passes on SFI certified material/product does not need an SFI Chain-of-Custody system provided the SFI certified material/product is in its original packaging and the material/product is identified with an SFI Chain-of-Custody on-product label.

#### **Geographic Application of the Chain-of-Custody Standard**

The *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard* applies to any organization globally.

### 1.2 Additional Requirements

*Primary producers* must also conform to the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*.

*Primary* and *secondary* producers with a valid *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody* certificate can use their Chain-of-Custody procedures to make SFI-certified sourcing claims or apply the SFI-certified sourcing label provided they satisfy the requirements of Part 3: Calculating the Certified Sourcing Claim in the *SFI 2022 Certified Sourcing Standard*.

Use of the *SFI On-Product Labels* and claims shall follow Section 6 — Rules for Use of *SFI On-Product Labels and Off-Product Marks* as well as ISO 14020:2000.

*Primary* and *secondary* producers with a valid *SFI 2022 Chain of Custody* certificate can use their Chain-of-Custody procedures to make PEFC chain of custody claims or apply the PEFC on-product logo provided they comply with the applicable requirements in PEFC ST 2002:2020 – Chain of Custody of Forest and Tree Based Products - Requirements and PEFC ST 2001:2020 - PEFC Trademark Rules.

## 1.3 References

This standard incorporates, by dated or undated reference, provisions from other publications. These normative and informative references are cited at the appropriate places in the text and the publications are listed hereafter. For dated and undated references, the latest edition of the publication applies.

### Normative References

- i. ISO/IEC Guide 65:1996 General Requirements for bodies operating product certification systems
- ii. ISO/IEC 17065:2012 — Conformity Assessment — Requirements for bodies certifying product, process, and services
- iii. ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004 Standardization and related activities — General vocabulary
- iv. ISO 14020:2000 Environmental labels and declarations — General principles
- v. Section 2 — *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*
- vi. Section 3 — *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*
- vii. Section 4 — *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard*
- viii. Section 5 — *SFI 2022 Certified Sourcing Standard*
- ix. Section 6 — Rules for Use of *SFI-On-Product Labels and Off-Product Marks*
- x. Section 8 — *SFI Policies*
- xi. Section 10 — Appendix 1: Audits of Multi-Site Organizations
- xi. Section 12 — Public Inquiries and Official Complaints
- xii. Section 14 — SFI Definitions

For the purposes of this standard, the relevant definitions given in ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004 and ISO 9000:2005 apply, together with the definitions in the SFI Definitions (Section 14).

### Informative References

- i. ISO 9000:2005 Quality management systems — Fundamentals and vocabulary
- ii. ISO 9001:2015 Quality management systems — Requirements
- iii. ISO 14001:2015 Environmental Management Systems — Specification with guidance for use

- iv. PEFC ST 2002:2020 Chain-of-Custody of Forest and Tree -Based Products — Requirements, February 2020
- v. PEFC ST 2001:2020 - PEFC Trademark Rules, February 2020
- vii. Section 7 — Guidance to SFI 2022 Standards
- viii. Section 10 — *SFI 2020* Audit Procedures and *Auditor* Qualifications and Accreditation

## **Part 2: Physical Separation Method**

### **2.1 General Requirements for Physical Separation**

- 2.1.1** The *SFI-certified organization* applying the physical separation method shall ensure that the *certified forest content* is separated or controlled to ensure it is not mixed with or replaced by uncertified content.
- 2.1.2** The *SFI-certified organization* whose *certified forest content* and *recycled content* inputs are not mixed with other raw material, should use physical separation as the preferred option.
- 2.1.3** An *SFI-certified organization* that makes SFI claims or uses the SFI On-Product Label in association with *non-timber forest products* shall apply the physical separation method to ensure *non-timber forest products* are sourced from SFI-certified lands.

### **2.2 Separation of the *Certified Content***

- 2.2.1** *Certified content* shall remain clearly identifiable throughout the entire sourcing production, trading and sales process. This shall be achieved by:
  - a. physical separation in terms of production and storage space or
  - b. physical separation in terms of time; or
  - c. permanent identification of the *certified content*.
- 2.2.2** Verification that *certified content* is controlled during the production, trading, and sales process to ensure it is not replaced by uncertified material.

## **Part 3: Percentage Method and Credit Method (Mixed Inputs)**

### **3.1 General Requirements for Mixed Inputs**

The percentage-based method applies to *SFI-certified organizations* with facilities where *certified content* is mixed with non-certified forest inputs that cannot be clearly identified

in the output products. Where *certified content* is mixed with non-certified forest inputs that cannot be clearly identified in the output products, *SFI-certified organizations* shall use either the Percentage Method or the Credit Method.

## **3.2 Definition of the *Product Group***

**3.2.1** The *SFI-certified organization* shall implement the requirements for the Chain-of-Custody process of this standard for the specific *product group*.

**3.2.2** The *SFI-certified organization* shall identify its *product group(s)* based on the following criteria:

- a. raw material included in the products covered by the *product group*;
- b. production site at which the products covered by the *product group* have been produced;
- c. time period over which the products covered by the *product group* have been produced, sold or transferred.

**3.2.3** The *product group* shall be associated with (i) a single product or (ii) a group of products, which consist of the same or similar input raw material based on, for example, species, sort or substitutability within products (e.g., SPF lumber contains multiple tree species but may be treated as a single *product group*).

**3.2.4** The *SFI-certified organization* shall identify an entity within the organization for which the *product group* is defined and only products produced or controlled by that entity shall be included within the *product group*. The *product group* may cover several sites.

Note: The entity may be a standalone manufacturing facility, a forest contractor with multiple harvest sites, a trader or distributor with multiple suppliers, a remanufacturing facility supplied by multiple primary manufacturers or a centralized sales department within an organization with responsibility for multiple manufacturing units.

**3.2.5** For credibility purposes the maximum *claim period* is three months.

**3.2.6** The *SFI-certified organization* shall identify all products included in the *product group* covered by the Chain-of-Custody *claim period* so it is possible to determine the *product group* to which the products belong. The identifier can be a unique number or a name that all products within the *product group* belong to.

Note: Physical on-product identification of the *product group* is not required if the certification percentage is applied to sold or transferred products as the *product group* identification is evident from the sale or delivery documents. However, products that carry the SFI on-product label must be accompanied by the associated claim statement.



### 3.3 Calculation of the Certified Percentage

**3.3.1** The *SFI-certified organization* shall calculate the certification percentage separately for each *claim period* according to the following formula:

$$Pc = \frac{Vc}{Vc + Vo} \times 100$$

**Pc** Certification percentage  
**Vc** *Certified content*  
**Vo** Other raw material (*SFI certified sourcing*)

Note: When making claims about *pre-* and *post-consumer recycled content*, both can count as *certified content* and the amount must be disclosed to the customer. For *organizations* choosing not to count *pre-* and *post-consumer recycled content*, the *pre-* and *post-consumer recycled content* is neutral and shall not be included in the calculation of the *certified content* percentages in Chain-of-Custody tracking.

**3.3.2** The *SFI-certified organization* shall calculate the certification percentage based on a single measurement unit used for all raw material covered by the calculation. The Chain-of-Custody shall use only official conversion ratios and methods. If a suitable official conversion ratio does not exist, the organization shall define and use a reasonable and credible internal conversion ratio.

Note: The Conversion Factor/Ratio is calculated by dividing the output (volume or weight) by the input (volume or weight) and is applied to each individual input component of a *product group*.

**3.3.3** If the procured raw material includes only a proportion of *certified content*, then only the quantity corresponding to the actual certification percentage claimed by the supplier can enter the calculation formula as *certified content*. The rest of that raw material shall enter the calculation as other raw material.

**3.3.4** The *SFI-certified organization* shall calculate the certification percentage either as a simple or rolling percentage. Refer to Appendix 1 of this document for the definitions of simple and rolling percentage calculations.

**3.3.5** The *SFI-certified organization* applying the simple certification percentage shall base the calculation of Pc (the certification percentage) for each *product group* on the figures for Vc (*certified content*) and Vo (other raw material) for that specific *product group*. As a result, it is necessary for the organization applying this method to know the percentage of *certified content* before any product of the *product group* is sold or transferred.

The *claim period* shall not exceed three months of production.

- 3.3.6** The *SFI-certified organization* applying the rolling percentage shall base the calculation of Pc (the certification percentage) for each *product group* and *claim period* on the figures for Vc (*certified content*) and Vo (other raw material) for a specified number of prior *claim period*.

The time period covered by the specified number of prior *claim periods* shall not exceed 12 months.

### **3.4 Percentage Method**

- 3.4.1** The *SFI-certified organization* applying the percentage method can claim all the products covered by the *claim period*, provided that the percentage of *certified content* is clearly communicated. To use the SFI label, the organization must meet a 70% *certified content* threshold. If *recycled content* is not used, then the label must just state, "Promoting Sustainable Forestry."
- 3.4.2** If an *SFI-certified organization* falls below the 70% *certified content* threshold, the organization shall be transparent and communicate the actual percentage of *certified content*.

### **3.5 Credit Method**

- 3.5.1** The *SFI-certified organization* shall apply the credit method for a single claim. The *organization* receiving a single delivery of material with more than one claim relating to the category of *origin* shall either use it as a single inseparable claim (e.g., *SFI/PEFC certified content*) or shall only use one from the received claims (*SFI* or *PEFC* certified) for calculating the credits. The credits shall be distributed to the output products from the credit account in a way that all products sold as certified are sold as 100%certified.
- 3.5.2** The *SFI-certified organization* shall recognize credits in a single measurement unit used for all raw material inputs and shall enter the credits into the credit account. The credit account may be established for individual product types of the *product group* or for the whole *product group* where the same measurement unit is applied to all product types.
- 3.5.3** The *SFI-certified organization* shall calculate the credits using either:
- a. certification percentage (clause 3.3) and volume of output products (clause 3.5.4) or
  - b. input material (*certified forest content / pre-consumer recycled / post-consumer recycled*) and input/output ratio (clause 3.5.5).
- 3.5.4** The *SFI-certified organization* applying the certification percentage shall calculate the credits by multiplying the volume of output products of the *product group* by the certified percentage.

- 3.5.5** The *SFI-certified organization* must demonstrate a verifiable ratio between the input material and output products. The credits may be calculated directly from the input certified material by multiplying the volume of the input certified material by the input/output ratio and accounting for manufacturing losses.
- 3.5.6** The labels used for the Credit method are shown in Section 6. Rules for Use of *SFI On-Product Labels* and *Off-Product Marks*.
- 3.5.7** The SFI-certified organization can accumulate the *SFI Certified Credits* or *Recycled Credits* by creating a credit account, which can be used for the next *claim period*.
- k. The total quantity of credits cumulated at the credit account cannot exceed the sum of credits entered into the credit account during the last 24 months.
  - l. An SFI-certified organization that is using the credit method but has yet to complete its initial certification can start counting all eligible credit after the completion of a successful internal audit of the Chain-of-Custody system and completion of a management review of the Chain-of-Custody system performance. Eligible credits can be accumulated up to 365 days prior to the initial registration audit. Accumulated credits can be utilized for the sale of products only after successful completion of the registration audit and receipt of the Chain-of-Custody certificate from their certification body.

## **Part 4: Identification of the *Origin***

### **4.1 Identification at Delivery Level**

The *SFI-certified organization* shall identify and verify the category of the *origin* of all procured raw material. Documents and/or verifiable information associated with the source and/or delivery of raw material shall include at least:

- a. supplier identification,
- b. quantity of delivery,
- c. date of delivery / delivery period / accounting period,
- d. category of *origin*<sup>1</sup>,
  - i. *SFI X% Certified Forest Content*
  - ii. *SFI X% SFI Recycled Content*
  - iii. *SFI X% Pre-Consumer Recycled*
  - iv. *SFI X% Post-Consumer Recycled*
  - v. *SFI X% Certified Sourcing* or *SFI Certified Sourcing*
  - vi. *SFI Credit* or *100% as calculated under the credit method*.
  - vii. *SFI at Least X% Certified Forest Content*

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<sup>1</sup> *Primary* and secondary producers with a valid *SFI 2022 Chain of Custody* certificate can use their Chain-of-Custody procedures to make PEFC chain of custody claims or apply the PEFC on-product logo provided they comply with the applicable requirements in PEFC ST 2002:2020 - Chain of Custody of Forest and Tree Based Products – Requirements and PEFC ST 2001:2020 - PEFC Trademark Rules. A matrix on SFI and PEFC category of origin alignments is available in the Guide to the SFI Standards and Rules (Section 7).

- viii. SFI 100% from a Certified Forest
- ix. SFI 100% *Certified Forest Content* - Raw material from a forest certified to an *acceptable forest management standard* constitutes a claim of 100% *certified forest content*
- e. The supplier's *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard, SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard, SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard, PEFC Chain-of-Custody Standard, or other acceptable forest management standards* certificate number, as applicable.

This information can be documented in the form of, but not limited to, an invoice, bill of lading, shipping document, letter, or other forms of communications between the *SFI-certified organization* and the next entity in the supply chain.

Note 1: The categories of the *origin* of raw material are specified in the SFI Definitions (Section 14).

Note 2: An *SFI-certified organization* (e.g., printer or lumberyard) that uses the physical separation method and sources inputs from a supplier that uses the percentage-based method must know the percentage of *certified content* if it wants to label products or make claims about them.

## 4.2 Identification at Supplier Level

The *SFI-certified organization* shall obtain or access confirmation documentation for all suppliers of the *certified content*, which proves that the criteria set for the supplier have been met.

## Part 5: Sale of *Certified Content* Products

- 5.1 At the point of sale or transfer of the certified products to another entity, the *SFI-certified organization* shall provide the next entity in the chain with written information confirming the supplier's certification status and an official SFI claim statement providing a clear indication of input category. This can be in the form of, but not limited to, an invoice, bill of lading, shipping document, letter or other forms of communications available to the customer at the time of the sale of the product.
- 5.2 The SFI-certified organization shall ensure that documentation of the certified products clearly states at least the following information
  - a. *certified organization's* identification,
  - b. quantity of delivery,
  - c. date of delivery / delivery period / accounting period,
  - d. an official *SFI claim*<sup>2</sup>,

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<sup>2</sup> *Primary* and secondary producers with a valid *SFI 2022 Chain of Custody* certificate can use their Chain-of-Custody procedures to make PEFC chain of custody claims or apply the PEFC on-product logo provided they comply with the applicable requirements in PEFC ST 2002:2020 - Chain of Custody of Forest and Tree Based Products – Requirements

- i. SFI X% Certified Forest Content
- ii. SFI X% Recycled Content
- iii. SFI X% Pre-Consumer Recycled
- iv. SFI X% Post-Consumer Recycled
- v. SFI X% Certified Sourcing or SFI Certified Sourcing  
(Note: Percentages of any combination of the above are permissible.)
- vi. SFI Credit or 100% as calculated under the credit method.
- vii. SFI at Least X% Certified Forest Content
- viii. SFI 100% from a Certified Forest
- ix. SFI 100% Certified Forest Content
- e. the *SFI-certified organization's* Chain-of-Custody number.

**5.3** If the *SFI-certified organization* uses the off-product mark or on-product label, both on-product and off-product usage shall be carried out according to the terms and conditions of the *Office of Label Use and Licensing* and the Rules For Use of *SFI On-Product Labels* and *Off-Product Marks* (Section 6 in the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules*).

## **Part 6: Reporting Requirements**

**6.1** *Primary* or *secondary producers* outside the United States and Canada must submit to the *SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing*:

Specific examples of proposed *SFI* on-product label use and related promotional literature to the *Office of Label Use and Licensing*, in keeping with the Rules for Use of *SFI On-Product Labels* and *Off-Product Marks* (Section 6 in the *SFI Standards and Rules* document).

## **Part 7: Due Diligence System to Avoid *Controversial Sources***

### **7.1 Definition of *Controversial Sources***

- a. Forest activities which are not in compliance with applicable state, provincial, federal, or international laws.
- b. Forest activities that 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*).
- c. *Conversion sources* originating from regions experiencing forest area decline.

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and PEFC ST 2001:2020 - PEFC Trademark Rules. A matrix on SFI and PEFC category of origin alignments is available in the Guide to the SFI Standards and Rules (Section 7).

- d. Forest activities where the spirit of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at work (1998) are not met.
- e. Forest activities where the spirit of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007) are not met.
- f. *Fiber sourced from areas without effective social laws*
- g. *Illegal Logging* including trade in CITES (The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) listed species.
- h. *Conflict Timber*
- i. Genetically modified trees via *forest tree biotechnology*

## 7.2 Access to Information

**7.2.1** The *SFI-certified organization* shall collect information on the source of the forest-based product, through a due diligence system to address the likelihood of sourcing from controversial sources.

- a. Identification of tree species, or list of tree species potentially included, by their common name and or their scientific name where applicable.
- b. Country or region of harvest of the material.
- c. If requested by their customer, provide the information required in a. and b.

*Recycled content* is exempt from a due diligence system to address the likelihood of sourcing from *controversial sources*.

**7.2.2** The *SFI-certified organization* can consider forest based products low risk and exempt from due diligence when:

- a. Procured from a supplier with a valid *SFI Section 2 (SFI Forest Management Standard)* certificate, or other *acceptable forest management standards*, that clearly indicates that the source is within the scope of the certification; or
- b. Procured from a supplier with a valid *SFI Section 3 (SFI Fiber Sourcing Standard)* certificate that clearly indicates that the source is within the scope of the certification and/or the due diligence system; or
- c. Procured from a supplier with a valid *SFI Section 4 (SFI Chain-of-Custody Standard)*, or other *credible Chain-of-Custody standard* certificate and/or the due diligence system; or
- d. Procured from a supplier with a valid *SFI Section 5 (SFI Certified Sourcing Standard)* certificate and/or the due diligence system.

## 7.3 Develop and Implement a Due Diligence System

**7.3.1** The *SFI-certified organization* shall develop and implement a Due Diligence System (DDS) to assess and manage the risk of sourcing forest-based products from *controversial sources* in accordance with the requirements of this standard.

- 7.3.2** The DDS risk assessment shall classify material into low- and high-risk categories
- 7.3.3** The risk assessment shall be carried out at the regional level unless risk is consistent at the national level.
- 7.3.4** The *SFI-certified organization* shall review, and if necessary, revise its risk ratings on at least an annual basis.
- 7.3.5** The *SFI-certified organization* shall conduct a risk assessment before the first time of delivery for each new region of supply.

## **7.4 Substantiated Concerns Due to Organization's Risk Assessment**

- 7.4.1** The *SFI-certified organization* shall have a *program* to assess any substantiated concern. A substantiated concern is information supported by proof or evidence, indicating that forest-based material originates in *controversial sources*. Substantiated concerns can be concerns by third parties, as well as concerns of the *SFI-certified organization* itself.
- 7.4.2** The *SFI-certified organization* shall update its risk assessment to reflect substantiated concerns associated with a region of origin identified through internal data or public data.

## **7.5 Management of High-Risk Forest-Based Products**

- 7.5.1** Where the risk assessment determines high risk, the *SFI-certified organization* shall implement a *program* to mitigate such risk and require a signed contract and/or self-declaration that the supplied forest-based product does not originate from *controversial sources*.
- 7.5.2** For each supply source where the risk is high, the risk assessment shall also identify the specific verifiable controls that the *SFI-certified organization* has in place to substantially reduce the risk of sourcing forest-based products from *controversial sources*.
- 7.5.3** Where an *SFI-certified organization* receives forest-based products, and then learns these forest-based products are from *controversial sources*, if possible, these forest-based products shall be segregated and prevented from entering the Chain-of-Custody system. If forest-based product has already entered the Chain-of-Custody system and cannot be segregated additional corrective measures shall be implemented to avoid future controversial sources. If subsequent verification demonstrates that the risk of this fiber originating from *controversial sources* is low, these forest-based products can re-enter the Chain-of-Custody system.
- 7.5.4** The *SFI-certified organization* shall identify the verifiable measures that the *SFI-certified organization* must implement across the full supply chain for each

source of supply identified as high risk to ensure that the supply is not from *controversial sources*, which will include:

- a. Assessing the operating effectiveness of verifiable measures, through field-based verification.
- b. For direct sources, include field and document verification of *controversial sources* risk factors back to the forest units from which fiber is sourced.
- c. For indirect sources, include site and document verification of suppliers (such as lumber suppliers, chip suppliers and wood yards) to establish the absence of *controversial sources* risk factors in their inputs and sample-based field verification of their supply sources back to the forest units from which they source fiber.

**7.5.5** Where sampling is conducted as part of the verification program, the sampling program shall be risk based to draw valid conclusions across all fiber inputs.

## **7.6 Avoidance of Controversial Sources**

**7.6.1** Where the verifiable measures are not considered to be effective in reducing the risk of receiving fiber from *controversial sources* to low, fiber from these sources shall be avoided.

## **Part 8: Minimum Management System Requirements**

### **8.1 General Requirements**

The *SFI-certified organization* shall operate a management system in accordance with the following elements of the *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard*, which ensure correct implementation and maintenance of the Chain-of-Custody process. The management system shall be appropriate to the type, range and volume of work performed.

Note: An *SFI-certified organization's* quality (ISO 9001:2015) or environmental (ISO 14001:2015) management system can be used to meet the minimum requirements for the management system defined in this standard.

### **8.2 Responsibilities and Authorities for Chain-of-Custody**

**8.2.1** The *SFI-certified organization's* management shall define and document its commitment to implement and maintain the Chain-of-Custody requirements, and make this available to its personnel, suppliers, customers, and other interested parties.

**8.2.2** The *SFI-certified organization's* management shall appoint a member of the management who, irrespective of other responsibilities, shall have overall responsibility and authority for the Chain-of-Custody.



- 8.2.3** The *SFI-certified organization's* management shall carry out a regular periodic review of the Chain-of-Custody and its compliance with the requirements of this standard.
- 8.2.4** The *SFI-certified organization* shall demonstrate its commitment to comply with the social, health and safety requirements defined in this standard, including the spirit of ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998).
- 8.2.5** The *SFI-certified organization* shall identify personnel performing work affecting the implementation and maintenance of the Chain-of-Custody, and establish and set responsibilities and authorities relating to the Chain-of-Custody process:
- a. raw material procurement and identification of the *origin*;
  - b. product processing covering physical separation, percentage calculation, or credit and transfer into output products;
  - c. product sale and labeling;
  - d. record keeping; and
  - e. internal audits and nonconformity control.
- 8.2.6** *SFI-certified organizations* shall have a system to comply with all applicable social laws at the federal, provincial, state, and local levels in the country in which the *SFI-certified organization* operates. This includes having a policy demonstrating compliance with social laws, such as those covering civil rights, equal employment opportunities, anti-discrimination and anti-harassment measures, workers' compensation, *Indigenous Peoples'* rights, workers' and communities' right to know, prevailing wages, workers' right to organize and occupational health and safety.

### **8.3 Documented Procedures**

The *SFI-certified organization's* procedures for the Chain-of-Custody shall be documented, and include at least the following elements:

- a. description of the raw material flow within the production process;
- b. organization structure, responsibilities and authorities relating to Chain-of-Custody; and
- c. procedures for the Chain-of-Custody process covering all requirements of this standard.

### **8.4 Record Keeping**

- 8.4.1** The *SFI-certified organization* shall establish and maintain records to provide evidence it has conformed to the requirements of this standard and its Chain-of-Custody procedures are effective and efficient. The organization shall keep at least the following:
- a. records of all suppliers of forest-based material, including information to confirm requirements at the supplier level are met;
  - b. records of all purchased forest-based raw material, including information on its *origin*;

- c. records that demonstrate how the certification percentage for each *product group* was calculated;
- d. records of all forest-based products sold and their claimed *origin*, including, as applicable, records of movements in credit accounts;
- e. records of internal audits, nonconformities that occurred and corrective actions taken;
- f. records of top management's periodic review of compliance with Chain-of-Custody requirements; and
- g. records of all complaints received from suppliers, customers, and other parties relating to its Chain-of-Custody system.

**8.4.2** The *SFI-certified organization* shall maintain the records for a minimum period of three years unless stated otherwise by law.

## **8.5 Resource Management**

### **8.5.1** Human Resources/Personnel:

The *SFI-certified organization* shall ensure that all personnel performing work affecting the implementation and maintenance of the Chain-of-Custody shall be competent based on appropriate training, education, skills, and experience.

### **8.5.2** Technical Facilities:

The *SFI-certified organization* shall identify, provide, and maintain the infrastructure and technical facilities needed for effective implementation and maintenance of the organization's Chain-of-Custody to meet the requirements of this standard.

## **8.6 Internal Audit and Management Review**

**8.6.1** The *SFI-certified organization* shall conduct internal audits at least annually, and prior to the initial certification audit, covering all requirements of this standard and establish corrective and preventive measures if required.

**8.6.2** The *SFI-certified organization* shall conduct the internal audit in accordance with the following requirements:

- a. The internal audit shall be undertaken by personnel that have adequate knowledge of the *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard*;
- b. Off-site interviews and desk audits are permissible;
- c. If there have been no inputs or outputs for a site or manufacturing facility over the past year, internal audits are not required;
- d. If a site or manufacturing facility has had no sales of SFI-certified products over that past year, internal audits are not required;
- e. Internal audits are to assess overall organizational conformance and internal audit documentation can consist of one consolidated internal audit checklist and/or report; and

- f. Where nonconformities are identified during the internal audit process, a Corrective Action Plan shall be developed at the site and/or organizational level.
- 8.6.3** The *SFI-certified organization* shall have its rationale for remote audits and its sampling procedure audited by its third-party certifier.
- 8.6.4** The results of internal audits shall be reported to management for review during the annual management review.
- 8.7** In accordance with clause 8.4.1 g and SFI Section 12, the *SFI-certified organization* shall establish procedures for dealing with complaints from suppliers, customers, and other parties relating to its Chain-of-Custody system. If requested by SFI, provide SFI a summary of complaints received.

## **Part 9: Outsourcing Agreements**

- 9.1** The *SFI-certified organization* may outsource activities covered by its SFI Chain-of-Custody to another entity.
- 9.2** Through all stages of outsourcing the *SFI-certified organization* shall be responsible for ensuring that all outsourced activities meet the requirements of this standard, including management system requirements. The *SFI-certified organization* shall have a written agreement with all entities to whom activities have been outsourced, ensuring that:
- a. The material/products covered by the *SFI-certified organization's* SFI Chain-of-Custody are clearly identified from other material or products.
  - b. The *SFI-certified organization* has access to the entity's site(s) for internal and external auditing of outsourced activities for conformity with the requirements of this standard.
  - c. Internal audits of outsourced activities should be conducted at least annually and before the outsourced activity starts.
  - d. Records of inputs/outputs are available.
- 9.3** Where the *SFI-certified organization* has outsourced activities within the scope of its Chain-of-Custody, the *SFI-certified organization* shall develop procedures for the audit of these contractors.
- 9.4** The internal audit of outsource contractors may be conducted remotely.
- 9.5** Where there are sufficient outsource contractors the internal audit may use a sampling approach for these contractors.

## Appendix 1: Calculation of the Certification Percentage (Informative)

### Definition of the *Product Group*

The *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard* at Part 3.2 and Appendix 1 allows an organization to define the *product group(s)* for which the certification percentage is calculated. The *product group* should be identified for specific products or groups of products. The organization should include in one *product group* only products which consist of the same raw material. For example, a printer could identify as a *product group* the paper usage for all inserts, order-forms, offset body, gravure body, and cover products being bound or stitched together into the final product of a magazine or catalog.

Other examples are listed in Table 1.

**Table 1: Example of Chain-of-Custody *product group***

<b>Output products</b>	<b>Input raw material</b>	<b>Chain-of-Custody <i>product group</i></b>	<b>Units for credit account</b>
Spruce lumber A	Spruce, Pine, Fir (SPF) sawlogs	Spruce, Pine, Fir (SPF) products	Tons of Spruce, Pine, Fir (SPF) sawlogs
Pine lumber B			
Fir lumber C			
Fir/Spruce/Pine (SPF) chips			
Alder lumber A	Alder sawlogs	Alder products	Tons of Alder sawlogs
Alder lumber B			
Alder lumber C			
Alder chips			
Alder/Pine/Spruce sawdust	Alder/Spruce/Pine sawlogs	Residue products	Tons of Alder/Spruce, Pine Fir (SPF) sawlogs
Alder/Pine/Spruce bark			

## Calculation of the Certification Percentage

The company can use two methods to calculate the certification percentage (simple percentage or rolling percentage):

### Simple Percentage

The certification percentage for the specific *product group* is calculated from the material included in that specific *product group*. As a result, the organization applying this method must know the percentage of *certified content* before any product from that *product group* is sold or transferred.

### Rolling Percentage

The rolling percentage is obtained by using the quantity of raw material procured in the specified previous period. As a maximum, the rolling percentage can be applied over the last 12 months.

## Example of a Three-Month Rolling Percentage

The certification percentage for the *product group* is calculated from volumes of certified and other raw material procured during the previous three-month period (excluding the current *product group*).

Note: When the organization starts the Chain-of-Custody and the time period used in rolling percentage calculation is longer than the time period the Chain-of-Custody has been in place, the calculation of the rolling percentage is carried out from the volumes procured since the Chain-of-Custody was established. An example is given in Table 2: The first rolling percentage (month 1) is calculated only from volumes procured in month 1, the second rolling percentage (month 2) is calculated only from volumes procured in months 1 and 2.

**Table 2: Example of three-month rolling percentage calculation**

1	2	3	4	5	6
No. of the 1-month calculation period	Volume of certified raw material procured (tons)*	Volume of other raw material (tons)*	Sum of volumes of certified raw material for previous 3 months (tons)	Sum of volumes of other raw material for previous 3 months (tons)	3-month rolling percentage
j=i	V <sub>c</sub>	V <sub>o</sub>	V <sub>c(3)</sub>	V <sub>o(3)</sub>	P <sub>c(3)</sub>
			$V_{c(3)} = \sum_{j=i}^{i-2} V_{c_j}$	$V_{o(3)} = \sum_{j=i}^{i-2} V_{o_j}$	$P_c = \frac{V_{c(3)}}{V_{c(3)} + V_{o(3)}}$
1	11	90	11	90	10.89%
2	12	90	23	180	11.33%
3	13	90	36	270	11.76%
4	14	90	39	270	12.62%
5	15	90	42	270	13.46%
6	16	90	45	270	14.29%
7	17	90	48	270	15.09%
8	18	90	51	270	15.89%
9	19	90	54	270	16.67%
10	20	90	57	270	17.43%
11	21	90	60	270	18.18%
Continues					

\* The volume figures given in the table above are only examples

Example of calculation given in Table 2:

- a. [column 4] Volume of certified raw material is calculated as sum of volumes of certified raw material procured in the previous 3 months.  
 $V_{c(3)}_6 = V_{c_6} + V_{c_5} + V_{c_4}$ ;  $V_{c(3)}_6 = 16 + 15 + 14 = \mathbf{45}$  [tons]
- b. [column 5] Volume of other raw material is calculated as sum of volumes of other raw material procured in the previous 3 months.  
 $V_{o(3)}_6 = V_{o_6} + V_{o_5} + V_{o_4}$ ;  $V_{o(3)}_6 = 90 + 90 + 90 = \mathbf{270}$  [tons]

- c. [column 6] The rolling percentage is calculated according to the formula of chapter 3.3.1:  $P_c = V_c / [V_c + V_o]$   
 $P_{C_6} = 100 * V_c(3)_6 / [V_c(3)_6 + V_o(3)_6]$ ;  $P_{C_6} = 100 * 45 / [45 + 270] =$   
**14.29%**

Note: The *product group* period does not need to be equal to the calculation period if it does not exceed the length of the calculation period.

## Credit Accumulation

The organization can establish a credit account for the input raw material used in the specific *product group* or for specific products of the *product group* if 3.5.2 applies.

**Table 3: Example of credit accumulation (in tons)**

1	2	3	4	5
Number of 1 month's <i>product group</i>	Credit volume for the <i>product group</i>	Credit account	Maximum credit account	Used credits
I		$= [3]_{i-1} - [5]_{i-1} + [2]_i$ condition: $[3]_i \leq [4]_i$	$\sum_i^{i-11} [2]$	
1	0	0	0	0
2	7.78	7.78	7.78	0
3	8.17	15.95	15.95	0
4	8.56	24.51	24.51	0
5	9.28	33.79	33.79	0
6	9.99	43.78	43.78	0
7	10.70	54.48	54.48	0
8	11.41	65.89	65.89	0
9	12.12	78.01	78.01	0
10	12.83	90.84	90.84	0
11	13.54	104.39	104.39	0
12	14.25	118.64	118.64	0
13	14.96	133.61	133.61	0
14	15.68	141.50	141.50	5
15	16.38	149.72	149.72	10
16	17.09	156.81	158.25	50
17	17.80	124.62	166.78	50
18	18.51	93.13	175.30	100



Example of calculation given in Table 3 for the *product group* of month 14:

- d. [column 2] Includes credit calculated for 1 month *product group*. (Values for months 1-11 are taken from Table 2.)
- e. [column 3] Credit account is calculated as a result of the credit account in the previous month [column 3, month 14] minus credits used in the previous month [column 5, month 14] plus credit calculated for the current month [column 2, month 15].

$$[3]_{14} - [5]_{14} + [2]_{15} = 141.50 - 5 + 16.38 = 152.88 \text{ [tons]}$$

Total quantity accumulated in the credit account cannot exceed credits entered into the credit in the previous 12 months [column 4 = 149.72] (chapter 3.4.2.4)

$$152.88 > 149.72, \text{ therefore credit account is } \mathbf{149.72 \text{ [tons]}}$$

- f. [column 4] Maximum credit account is calculated as a sum of credits entered into the credit account during the last 12 months [column 2, month 4-15].

$$[4] = [2]_4 + [2]_5 + [2]_6 + [2]_7 + [2]_8 + [2]_9 + [2]_{10} + [2]_{11} + [2]_{12} + [2]_{13} + [2]_{14} + [2]_{15} =$$

$$= 8.56 + 9.28 + 9.99 + 10.70 + 11.41 + 12.12 + 12.83 + 13.54 + 14.25 + 14.96 + 15.68 + 16.38 =$$

$$= \mathbf{149.72 \text{ [tons]}}$$

### Use of the Credit Account

The credit account shall be drawn down as certified sales are made. The number of credits removed from the account shall be based on the ratio of input/output volume for the specific products sold as certified. Table 4 shows an example of the drawdown of the credit account for different product sales.

**Table 4: Example of drawdown of the credit account for different product sales**

Credit account balance (raw material credits)	Product	Input/output ratio	Volume of certified sales	Reduction to credit account balance
200	A	1/1	20	20
180	B	4/1	40	160
20	C	2/1	10	20
0	-	-	-	-



# **SECTION 5**

## **SFI 2022 CERTIFIED SOURCING STANDARD**

**October 7, 2021**

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## Part 1: Scope and Purpose

### 1.1 Scope

This section describes the requirements for *SFI-certified organizations*, both *primary producers* and *secondary producers*, in the United States or Canada sourcing *SFI Certified Sourcing* inputs to make an *SFI Certified Sourcing* claim. *Primary* or *secondary producers* with operations outside of the United States and Canada should refer to Part 4 of this standard.

*SFI-certified organizations* with a valid *SFI Chain-of-Custody certificate* may use their *Chain-of-Custody* procedures to account for *SFI Certified Sourcing* content and apply the *SFI Certified Sourcing label*.

A *secondary producer* must meet all the requirements in the *SFI Certified Sourcing Standard* to use the *SFI Certified Sourcing Label*, provided they do not also hold a *SFI Chain-of-Custody Certificate*. This includes Part 7. Due Diligence System to Avoid Controversial Sources and Part 8. Minimum Management System.

### 1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this section is to describe the requirements *SFI-certified organizations* must meet to manufacture product with a *SFI Certified Sourcing* claim.

### 1.3 Label

This label applies to this section.



## Part 2: Normative and Informative References

### 2.1 Normative

The following normative *SFI standards* are referenced in this document and can be found on the [SFI Inc. website](#):

- i. ISO/IEC 17065:2012 — Conformity Assessment — Requirements for bodies certifying product, process and services

- ii. Sections 2 and 3 — *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules*
- iii. Section 6 — Rules for Use of *SFI On-Product Labels* and *Off-Product Marks*
- iv. Section 8 — *SFI Policies*
- v. Section 10 — Appendix 1: Audits of Multi-Site Organizations
- vi. Section 14 — SFI Definitions

## 2.2 Informative

The following informative documents are referenced in this section and can be found on the [SFI Inc. website](#):

- i. Section 4 — *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard*
- ii. Section 7 — Guidance to *SFI 2022 Standards*
- iii. Section 10 — *SFI 2022 Audit Procedures and Auditor Qualifications and Accreditation*
- iv. ISO 9001:2015 Quality management systems — Requirements
- v. ISO 14001:2015 Environmental Management Systems — Specification with guidance for use

## Part 3: Calculating the *Certified Sourcing Claim*

**3.1** *Primary producers* are manufacturing units that produce forest products (wood, paper, pulp, or composite products) and source 50% or more (by weight) of their wood-based raw materials directly from *primary sources*. They must account for 100% of their *primary sources* as coming from *certified sourcing*.

If a *primary producer* sources from company-owned or company-controlled lands, those lands must be third-party certified to the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*.

**3.2** *Secondary producers* are manufacturing units that produce forest products and source 50% or more by weight of their wood-based raw materials from *secondary sources*. They must account for at least two-thirds by weight of the wood or wood fiber in the product(s) or manufacturing unit as coming from *certified sourcing*. The other one-third cannot come from *controversial sources*.

**3.3** Calculation of percentage for use of the *certified sourcing* claim or label and information in sales documentation is as follows:

- 3.3.1** *Primary producers* shall always demonstrate conformance with the requirements of 3.1, which means 100% *certified sourcing* for every *product group*.
- a. If less than 5% by weight of a manufacturing unit's raw material supply comes from *secondary sources*, these sources are considered de minimis and no certification of this portion is required if all is from U.S. or Canadian sources.
  - b. A *primary producer* that sources more than 5% of their raw material from *secondary sources* (the remaining raw material is from *primary sources* that are certified to the *SFI Fiber Sourcing Standard's* requirements), is required to meet Part 3, Creating a *certified sourcing* Claim, Part 7. Due Diligence System to Avoid Controversial Sources and Part 8. Minimum Management System.
- 3.3.2** *Secondary producers* shall specify how they will meet the requirements of 3.2 to conform to the two-thirds rule. They may base the calculation on a *product group* or time period, which cannot exceed one quarter. The percentage may be calculated as:
- a. Rolling Average Percentage — The percentage calculated for wood fiber consumed during, for example, the previous four quarters or 12 months. The period over which the rolling average is calculated shall not exceed one year.
  - b. Simple Percentage — The percentage calculated for wood fiber consumed in the specific *product group*.
- 3.3.3** In all cases, the organization must demonstrate that the requirements of 3.1 and/or 3.2 are met before the claim or label can be used in relation to a specific *product group* or time period.
- 3.3.4** A *secondary producer* may use the *certified sourcing* claim or label on products from a single manufacturing unit as long as the specific supply for that product(s) or for that manufacturing unit meets all the content requirements set out in this document.
- 3.3.5** The sourcing requirement may be met either at the product line or manufacturing unit level.
- 3.4** *SFI Certified Sourcing* Claim: Fiber that conforms with Objectives 1-10 of Section 3, and/or from *pre-consumer recycled content*, and/or from *post-consumer recycled content*, and/or from an *acceptable forest management standard*.
- 3.4.1** *Certified sourcing* claim verification can occur by a *primary producer's* Section 3 — *SFI Fiber Sourcing Standard* certificate or Section 4 — *SFI Chain-of-Custody Standard* certificate, a *secondary producer's SFI Chain-of-Custody Standard* certificate or *SFI Certified Sourcing Standard* certificate or, an invoice, bill of lading, shipping document, letter, or other forms of communications available to the customer.

## Part 4: Organizations Outside the United States and Canada

- 4.1 A *primary producer* or *secondary producer* outside the United States and Canada must successfully complete an annual audit by an accredited *SFI certification body* against the requirements of the *SFI Certified Sourcing Standard*.
- 4.2 A *primary producer* outside the United States and Canada must account for 100% of its *primary sources* as coming from *certified sourcing*.
- 4.3 A *secondary producer* outside the United States and Canada must account for at least two-thirds by weight of the wood or wood fiber in the product(s) or manufacturing unit as coming from *certified sourcing*. The other one-third cannot come from *controversial sources*.
- 4.4 An *SFI-certified organization* utilizing de minimis amounts of materials sourced from outside of the United States and Canada in their product(s) must conform to the requirements of the *SFI Certified Sourcing Standard* — Part 7 Due Diligence System to Avoid Controversial Sources.

## Part 5: *Certified Sourcing* Definition

*Certified sourcing* is defined as raw material sourced from the following sources confirmed by a *certification body*:

- 5.1 Fiber that conforms with Objectives 1-11 of Section 3 — *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard's* requirements.
- 5.2 *Pre-Consumer Recycled Content*: Forest and tree-based material recovered from waste during a manufacturing process. Excluded is reutilization of materials such as rework, regrind or scrap generated in a process and capable of being reclaimed within the same process that generated it. Excluded are by-products resulting from primary production processes, such as sawmilling by-products (sawdust, chips, bark, etc.) or forestry residues (bark, chips from branches, roots, etc.) as they are not considered waste.

Any claims about *pre-consumer recycled content* by *SFI-certified organizations* or *label users* shall be accurate and consistent with applicable law. *SFI-certified organizations* and *label users* are encouraged to consult the U.S. Federal Trade Commission's guidelines on environmental claims in product advertising and communication and the guidelines on environmental labeling and advertising issued by the Fair Business Practices Branch of Industry Canada's Competition Bureau, as appropriate, and to seek additional information and direction from national accreditation bodies, national standards bodies and national, state and provincial consumer protection and competition laws.

- 5.3 *Post-consumer recycled content*: Forest and tree-based material generated by households or by commercial, industrial, and institutional facilities in their role as end-users of the product which can no longer be used for its intended purpose. This includes

returns of material from the distribution chain and material from salvage from demolition.

Any claims about *post-consumer recycled content* by *SFI-certified organizations* and *label users* shall be accurate and consistent with applicable law. *SFI-certified organizations* and *label users* are encouraged to consult the U.S. Federal Trade Commission's guidelines on environmental claims in product advertising and communication and the guidelines on environmental labeling and advertising issued by the Fair Business Practices Branch of Industry Canada's Competition Bureau, as appropriate, and to seek additional information and direction from national accreditation bodies, national standards bodies, and national, state and provincial consumer protection and competition laws.

- 5.4** *Certified forest content*, which includes content from specific forest tracts that are third-party certified to conform with *the SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard's* Objectives 1-16 requirements or other *acceptable forest management standards* (e.g., CAN/CSA-Z809 and American Tree Farm System).
- 5.5** *Non-controversial sources*: The organization shall establish adequate measures to ensure that the labeled products do not come from *controversial sources*. See Part 7 on due diligence system to avoid *controversial sources*.

## **Part 6: Sale of Products**

- 6.1** If requested to provide an *SFI-certified sourcing* claim, the *SFI-certified organization* can, at the point of sale or transfer of the certified products to the next entity in the supply chain, provide customers with written information confirming the supplier's certified status and an official SFI claim statement. This can be in the form of, but not limited to, an invoice, bill of lading, shipping document, letter, or other forms of communications available to the customer at the time of the sale of the product.
- 6.2** When claims are communicated, the *SFI-certified organization* shall ensure that documentation of the certified products clearly states at least the following information:
- a. *SFI-certified organization's* identification and *SFI Certified Sourcing Standard* or *SFI Chain-of-Custody Standard* certificate number,
  - b. manufacturing facility(s) supplying the product(s) covered by the claim,
  - c. range of dates for manufacture of the product(s) covered by under the claim,
  - d. description of product(s) covered by the claim,
  - e. an official *SFI* claim statement:
    - i. SFI X% Certified Sourcing or SFI Certified Sourcing
- 6.3** If the *SFI-certified organization* uses the logo, both on-product and off-product usage shall be carried out according to the terms and conditions of the *SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing* and the Section 6 — Rules for Use of *SFI On-Product Labels* and *Off-Product Marks*, in the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules* document.

## Part 7: Due Diligence System to Avoid *Controversial Sources*

### 7.1 Definition of *controversial sources*:

- a. Forest activities that are not in compliance with applicable state, provincial, federal, or international laws.
- b. Forest activities that 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*).
- c. *Conversion sources* originating from regions experiencing forest area decline.
- d. Forest activities where the spirit of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at work (1998) are not met.
- e. Forest activities where the spirit of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007) are not met.
- f. *Fiber sourced from areas without effective social laws*.
- g. *Illegal Logging* including trade in CITES (The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) listed species.
- h. *Conflict Timber*
- i. Genetically modified trees via *forest tree biotechnology*.

### 7.2 Access to Information

**7.2.1** The *SFI-certified organization* shall collect information on the source of the forest-based product, through a due diligence system to address the likelihood of sourcing from *controversial sources*. This includes:

- a. Identification of tree species, or list of tree species potentially included, by their common name and or their scientific name where applicable.
- b. Country or region of harvest of the material.
- c. If requested by their customer, provide the information required in a. and b.

*Recycled content* is exempt from a due diligence system to address the likelihood of sourcing from *controversial sources*.

**7.2.2** The *SFI-certified organization* can consider forest-based products low risk and exempt from due diligence when:

- a. Procured from a supplier with a valid SFI Section 2 (*SFI Forest Management Standard*) certificate, or other *acceptable forest management standards*, that clearly indicates that the source is within the scope of the certification; or
- b. Procured from a supplier with a valid SFI Section 3 (*SFI Fiber Sourcing Standard*) certificate that clearly indicates that the source is within the scope of the certification and/or the due diligence system; or



- c. Procured from a supplier with a valid SFI Section 4 (*SFI Chain-of-Custody Standard*), or other credible *Chain-of-Custody* standard certificate and/or due diligence system; or
- d. Procured from a supplier with a valid SFI Section 5 (*SFI Certified Sourcing Standard*) certificate and/or due diligence system

### **7.3 Develop and Implement a Due Diligence System**

**7.3.1** The *SFI-certified organization* shall develop and implement a Due Diligence System (DDS) to assess and manage the risk of sourcing forest-based products from *controversial sources* in accordance with the requirements of this standard.

**7.3.2** The DDS risk assessment shall classify material into low- and high-risk categories.

**7.3.3** The risk assessment shall be carried out at the regional level unless risk is consistent at the national level.

**7.3.4** The organization shall review, and if necessary, revise its risk ratings on at least an annual basis.

**7.3.5** The organization shall conduct a risk assessment before the first time of delivery for each new region of supply.

### **7.4 Substantiated Concerns Due to Organization's Risk Assessment**

**7.4.1** The *SFI-certified organization* shall have a *program* to assess any substantiated concern. A substantiated concern is information supported by proof or evidence, indicating that forest-based material originates in *controversial sources*. Substantiated concerns can be concerns by third parties, as well as concerns of the organization itself.

**7.4.2** The *SFI-certified organization* shall update its risk assessment to reflect substantiated concerns associated with a region of origin identified through internal data or public data.

### **7.5 Management of High-Risk Forest-Based Products**

**7.5.1** Where the risk assessment determines high risk, the *SFI-certified organization* shall implement a *program* to mitigate such risk and require a signed contract and/or self-declaration that the supplied forest-based product does not originate from *controversial sources*.

**7.5.2** For each supply source where the risk is high, the risk assessment shall also identify the specific verifiable controls that the supplier has in place to substantially reduce the risk of sourcing forest-based products from *controversial sources*.

**7.5.3** Where a *SFI-certified organization* receives forest-based products, and then learns these forest-based products are from *controversial sources*, if possible, these forest-based products shall be segregated and prevented from entering the supply chain. If forest-based product has already entered the fiber supply system and cannot be segregated additional corrective measures shall be implemented to avoid future controversial sources. If subsequent verification demonstrates that the risk of this fiber originating from *controversial sources* is low, these forest-based products can re-enter the supply chain.

**7.5.4** The *SFI-certified organization* shall identify the verifiable measures it must implement across the full supply chain for each source of supply identified as high risk to ensure that the supply is not from *controversial sources* which will include:

- a. assessing the operating effectiveness of verifiable measures, through field-based verification.
- b. for direct sources, include field and document verification of *controversial sources* risk factors back to the forest units from which fiber is sourced.
- c. for indirect sources, include site and document verification of suppliers (such as lumber suppliers, chip suppliers and wood yards) to establish the absence of *controversial sources* risk factors in their inputs and sample-based field verification of their supply sources back to the forest units from which they source fiber.

**7.5.5** Where sampling is conducted as part of the verification *program*, the sampling *program* should be risk based to draw valid conclusions across all fiber inputs.

## **7.6 Avoidance of Controversial Sources**

**7.6.1** Where the verifiable measures are not considered to be effective in reducing the risk of receiving fiber from *controversial sources* to low, fiber from these sources shall be avoided.

## **Part 8: Minimum Management System Requirements**

A *primary producer* certified to the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* (Section 3, Objectives 1-11), meets the minimum management systems requirements specified in Part 8 of *SFI Certified Sourcing Standard*.

### **8.1 General Requirements**

The *organization* shall operate a management system in accordance with the following elements of this standard, which ensure correct implementation and maintenance of the *certified sourcing* process. The management system shall be appropriate to the type, range and volume of work performed.

Note: An organization's quality (ISO 9001:2015) or environmental (ISO 14001:2015) management system can be used to meet the minimum requirements for the management system defined in this standard.

## **8.2 Responsibilities and Authorities for *Certified Sourcing***

- 8.2.1** The *SFI-certified organization's* management shall define and document its commitment to implement and maintain the *certified sourcing* requirements, and make this available to its personnel, suppliers, customers, and other interested parties.
- 8.2.2** The *SFI-certified organization's* management shall appoint a member of the management who, irrespective of other responsibilities, shall have overall responsibility and authority for the *certified sourcing*.
- 8.2.3** The *SFI-certified organization's* management shall carry out a regular periodic review of the *certified sourcing* and its compliance with the requirements of this standard.
- 8.2.4** The *SFI-certified organization* shall demonstrate its commitment to comply with the social, health and safety requirements defined in this standard, including the spirit of ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998).
- 8.2.5** The *SFI-certified organization* shall identify personnel performing work affecting the implementation and maintenance of the *certified sourcing*, and establish and set responsibilities and authorities relating to the *certified sourcing* process:
- a. raw material procurement and identification of the *certified sourcing*;
  - b. product sale and labeling;
  - c. record keeping; and
  - d. internal audits and nonconformity control.
- 8.2.6** The *SFI-certified organization* shall have a system to comply with all applicable social laws at the federal, provincial, state, and local levels in the country in which the *SFI-certified organization* operates. This includes having a policy demonstrating compliance with social laws, such as those covering civil rights, equal employment opportunities, anti-discrimination and anti-harassment measures, workers' compensation, *Indigenous Peoples'* rights, workers' and communities' right to know, prevailing wages, workers' right to organize and occupational health and safety.

## **8.3 Documented Procedures**

The *SFI-certified organization's* procedures for the *certified sourcing* shall be documented, and include at least the following elements:

- a. description of the raw material flow within the production process;
- b. organization structure, responsibilities and authorities relating to chain of custody; and
- c. procedures for the *certified sourcing* process covering all requirements of this standard.

## 8.4 Record Keeping

**8.4.1** The *organization* shall establish and maintain records to provide evidence it has conformed to the requirements of this standard and its *certified sourcing* procedures are effective and efficient. The *organization* shall keep at least the following:

- a. records of all suppliers of *certified sourcing* material, including information to confirm requirements at the supplier level are met;
- b. records of all purchased *certified sourcing* raw material;
- c. records of all *certified sourcing* products sold;
- d. records of internal audits, nonconformities which occurred and corrective actions taken; and
- e. records of top management's periodic review of compliance with *certified sourcing* requirements.

**8.4.2** The *organization* shall maintain the records for a minimum period of three years unless stated otherwise by law.

## 8.5 Resource Management

**8.5.1** Human Resources/Personnel:

The *SFI-certified organization* shall ensure that all personnel performing work affecting the implementation and maintenance of the *certified sourcing* shall be competent based on appropriate training, education, skills, and experience.

**8.5.2** Technical Facilities:

The *SFI-certified organization* shall identify, provide, and maintain the infrastructure and technical facilities needed for effective implementation and maintenance of the organization's *certified sourcing* to meet the requirements of this standard.

## 8.6 Internal Audit and Management Review

**8.6.1** The *SFI-certified organization* shall conduct internal audits at least annually, and prior to the initial certification audit, covering all requirements of this standard and establish corrective and preventive measures if required.

**8.6.2** The *SFI-certified organization* shall conduct the internal audit in accordance with the following requirements:

- a. The internal audit shall be undertaken by personnel that have adequate knowledge of the *SFI 2022 Certified Sourcing Standard*;
- b. Off-site interviews and desk audits are permissible;
- c. If there have been no inputs or outputs for a site or manufacturing facility over the past year, internal audits are not required;
- d. If a site or manufacturing facility has had no sales of *SFI-certified sourcing* products over that past year, internal audits are not required;

- e. Internal audits are to assess overall organizational conformance and internal audit documentation can consist of one consolidated internal audit checklist and/or report; and
- f. Where nonconformities are identified during the internal audit process, a corrective action plan shall be developed at the site and/or organizational level.

**8.6.3** Where the *SFI-certified organization* has outsourced activities within the scope of its *certified sourcing* the *organization* shall develop procedures for the audit of these contractors including a written agreement with all outsource contractors that states:

- a. the *SFI-certified organization* maintains legal ownership of all input material to be included in the outsourced processes;
- b. the *certified sourcing* material from the *certified organization* is clearly identified from other non-certified material and outsource contractor returns the material back to the *certified organization* after the outsourced work is completed; and
- c. the *certified organization* reserves the right for the SFI-accredited certification body to audit the outsourcing contractor or operation.
- d. records of inputs/outputs are available.

**8.6.4** The internal audit of outsource contractors may be conducted remotely.

**8.6.5** Where there are sufficient outsource contractors the internal audit may use a sampling approach for these contractors.

**8.6.7** The *SFI-certified organization* shall have its rationale for remote audits and its sampling procedure audited by its third-party certifier.

**8.6.8** The results of internal audits shall be reported to management for review during the annual management review.

**8.6.9** The organization shall establish procedures for dealing with complaints from suppliers, customers, and other parties relating to its certified sourcing system.

## **Part 9: Application Requirements**

**9.1** *Primary producers* must submit to the *SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing*:

**9.1.1** A copy of their annual *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* and/or *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* public audit summary report issued by an SFI certification body.

**9.2** *Primary* or *secondary producers* outside the United States and Canada must submit to the *SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing*:

**9.2.1** Specific examples of proposed *SFI* on-product label use and related promotional literature to the *SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing*, in keeping with the SFI Section 6 — Rules for Use of *SFI On-Product Labels* and *Off-Product Marks*.



**Rules for Use of SFI On-Product Labels and  
Off-Product Marks  
(Section 6)**

**October 7, 2021**

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## Part 1: Rules for Use of *SFI* On-Product Labels

*SFI* has chain-of-custody labels and an *SFI Certified Sourcing* label.

Certified chain-of-custody labels track the use of fiber from *certified forests*, *certified sourcing*, and *recycled material*.

The *SFI Certified Sourcing* label does not make claims about *certified forest content*. *Certified sourcing* can include fiber sourced from a company that conforms with Section 2 — *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*, Section 3 — *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*, from *recycled content*, or from *certified forest content*. Fiber shall never be sourced from a *controversial source*.

## Part 2: Office of Label Use and Licensing

- 2.1** The *Office of Label Use and Licensing* shall evaluate and approve applications for use of all *SFI* on-product labels, shall establish label-use rules and procedures set out in the Rules for Use of *SFI On-Product Labels* and *Off-Product Marks* a (Section 6 in the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules* document), and shall maintain oversight of use of all *SFI On-Product Labels*.
- 2.2** All projects with the *SFI* label must be sent to the *SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing* prior to press. There are no size or color restrictions on the label, but if the certified printer uses the below green/black version, the PMS color is 347C. PMS 348 may also be used.



- 2.3** A *label user* shall not use the *SFI* label on any products from manufacturing unit(s) for which it has not obtained approval from the *Office of Label Use and Licensing*.
- 2.4** Approval for use of any *SFI* on-product labels will become effective upon authorization issued by the *Office of Label Use and Licensing*.
- 2.5** The *Office of Label Use and Licensing* may periodically announce additional rules and procedures to ensure ownership and use of the *SFI On-Product Labels* are adequately protected under applicable law, and to ensure proper consumer understanding.

- 2.6** Label Users must provide specific examples of proposed *SFI On-Product Label* use and related promotional literature to the *Office of Label Use and Licensing*, in keeping with the Rules For Use of *SFI On-Product Labels* and *Off-Product Marks* (Section 6 in the SFI Standards and Rules document).
- 2.7** All advertising material must be sent to the *SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing* for review and approval. SFI staff are available to answer questions about the use of the marks and these rules.
- 2.8** In response to questions and issues raised by *SFI on-product label users* or *certification bodies*, the *Office of Label Use and Licensing* will periodically announce and formally adopt interpretations to Section 6 — Rules For Use Of *SFI On-Product labels* and *Off-Product Marks* (see [interpretations posted here](#)).
- 2.9** The *SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing* reserves the right to request samples of all uses of the *SFI On-Product Labels* from time to time.
- 2.10** If the *Office of Label Use and Licensing* determines that a *label user* is not using the marks as provided in these rules, which may be amended from time to time, or no longer meets the criteria set out in *SFI requirements*, it will send a written notice to the *label user* specifying the inappropriate use(s) and allow thirty (30) days in which to make a correction. If the *label user* fails to make the correction, the right to use the marks will be revoked.
- 2.11** *Label users* who observe misuse of any of these marks shall report this immediately to the *Office of Label Use and Licensing*.
- 2.12** The size of the label can be determined by the certified company approved to use the *SFI* label, if approved by the *SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing*.
- 2.13** If the label is being used on a small product (e.g., pencils) and the claim may not be legible, a company may apply to the *SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing* for additional exceptions on applying the *SFI On-Product* label.
- 2.14** The *Office of Label Use and Licensing* will approve use of *SFI On-Product* labels as a batch or group. These blanket approvals can include:
1. Template label use:
    - a. for different products with the same customer using the same *SFI* category of origin. The category of origin meets label use requirements, the label is always the same but is applied to different products or a group of products with the same customer/brand. Example: *SFI* label applied on 5 versions of Company X's product packaging (sizes XS/S/M/L/XL, or 6 pack/12 pack/24 pack or 4 flavor options).

- b. for different customers using the same *SFI* category of origin. The category of origin meets label use requirements, the product group is the same, the label is the same, but the same product is printed for different customers. For example, Company Y produces a box for 17 customers where the label placement and category of origin is the same for all 17.

2. Repeat jobs by a company or facility for a customer using the same SFI category

of origin on a product. The category of origin is the same, the label is the same, but the product is updated. For example, a magazine with repeat issues (catalogs or books). For example, Company Z prints a quarterly magazine using the same paper with the same SFI category of origin with the same label for all four issues that year.

**2.15** The *Office of Label Use and Licensing* reserves the right to refuse any label use that does not align with *SFI Inc.'s* strategic vision and mission.

**2.16** For private branded products where the company has concern disclosing the relationship with the manufacturer, or if there is concern with revealing strategic competitive information about the manufacturer, *SFI Inc.* can issue a second SFI label ID number. While the second SFI label ID number would be on the product when searched in the SFI on-line database, the supplier information will read "Contact SFI Inc. for More Information on this Product (Tel: 202-596-3450)." SFI staff can confirm for the person making the enquiry that the label is legitimate based on information supplied. This second SFI label ID number will only be granted for organizations who produce private branded products and request a private number in order to avoid disclosing competitive information. The manufacturer must continue to use their originally assigned SFI label ID number for all other products they manufacture and label that do not have competitiveness concerns as described above.

In addition to private SFI label ID number issuance to private branded products, the SFI promotional mark can be used with a private SFI Label ID number for retailers and other point of sales, as well as for educational or non-profit use.

*A Certified Organization* shall apply to the *SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing* for a private SFI label ID number.

## **Part 3: SFI Claims and Labels**

### **3.1 SFI Chain-of-Custody Labels and Claims**

The SFI-Certified Chain-of-Custody labels communicate the use of fiber from certified forests, *certified sourcing* or *recycled content*. These products do not contain *controversial sources* and the content is calculated using either percentage or the credit method.

The credit method allows a company to label only the percentage of output corresponding to the percentage of *certified forest content* and/or *recycled content* used in the manufacturing process. This is always at a 1:1 ratio, so it is considered 100% certified. There are two labels may be used by any chain of custody *certified organization* that uses the credit chain of custody method. If the chain of custody *certified organization* uses *recycled content*, then the label must state "Promoting Sustainable Forestry and Recycled Content." However, if *recycled content* is not used, then the label must state, "Promoting Sustainable Forestry."

The percentage method allows chain of custody *certified organizations* to consistently label all of their products with the percentage labels. To use the "Promoting Sustainable Forestry and Recycled Content" label with the percentage method, the chain of custody *certified organization* must meet a 70% threshold which can be obtained by *certified forest content* and/or *recycled content*. If *recycled content* is not used, then the label must state, "Promoting Sustainable Forestry." If the chain of custody *certified organization* drops below the 70% threshold, they shall be transparent and disclose the actual amount of *certified forest content* and/or *recycled content* on the label. There are two labels that may be used by any chain of custody *certified organization* that drops below a 70% threshold and uses the percentage chain of custody method.

## LABEL: SFI CHAIN-OF-CUSTODY — PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY



**REQUIRED CERTIFICATION:  
SFI CHAIN-OF-CUSTODY**

### OFFICIAL SFI CLAIMS

#### From a supplier using the Percent Method

- *SFI 70% -100% Certified Forest Content*

#### From a supplier using the Credit Method

- *SFI Credit*
- *100% as calculated under the SFI credit method*

### NOTES:

- Other acceptable credit claims include *SFI Volume Credit* and *SFI 100% as calculated under the volume credit method.*

## LABELS: SFI CHAIN-OF-CUSTODY — PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY AND RECYCLED CONTENT



### OFFICIAL SFI CLAIMS

#### From a supplier using the Percent Method

- *SFI 70% - 100% Certified Forest Content and recycled content*
- *SFI At Least 70% - 100% Certified Forest Content and recycled content*

#### MOBIUS LOOP OPTION

- *SFI X% recycled content (shown in mobius loop)*



**REQUIRED  
CERTIFICATION:  
SFI CHAIN-OF-CUSTODY**

**From a supplier using the Credit Method:**

- *SFI Credit*
- *100% as calculated under the SFI credit method*
- **MOBIUS LOOP OPTION**
  - *SFI X% recycled content (shown in mobius loop)*

**NOTES:**

- Other acceptable volume credit claims include *SFI Volume Credit* and *SFI 100% as calculated under the volume credit method*.

**LABELS: SFI CHAIN-OF-CUSTODY — AT LEAST XX% CERTIFIED FOREST CONTENT**



**REQUIRED  
CERTIFICATION:  
SFI CHAIN-OF-CUSTODY**

**OFFICIAL SFI CLAIMS**

**From a supplier using the Percent Method**

- *SFI At Least XX% Certified Forest Content*
- **MOBIUS LOOP OPTION**
  - *SFI X% recycled content (shown in mobius loop)*

**NOTES:**

- When the "At Least X% Certified Forest Content label is being applied on solid wood products, the claim must read, "Product Line Contains at Least X% Certified Forest Content." Artwork for this label is available upon request.
- An SFI Chain-of-Custody certified organization may make a claim of any percentage of certified forest content but use of the label is contingent on the production batch having at least 10% certified forest content, unless the product is 100% recycled content.

**LABEL: SFI CHAIN-OF-CUSTODY — 100% RECYCLED CONTENT**



**REQUIRED  
CERTIFICATION:  
SFI CHAIN-OF-CUSTODY**

**OFFICIAL SFI CLAIMS**

**From a supplier using the Percent Method**

- *SFI 100% Recycled Content*

**NOTES:**

- Label users can substitute the term "Recycled Content on labels and replace it with pre-consumer recycled and/or post-consumer recycled.
- Facilities that utilize 100% recycled content can use the X% label with the percentage method. They cannot, however, use the X% Certified Forest Content tagline, and must exclude that tagline from the label.

## LABELS: SFI CHAIN-OF-CUSTODY — X% CERTIFIED FOREST CONTENT, X% CERTIFIED SOURCING, AND X% RECYCLED CONTENT



**REQUIRED  
CERTIFICATION:  
SFI CHAIN-OF-CUSTODY**



**REQUIRED  
CERTIFICATION:  
SFI CHAIN-OF-CUSTODY**

### OFFICIAL SFI CLAIMS

#### From a supplier using the Method

- *SFI X% Certified Forest Content*
- *SFI X% Certified Sourcing*
- *SFI 100% Recycled Content*

#### MOBIUS LOOP OPTION

- *SFI X% recycled content (shown in mobius loop)*

### NOTES:

- The X% content label must equal all parts to 100%
- If a specific attribute does not apply (e.g., post-consumer recycled content), the company must exclude that tagline from the label.
- The 100% certified forest content claim can be made only when the physical separation method has been used throughout the chain of custody process.
- When using the X% Chain of Custody label, the claims can be switched in order so "X% Certified Sourcing" or "X% Recycled Content" is first. Furthermore, label users can add the words, "At Least" in front of the "X% Certified Forest Content" claim.
- If the content contains less than SFI 10% certified forest content, and is not 100% recycled content, this label cannot be used. The use of this label with the certified forest content claim is contingent on the production batch having at least 10% certified forest content, unless the product is 100% recycled content. An SFI Chain-of-Custody certified organization may make a claim of any percentage of recycled content but use of the label is contingent on the production batch having at least 10% recycled content with the balance of the production batch qualifying for certified forest content and/or SFI certified sourcing.
- SFI Certified Sourcing can only be used in combination with SFI X% certified forest content. It cannot be used alone in the SFI Chain of Custody label, nor in sole combination with SFI X% recycled content. If the label user wishes to make a 100% certified sourcing claim, the SFI certified sourcing label must be used.
- The SFI X% Recycled line can only be used on its own if it is at 100%. Pre and Post consumer recycled content can be included in the Recycled Content line. If the SFI X% Recycled Content is less than 100, it must be used with the SFI X% Certified Forest Content line and/or the SFI X% Certified Sourcing line. Both are applicable to the total claim breakdown.
- If a chain of custody certified organization uses recycled content, they can choose to incorporate a Mobius loop stating the percentage of recycled content in the product. The recycled

mobius loop may only be used within the SFI label when the organization is certified to the SFI 2022 Chain of Custody Standard.

- If a chain of custody *certified organization* uses *recycled content*, they can choose to incorporate a Mobius loop stating the percentage of *recycled content* in the product.

### **3.2 SFI Certified Sourcing Label and Claim**

The *SFI Certified Sourcing* label and claim do not make claims about certified content. They tell buyers and consumers that *certified organization* is certified to the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*, or comes from *recycled content*, or from a certified forest. All fiber must be from non-*controversial sources*.

The *SFI Certified Sourcing* label can be used by any organization certified to Section 2 - *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* and/or Section 3 — *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*. The *SFI Certified Sourcing* label does not make claims about *certified forest content*. Eligible inputs that count towards the *Certified Sourcing* label includes fiber from Section 2 — *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*, fiber from Section 3 — *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*, fiber from *recycled content*, or fiber from *certified forest content*. Fiber shall never be sourced from a *controversial source*.

*Primary and Secondary producers* with a valid *SFI Chain-of-Custody* certificate may use their chain of custody procedures to account for *SFI Certified Sourcing content* and applying the *SFI Certified Sourcing label*. These organizations must obtain documentation from their suppliers that the product is sold with a *SFI Certified Sourcing* claim and is approved for the *Certified Sourcing* Label.

Printers that are certified to the *SFI Chain-of-Custody* Standard may use their chain of custody procedures to account for product that is approved for the *Certified Sourcing* Label and label that product with the *Certified Sourcing* Label. These *certified organizations* must obtain documentation from their suppliers that the product is approved for the *Certified Sourcing* Label.

## LABEL: SFI CERTIFIED SOURCING



- **OFFICIAL SFI CLAIMS** *SFI Certified Sourcing*
- *SFI 100% Certified Sourcing*

**REQUIRED CERTIFICATION:  
SFI CHAIN-OF-CUSTODY,  
CERTIFIED SOURCING, AND/OR  
SFI FIBER SOURCING**

### 3.3 Other SFI Label and Claim Options

#### 3.3.1 Non-Timber Forest Products

Organizations with *SFI Chain-of-Custody* certification using physical separation for a Non-Timber Forest Product can use the *SFI Chain-of-Custody* label with a claim of "100% from a SFI Certified Forest."

## LABEL: NON-TIMBER FOREST PRODUCTS



**REQUIRED CERTIFICATION:  
SFI CHAIN-OF-CUSTODY**

### OFFICIAL SFI CLAIMS

#### From a supplier using Physical Separation Method

- *SFI 100% from a Certified Forest*

#### 3.3.2 SFI Forest Management Label

Organizations with *SFI Forest Management* certification without *SFI Chain-of-Custody* can apply the *100% Certified Forest Content* label.



## LABEL: SFI FOREST MANAGEMENT LABEL



### REQUIRED CERTIFICATION: SFI FOREST MANAGEMENT

- **OFFICIAL SFI CLAIMS** *100% Certified Forest Content*

### 3.4 Use of *SFI On-Product Labels* with *Other Credible Chain-of-Custody Standards*

*Primary producers* of wood, wood pulp and/or pulp and paper products certified to the PEFC Chain of Custody standard can use the *SFI* label as long as the following criteria are met:

- a. the *primary producer* must be a *Certified Organization*;
- b. the *primary producer* must be certified to all of the applicable *objectives* in Section 2 — *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* and/or Section 3 — *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*.
  - An organization which owns or manages forestlands must be certified to Section 2 — *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*.
  - An organization which only sources direct from the forest and does not manage the forestlands must be certified to Section 3 - *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*.
  - An organization which owns or manages forestlands and sources direct from the forest must be certified to Section 2 — *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* and Section 3 — *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*.
- c. *Primary or secondary producers* of wood, wood pulp and/or pulp and paper products certified to the PEFC Chain of Custody standard can use the *SFI Labels Recognizing Global Standards* label as long as the following criteria are met:
  - The *primary producer*, if outside the United States and Canada, must have a valid PEFC Chain of Custody certificate for relevant manufacturing sites located outside the United States or Canada.
  - The *secondary producer* must have a valid PEFC Chain of Custody and/or *Section 4 — SFI 2022 Chain of Custody Standard* certificate for relevant manufacturing sites located outside the United States or Canada and manufacture products for Canadian and U.S. markets.
  - Note that at least one organization in the supply chain must meet User Requirements for *SFI* Label Recognizing Global Standards to

use the label on finished products and all rules for use of the *SFI* Label must be followed.

### **3.4.1 *SFI* Label Recognizing Global Standards**

The *SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards* is a label that enables non-U.S. and Canadian PEFC certified forest content to be counted under a SFI Chain-of-Custody.

This label is intended for use in the U.S. and Canada and *primary producers* outside the U.S. and Canada must have valid PEFC Chain of Custody certification.

The SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards is similar to other *SFI Chain-of-Custody* labels. The only difference is the added line that reads: "Recognizing Global Standards."

#### **a. The following requirements must be met in order to use the *SFI* Label Recognizing Global Standards:**

- i. The *Primary Producer*, if outside the United States and Canada, must have a valid PEFC Chain of Custody certificate for relevant manufacturing sites located outside the United States or Canada.
- ii. The *Secondary Producer* must have a valid PEFC Chain of Custody and/or SFI Chain-of-Custody certificate for relevant manufacturing sites located outside the United States or Canada and manufacture products for Canadian and U.S. markets.
- iii. The *SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards* user with central offices in the United States and Canada may use the *SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards* if they also hold relevant and valid SFI certification for their company type.
- iv. Other organizations in the supply chain must have either a PEFC Chain-of-Custody or SFI Chain-of-Custody certification.
- v. A PEFC claim must be passed on and follow all PEFC requirements for communicating PEFC claims if the label user holds a valid PEFC Chain-of-Custody certificate.
- vi. An SFI claim must be passed on and follow all SFI requirements for communicating SFI claims if the label user holds a valid SFI 2022 certificate.
- vii. All rules for use of the SFI label must be followed. This includes SFI's rule that credit claims must be communicated at 100%.
- viii. The *SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards* is intended for use on products sold in the U.S. and Canada and includes PEFC content sourced from non-U.S. and Canadian sources.
- ix. The *SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards* user must pay an annual licensing fee and complete an SFI Annual Progress Report survey and an SFI Market Survey.

- x. The organization applying the label must seek approval through the *SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing*.
- xi. At least one organization in the supply chain must meet User Requirements for *SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards* to use the label on finished products.
- xii. *Certified Organizations* certified to SFI 2022 Section 2 (Forest Management) and/or Section 3 (Fiber Sourcing) already paying *Certified Organization* fees may use the *SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards* without paying the *SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards* user fee as this is covered in their *Certified Organization* dues to SFI.
- xiii. *SFI Inc.* will not license any person or entity to use SFI's trademarks or labels, and SFI may revoke any license previously granted if the proposed licensee or an Affiliate of the licensee has been found to have engaged in illegal logging by a government authority in the jurisdiction where the logging occurred. Refer to SFI's Policy on Illegal Logging for more information.

**b. User Requirements for *SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards***

Requirements for non-U.S. and non-Canadian as well as U.S. and Canadian based *SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards* users depend on certification type and location.

**Annual Requirements of Non-U.S. and Non-Canadian Label Users**

- i. Have a valid PEFC Chain-of-Custody or SFI Chain-of-Custody certificate and provide a copy of the certificate, including a detail scope of certification if not already detailed on the PEFC Chain-of-Custody certificate to *SFI Inc.*
- ii. Be a *primary* or *secondary producer* as defined in *SFI Standards and Rules* and manufacture products for Canadian and U.S. markets.
- iii. Sign a licensing agreement for use of the *SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards*.
- iv. Document all label use through a tracking form to help understand the use of the *SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards*
- v. Complete an SFI annual progress report and market survey.
- vi. Complete an annual net sales form to determine fees for the use of the *SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards*.
- vii. Pay an annual label use fee to SFI.
- viii. Confirm the organization applying for use of the *SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards* is aware they cannot make claims about their forests being *SFI* certified to the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* and/or they cannot make claims they are certified to the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*.

- ix. *SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing* and SFI Communications Department must approve any statements the user of the *SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards* plans to make publicly about their use of this label.
- x. Receive a unique SFI label ID number from *SFI's Office of Label Use and Licensing* after successful application for the *SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards*.
- xi. Submit the completed PEFC Chain-of-Custody Auditor Checklist for *SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards* after a regularly scheduled audit.

### **Annual Requirements for U.S. and Canadian Label Users**

- i. Hold a valid SFI Chain-of-Custody certificate.
- ii. Source from either:
  - a supplier who meets the Annual Requirements of Non-U.S. and Non-Canadian Users of the *SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards*.
  - a supplier with manufacturing sites and/or facilities outside the U.S. and Canada exporting and selling product with PEFC certified content claims to U.S. and Canadian *SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards* users.
- iii. If sourcing from a supplier who is not an *SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards* user, the *SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards* user must:
  - Sign a licensing agreement for use of the *SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards*.
  - Document all label use through a tracking form to help understand the use of the *SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards*
  - Complete an SFI annual progress report and market survey
  - Complete an annual net sales form to determine fees for the use of the *SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards*
  - Pay an annual label use fee to *SFI* (*Primary producers* with a certificate to SFI 2022 Section 2 (Forest Management) or Section 3 (Fiber Sourcing) are exempt from the fee).
  - Confirm the organization applying for use of the *SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards* is aware they cannot make claims about their forests being certified to the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* and/or they cannot make claims they are certified to the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*.
  - *SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing* and SFI Communications Department must approve any statements the user of the *SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards* plans to make publicly about their use of this label.

- Receive a unique SFI label ID number from the *SFI Office of Label Use & Licensing* after successful application for the *SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards*.

## LABEL: SFI RECOGNIZING GLOBAL STANDARDS LABELS

In order to use the SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards, the supplier must communicate the category of origin according to SFI Chain-of-Custody and/or PEFC Chain-of-Custody requirements. Verification of involvement in or sourcing from an *SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards* member is also required.



**REQUIRED CERTIFICATION:  
SFI CHAIN-OF-CUSTODY,  
AND/OR PEFC CHAIN OF  
CUSTODY**

### OFFICIAL CLAIMS From a supplier using the Credit Method:

- *SFI Credit*
- *SFI 100% as calculated under the credit method*
- *SFI 100% Certified Forest Content*
- *100% PEFC Certified*

### From a supplier using the Percent Method

- *70% – 100% PEFC Certified*
- *SFI 70% – 100% Certified Forest Content*

### NOTES:

- Other acceptable volume credit claims include *SFI Volume Credit* and *SFI 100% as calculated under the volume credit method*.



**REQUIRED CERTIFICATION:  
SFI CHAIN-OF-CUSTODY,  
AND/OR PEFC CHAIN OF  
CUSTODY**

### OFFICIAL CLAIMS from a supplier using the Percent Method

- *XX% PEFC Certified*
- *SFI XX% Certified Forest Content*

### OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

- If the product contains less than 70% certified content the label user must transparently disclose the amount.
- The use of this label is contingent on the production batch having at least 10% Certified Forest Content.



**REQUIRED CERTIFICATION:  
SFI CHAIN-OF-CUSTODY,  
AND/OR PEFC CHAIN OF  
CUSTODY**

**OFFICIAL CLAIMS** from a supplier using the Percent Method

- *XX% PEFC Certified*
- *SFI XX% Certified Forest Content*
- *XX% Recycled Content*

**OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:**

- If the product contains less than 70% certified content the label user must transparently disclose the amount.
- If the content contains less than SFI 10% certified forest content, and is not 100% recycled content, this label cannot be used. The use of this label is contingent on the production batch having at least 10% certified forest content, unless the product is 100% recycled content.

## **Part 4: General Rules for Use of *SFI On-Product Labels***

*SFI Inc.* owns the on-product labels shown in the SFI Standards and SFI Label Generator. The SFI tree/leaf design shown below is registered in the United States, Canada, Mexico, European Union, China, Japan, and South Korea.

SFI owns all right, title and interest in the foregoing marks and exercises legitimate control over the use of these on-product labels.

Qualified organizations or with a valid certificate issued by an accredited *certification body* may use the on-product labels upon receiving authorization from the *SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing*, provided the following conditions and limitations are strictly adhered to:

- 4.1** *SFI* marks are registered with both the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and the Canadian Intellectual Property Office, and each mark must be individually accompanied by an ® to indicate that the on-product label is associated with SFI.
- 4.2** All projects with the SFI label must be sent to the *SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing* prior to press. There are no size or color restrictions on the label, but if the certified printer uses the above green/black version, the PMS color is 347C. PMS 348 may also be used.
- 4.3** The on-product label may be combined with the Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes (PEFC) on the product label, assuming the organization has a valid PEFC chain of custody certificate and meets all PEFC logo use requirements.
- 4.4** The tree/leaf design may not be displayed by itself and must always be accompanied with either "Sustainable Forestry Initiative" or "SFI," the claim associated with the label, the [SFI website](#), and the *Certified Organization's* SFI label ID number.

- 4.5** The SFI label identification number must be added under the SFI website. The numbering system is as follows: SFI-00000. The *label users* unique label ID number is a license number provided by *SFI Inc.* The label ID number is a different number than the chain of custody number provided by the *certification body*.
- 4.6** For private branded products where the company has concern disclosing the relationship with the manufacturer, or if there is concern with revealing strategic competitive information about the manufacturer, *SFI Inc.* can issue a second SFI label ID number. While the second *SFI* label ID number would be on the product when searched in the SFI on-line database, the supplier information will read "Contact SFI Inc. for More Information on this Product (Tel: 202-596-3450)." SFI staff can confirm for the person making the enquiry that the label is legitimate based on information supplied. This second SFI label ID number will only be granted for organizations who produce private branded products and request a private number in order to avoid disclosing competitive information. The manufacturer must continue to use their originally assigned SFI label ID number for all other products they manufacture and label that do not have competitiveness concerns as described above.
- 4.7** For products where a supplier or other party in the supply chain prefers their own SFI label ID number be used instead of the number associated with the *Certified Organization* applying the label, the preferred SFI label ID number can be used. The *Certified Organization* uses their own procedures and obtains SFI label approval, as relevant.
- 4.8** The on-product labels can be used in either horizontal or vertical styles.
- 4.9** The on-product labels can be used in English, French, and Spanish, and translations are available.
- 4.10** The on-product labels may be used on products, including shrink wrap and other product packaging, that have been produced by a *primary or secondary producer* facility, a publisher, a retailer, or a printer that has qualified for use of the appropriate on-product labels.
- 4.11** The on-product labels may be used in product/brochures or advertising for products that qualify to use one of the on-product labels subject to the following rules:
- a. When discussing products produced by a qualified facility, the on-product usage is restricted to either, 1) the statement, "Look for this label on (specified product)" or, 2) in a picture of a product with the label on the product.
  - b. When promoting the sale of trees or logs grown on certified land by landowners who have the land third-party certified to the *SFI Standard*.
  - c. When referencing the products of a company with mills that do not all qualify for the certification mark, this fact must be communicated (e.g., "only

some of the mills producing 'x' product are qualified to use the *SFI On-Product Label*').

- d. If all the products in a product line are not certified, the label must accurately state this (e.g., "this label only applies to the cover of this publication").

**4.12** Publishers can work with a certified printer and do not need a separate chain-of-custody certification unless they are printing the publication. If an organization not required to obtain *SFI Chain-of-Custody* certification would like to pass on a claim or promote their participation in *SFI*, they are required to seek *SFI Chain-of-Custody* certification.

**4.13** When selling product as *SFI Chain-of-Custody* certified, the *Certified Organization* shall provide customers with written information confirming the supplier's certified status, an official SFI claim statement and the organizations chain of custody number. This can be in the form of, but not limited to, an invoice, bill of lading, shipping document, letter, or other forms of communications available to the customer at the time of the sale of the product.

**4.14** The *Certified Organization* approved to use the SFI on-product label can use either the color, black and white, or reversed style labels. Where one-color print is being used, the SFI label may be the same color as the rest of the product.

## **Part 5: Communicating Certification and Certified Product**

**5.1** The following statements can be used in combination with all *SFI On-Product Labels* and with promotional materials that may or may not include the SFI label. The [SFI website](#) can be added to any of these taglines.<sup>3</sup>

### **a. General Benefit Statements**

- i. [Organization] believes healthy forests mean a healthy future for us all. That's why we use SFI-certified products.
- ii. Thank you for supporting...
  - healthy North American forests.
  - healthy American forests.
  - healthy Canadian forests.
- iii. We work to keep forests healthy and communities thriving.
- iv. By choosing SFI certification, we invest in conservation research, community engagement and environmental education.
- v. We choose SFI-certified products because a sustainable supply chain is a smart climate solution.

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<sup>3</sup> Some statements may be best suited for an SFI chain-of-custody content claim or promotional materials. Because all projects with the SFI label must be sent to the *SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing* prior to press, SFI may recommend an alternate statement based on fiber supply.



- vi. By choosing SFI, [Brand name] helps achieve multiple United Nations Sustainable Development Goals ... including:
  - Goal 4, Quality Education
  - Goal 6, Clean Water and Sanitation
  - Goal 12, Responsible Production and Consumption
  - Goal 13, Climate Action
  - Goal 15, Life on Land
  - Goal 17, Partnerships for the Goals
- vii. A growing solution to global sustainability challenges.

**b. Conservation-Focused Statements**

Water-Focused Statement

- i. SFI helps protect water quality by ensuring practices that promote healthy forests and minimize erosion.

Climate-Focused Statements

- i. [Organization] chooses SFI-certified products as part of our journey toward [organization's climate/carbon goal].
- ii. SFI is leading research to better understand how sustainably managed forests help us combat climate change.

**c. Community-Focused Statements**

- i. SFI respects Indigenous Peoples' rights and traditional knowledge and promotes forest-focused collaboration to support certification.
- ii. SFI proudly supports future forest and conservation leaders through environmental education and career development.
- iii. SFI creates experiential learning opportunities for youth through work placements, mentorship, and environmental education.

**d. Education-Focused Statements**

- i. SFI helps educators teach about climate change and sustainability (through its Project Learning Tree initiative).
- ii. SFI reaches 14,000 educators and 3.2 million students every year with environmental education activities.
- iii. SFI teaches students how to think, not what to think, about forests and the environment.
- iv. SFI helps the next generation explore green jobs and prepares them to become environmental stewards.

**5.2** The following statements can be used in combination with SFI On-Product Labels that include SFI-certified forest content and with promotional materials that may or may not include the SFI label but are based on supply sourced from SFI-certified forest content. The SFI website can be added to any of these taglines.<sup>1</sup>

a. **General Benefit Statements**

- i. [Organization] values sustainably managed forests and the [clean water/wildlife habitat/climate solutions/pick your benefit] they provide.
- ii. SFI-certified forests play an important role in water conservation, healthy animal and plant populations, and climate solutions.
- iii. SFI-certified forests contribute to local, regional, and national conservation goals.

b. **Conservation-Focused Statements**

Habitat/Plant and Animal-Focused Statements

- i. [Organization] chooses SFI-certified products to help conserve habitat for at-risk plant and animal species.
- ii. SFI-certified lands provide a home for hundreds of plant and animal species.
- iii. SFI conservation initiatives and sustainable forest management practices help ensure habitat for at-risk plant and animal species.
- iv. In SFI-certified forests, specific actions are taken to conserve at-risk species.
- v. SFI promotes research to help determine how forest management can reverse declining North American bird populations.

Water-Focused Statement

- i. SFI-certified forests help protect millions of acres of watersheds—which means more clean water across [North America, America, Canada].

Climate-Focused Statements

- i. SFI promotes climate-smart forestry practices.
- ii. SFI certification ensures that working forests and their products reduce the impacts of climate change.

Research (general)-Focused Statements

- i. SFI promotes research to better understand the benefits that sustainably managed forests provide us all.
- ii. SFI supports sustainable forests and healthy communities through grant programs, carefully targeted research, and conservation partnerships.

c. **Community-Focused Statements**

- i. SFI grants support forest-focused collaborations and partnerships that help to grow a world that values and benefits from sustainably managed forests.
- ii. The SFI standard's training requirements ensure that SFI-certified forests are managed using leading on-the-ground sustainability practices.

**5.3** Usage of SFI labels and claims shall follow ISO 14020:2000.

## **Part 6: Rules for Use of SFI Off-Product Marks**

In addition to its on-product labels, *SFI Inc.* has off-product marks to show alignment with SFI's mission. *SFI Inc.* owns all right, title and interest in these off-product marks, and exercises legitimate control over their use.

SFI Licensed Off-Product Marks:



- 6.1** Off-product marks may only be used by *Certified Organizations* in good standing whose operations have been certified by an *SFI certification body* to be in conformance with the *SFI 2022 Forest Management, SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standards, and/or the SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard* (for all or a portion of their operations. Any express or implied claim that a *Certified Organization* is in conformance with the SFI standard(s) must be substantiated by a current, valid certification by an SFI accredited *certification body*.
- 6.2** Off-product marks may be used as described in Part 8 under General Rules for *Certified Organizations*.
- 6.3** The tagline mark “Better Choices for the Planet®” may be placed beneath the off-product mark.
- 6.4** The SFI label identification number must be added under the logo mark. The numbering system is as follows: SFI-00000. The *Certified Organization’s* unique label ID number is provided by *SFI Inc.* The label ID number is a different number than the certification number provided by the *certification body*.
- 6.5** *Certified Organizations* must seek approval from the *SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing* for use of the SFI Off-Product Marks.
- 6.6** Any public communication by *Certified Organizations* shall be accurate and consistent with applicable laws and requirements for SFI logo use. *Certified Organizations* and *label users* are encouraged to consult the U.S. Federal Trade Commission’s guidelines on environmental claims in product advertising and communication and the guidelines on environmental labeling and advertising issued by the Fair Business Practices Branch of Industry Canada’s Competition Bureau, as appropriate, and to seek additional information and direction from national accreditation bodies, national standards bodies and national, state and provincial consumer protection and competition laws. *Label*

*users* should consult with their legal counsel when preparing product advertising that includes an SFI on-product label or any other reference to SFI.

- a. Point of purchase (POP) materials should avoid environmental claims that can be tied to the product. Rather, they should explain the *Certified Organization's* voluntary participation in a *program* for sustainable forest management. Avoid references or suggestions that SFI preserves forests.
- b. Avoid promoting any specific attributes of the product(s) bearing the mark when discussing participation in SFI, other than those related to forest management.
- c. Organizations can make claims about other certified processes (e.g., soy ink or alternate power sources) as long as it is clear that this is not associated with the SFI certification.

## **Part 7: Rules for Use of SFI Word Marks**

*SFI Inc.* owns all right, title and interest in the foregoing word marks and exercises legitimate control over the use of the word marks.

The purpose of these word marks is to show participation in *SFI*<sup>®</sup> and to promote *SFI* generally.

- SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY INITIATIVE<sup>®</sup>
- SFI<sup>®</sup>

SFI Licensed Tagline Mark:

- BETTER CHOICES FOR THE PLANET<sup>®</sup>

- 7.1** Use of the word marks may only be used by *Certified Organizations* in good standing whose operations have been certified by an *SFI certification body* to be in conformance with the *SFI 2022 SFI Forest Management Standard*, *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*, the *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard*, and/or the *SFI 2022 Certified Sourcing Standard* for all or a portion of their operations. Any express or implied claim that a *Certified Organization* is in conformance with the SFI standard(s) must be substantiated by a current, valid certification by an SFI accredited *certification body*.
- 7.2** The <sup>®</sup> only needs to be included the first time "Sustainable Forestry Initiative" or "SFI" word marks appears in a document, whether it is in a title or in text. If both word marks are used, the correct format is: Sustainable Forestry Initiative<sup>®</sup> (SFI), and then the first use of "SFI" also carries an <sup>®</sup> (e.g., SFI<sup>®</sup>).
- 7.3** A word mark must be an adjective, it cannot be a noun, so when it is used in text, the word "standard" must appear after the mark. The mark should not be plural or possessive.
- 7.4** The tagline mark (Better Choices for the Planet<sup>®</sup>) can be used in association with the word marks.

- 7.5** In addition to the uses described below in Part 8, General Rules for off-product marks the word marks may be used as follows, provided the advertisement or brochure refers to the [SFI website](#) or the *Certified Organization's* website with a link to the SFI website:
- in advertisements which promote the *Certified Organization's* certification to the SFI standard(s); and
  - in sales brochures and other similar product promotional items.
- 7.6** *Certified Organizations* must seek approval from the *SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing* for use of the word marks.








## **Part 8: General Rules — For Use of the SFI Off-Product Marks and Word Marks**










- 8.1** The off-product and word marks may be used, subject to the rules in Parts 6 and 7, and as follows:
- a. In image advertising that focuses on a summary of company accomplishments or values, on company people, on company financial results or stock performance, on company community activities, or any combination of the above. Such advertising must not promote specific products, tout product attributes, or make value propositions, although generic products may be shown.
  - b. In communications which explain and/or promote the *Sustainable Forestry Initiative* program's services and a company's use of SFI standards, both to employees and to those outside of the organization.
  - c. On business letterhead, business cards, and invoices.
  - d. In annual reports, provided there is a reference to the [SFI website](#).
  - e. On generic business signs (e.g., vehicles, forest stands, office buildings, and mill sites that are owed or held on a *long-term* exclusive lease). Vehicles or facilities must be under the certified company's direct control and must prominently display the company's name. If the vehicle or facility is sold or the lease terminated, the marks must be removed before the title is transferred or the occupancy ends.
  - f. On clothing and protective gear (e.g., uniforms, shirts, and hard hats), in conjunction with, but not attached to, the company's name or off-product.
  - g. On a company website with a link to the [SFI website](#).
- 8.2** If any of the marks are used in written communications, the following statement must be included in an appropriate location (e.g., bottom of the page or on the back of a brochure) "SFI marks are registered marks owned by the *Sustainable Forestry Initiative Inc.*"

- 8.3** In addition to the references to the SFI website required above, companies should consider including a reference to the SFI website in any document where an off-product or wordmark is displayed.
- 8.4** Use of the marks must comply with the Art Rules in Appendix 3, which are incorporated herein by reference, and with the following:
- a. A *label user* may use one color in the presentation of the logo marks. If you choose to use green, the PMS is 347C. PMS 348 may also be used.
  - b. The off-product mark font is Vag Rounded Light. The off-product mark may not be recreated using any other fonts or styles of these fonts. The font sizes must remain in the same proportions as the off-product mark provided in camera-ready or electronic file form.
  - c. The off-product mark may appear within a photographic image or illustration.
  - d. The off-product mark may not be combined with any other logo or image in such a way as to create a third logo or mark.
  - e. The SFI tree shield portion of the off-product mark can be used without the wordmark in certain instances such as social media, watermarks on photographs, and on design materials for a cleaner feel. Variations of the logo are never to be used on product to communicate SFI certification status, or to alter the SFI on-product label and claim.
  - f. The off-product mark must always be accompanied by the *Certified Organization's* SFI label ID number. The SFI label ID number shall be added under the mark.
- 8.5** The SFI mark is registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, in Canada, and the European Union, and must be accompanied by a ® to indicate that *SFI Inc.* owns it, unless otherwise authorized in these rules.
- 8.6** Any public communication by *Certified Organizations* or *label users* shall be accurate and consistent with applicable law and requirements for SFI off-product use. *Certified Organizations* and *label users* are encouraged to consult the U.S. Federal Trade Commission's guidelines on environmental claims in product advertising and communication and the guidelines on environmental labeling and advertising issued by the Fair Business Practices Branch of Industry Canada's Competition Bureau, as appropriate, and to seek additional information and direction from national accreditation bodies, national standards bodies and national, state and provincial consumer protection and competition laws. Legal counsel, as well as with the *SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing*, should be consulted during the preparation of any material that uses the marks and describes or makes claims about SFI and a company's participation.
- 8.7** The *SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing* reserves the right to refuse any label use that does not align with *SFI Inc.'s* strategic objective, which is to "ensure the *SFI standard* is strong, grounded in science, progressive and based on integrity and proven through *conservation* collaboration resulting in wide market acceptance."




- 8.8** If *SFI Inc.* determines marks are not being used as provided in these rules, it will send a written notice specifying the inappropriate use(s) and allow thirty (30) days in which to make a correction. If corrections are not made, the right to use the marks will be revoked.
- 8.9** Any observed misuse of any of these marks should be reported immediately to the *SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing*.
- 8.10** *SFI Inc.* has marketing materials available on the [members-only section](#) of the [SFI website](#). Please contact the *SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing* for access to this section.
- 8.11** Approval for *SFI* on product label use and *SFI* marks should be obtained by using the [online label approval system](#) monitored by the *SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing*.

## APPENDIX 1: SFI LABELS AND CLAIMS MATRIX

SUPPLIER CERTIFICATION & METHODS		SUPPLIER CLAIM	LABEL OPTION(S)	
CREDIT METHOD	SFI COC	SFI Credit		Recycled content included in credit
	SFI COC	SFI 100% as calculated under the credit method.		 
PERCENTAGE METHOD	SFI COC	SFI at Least X% Certified Forest Content	 	SFI At Least 70% - 100% Certified Forest Content and recycled  

		<p>Any combination of the below X% are permissible, provided a minimum of SFI 10% Certified Forest Content or SFI 10% Recycled Content and the sum of all parts is 100%.</p>	
	SFI COC	SFI X% Certified Forest Content	
		SFI X% Recycled Content	
		SFI X% Pre-Consumer Recycled	
		SFI X% Post-Consumer Recycled	
		SFI X% Certified Sourcing	
		<p>SFI 70% - 100% Certified Forest Content and recycled content</p> 	
		<p>100% Recycled Content</p> 	
		<p>100% Certified Sourcing</p> 	
CERTIFIED SOURCING	SFI COC and/or SFI CS	SFI X% Certified Sourcing	
		SFI Certified Sourcing	
PHYSICAL SEPERATION	SFI COC	SFI 100% from a Certified Forest	
	SFI FM	SFI 100% Certified Forest Content	



SFI LABEL RECOGNIZING GLOBAL STANDARDS	<p>SFI Chain-of-Custody and/or PEFC Chain-of-Custody</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Verification of involvement in or sourcing from an SFI Label Recognizing Global Standards member is also required.</p>	<p>From a supplier using the Credit Method:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SFI Credit</li> <li>• SFI 100% as calculated under the credit method</li> <li>• SFI 100% Certified Forest Content</li> <li>• 100% PEFC Certified</li> </ul> <p>From a supplier using the Percent Method</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 70% -100% PEFC Certified</li> <li>• SFI 70% - 100% Certified Forest Content</li> </ul>	
		<p>supplier using the Percent Method</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• XX% PEFC Certified</li> <li>• SFI XX% Certified Forest Content</li> </ul>	
		<p>from a supplier using the Percent Method</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• XX% PEFC Certified</li> <li>• SFI XX% Certified Forest Content</li> <li>• XX% Recycled Content</li> </ul>	



# **Guidance to SFI 2022 Standards and Rules (Section 7)**

**October 7, 2021**

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## Introduction

This guidance document is intended to assist *Certified Organizations* and *certification bodies* in interpreting and implementing new and existing provisions in the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules*.

This document provides additional information that may help *Certified Organizations* make management decisions to meet *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules* requirements. *SFI Inc.* routinely researches ways to improve the functionality of its work, thus this document may be updated over time. This guidance document is informative in nature and the information contained below should not be taken as normative.

### 1. Guidance for the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*

#### **Application of the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*, *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* and *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard***

##### **Scope of the *SFI 2022 Forest Management* and *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standards***

The *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* and *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standards* apply to the management of and sourcing from natural and plantation forests throughout the United States and Canada, regardless of the forest products derived from such forests. The figure (Figure 1) below illustrates the spectrum of forest management systems. The *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* and *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* are intended to apply to forest management systems that are classified as natural forest systems, managed natural forests and plantation forests. Management systems that are classified as short rotation woody crops or agro-forestry are not within the scope of the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules*.

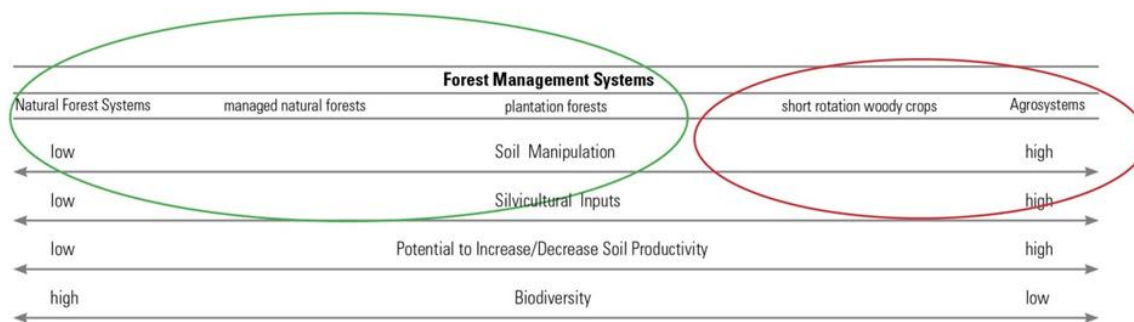


Figure 1. Spectrum of forest management systems (green circle) that qualify for certification to the *SFI 2022 Standards* (Adapted from Burger, 2002<sup>4</sup>).

<sup>4</sup> Burger, J. A. 2002. Soil and Long-Term Site Productivity Values. In: Richardson, J.; Bjorheden, R.; Hakkila, P.; Lowe, A. T.; and Smith, C. T. Bioenergy from Sustainable Forestry: Guiding Principles and Practice. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers: 165-189.

## **Objective 1. Forest Management Planning**

### ***Long-term Sustainable Harvest Levels***

#### **Determining the Most Appropriate Geographic Scale**

Objective 1 Performance Measure 1.1 requires long-term harvest levels that are sustainable and consistent with appropriate *growth and yield models*. Indicator 1.1.1 lists items required in forest management planning “at a level appropriate to the size and scale of the operation,” with 1.1.1d requiring that “*biodiversity* at the *stand* and *landscape* scale” be factored into forest management planning decision making. These requirements imply that a *Certified Organization* must base their *long-term* sustainable harvest level planning at a geographic scale that accurately reflects forest growth and yield and conservation of biodiversity. Likewise, the requirement that forest management planning shall ensure *long-term* (one rotation or greater) sustainable harvest levels requires planning to occur on forest types in similar biological, geological, and climatic areas.

#### **Sustainable Harvest Planning and Land Acquisition**

A *Certified Organization* with a prolonged, accelerated harvest level in one operational region cannot use land acquisition to offset a *long-term* unsustainable level of harvests. It does not meet the spirit and intent of SFI certification and to allow this practice could result in an imbalance in forest age classes and species composition in certain portions of the *Certified Organization’s* lands. This imbalance could have significant negative impacts on the conservation of *biological diversity* contrary to Indicator 1.1.1d, which requires that forest management planning consider *biodiversity* at the *stand* and *landscape* scale. Any acquired lands should be integrated into the *Certified Organization’s* forest management planning, and the *Certified Organization* should recalculate appropriate *long-term* harvest levels that are sustainable and consistent with accepted growth and yield models by operational region.

#### **Temporal Scale**

SFI expects that *certification bodies* shall audit sustainable harvest levels based on the criteria specified in Performance Measure 1.1, taking into account the maintenance of *landscape-level biodiversity*, and confirming that any increases in planned harvest level(s) are consistent with the *Certified Organization’s* forest management plan. Additionally, sustainable harvest levels or government-regulated allowable annual harvest should not be exceeded for extended periods of time unless a substantive ecological rationale is developed to justify the elevation. Substantive rationales could include a response to forest health emergencies, such as beetle epidemics, or sanitation logging of forests impacted by catastrophic wildfire, ice storm or wind damage. In instances where harvest levels are exceeded for extended periods, a documented plan must be in place to demonstrate how harvest planning will achieve a return to the *long-term* sustainable harvest levels over one rotation.

#### **Record Retention**

Objective 1, Performance Measure 1.1 addresses the need to have a *long-term* resources analysis, *forest inventory*, *growth-and-yield modeling* capabilities, and recommended

sustainable harvest levels for areas available for harvest. Likewise, Indicator 1.1.2 requires that “documented current harvest trends fall within *long-term* sustainable levels identified in the forest management plan,” and Indicator 1.1.4 requires “periodic updates of *forest inventory* and recalculation of planned harvests to account for changes in growth due to *productivity* increases or decreases.”

Forest management plans by their very nature are adjusted as needed to reflect changes in factors such as inventory, *growth-and-yield modeling* capabilities, growing stock, harvest levels, and the cyclical nature of the forest products market. To ensure effective decision making regarding *long-term* sustainable harvest levels, a *Certified Organization* must have retained the appropriate documentation to be able to assess whether past planning inputs were accurate. It is expected that a *Certified Organization* will be able to look backwards over a sufficiently long timeframe in order to inform its future forest management planning.

### **Social, Environmental, and Economic Effects of Forest Management Operations**

Indicator 1.1.6 requires that a *Certified Organization* consider the local or regional social, environmental, and economic effects of the forest management operations contained in their forest management plans. The “consideration” required in Indicator 1.1.6 does not necessarily require a formal assessment, but *Certified Organizations* should show evidence of having developed an appropriate understanding, relative to the size and scale of the operation, of the potential social, environmental, and economic effects of the implementation of forest management planning.

## **Conversion**

### **Conversion of One *Forest Cover Type* to Another *Forest Cover Type***

The intent of Performance Measure 1.2 is to outline the limitations on conversion and the due diligence process to be followed when converting to a different *forest cover type*. Limitations exist where the conversion is unlawful, threatens rare and ecologically important *native* forest types, or where *long-term* adverse impacts are expected on species, *habitats* or *special sites* already protected by the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*.

In situations where a *Certified Organization* intends to convert from one *forest cover type* to another *forest cover type*, the *Certified Organization* is expected to demonstrate proficiency in its assessment of the conditions outlined in Indicator 1.2.2.

The formality of the assessment has not been prescribed and therefore, *Certified Organizations* are able to structure the assessment in accordance with the scope and scale of their organization and the scale of the intended conversion.

*Certified Organizations* are encouraged to consider ways in which to conduct the required assessments in the most efficient ways possible. For example, if a particular scenario of conversion and assessment repeats regularly, a single assessment of that repeating scenario may suffice, and could be applied to that situation when it arises again. Another potential way to achieve efficiency could be to collaborate with other *Certified Organizations*, or within *SFI*

*Implementation Committees* that encounter similar circumstances throughout their areas of operation — in such cases, assessments could be conducted collaboratively and applied by participating *Certified Organizations* under appropriate circumstances. This may be employed as appropriate to obviate the need for a new assessment each time a *Certified Organization* encounters relatively common and similar circumstances.

It is not the intent of Performance Measure 1.2 to limit activities that are of ecological benefit, such as returning a site to a historical *forest cover type*, responding to *forest health* concerns, or mitigating present or future environmental harm (e.g., *climate change*). To be consistent with the intent of Performance Measure 1.2, any proactive conversion of *forest cover types* intended to mitigate the future impacts of climate change, or to limit susceptibility to pathogens, insect infestations, etc. must first meet the two-filter test, and further be supported by best available scientific information. Similarly, Performance Measure 1.2 should not be construed to limit conversion of *forest cover types* in ways that fundamentally reflect (or effectively accelerate) the natural order of succession of *native forest cover types*, or which result in restoration of ecologically significant *forest cover types* or conditions.

In situations where a *Certified Organization* proposes a site for conversion from one *forest cover type* to another *forest cover type*, the *Certified Organization* is expected to demonstrate proficiency in its assessments as outlined in Indicator 1.2.2., and to further demonstrate that these conditions are fully met before further consideration is given to the potential for conversion at the site level.

If the conditions noted under Indicator 1.2.1 are met, then the *Certified Organization* must further meet the conditions and justifications noted under Indicator 1.2.2 to move forward with conversion of forest types — in other words, these requirements are essentially hierarchical in application.

Indicator 1.2.2 requires that conversion objectives include *stand-* and *landscape-*level outcomes that are generally consistent with the natural distribution of *forest cover types* and structural composition at the *landscape* scale. Supporting assessments and spatial analyses are consistent with the requirements under Objective 4.

There may be circumstances under which an *ecologically important native forest cover type* could be considered for conversion. A possible example could be the limited conversion of a bottomland hardwood stand to loblolly pine — a species that is more economically justified for the site. In this instance, bottomland hardwood may be considered an ecologically important *native forest cover type*, although it still occurs extensively across the landscape. Such conversion could be allowable under limited circumstances, if justified for economic reasons, provided that such conversion would not put *native forest cover types*, or *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value* (FECV), at risk. An important determinant in this instance is the scale of the conversion — this should be fully explored in the required assessments to provide assurance that the scale of the proposed conversion does not generate undue risk to FECV, or to the perpetuation of the *native forest cover type* itself. The *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* is intended to safeguard such ecologically important natural communities; forest managers must carefully consider the impacts prior to the approval of any such conversion.

Indicator 1.2.2d notes the need for “appropriate consultation” with local communities, Indigenous Peoples, and other *stakeholders* who could be affected by such activities, including adjacent ownerships. Landowners must recognize the societal context of managed forests within landscapes, and consider *stakeholder* concerns, if any, when determining the scale and impact of the proposed conversion. “Appropriate consultation” includes the possibility that the circumstances of any particular conversion proposal may not merit any consultation (i.e., that consultation is not necessary, and therefore no consultation is appropriate). For example, if the project is sufficiently remote, it may occur beyond the range of impact to any local community or group. Therefore, with sufficient explanation and justification, the *Certified Organization* may determine to forego consultation.

In the event that “appropriate consultation” suggests the need for consultation, such consultation should help to gauge the possible impacts of conversion on local values — recreation, aesthetics, cultural, etc. Consultation becomes increasingly critical according to the scale of the proposed conversion, but there is no specific prescription for a threshold of the size of a conversion that should trigger a consultation.

### ***SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module and SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module of Indigenous Peoples and Families (the Modules) and Conversion to Other Forest Cover Types***

Regarding reforestation by *organizations* certified to the Modules, it is recognized that that in most instances the landowner/manager is going to reforest with species that were present on the site prior to harvest. Nonetheless, the landowner/manager may decide to reforest to another appropriate *native forest cover type*. This is an acceptable land management decision given that the reforested species is ecologically appropriate and meets the intent of protecting *Forests of Exceptional Conservation Values* or Forests of Recognized Importance for members of a Small Lands Group Certification Module certificate in the United States.

### **Conversion of Forest Land to Another Land Use**

The intent of Performance Measure 1.3 to ensure that forest land that is being converted to non-forest land uses is appropriately scoped out of *SFI* certificates. The *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module*, clause 4.1.2 and the *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families*, Objective 1 require the landowner to identify risks of conversion of forests to non-forest uses and measures to mitigate this risk. Two basic tenets establish the rationale for these requirements. First, forest land that is being converted to non-forest land uses would not likely meet any of the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* and Module requirements (prompt *reforestation*, *biodiversity*, etc.) and therefore could not be certified under the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* or the Modules.

Second, fiber (roundwood and/or chips) from forest land being converted to non-forest land uses cannot be counted as *certified forest content* in any product bearing an SFI label (see definition of *conversion sources*).



## Scope of Certification

To convert forest land to non-forest land use, a *Certified Organization* must have a clear understanding of which of its lands are eligible to be within the scope of its *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* certificate. There is no limit on the percentage of land that can be scoped out of an *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* certificate. However, it is important to ensure that forest land within the scope of the *Certified Organization's SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* certificate continues to be managed as forest land consistent with the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*. In some circumstances, forest land designated for sale may not sell in the short term, nor is there certainty that the forest land will be converted to another land use by its purchaser. As such, the *Certified Organization* should continue to manage this forest land in conformance with the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* until a sales contract has been executed. Once a sales contract is executed, the *Certified Organization* should scope out the lands that have been sold.

*Certified Organizations* are not restricted in their decision making regarding the purchase of or sale of forest land, or in the movement of forest land (or the quantity) in or out of the scope of an *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* certificate. *Certification bodies* must ensure that lands within the scope of an *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* audit are being managed in conformance with the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* to protect the integrity of the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules*. Furthermore, *certification bodies* and *Certified Organizations* must ensure that there is absolute clarity on which forest lands — whether owned, managed or controlled (see Control of Decision Making below) — are included in the scope of the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* certificate.

## Control of Decision Making

The level of control of decision making by the *Certified Organization* is the central factor when determining which forest land should be scoped out of an *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* certificate. When a *Certified Organization* knowingly intends to convert forest land to a non-forest land use and has control over the process, then the forest lands should be scoped out of the certificate when the decision is made to convert.

When forest land is being sold or purposefully converted to non-forest land use it is relatively straight-forward when it comes to identifying who has control of decision making. However, there are other examples where control of decisions over management practices is less clearly defined, or where control of decisions regarding forest land use shifts to a different party after a fixed period of time. Examples of these more ambiguous circumstances include *long-term* leases and timber deeds.

As in the forest land sale example, the decision whether to scope forest land in or out of an *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* certificate still rests with the organization who has control over the decisions related to management of the forest land in conformance with the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*. More specifically, if a *Certified Organization* has forest management authority over Objective 1 of the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* then such lands can remain within the scope of the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* certificate until such time as control of forest management decisions is relinquished. Likewise, in the case of *long-term* leases or timber deeds, if a *Certified Organization* has a reasonable expectation

the lands will remain in a forested condition after its lease or deed expires, then such lands can remain within the scope of the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* certificate until such time as control of forest management decisions is relinquished.

Mining and drilling activities are other examples of where *Certified Organizations* may have control over forest management but may not have control over the ultimate fate of the land use. In this example, if the *Certified Organization* is not the party doing the mining or drilling, and it has not engaged into a contractual relationship with a third party to do so, the lands being managed in accordance with the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* may remain within the scope of an *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* certificate until such time as forest management control is relinquished.

### **Accounting for Non-Certified Forest Content**

Despite efforts to scope out forest lands intended to be converted to non-forest land uses, small parcels of land intended for conversion may remain in the scope of an *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* certificate (e.g., utility right-of-way, well drilling pad). It may be impracticable to account for the *conversion sources* from such small inclusions within a larger SFI-certified forest. Therefore, to meet the spirit and intent of Performance Measure 1.3, *Certified Organizations* should make reasonable efforts to separate *conversion sources* from *certified forest content* where the volume of *conversion sources* is more than a minimal amount (e.g., 1% of the harvested volume).

## **Objective 2. Forest Health and Productivity**

### **Prohibited Chemicals – SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard and SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module**

The intent of Performance Measure 2.2 is to *minimize* the chemical use required to achieve management *objectives* while ensuring the protection of employees, the public, and the environment, including *wildlife* and *aquatic habitats*. To ensure this is achieved, the use of forest management pesticides must follow federal, state, and local laws; be applied according to the label instructions; and be implemented with proper equipment and training. Furthermore, pesticides, such as chlorinated hydrocarbons whose derivatives remain biologically active beyond their intended use, as well as pesticides banned by international agreement, are prohibited for use by *Certified Organizations*. This last requirement is addressed by Indicators 2.2.5 and 2.2.6.

Indicator 2.2.5: The World Health Organization (WHO) type 1A and 1B pesticides shall be prohibited, except where no other viable alternative is available.

The *Certified Organization* is responsible for ensuring that chemicals from the WHO type 1A and 1B list of prohibited chemicals are not used in forest management. In the rare exception where a *Certified Organization* believes a variance on the prohibition on the use of a WHO type 1A and 1B chemical is warranted, the *Certified Organization* will submit its rationale to its *certification body* for approval. The *certification body* will then monitor the chemical usage approved under this variance, if this variance is approved. ([WHO list of prohibited type 1A and 1B chemicals](#))

Indicator 2.2.6: Use of pesticides banned under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (2001) shall be prohibited.

It is the responsibility of the *Certified Organization* to ensure that any chemical used in forest management complies with the ban on the use of chemicals under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (2001). There is no option of a variance for the use of chemicals banned under the Stockholm Convention (2001). ([List of chemicals banned under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants](#))

### **Small Lands Group Certification Module**

The Module at 4.3.4.1 directs the landowner to evaluate alternatives to chemicals for the control of pests, pathogens and unwanted vegetation. Requirement 4.3.4.2 states that if used, chemicals shall be approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in the United States or the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) of Health Canada. They shall be applied, stored, and disposed of in accordance with EPA or PMRA approved labels and applied by persons who are trained, licensed (as required by their jurisdiction) and appropriately supervised. The landowner is responsible for ensuring that the planned use of a chemical is in compliance with the EPA / PMRA label requirements. Use of chemicals should be documented by the landowner or designated representative.

In the exceptional case where a landowner believes that a variance for the use of a WHO 1A and 1B chemical is required they should work with their *group manager* and submit the required rationale to the *certification body* as per the process above.

### **Soil Health**

Performance Measure 2.3 now includes requirements to implement *practices* that *protect* and maintain forest *soil health*, in addition to soil *productivity*. This guidance suggests some potential *practices* that could be considered by *Certified Organizations* to maintain those values.

The way in which forests are managed can improve or degrade the quality or health of forest soils, which represent a complex ecosystem that includes living microorganisms, minerals, and organic matter. Together, this dynamic medium serves to regulate water, air, and nutrients, and thus interplays directly with health of the forest ecosystem. Healthy soils provide many functions that support plant growth, including nutrient cycling, biological control of plant pests, and regulation of water and air supply. These functions are influenced by the interrelated physical, chemical, and biological properties of soil, many of which are sensitive to soil management practices (primary source: [PennState Extension—Managing Soil Health: Concepts and Practices](#)).

*Soil health* is essential to forest *productivity*, and ecosystem function. Managing for *soil health* (improved soil function) is mostly a matter of maintaining suitable *habitat* for the diversity of organisms that depend on it. This can be accomplished by minimizing soil disturbance, ensuring plant diversity, maintaining vegetative cover, and avoiding serious alterations to soil chemistry.

*Practices* that limit soil disturbance, exposure, and/or chemical alteration are key to maintaining *soil health*. In many cases, such *practices* are consistent with *best management practices* for water quality (Performance Measure 3.1), *practices* that maintain water quantity (Performance

Measure 3.2), and *practices* relative to appropriate use of chemicals and pesticides (Performance Measure 2.2). However, additional *practices* to maintain *soil health* may also be considered by forest managers during potentially impactful activities such as road or skid trail construction, harvesting or yarding activities, herbicide or pesticide application, etc. To meet the intent of Performance Measure 2.3, forest managers should be able to offer some evidence of having considered whether additional measures may be appropriate to meet the particular circumstances of site conditions and activities, in order to minimize adverse impacts to *soil health*. As a practical matter, *Certified Organizations* will have to weigh *soil health* measures in the context of overall forest management objectives, recognizing that such measures need to be balanced with related objectives, ranging from water quality to the productive capacity of the site to maintaining a diversity of species on the managed area.

### **Objective 3. Protection and Maintenance of Water Resources**

#### **Water Quantity**

The intent of Performance Measure 3.2.2 is to have a *program* to address the management and protection of water quantity during all phases of management. Protecting and maintaining water quantity benefits a range of water-related ecosystem services that are provided by forests, including flood regulation, *aquatic habitat*, water filtration and storage, and ensuring a good supply of healthy drinking water. Water quantity and quality are closely linked and *practices* already in place to *protect* and maintain water quality are important for protecting and maintaining water quantity. Developing, documenting, and implementing a water quantity *program* will help reinforce the important role *Certified Organizations* can play in positively or adversely affecting water quantity.

Water quantity is the timing and total yield of water from a watershed. It is affected by the hydrologic regime (e.g., precipitation amount, intensity, type (rain or snow)), watershed characteristics (e.g., geology and soils, aspect and slope, vegetation), climate (e.g., evaporation), *forest health* (e.g., impacts of wildfire, disease, pests), and forest management activities (e.g., road building, harvest and stand management, *reforestation*). Water quantity varies naturally within and between years.

Managing for water quantity requires an understanding of the natural and man-made features and activities that may contribute to success. For example, considering other land use activities, as laid out in state or provincial watershed management plans, or recognizing the important role of *riparian areas* and *wetlands* toward protecting water quantity and quality can lead to forest management activities that manage effects to water quantity. This includes activities such as the timing of road/trail construction or harvesting activities, and the design of *wetland* crossings.

Water quantity is included in Objective 3 because watershed features and forest management activities may affect water quantity. Increased awareness and the implementation of *practices* affecting water quantity that are appropriate to the size and scale of the *Certified Organization* will help to maintain a natural range of variation, while avoiding or minimizing negative effects.

## Forest Management Impacts on Water Quantity

Forest management, including road/trail development, forest harvest, and *reforestation* activities, can influence water quantity. The potential effects of these activities on water quantity are influenced by regional characteristics such as the amount of annual precipitation, slope, soils, and vegetation, and can vary locally depending on factors such as the proportion of a watershed harvested. For example, forest harvest in a watershed that has steep slopes with high annual precipitation has a greater potential for water yield impacts, when compared to a watershed with flat terrain and low annual precipitation.

Road/skid trail location and density can alter stream flow characteristics, resulting in higher peak flows from reduced water infiltration, blocked subsurface flow, and faster water delivery to streams via roadside ditches. Additionally, roads with water, *wetland*, and *riparian area* crossings can block surface flow if they are not designed and built to accommodate the natural flow characteristics.

Forest harvests can contribute to increased runoff. In general, runoff and stream flow increase in proportion to the amount of land harvested in a watershed.

Water quantity is also influenced by the position of the harvest within the watershed, the silvicultural system, and harvesting *practices* used. Harvesting operations that maximize the retention of forest floor vegetation and non-merchantable timber within the harvest area and minimize soil rutting and compaction help reduce surface runoff and the potential for increased stream flow following harvest. Prompt *reforestation* can minimize or mitigate the effects of forest harvest on water quantity.

*Certified Organizations* can reference state, provincial, or other relevant watershed plans and indicate how their forest management plans and activities may support those plan's objectives at a level appropriate to the size and scale of the *Certified Organization's* operations.

On public lands, *Certified Organizations* can indicate how their forest management plans and activities are consistent with established government agency requirements and guidelines, rate of harvest criteria, and other relevant watershed plans.

Components to be considered in a *program* could include mapping and identifying watershed features that contribute to water quantity (e.g., lakes, streams, *riparian areas*, *wetlands*, *vernal pools*, beaver ponds), *practices* that maintain natural drainage patterns and minimize adverse effects of roads and skid trails on water yield, harvesting *practices* that minimize ground disturbance and retain non-merchantable timber or other vegetative cover, *practices* that *protect* and maintain soil *productivity* and *soil health*, and prompt *reforestation* where consistent with other *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard Objectives*. The *program* can also include meeting or exceeding applicable *best management practices* for protecting and maintaining water quality in ways that contribute to protecting and maintaining water quantity.

## **Objective 4. Conservation of *Biological Diversity***

### ***Conservation of Biological Diversity***

The intent of Performance Measure 4.1 is to ensure that *Certified Organizations* use the *best scientific information* available to inform their action at multiple scales, for the purposes of *biodiversity conservation*. The individual indicators specify how this should be executed.

Several indicators suggest the use of *best scientific information*. This is intended to drive the utilization of credible sources to determine *landscape*-level priorities, facilitate assessments, and ultimately maximize the potential of the managed area to contribute to *landscape* level *biodiversity*, within the context of management objectives. Credible sources of science information include (but are not limited to) The Nature Conservancy ecoregional plans, NatureServe biodiversity metrics, and others.

Assessments conducted under Performance Measure 4.1, or any assessments consulted to meet the requirements of Performance Measure 4.1, should inform efforts to maintain or advance *biodiversity conservation* at multiple scales, including *landscape* scale. Indicator 4.1.3 references documentation of *biodiversity* at *landscape* and ownership levels, and incorporation of such documentation “to ensure the contribution of the managed area to the diversity of conditions that promote *biodiversity*.” Such documentation is increasingly available through remote sensing sources, NatureServe biodiversity metrics (a project of SFI), The Nature Conservancy, Forest Inventory and Analysis (U.S.), and/or Canadian Forest Service. It may be possible for a *Certified Organization* to develop its own documentation of diversity at this scale, though credibility is likely enhanced by participating in a broader collaborative process.

To achieve the intended goal of contributing to *biodiversity conservation* at *landscape* scale, managers will need to evaluate the required “documentation of *biodiversity* at *landscape* and ownership/tenure levels” in the context of their own management strategies and objectives, to determine whether there may be opportunities to fill gaps in their *biodiversity* outcomes, or to provide certain forest composition, age-classes, or conditions that may be lacking on the *landscape*. Indicator 4.1.4 cites “planning and priority-setting efforts” to help managers understand *conservation* priorities that have been independently and scientifically established, and “incorporating results” into their own planning. Indicator 4.1.4 provides a list of credible sources to aid in that process — these sources often intersect or dovetail with the *landscape biodiversity* assessments noted above.

One example of a credible prioritization effort at large scale is the “Forests for the Birds” project, collaboratively developed by SFI, the American Bird Conservancy, and multiple *Certified Organizations*. The results of this project should be considered appropriate to meet the intent of Indicator 4.1.4 by informing management strategies for the conservation of wide-ranging bird species.

A credible analysis of the contributions of a given managed area to *biodiversity conservation* may contain certain commonly understood forest metrics, such as stand age and size-class distribution. Certain imperiled species, such as the Red Cockaded Woodpecker (in the U.S. South), may have life cycle requirements related to tree size and distribution — in this case, larger diameter trees. Analysis and planning therefore could include an assessment of the range maps or habitat prediction models of species that may be dependent on such conditions. In this

way, managers can develop strategies to enhance habitat for species with known requirements, and potentially elevate the contribution of their managed area toward landscape goals within the context of overall management objectives, using well-established metrics beyond just the *forest cover type*.

An advantage of using credible planning and priority-setting frameworks, such as those noted above, is that multiple elements and scales of *biodiversity* analysis are already inherent to these constructs. For example, the NatureServe *biodiversity* metrics approach (a project in collaboration with SFI and multiple *Certified Organizations*) includes metrics relative to “*landscape condition*” and “*species assemblages*,” effectively addressing “*connectivity*” and “*natural communities*” respectively. The metric of “*Landscape Spatial Pattern*” effectively speaks to both “*fragmentation*” and “*connectivity*” as inherent attributes of *biodiversity* at multiple scales.

Analyses of *landscape* conditions and opportunities may be conducted collaboratively by multiple *Certified Organizations*, or in partnership with *SFI Implementation Committees* that operate across multiple certified ownerships. Forest managers can use these analyses to implement more efficient strategies for addressing *landscape* scale conservation or *biodiversity* assessments, improving outcomes while remaining true to the management objectives of individual *Certified Organizations*.

### ***Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value***

Objective 4 of the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* extends the *biodiversity* requirements to *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value* (FECV).

Indicator 4.2.2 requires that *Certified Organizations* with FECVs have a *program* to locate and *protect* known sites of flora and fauna associated with viable occurrences of *critically imperiled* and *imperiled* species and communities. An imperiled or critically imperiled plant, animal, or community is one that is globally rare or vulnerable to extinction. *Protection* plans may be developed independently by *Certified Organization* management, or in cooperation with other *stakeholders*, and may include the use of easements, *conservation* land sales, exchanges, or other *conservation* strategies.

Definition of *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value*: *critically imperiled* (G1) and *imperiled* (G2) species and ecological communities.

***Critically imperiled***: A plant or animal or community, often referred to as G1, that is globally extremely rare or, because of some factor(s), especially vulnerable to extinction. Typically, five or fewer occurrences or populations remain, or very few individuals (<1,000), acres (<2,000 acres or 809 hectares), or linear miles (<10 miles or 16 kilometers) exist.

***Imperiled***: A plant or animal or community, often referred to as G2, that is globally rare or, because of some factor(s), is very vulnerable to extinction or elimination. Typically, six to 20 occurrences, or few remaining individuals (1,000 to 3,000), or acres (2,000 to 10,000 acres or 809 to 4047 hectares), or linear miles (10 to 50 miles or 16 to 80.5 kilometers) exist.

In the United States and Canada, *Certified Organizations* can use the NatureServe database to identify species and communities for *protection*. Learn more about [NatureServe Conservation Status Assessments](#).

## NatureServe Resources for Global and Occurrence Ranks

Identification and *protection of critically imperiled and imperiled species* and communities is a stepwise process. First, NatureServe determines the global rank, which reflects the rarity/imperilment of the species or community. Then it assesses the estimated viability, or probability of persistence, of particular occurrences of *critically imperiled and imperiled species* and communities. A viable species or community is one that is of sufficient quality to likely survive *long-term*. Clearly, little *conservation* benefit is gained unless protected occurrences have a good likelihood of *long-term* survival.

NatureServe inventory and *conservation* activities focus on locating, maintaining records on, and working with partners to conserve viable occurrences of *conservation* elements. NatureServe and its network of natural heritage programs rank the viability of element occurrences (either community or species) using standard methodologies to yield an element occurrence ranking. They develop and maintain a standard set of element occurrence rank specifications for each element, and then apply them against individual occurrences of the element.

The basic element occurrence ranks are:

- A: Excellent estimated viability
- B: Good estimated viability
- C: Fair estimated viability
- D: Poor estimated viability
- E: Verified extant (viability not assessed)
- H: Historical
- F: Failed to find
- X: Extirpated

The *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* requires that *Certified Organizations* have a "*program to address conservation of ecologically important species and natural communities, including those that are locally rare.*"

Under the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*, occurrences of *critically imperiled and imperiled species* and communities ranked as A and B are to be protected. C-ranked occurrences should be reviewed and addressed on a case-by-case basis. If they have greater potential to be viable (C+), they should be protected. If they have less potential for viability (C-), they should be managed at the *Certified Organization's* discretion.

Element occurrences with poor estimated viability (D) would not be protected under the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*. A D rank might result because the acreage of a community or the population of a species is too small, the quality is very low, and/or the ecological processes required to maintain the occurrence are fundamentally altered and un-restorable. E-ranked occurrences (viability not assessed) should be presumed viable and protected until they are assessed, and then protected or not accordingly. Occurrences ranked F



are not covered under the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* since only known occurrences are included. Historical (H) and extirpated (X) occurrences are clearly nonviable, and no *protection* activity is warranted.

In determining the viability and potential to *protect* occurrences, *Certified Organizations* are encouraged to seek [additional information on occurrence ranking](#) from NatureServe and/or collaborate with qualified *conservation* experts.

## Occurrence Quality

The following material provides additional information on the standards and methodologies employed by NatureServe in determining the quality or viability of occurrences.

For an ecological assessment, scientists and managers want to know if each occurrence is of sufficient quality, or feasibly restorable, before including it in management planning. With adequate information, ecologists evaluate and rate the quality of element occurrences using criteria grouped into three categories: size, condition, and *landscape* context. Characterizing these qualities provides the basis for assessing the stresses that occurrences may be experiencing (such as degradation or impairment) at a given site.

To assess the quality of element occurrences, ecologists must identify the key ecological factors (ecological processes, population abundance, disturbance regimes, composition, structure, etc.) that support them. Once these are identified, it is possible to describe their expected ranges of variation and assess whether the on-site factors are within those ranges or require significant effort to be maintained or restored to their desired status.

Key ecological factors vary by element type, but all are grouped into the three categories of size, condition, and *landscape* context. Each category is reviewed and ranked for each occurrence as A (excellent), B (good), C (fair), and D (poor). The break between C and D establishes a minimum quality threshold for occurrences. Occurrences ranked D are typically presumed to be beyond practical consideration for ecological restoration. In subsequent management planning, these ranks and underlying criteria aid in focusing *conservation* activities and measuring progress toward local *conservation* objectives.

The categories are defined as follows:

**Size** is a measure of the area or abundance of a *conservation* element's occurrence. It may simply be a measure of the occurrence's patch size or geographic coverage, or it may include an estimate of sub-population size or density. One aspect, the minimum dynamic area, is the area needed to ensure the survival or re-establishment of a population or community after a natural disturbance.

**Condition** is an integrated measure of the composition, structure, and biotic interactions that characterize an occurrence. This includes factors such as reproduction, age structure, biological composition (e.g., presence of *native* versus *invasive species*; presence of characteristic patch types), physical and spatial structure (e.g., canopy, understory, and groundcover; spatial distribution and juxtaposition of patch types or seral stages in an ecological system), and biotic interactions that directly involve the element (e.g., competition and disease).

**Landscape context** measures two factors: the dominant environmental regimes and processes that establish and maintain the element occurrence, and connectivity. Dominant environmental regimes include hydrologic and water chemistry regimes (surface and groundwater), geomorphic processes, climatic regimes (temperature and precipitation), fire regimes, and natural disturbances. Connectivity includes such factors as species elements having access to *habitats* and resources needed for lifecycle completion, the fragmentation of ecological communities and systems, and the ability of any element occurrence to respond to environmental change through dispersal, migration, or re-colonization. The criteria for ranking ecological communities vary by type. In many instances, criteria are developed for ecological systems, then modified (mostly with size attributes) for application to occurrences of individual rare plant associations that may occur among the more broadly defined ecological system.

### **Guidance on Incorporation of Ecosystems in the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard***

In the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*, the term “ecosystem” or “ecosystems” is referenced in several different *objectives* and *indicators*, yet guidance on how the concept of ecosystems should be integrated into *sustainable forestry* is lacking. Ecosystems represent the integration of biotic (e.g., plants, animals) and abiotic (e.g., soils, water) elements of the environment. In the context of *sustainable forestry*, key components of ecosystems include: 1) forest composition; 2) forest structure; 3) connectivity across *landscapes*; and 4) how ecological processes like competition, nutrient cycling, or herbivory influence the sustainability of forest ecosystems.

*Sustainable forestry* is based on applying management at multiple scales, with most *Certified Organizations* operating at *stand* to *landscape* scales. The guidance provided is not a template for ecosystem management – it relies on the currently accepted *SFI* definitions and approved requirements of the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* to demonstrate how ecosystems are an integral component of sustainable forest management. However, the guidance is consistent with the four key components of ecosystems listed above.

### **Integrating the Biotic and Abiotic Elements of the Environment**

The foundation for *landscape* scale mapping and planning that incorporates ecosystems into sustainable forest management includes a combination of *forest cover type* and soils maps, supplemented by non-timber information like *non-forested wetlands* and *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value*. *Certified Organizations* are required to have a *land classification* system (Indicator 1.1.1c), soils inventory and maps, where available (Indicator 1.1.1e, Performance Measure 2.3), up-to-date maps or a *geographic information system* (Indicator 1.1.1g), and information on non-timber resources (Indicator 1.1.1i, Performance Measure 3.2, Indicators 4.1.6, 4.2.2, 4.2.3) as part of their forest planning processes. *Certified Organizations* also are required to integrate biotic and abiotic elements in forest conversion decisions (Indicator 1.2.2), forest regeneration (Performance Measure 2.1), and during implementation of forest *protection* activities (Performance Measure 2.4). Additionally, the *conservation of biological diversity* inherently integrates the biotic and abiotic elements of the environment through the accounting of *wildlife habitats* (Indicators 4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.1.5), ecological community types (Indicators 4.1.1, 4.2.2, Performance Measure 4.3), *biological*

*diversity* (Indicator 4.1.1), and *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value* (Performance Measures 4.2 and 4.4).

## **Forest Composition**

Forest composition is closely linked to abiotic factors like soil, microclimate, and moisture availability. Forest managers tend to think of composition at three levels: 1) *forest health* and *productivity* (e.g., high growth rates, drought resistant, disease resistance) of planting or regeneration stock (the “genetic” level”); 2) *stand* level considerations, including tree species composition, management of competing vegetation, and structural retention practices (Indicator 4.1.2); and 3) *landscape* scale considerations (across ownerships or across multiple ownerships – Indicators 4.1.3, 4.1.4) in terms of *forest cover types* or other land cover classes.

## **Forest Structure**

Within forest *stands*, structure refers to several different characteristics, including the physical arrangement of trees, snags, and down woody debris. Within a *stand* and depending on the situation, *Certified Organizations* have criteria for the desired forest composition (Performance Measure 2.1), tree stocking (Indicator 2.1.2), size distributions (Indicators 1.1.1a, 1.1.1h), retention of *habitat* elements (Indicator 4.1.2), *protection of ecologically important sites* (Indicators 4.1.5, 4.1.6, Performance Measure 4.3), and *protection of special sites* (Objective 6). At larger scales, such as with multiple forest *stands*, forest structure is often based on differences in size/density or stand age (in even-aged management systems), as portrayed by a *land classification* system (Indicator 4.1.3). This *land classification* system often includes information on *riparian zones* and *wetlands* (Performance Measure 3.2). At even larger scales (e.g., *landscapes*), forest managers tend to portray the diversity of size, density, or age classes in management blocks, across entire ownerships, or in some instances across multiple ownerships (Indicator 4.1.3).

## **Connectivity**

Integration of connectivity into sustainable forest management occurs through *protection of wetlands* and *riparian zones* (Performance Measure 3.2), provision of diverse *forest cover types* and structures (Indicators 4.1.2, 4.1.3), and *protection of other ecologically important sites* (Indicators 4.1.5, 4.1.6, Performance Measure 4.3). Connectivity can be assessed at multiple scales and can be thought of as “structural” or “functional.” Structural connectivity refers to *forest cover types* or *habitats* that are geographically adjacent, facilitating the ability of genes and species to move through a managed forest *landscape*. Functional connectivity refers to *forest cover types* or *habitats* that are not physically adjacent but are arranged in a *landscape* such that genes and species can move. The *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* contains *indicators* that both directly and indirectly influence connectivity via requirements for prompt forest *reforestation* (Performance Measure 2.1), limitations on clearcut harvest area sizes (Indicator 5.2.1), limitations on forest *conversion* (Performance Measures 1.2, 1.3), the *protection of wetlands* and *riparian zones* (Performance Measure 3.2), non-forested areas, and other ecological sites (Indicators 4.1.5, 4.1.6, Performance Measure 4.3), and through aesthetic considerations (Objective 5). In certain situations, some *Certified Organizations* may explicitly

identify species of *conservation* concern that warrant direct assessments of connectivity (Performance Measure 4.2).

## **Ecological Processes**

Ecological processes help sustain forest composition, structure, and connectivity. The *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* explicitly recognizes numerous important ecological processes that are important to *sustainable forestry*, including *reforestation* (Performance Measure 2.1), *forest health* (Performance Measure 2.4), hydrological function (Objective 3), and consideration of the role of natural disturbances (Indicator 4.1.8). In many certified forest *landscapes*, the ecological processes that sustain composition and structure are influenced by active or passive management activities including harvesting, *reforestation*, and maintenance or enhancement of *biological diversity* and *wildlife habitat*.

## ***Wildlife Habitat Diversity, Ecologically Important Species, and Invasive Species***

Objective 4 in the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* includes *performance measures* and *indicators* for *conservation* of *biological diversity*. Additional information is provided here for *wildlife habitat* diversity and *invasive species*.

### ***Wildlife Habitat Diversity***

Performance Measure 4.1 in the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* includes *programs* to incorporate *conservation* of *biological diversity* and recognize the value of a diversity of *habitats* to support fish and *wildlife habitats*. Early successional forest stages, for example, are particularly lacking in certain regions of the U.S. and Canada, and managing for them can aid in preventing the decline of species dependent on them (e.g., ruffed grouse). Historically, fires and other natural disturbances created forest openings and the types of *habitat* needed by these early succession forest dependent species. As forests across the *landscape* mature, this type of *habitat* declines in abundance. However, it can easily be created by the proper selection of harvesting methods, including clearcutting and the use of prescribed fire.

### ***Ecologically Important Species***

Indicator 4.1.5 requires a *program* to address *conservation* of *ecologically important species* and *natural communities*. Such *ecologically important species* or communities could include those that are locally rare in the area of operation, at the discretion of the *Certified Organization*. "Locally rare" is a term intended to give managers flexibility in interpretation, though managers are encouraged to consult objective sources (such as NatureServe G and S rank systems) to achieve consistent application of the concept. Specifically, "locally rare" could include species with a high "S-Rank," indicating relative rarity within that jurisdictional area (e.g., state or province), or it could mean species that are at the fringes of their range, and thus relatively uncommon to that locality.

The intent of Indicator 4.1.5 is for *Certified Organizations* to; (1) evaluate *conservation* opportunities relative to species or communities that are not officially designated for *protection* by state, provincial, or federal law, or ranked G1 or G2 (and thus addressed through *Forests*

*with Exceptional Conservation Value*); (2) identify *ecologically important* species for management attention; and (3) incorporate *conservation* actions for the selected species into management.

The term "*ecologically important species*" replaces the former term "viable occurrences of significant species of concern." *Ecologically important* is a defined term, which can be applied to either species or *natural communities* (which is also now a defined term).

The intent is for *conservation* to occur on *Certified Organization* lands. Although *Certified Organizations* are not required to do surveys to determine known occurrences, they should refer to available sources to identify the presence of ecologically important species or *natural communities*. *Certified Organizations* should look to the definition of *ecologically important* to help determine which species or *natural communities* should be considered under this indicator, in addition to considering their rarity, regional importance, and sensitivity to, or reliance upon, forest management activities. Resources for determining rarity may include NatureServe G or S ranks, the International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List, and federal, provincial, or state lists. Resources for determining regional importance may include The Nature Conservancy ecoregional plans, State Wildlife Action Plans, or other credible *conservation* plans. Information regarding known occurrences (i.e., presence) can be drawn from NatureServe, state/provincial natural resource agencies, Conservation Data Centers, or other regional mapping efforts or assessments.

It should be noted that *non-forested wetlands*, bogs, fens, marshes, and *vernal pools* (cited for identification and *protection* in Indicator 4.1.6) are characterized by distinct *natural communities* and can thus be identified using the methods and sources noted above.

*Ecologically important* species or *natural communities* could include species that are ranked G3 or S1-S3 by NatureServe, at the discretion of the forest manager, and may be based on potential opportunities for the managed area to aid in the recovery or perpetuation of that species (note that G1-G2 species are already afforded *protection* by definition and related requirements under *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value*). For example, the Gopher tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*), ranked G3, is considered an *ecologically important* species across much of its range. Many forest managers in the Gopher tortoise's range in the U.S. South include specific attention to the needs of that species in management planning.

Lists of "special concern species," "rare species," "species of greatest conservation need," and other similarly described lists have been published by state, provincial, and federal agencies, and others. This indicator is not intended to imply that any particular species on such lists should require management or *protection*, but that such lists should serve as a resource for the identification of *ecologically important* species or *natural communities*.

Ensuring that *programs* are in place for *ecologically important* species and *natural communities* provides forest managers with opportunities to address vulnerable, and locally rare, species in multiple ways. *Certified Organizations* are encouraged to work closely with non-governmental organizations, and state, provincial, and federal agencies, to advance *conservation* efforts collaboratively, and to mitigate the need for formal listing and regulatory protections under the Endangered Species Act (US), or the Species at Risk Act (Canada).

## ***Invasive Species***

Indicator 4.1.7 addresses *invasive species*.

*Certified Organizations* should become knowledgeable about *invasive species* within their area of operation. The expectation is that they will participate in cooperative efforts by others (e.g., government agencies or non-government environmental organizations) and work proactively within their own *programs* (e.g., through erosion control or seed selection for *wildlife* plots) to limit the introduction, impact, and spread of *invasive species*. Indicator 4.1.7 does not require a *Certified Organization* to eliminate *invasive species* on their land. In some places, *invasive species* are well established and eradication by the *Certified Organizations* is unrealistic.

Experts in this area believe the most effective means of addressing *invasive species* include:

- awareness building,
- monitoring,
- preventing new introductions, and
- eliminating new occurrences.

*Certified Organizations* should emphasize these as priorities in their *programs*. Forest practices that reduce the abundance of *invasive species* are preferred if they can be addressed within the context of the *Certified Organization's* overall management objectives.

## **Application of Research to Forest Management Decisions**

The intent of Performance Measure 4.4 is to ensure that the substantial investment of *Certified Organizations* toward research is resulting in advancements in the application of practices toward *biodiversity conservation*. *Certified Organizations* can participate in advancing this knowledge in multiple ways. Performance Measure 4.4 suggests the need for acquiring biodiversity-related data through inventory processes, mapping, and interaction with natural heritage programs, data centers, or NatureServe. The implication is that *Certified Organizations* can both utilize such data and also participate in the advancement of general understanding, by contributing their own data to be widely shared, where feasible and appropriate. This could include, for example, sharing element occurrence data with NatureServe data centers to augment understanding of species' distribution. Participation could further include direct engagement in collaborative projects with non-governmental organizations, academic partners, and other *Certified Organizations* to increase understanding and advance common practice.

Modes of implementation could include (but are not limited to):

- collaborative research participation, and sharing results, through *SFI Implementation Committee* engagement;
- participation in research projects with external partners, through direct engagement, *SFI Conservation Grant* projects, multilateral partnerships, etc.; or
- sharing of proprietary research results, as appropriate, to support the elevation of forest practices across the sector.

## **Objective 8. Recognize and Respect Indigenous Peoples' Rights**

### **Indigenous Title**

*SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* Performance Measure 8.1 requires that *Certified Organizations* recognize and respect *Indigenous Peoples'* rights. Additionally, Objective 10 requires *Certified Organizations* to comply with all applicable federal and provincial/state laws and regulations. This includes applicable laws and regulations pertaining to engagement, communication, and/or consultation with *Indigenous Peoples*, as they exist within the *Certified Organization's* province(s) or state(s) of operation and apply to the *Certified Organization's* private forest lands or public tenures.

Further to legal compliance under Objective 10, *Certified Organizations* should take additional measures to demonstrate recognition and respect for *Indigenous Peoples'* rights and *traditional forest-related knowledge*. Such measures are intended to help build a strong foundation for meaningful relationship-building and collaboration between *Certified Organizations* and *Indigenous Peoples*, whose rights may be affected by the *Certified Organization's* forest management activities.

Demonstrating an understanding and recognition of established frameworks of legal, customary, and traditional rights is one such measure that can further support relationship building processes. Within their Objective 8 *program* (Indicator 8.1.1), *Certified Organizations* should include actions that demonstrate their efforts to understand and recognize established frameworks of legal, customary, and traditional rights as they pertain to their private forest lands or public tenures which may be of importance to *Indigenous Peoples* whose rights may be affected by the *Certified Organization's* forest management activities.

Reference to resources such as (i) the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, (ii) federal, provincial, and state laws and regulations, and (iii) relevant treaties, agreements, or other constructive arrangements among governments and *Indigenous Peoples* can be used to demonstrate efforts to recognize such frameworks. In all cases, *Certified Organizations* shall respect the processes, laws, and direction received from relevant government agencies derived through the nation-to-nation relationships where the certification takes place.

*Certified Organizations* are encouraged to investigate opportunities to implement aspects of such frameworks that fall outside of those required under Objective 10 and are identified as being of importance to affected *Indigenous Peoples*, as a means of further supporting meaningful relationship-building processes.

### **Communications with Indigenous Communities**

The *2022 Forest Management Standard* Indicator 8.2.1 d. requires a *Certified Organization* with public forest tenures to communicate with *Indigenous Peoples* whose rights may be affected by forest management *practices* through processes that respect their representative institutions and cultural preferences. At a minimum, *Certified Organizations* with forest management responsibilities on public lands must fulfill their legal requirements arising from relevant federal, state, or provincial regulations. Many jurisdictions have existing legislation or regulations that guide communications with *Indigenous Peoples* in the context of sustainable forest

management. Areas of consideration and levels of prescriptiveness vary by jurisdiction but may include:

- i. timing of communications;
- ii. subject matter of communications;
- iii. delivery method(s) of communications;
- iv. timelines for responses to communications;
- v. necessary recipients of communications; and,
- vi. ability to modify prescribed communication procedures to accommodate local preferences.

Early, often, and ongoing communication with *Indigenous Peoples* can enhance relationship-building efforts, promote trust and collaboration, and enable all parties to proactively address potentially contentious issues before they become sources of disruptive conflict. As such, *Certified Organizations* are encouraged to implement communications programs that build on regulated requirements and are aimed at supporting open, respectful, and locally relevant communication with affected *Indigenous Peoples*.

*Certified Organizations* are encouraged to identify communications protocols that have been previously developed and endorsed by affected Indigenous communities and integrate them into their broader communications programs. These protocols can often be obtained by checking a nation, tribe, or community's website; calling the nation, tribe, or community's administrative office; or, contacting relevant federal, provincial, or state authorities who have responsibilities to communicate with *Indigenous Peoples*. Many Indigenous communities will appoint an individual or department to lead external communication, consultation, and engagement activities who can advise *Certified Organizations* on appropriate protocols.

Where community-endorsed communications protocol does not already exist and/or where regulated requirements or existing communications protocols do not contain specific provisions related to performance measures or indicators contained in Objective 8, *Certified Organizations* are encouraged to co-develop customized communications protocols with affected Indigenous communities. Such protocols should seek to build upon relevant legal or regulatory requirements, while considering the unique interests, needs, preferences, and capacity of each party. In addition to considering items i through vi above, customized communications protocols could contain agreed-upon provisions pertaining to:

- adequate communications timelines that permit thorough review of documents and meaningful participation in decision-making processes by all parties;
- opportunities to participate in information sharing events such as company-hosted field tours or third-party audits (interviews and/or field audit);
- the presentation of relevant documents in an accessible, non-technical format that can be easily understood by individuals from a non-forestry background;
- the documentation, storage, application, and dissemination of (a) *Indigenous Peoples' traditional forest-related knowledge*, (b) information pertaining to sites of spiritual, historical, or cultural importance, (c) use of *non-timber forest products* of



- value, and (d) other forms of *Indigenous Peoples'* intellectual property as deemed important to the affected Indigenous community; and,
- the resolution of disagreements with respect to forest management decision making.

Prior to the establishment of a customized communications protocol that identifies necessary recipients of and delivery methods for communications, *Certified Organizations* should attempt to establish genuine, good faith communications with affected Indigenous communities by employing a variety of delivery methods (e.g., mail, electronic, telephone, in-person), as required, directed to appropriate contact persons or departments identified through the use of available resources and information. *Certified Organizations* are encouraged to document all communications with affected Indigenous communities pertaining to the fulfillment of Objective 8 requirements.

Communications protocols should be periodically reviewed and updated to ensure they remain relevant and meaningful to all parties, considering evolving local circumstances and forest management priorities. Appropriate training should be provided to personnel and contractors so that they are competent to fulfill both their legal responsibilities with respect to communications with *Indigenous Peoples* as well as their responsibilities arising from co-developed communications protocols.

### **Appropriate Training of *Certified Organization* Personnel and Contractors**

Indicator 8.1.1.c directs *certified organizations* to provide appropriate training to personnel and contractors so that the *certified organization* is competent to fulfill their responsibilities under Objective 8 of the *SFI Forest Management Standard*.

In designing and delivering their training programs, *certified organization* should endeavor to ensure that content is locally or regionally relevant and takes into account the rights, histories, and cultural backgrounds of *Indigenous Peoples* whose rights may be affected by the *certified organization's* forest management activities. Such approaches are supported by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), which recognizes that, "the situation of Indigenous peoples varies from region to region and from country to country and that the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical and cultural backgrounds should be taken into consideration" within processes that seek to uphold *Indigenous Peoples'* rights and foster positive relationship building.

*Certified organizations* are therefore encouraged to both engage with established Indigenous training providers who have professional experience in the *certified organization's* operating area(s) and co-develop training programs in collaboration with *Indigenous Peoples* whose rights may be affected by the *certified organization's* forest management activities, where interest from those Indigenous rights-holders exists, to enable due consideration of the *certified organization's* unique operating context(s), including:

- its organizational structure and geographic footprint,
- its workforce and contractor network composition,

- opportunities to integrate or phase Objective 8 training into existing training programs for personnel and contractors,
- the unique histories, rights, and cultures of rights-holding *Indigenous Peoples* within their operating area(s) as they pertain to various *performance measures* and *indicators* associated with Objective 8 of the *SFI Forest Management Standard*,
- opportunities to develop training programs, or specific components of training programs, on a regional basis, such as through collaborations involving tribal councils, provincial territorial organizations, treaty organizations, and/or *SFI Implementation Committees*,
- the unique ways in which different professional roles or departments within the *certified organization* may intersect with the below-listed training topics.

For *certified organizations* with forest management responsibilities on public lands, training topics may include, but not be limited to, locally or regionally relevant information pertaining to:

- Recognizing established frameworks of legal and customary rights, such as those outlined in UNDRIP; federal, provincial, and state laws and regulations; and treaties, agreements or other constructive arrangements among governments and *Indigenous Peoples*
- Understanding and respect for *traditional forest-related knowledge*
- Identifying and protecting spiritually, historically, and culturally important sites
- Addressing the use of *non-timber forest products* of value
- Communicating through processes that respect *Indigenous Peoples'* representative institutions, using appropriate protocols
- Providing opportunities to review forest management plans and forest management *practices*

For *certified organizations* with forest management responsibilities on private lands, training topics may include, but not be limited to, locally or regionally relevant information pertaining to:

- Recognizing established frameworks of legal and customary rights, such as those outlined in UNDRIP; federal, provincial, and state laws and regulations; and treaties, agreements or other constructive arrangements among governments and *Indigenous Peoples*
- Understanding and respect for *traditional forest-related knowledge*

## **Objective 9. *Climate Smart Forestry***

Atmospheric carbon continues to influence the effects of climate change on forest ecosystems and global climate cycles. Carbon sequestered in and released from forests has been identified as having a significant effect on atmospheric carbon levels. As such, understanding the benefits of carbon sequestration and storage in managed forests is an important element of sustainable forest management.

Natural disturbances such as fire and insect outbreaks have occurred throughout history in North American forests. However, recent evidence suggests that these events are becoming

more frequent and severe due to climate change. Increases in the extent and severity of disturbances have shifted large areas of forests towards significant sources of emissions to atmospheric carbon pools through catastrophic fires and increased mortality, compounding the climate change effects of anthropogenic carbon emissions.

Forest management decisions need to take into consideration a suite of objectives that are appropriately responsive to the unprecedented changes to our forests resulting from climate change. These include managing for wildfire risk, maintaining landscape diversity for wildlife and recreation, maintaining growing forests that remove carbon from the atmosphere, and providing a sustainable resource for rural communities that rely on forest-based economies. We know that when we actively manage our forested landscapes for wood products, we can maintain forests as a carbon sink.<sup>5,6</sup> Understanding carbon dynamics in managed forests means *Certified Organizations* can make informed decisions to ensure that their objectives, strategies, and practices are both responsive and responsible with respect to climate change impacts.

In 2019, the Michigan State University Forest Carbon and Climate Program (FCCP) undertook a preliminary study which included a qualitative analysis of SFI documents, interviews with key experts, and observations of SFI training activities. The analysis found that although the *SFI Forest Management Standard* did not explicitly require performance relative to carbon or climate mitigation to be performed, “climate smart forestry”<sup>7</sup> concepts, management practices, and other best practices were prevalent throughout the standards, training materials, and *Certified Organization* interviews. Beyond those valued practices, which remain as important elements of the *SFI Forest Management Standard*, the Climate Smart Forestry Objective is the next logical step in providing the assurance that such practices are undertaken, audited, and tracked as a proof point of forest sustainability.

The Climate Smart Forestry *objective* ensures that *Certified Organizations* are aware of the effects of their management on forest carbon dynamics as they relate to climate, and that such considerations are taken into account in business and forest management planning. However, the Climate Smart Forestry *objective* is not a carbon quantification protocol, nor does it require *Certified Organizations* to additionally sequester carbon in managed forests. Further, the Climate Smart Forestry *objective* does not require quantification or verification of carbon pools, as might be required by voluntary carbon markets or offset programs such as [Carbonzero](#), the [Verified Carbon Standard](#) (VCS), or [Carbonfund.org](#), but it may be a useful framework for those participating in such programs.

The requirements of the Climate Smart Forestry *objective* and the *programs* and management activities designed to meet its *performance measures* and *indicators* should, as much as possible, be based the *best scientific information*. SFI recognizes that there is uncertainty in all science, and climate change is a uniquely challenging phenomenon. Even with the *best scientific information*, the outcomes of climate change on forests may not be 100% predictable; nonetheless, we strive to have the best preparation possible, and to help reduce uncertainty, rather than avoid it.

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<sup>5</sup> Kurz W.A., Smyth, C. and Lemprière, T. (2016) Climate change mitigation through forest sector activities: principles, potential and priorities. *Unasylva* 246 (67), 61-67.

<sup>6</sup> Smyth, C.E., Stinson, G., Neilson, E., Lempriere, T.C., Rampley, G.J. and Kurz, W.A. (2014). Quantifying the biophysical climate change mitigation potential of Canada’s forest sector. *Biogeosciences* 11, 3515-3529.

<sup>7</sup> See [FAO 2019 for more information on Climate-smart Forestry](#)

It is important to note that the scope and scale at which *Certified Organizations* address these objectives will depend on their capacity to conduct analysis and their purposes vis-vis the needs of their customers. *Organizations* certified to the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* may choose to conduct a more complex and area-specific inventory of greenhouse gas emissions and harvest removals or consult regional averages for greenhouse gas emissions and harvest removal estimates, for the purposes of developing an *adaptation* strategy and *mitigation* plans.

Due to the overarching regionalized effects of climate change, it may be useful and feasible for *Certified Organizations* to coordinate efforts at addressing climate change risks to forests (Performance Measure 9.1), or to identify and address opportunities to mitigate climate change with their state or regional *SFI Implementation Committees*. While not a requirement, such coordinated efforts may be an effective means of assuring consistency for practice and information availability.

The intent of the Climate Smart Forestry Objective is to require *Certified Organizations* to consider as many managed forests greenhouse gas and carbon sources and sinks as is reasonably practicable, recognizing that some of them may be outside of their influence. SFI also acknowledges *Certified Organizations* will continuously improve their forest management activities to address climate change adaptation and mitigation measures over time as more data and information become available. The following guidance is intended to provide options that *Certified Organizations* may use to meet Objective 9 in the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* and is not normative.

### **Performance Measure 9.1 — Identifying Climate Change Risks and Vulnerabilities**

Risks and vulnerabilities that result from climate change impacts on managed forests and the values within them will vary from region to region and across forest stand types and ages. This variation may include differences in effects on tree mortality, forest infestation, wildfire, and species distributions.<sup>8</sup> Identifying risks and vulnerabilities using the best scientific and economic information available is important to test the relevance or efficacy of a *Certified Organization's* existing risk management strategies under climate change, and to help identify whether new or additional strategies may be warranted. Standard risk identification and assessment approaches exist that can be directly used in a forest management context ([Edwards et al 2015](#)<sup>9</sup>) or can be adapted from similar approaches ([CoastAdapt 2020](#)<sup>10</sup>).

#### **Indicator 9.1.1 — Prioritization of Risks and Vulnerabilities**

Risk or vulnerability assessment is the process of assessing the probabilities and consequences of potential risk events. Indicator 9.1.1 requires *Certified Organizations* to conduct an assessment to prioritize identified climate change risks. Management efforts can then be better allocated to reduce risks to forests and the values within them, as per Objectives 2 (Forest

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<sup>8</sup> Romero-Lankao et al 2014, Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability. Part B: Regional Aspects. Contribution of Working Group II to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

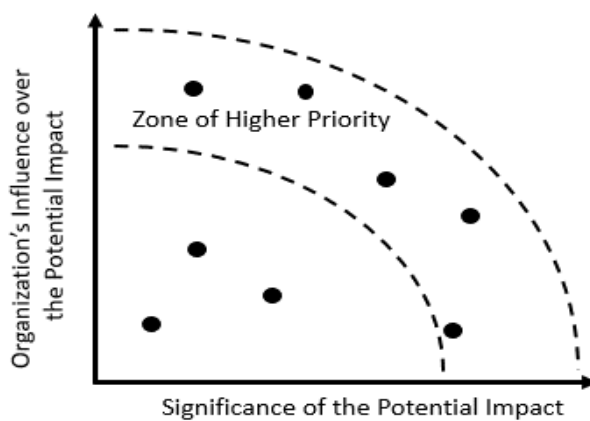
<sup>9</sup> Climate change and sustainable forest management in Canada: a guidebook for assessing vulnerability and mainstreaming adaptation into decision making / J.E. Edwards, C. Pearce, A.E. Ogden, and T.B. Williamson.

<sup>10</sup> Plunket, J., Stanzel, K., Weber, R. and S. Lerberg. 2015. Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment Tool for Coastal Habitats: Guidance Documentation. Available: <http://www.ccvatch.com>

Health and Productivity), 3 (Protection and Maintenance of Water Resources), 4 (Conservation of Biological Diversity), 5 (Management of Visual Quality and Recreation Benefits) and 6 (Protection of Special Sites).

Determining the climate-related material risks to a *Certified Organization* may involve identifying, refining, and assessing numerous potential environmental, social, and economic climate-related risks and vulnerabilities that could affect the *Certified Organization* or its *stakeholders*. These can then be distilled into a short list of topics that inform forest management strategies, targets, operations, and reporting.<sup>11</sup> Determining which risks and vulnerabilities are the highest priority may involve considering the nature of the impacts, including whether they are positive or negative, actual or potential, direct or indirect, short-term or long-term, or intended or unintended. A further consideration may be given to the significance of the potential impact on the *Certified Organization*, its operations, and *stakeholders*, and the level to which the impact can be influenced (Figure 1), and the risks over the *long-term* planning horizon for the forest being assessed.

Figure 1: Prioritization of climate-related risks to a *Certified Organization* based on the significance of the potential impact and the *organization's* ability to influence the risks.



### Indicators 9.1.2 and 9.1.3 — Identifying *Adaptation* Strategies

Indicator 9.1.2 requires a *Certified Organization* to develop an *adaptation* plan to address priority climate change risks, and in so doing help identify and address opportunities to enhance ecosystem resilience for the forests they own or manage (Indicator 9.2.2). Indicator 9.1.3 then addresses how these *adaptation* plans should be reviewed in the context of Regional Climate Change Adaptation Strategies (RCCAS), where they exist. RCCAS are useful tools that help governments and organizations conduct operations that are aligned with overall *adaptation* efforts that are sensitive to regionally specific climate change risks. RCCAS have been developed for several jurisdictions and municipalities, such as those found in Table 1, and are readily available for downloading.

*Adaptation* strategies may involve considering potential adjustments to account for altered timing of spring thaws and shorter winters, assisted tree migration through selective planting,

<sup>11</sup> KPMG 2014, [Sustainable Insight: The essentials of materiality assessment](#).

and consideration of planting the right tree species in the right place, at the right time, to name a few. *Certified Organizations* may further wish to assess the impact of climate risk across the range of *programs* they develop under the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*, including those related to *wildlife* and *biodiversity*, and *special sites*, through monitoring and data collection. For example, climate change may result in shifts in *habitat* for *threatened and endangered* species or increase the potential for catastrophic wildfire or insect infestation on *special sites*. It may be useful to identify how these *programs* might need to evolve to address identified climate risks.

Table 1: A non-exhaustive list of Adaptation Tools and Strategies by relevant jurisdiction, with title and source URLs for locating the documents (accessed April 26, 2020).

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Title</b>
California	<a href="#">California Adaptation Planning Guide: planning for adaptive communities</a>
New Hampshire	<a href="#">Climate Change Resilience Plan: resilience and preparedness in state government project</a>
U.S. Southeast	<a href="#">UE EPA Region 4 Adaptation Implementation Plan</a>
British Columbia	<a href="#">Strategic Climate Risk Assessment Framework for British Columbia</a>
Ontario	<a href="#">Climate Ready: Ontario's adaptation strategy and action plan</a>
Canada	<a href="#">Adapting Sustainable Forest Management to Climate Change: preparing for the future</a>
U.S.	<a href="#">Climate Hubs – U.S. Department of Agriculture</a>
U.S.	<a href="#">USFS Climate Change Resource Center</a>
Canada	<a href="#">Forestry Adaptation Community of Practice (FACoP)</a>
U.S.	<a href="#">Climate Change and Forestry Handbook (Manomet)</a>
U.S.	<a href="#">Forest Adaptation Resources: Climate Change Tools and Approaches for Land Managers, 2nd edition (USDA)</a>

Adapting forest practices to address the potential risks identified in Performance Measure 9.1 includes understanding the range of variability in future climate scenarios and adapting management and silvicultural practices to those potentially altered conditions to sustain a thriving forest with all of its inherent values. Larger forest landowners and managers may choose to conduct a more holistic adaptation plan and incorporate a broader range of options or may examine a narrower range of feasible options for the purposes of developing an adaptation strategy, depending on their capacity or market purposes.

### **Indicator 9.2.1 — Identifying Options for Addressing Stored Carbon and Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

Resulting activities from this *indicator* may range from assessing the impact of the forest management plan on overall carbon balance to assessing the impact of different silvicultural and operational *practices* on live tree carbon to support the maintenance of forest benefits, potentially including target-setting for reduced net emissions or increased sequestration. Some examples may include:

- consideration of equipment age, operability and maintenance (Scope 1 emissions);
- selecting the correct equipment size (most efficient machine for the job);
- finding alternative uses for logging waste to manage for fuel abatement and minimizing open burning; and/or
- modifications to site preparation techniques.

### **Indicator 9.2.3 — Quantifying GHG Emissions in Forest Management Operations**

Understanding the overall impact of forest operations on forest carbon balance can encompass analysis of carbon pools and fluxes, or the identification and management of the most significant fluxes over which *Certified Organizations* have an influence. Forest landowners and managers may choose to conduct a more comprehensive inventory of greenhouse gas emissions, or they may rely on regional averages for estimating emissions and informing their forest management operations, depending on their capacity or market purposes.

Models and tools to quantify local, regional, and national level forest carbon storage, which may assist in addressing carbon storage or emission calculations, are available from a variety of sources. The USDA Forest Service website maintains a list of tools for carbon inventory, management, and reporting here. Some freely available data sources include the USFS Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) National Program, as well as resources available from Natural Resource Canada's (NRCan) Carbon Accounting Program, such as the CBM-CFS3 model (available [here](#)). Other more regionally specific resources are available from industry-specific vendors (e.g., NCASI, Silviaterra), or through available tools such as FORECAST or FORCARB. Tool and approach selection may consider resolution, accuracy, and scalability. Irrespective of the source, accounting tools should be characterized by sensitivity to forest types and employ the appropriate scale and climate modelling analysis suitable to the forest management area in question.

Resources available to help *Certified Organizations* develop *programs* (Indicator 9.2.2) are related to the tools and methods used to address carbon and greenhouse gas emissions (Indicator 9.2.1), combined with approaches that prioritize the most significant emission sources for management. Tools and models developed to quantify emissions are listed in Table 2.

Table 2 — Forest carbon emission and storage estimation models and tools, with references to geographic applicability. Note this is not an exhaustive list of possible tools.



Tool	Country, State/Province	Description	Source
CBM-CFS3	Canada (all)	The operational-scale Carbon Budget Model of the Canadian Forest Sector (CBM-CFS3) is an aspatial, stand- and landscape-level modeling framework that simulates the dynamics of all forest carbon stocks required under the Kyoto Protocol (aboveground biomass, belowground biomass, litter, dead wood, and soil organic carbon). It complies with the carbon estimation methods outlined by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).	<a href="#">Link</a>
Generic Carbon Budget Model (GCBM)	Canada (all)	The GCBM is the next generation, fully spatial version of the CBM-CFS3 that the federal government is currently using for various internal research and collaborative projects.	<a href="#">Contact</a>
FORECAST model	Canada (BC, AB, SK, S. ON, NS)	FORECAST is an ecosystem-based, stand-level, forest growth simulator. The model was designed to accommodate a wide variety of harvesting and silvicultural systems in order to compare and contrast their effect upon forest productivity, stand dynamics, and various biophysical indicators of non-timber values. Forest carbon is one of the outputs that can be modeled.	<a href="#">Link</a>
FORCARB model	Canada (ON)	FORCARB is a U.S. developed model that the government of Ontario has modified for provincial use. The Ontario model is referred to as FORCARB-ON. The model can be used to project carbon storage in harvested wood products.	<a href="#">Link</a>
i-Tree Harvest Carbon Calculator	U.S.	The i-Tree Harvest Carbon Calculator (originally known as the PRESTO Wood Calculator) allows land managers and landowners to estimate the amount of carbon stored in harvested wood products. Carbon estimates are based on harvest volume, geographic region, and wood type.	<a href="#">Link</a>

Methods for calculating ecosystem and harvested carbon	U.S.	A publication with guidelines and default tables for estimating forest ecosystem carbon pools in the US and storage of harvested wood products in use and in landfills.	<a href="#">Link</a>
FORCARB2	U.S. and Ontario	FORCARB2 produces estimates of carbon stocks and stock changes for forest ecosystems and forest	<a href="#">Link</a>



		products at 5-year intervals; it includes a new methodology for carbon in harvested wood products, updated initial inventory data, a revised algorithm for dead wood, and now includes public forest land, reserved forest land, and forest land of low productivity.	
US Forest Carbon Calculation Tool	U.S.	The Carbon Calculation Tool 4.0, <i>CCTv40.exe</i> , is a computer application that reads publicly available forest inventory data collected by the U.S. Forest Service's Forest Inventory and Analysis Program (FIA) and generates state-level annualized estimates of carbon stocks on forest land based on FORCARB2 estimators.	<a href="#">Link</a>
EVALIDator	U.S.	Generates user-specified reports on forest inventory estimates, including forest carbon stocks and changes in dry biomass over time, using US Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) data.	<a href="#">Link</a>
Practitioner's Menu of Adaptation Strategies and Approaches for Forest Carbon Management	U.S.	Decision-support tool for incorporating adaptation considerations into current management objectives.	<a href="#">Link</a>
USFS Climate Change Resource Center	U.S.	CCRC hosts several informational pages on forest carbon management.	<a href="#">Link</a>
USFS Climate Change Resource Center – Library	U.S.	Library of tools related to forest carbon.	<a href="#">Link</a>
Forest-Climate Working Group	U.S.	FCWG hosts webinars that address a wide range of topics related to adaptation and mitigation.	<a href="#">Link</a>

IPCC AR4 WG3 (2007), Metz, B.; Davidson, O.R.; Bosch, P.R.; Dave, R.; Meyer, L.A. (eds.), *Climate Change 2007: Mitigation of Climate Change, Contribution of Working Group III (WG3) to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*

(IPCC), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom and New York, NY, USA., 851 pp.

## **Objective 10. Fire Resilience and Awareness**

The intent of Objective 10 — Fire Resilience and Awareness - is for *Certified Organizations* to limit the susceptibility of forests to undesirable impacts of wildfire and to raise community awareness of wildfire benefits, risks, and minimization measures.

Undesirable impacts of wildfire are those that threaten public safety, human health, property, carbon emissions, water quality and quantity, air quality, and species *habitat*, or have the capacity to destroy forests on a scale that significantly impacts the inherent values of these forests.

The link between wildfires and climate is well-documented. The planet is warming, and higher temperatures lead to drier conditions, with many regions experiencing severe drought, resulting in more dead trees and debris that significantly increase the risk of undesirable impacts of wildfire. Indicator 1.1.4 already requires *Certified Organizations*, where applicable, to model the negative impacts of climate change (i.e., prolonged drought, increased incidence of disease or pests) in their *long-term* sustainable harvest levels.

However, sustainable forest management can also reduce the risk of these undesirable impacts of wildfire. Appropriate management must be done within the context of fire ecology and fire regime. Doing so increases overall forest resiliency, including reducing fuel loads and limiting *invasive species*, both of which can decrease the likelihood of damage from catastrophic fire.

The Objective has two Performance Measures. Performance Measure 10.1 has requirements for practices on lands *Certified Organizations* own or manage. Performance Measure 10.2 has requirements for raising public awareness of the benefits, risks, and minimization methods regarding fire.

Performance Measure 10.1 requires that on the forests they own or manage, *Certified Organizations* shall limit susceptibility to undesirable impacts of wildfire, promote healthy and resilient forest conditions through management techniques, actions and/or policies, and support restoration of forests following wildfire damage. The development of a *program* to evaluate the risk of undesirable impacts of wildfire can occur individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving government agencies, *SFI Implementation Committees*, or other partners. The *program* can also take into consideration the scope and scale of the *Certified Organization's* forests.

Examples of risk assessment resources include:

- Canada — [Canadian Wildland Fire Information System](#)
- US — [USFS Operational Risk Management Guide](#)
- US South — Southern Wildfire Risk: [Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal](#)

When considering management techniques, actions, or policies, it is understood that these must be assessed in the context of economic viability and that they will vary according to regions and forest type. The following examples are illustrative and may not be suited to all regions.

Examples of management techniques for limiting the undesirable impacts of wildfire can include prescribed burning for wildlife or cultural purposes (e.g., traditional foods), *stand* thinning, or other treatments to reduce levels of hazardous fuels.

Examples of *landscape* level management practices for limiting the susceptibility of forests to undesirable impacts of wildfire include prescribed burning, and commercial and non-commercial restorative thinning treatments.

Examples of cooperative efforts at the *landscape* level include:

- The multi-partner [Manastash Taneum Resilient Landscapes – Restoration Project](#) in Washington state involving *Certified Organizations*, Tribes, state, and federal agencies.
- The [Gulf Coastal Plain Ecosystem Partnership](#), formed to conserve and restore the dwindling longleaf pine ecosystem and the unique aquatic resources of northwest Florida and southern Alabama.

Forest landowners and managers who use prescribed fire as a management tool can access additional resources at the following sites:

- US — The Longleaf Alliance [prescribed fire webpage](#)
- US — [Coalition of Prescribed Fire Councils](#)

Additional wildfire information for *Certified Organizations* can be found at:

- Southeast US — [Wildland Fire in the Southeast](#)
- US West — [Wildfire in the West](#)
- US Appalachian Region (Alabama to Pennsylvania) — [Consortium of Appalachian Fire Managers and Scientists](#)
- US Northeast — [Northeast Region Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy](#)
- US — link to all [US fire science consortiums](#)

In some jurisdictions, post-fire forest restoration on public forest lands is the responsibility of government agencies. These state/provincial or federal agencies have mandated wildfire management and restoration programs and/or regulations whose purpose is the mitigation of the negative impacts of wildfire to water quality and quantity and *soil health*, and to promote restoration and forest resilience. These programs ensure forests are promptly restored, preserving the critical values inherent in them. *Certified Organizations* are expected to work individually or cooperatively in support of these government agencies. Additionally, *Certified Organizations* where applicable should operate in accordance with fire management regulations, including the reduction of hazardous fuels from logging slash and preventative measures to control the spread of fire resulting from forestry operations.

*Certified Organizations* can refer to the following when implementing plans for forest restoration.

- US — [Emergency Watershed Protection Program](#)
- US — [Burned Area Emergency Response](#)

- US — [After the Flames](#) (Coalitions and Collaboratives, Inc.)
- Canada — [Wildfire Recovery](#) (British Columbia)

Examples of practices for addressing restoration following damaging fire include salvage logging, installation of water or erosion control devices, planting or seeding for erosion control or slope stability, installation of appropriate-sized drainage features on roads or trails, *protection* of threatened and endangered *habitat*, and monitoring for detection and rapid response to *minimize* the spread of *invasive species*.

Performance Measure 10.2 requires that *Certified Organizations* individually or through cooperative efforts involving government agencies, *SFI Implementation Committees*, Project Learning Tree, or other partners, engage in efforts to raise awareness of and take action towards the benefits of fire management and the minimization of undesirable impacts of wildfire.

Indicator 10.2.1 requires participation in, or support of, local, state, Indigenous, provincial, or federal fire management and prevention programs. When developing these programs, *Certified Organizations* can consult the following tools:

- U.S. — [Bureau of Indian Affairs Wildfire Prevention Handbooks and Guides](#)
- Canada — [Wildland Fire Management Strategy](#) (Ontario)

Indicator 10.2.2 requires *Certified Organizations* to participate in, or support, programs to promote the benefits of fire management, and raise awareness about the environmental, economic, and social risks of the undesirable impacts of wildfire to values such as carbon emissions, water quality and quantity, air quality, species *habitat*, public safety, and human health.

Examples of national wildfire awareness programs or community awareness programs include: [FIREWISE USA](#), [FireSmart™ Canada](#) (FireSmart™ and associated marks are trademarks of Partners in Protection), [Smokey Bear](#) and Project Learning Tree's [Living with Fire](#) or [The Nature of Fire](#). Examples of state or provincial community wildfire awareness resources include: Alberta's [Firesmart Guidebook for Community Protection](#) and the Washington Department of Natural Resources [How to Prepare for a Wildfire](#).

## **Objective 11. Legal and Regulatory Compliance (and Objective 4 of SFI Fiber Sourcing Standard SFI Small Lands Group Certification Modules and SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families)**

Legal compliance is one of the SFI Forestry Principles. Specifically, *Certified Organizations* are required to comply with applicable federal, provincial, state, and local forestry and related environmental laws, statutes, and regulations. In support of this principle the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* and the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* have as Objectives, Legal and Regulatory Compliance. Likewise, the SFI Modules have requirements for legal and regulatory compliance. *Certified organizations* are assisted with implementing the requirements of these objectives by the very robust and comprehensive legal systems in the US and Canada.

The national legal systems have legislation and regulation at the federal, state / provincial, and the county or municipal level. *SFI certified organizations* depending on the jurisdictions in which they operate are required to be aware of and comply with applicable legislation as it applies to their forestry operations. This basic threshold level of legal compliance includes payment of applicable harvest royalties and/or severance taxes, control of inorganic waste, and control of fuels and lubricants. It also includes respect for property rights (trespass), and compliance with legislation prohibiting corrupt practices.

Additional requirements in the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* address responsible use of forest chemicals (including fertilizers), protection of water quality, protection of biological diversity and respect for the rights of *Indigenous Peoples*. Objective 11 (and Objective 4) also require compliance with applicable social laws. Social laws are legislation covering civil rights, equal employment opportunities, gender equality, diversity inclusion, anti-discrimination and anti-harassment measures, workers' compensation, *Indigenous Peoples'* rights, workers', and communities' right to know, prevailing wages, workers' right to organize, and occupational health and safety.

#### Scale of Ownership and Operation and Legal Compliance

*SFI certified organizations* must demonstrate legal compliance with all applicable federal, provincial/state, and local forestry and related environmental legislation and regulations. This includes entities certified to the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* and the *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families* (the Modules). Nonetheless, it is recognized that applicability of some pieces of higher-level legislation or regulation should be considered in the context of the reduced scale and scope of the forestry management operations of small forest landowners or managers of small public forests. Members of a *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* certificate or forest landowners or managers certified to the *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families* operate with significantly

fewer resources, limited budgets, on forests that are very small in size. Furthermore, it is common for small forest landowners to perform much of the forest management operations themselves. *Organizations* certified to the Module(s) must use their knowledge of potentially applicable legislation for the jurisdictions where they operate to assess which are applicable given the scale and scope of their forest management operations.

Examples of categories of legislation or regulations that could be applicable for *organizations* certified the Module(s) are payment of harvesting royalties/severance taxes, worker health and safety regulations (if the landowner is using the services of contractors), control of inorganic waste, and control of fuels and lubricants, respect for property rights (trespass), and *Indigenous Peoples'* rights.

*Organizations* certified to the Module(s) should be able to demonstrate to their *Certification Body* what is not applicable and why. Examples of higher-level legislation which may be demonstrated to be non-applicable for small forest landowners or are addressed in other pieces of state/provincial legislation, are specific requirements for anti-corruption, protection of human

rights, equal opportunities, non-discrimination, non-harassment, gender equality, and ILO Core Conventions.

### ***Illegal Logging***

SFI has strong existing measures in the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules* to avoid sourcing fiber from *illegal logging*. These measures are reinforced by the *SFI Policy on Illegal Logging* (September 2008). These measures address the issue of *illegal logging* from sources within the United States and Canada and offshore.

The United States Lacey Act, as amended May 22, 2008, makes it unlawful to import, export, transport, sell, receive, acquire, or purchase in interstate or foreign commerce any plant, with some limited exceptions, taken, possessed, transported, or sold in violation of the laws of the United States, a State, an Indian tribe, or any foreign law that protects plants from removal or that regulates the removal of plants and products made from illegally removed plants. The European Union Timber Regulation (EUTR), applied since March 3, 2013, prohibits illegally harvested timber, or products derived from such timber, to be brought into the EU and creates due diligence obligations for operators who place timber and timber products on the EU market.

*SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* Objective 11 and *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* Objective 4 require legal and regulatory compliance with applicable federal, provincial, state, and local laws and regulations.

### ***SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard Performance Measure 11.1 and SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard Performance Measure 4.1.***

*Certified Organizations* shall comply with applicable federal, provincial, state, and local *forestry* and related and environmental laws and regulations and take appropriate steps to avoid *illegal logging*.

The definition of *illegal logging* is intended to cover intentional violations, such as timber theft from areas that are precluded from logging, falsification of official documents, avoidance of harvest payments and duties, and deliberate removal of trees from the land without the legal right to do so. The definition is not intended to cover isolated occurrences of legal infractions such as unintentional trespass over a property line (for private ownership) or unit boundaries (for public ownership), violation of roadway laws, or minor contract disputes. As stated in *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* Objective 11 and *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* Objective 4, *Certified Organizations* are required to comply with applicable federal, provincial, state, and local laws and regulations.

### **International Labour Organization (ILO) Core Conventions**

*SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* Performance Measure 11.2 and *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* Performance Measure 4.2 addresses differences in U.S. labor law and the ILO core conventions. Additional guidance is provided here for application of 11.2 and 4.2 for independent contractors and for *Certified Organizations*.

Application of *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* Performance Measure 11.2 and *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* Performance Measure 4.2 for independent contractors operating on lands owned or controlled by *Certified Organizations*:

- *Certification bodies* at the time of the audit will collect and review information the *Certified Organization* has received from outside *stakeholders* with regards to concerns or conformance pertaining to independent contractor actions related to ILO Core conventions 87, 98 and 111.
- Any information collected by the *certification bodies* during normal auditing times will be promptly submitted without contractor identifying information to the *Certified Organization*, *SFI Inc.* and the *SFI ILO* Task Force. Information received will be reviewed every six months by the *SFI ILO* Task Force which will develop recommendations to the *SFI Inc.* Board of Directors for resolution of any significant problems identified.
- Forest Management Standard Indicator 11.2 and Fiber Sourcing Standard Indicator 4.2 shall only apply to the core conventions not fully covered by existing U.S. or Canadian law.
  - Right to Organise (No. 87)
  - Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining (No. 98)
  - Discrimination (111)
- In addition, any ILO related issue that is being addressed through a formal grievance process or before any of the agencies established by the U.S. National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), the appropriate Provincial Labour Code or Act, or the courts, until those processes are completed will not be subject to review, consideration or recommendations by the *SFI ILO* Task Force nor by the *SFI Inc.* Board of Directors.

Application of *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* Performance Measure 11.2 for *Certified Organizations* with respect to their employees operating on lands owned or controlled by *Certified Organizations*:

- *Certification bodies* at the time of the audit will collect and review information the *Certified Organization* has received from outside *stakeholders* with regards to concerns or conformance pertaining to their employee relations with regards to ILO Core conventions 87, 98 and 111.
- *Stakeholders* may raise issues regarding conformance to Indicator 11.2.2 through the inconsistent *practices* and procedures outlined in the SFI Public Inquiries and Official Complaints (Section 12) requirements, item 3.
- All information collected through the inconsistent practices process will be reviewed every six months by the *SFI ILO* Task Force which will develop recommendations to the *SFI Inc.* Board of Directors for resolution of any significant problems identified.
- Indicator 11.2.2 shall only apply to the core conventions not fully covered by existing U.S. or Canadian law.
  - Right to Organise (No. 87)
  - Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining (No. 98)
  - Discrimination (111)

- In addition, any ILO related issue that is being addressed through a formal grievance process or before any of the agencies established by the U.S. National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), the appropriate Provincial Labour Code or Act, or the courts, until those processes are completed will not be subject to review, consideration or recommendations by the *SFI ILO* Task Force nor by the *SFI Inc.* Board of Directors.

Public forest landowners in states (Alabama, North Carolina and Virginia) that currently have laws prohibiting bargaining with their public employees shall be “legacied in” as meeting the requirements in Indicator 11.2.2 but must still participate in the information gathering process with their *certification bodies* (for independent contractors) and the inconsistent practices process in item 3 of the SFI Public Inquiries and Official Complaints (Section 12) requirements to aid in resolution of any issues that may be identified.

### **Objective 13. *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard (and Objective 6. *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*)***

#### ***Use of Qualified Logging Professionals, Qualified Resources Professionals and Certified Logging Companies***

Logger training is a very effective tool in promoting sustainable forest management and has been a key component of SFI’s work since its inception. The *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* strengthens requirements for logger training with revisions to Indicators 13.1.5, 13.2.1, and 13.2.2 and the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* does the same with Indicators 3.1.1, 3.2.1, 3.2.2, 6.2.1, and 6.2.2.

*SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* Indicator 13.1.5 requires *Certified Organizations* to develop a *program* for the purchase of their raw material from logging professionals who have completed training *programs*. The *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* Performance Measure 3.2 says that *Certified Organizations* through their relationships with *wood producers* and landowners, shall maximize the deliveries of raw materials from *qualified logging professionals*, and shall encourage the use of *qualified resource professionals*.

In working to maximize deliveries, *Certified Organizations* should strive for 100% of their raw material deliveries from *qualified logging professionals* or contract with loggers in the process of completing a logger training *program* approved by an SFI Implementation Committee. Allowances may have to be made for small-scale or *other wood suppliers*, for when catastrophic events (e.g., severe storms, wildfire, beetle epidemics) can result in increased deliveries by untrained loggers, or for turnover in the logging workforce. The goal is to demonstrate continual and incremental improvement towards this goal. Where the *Certified Organization* identifies a region where the availability of *qualified logging professionals* is not sufficient to meet the expectations of *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* Indicator 13.1.5 and *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* Indicator 3.2.2, the *Certified Organization* will develop a *program*, individually or collaboratively, to address this shortage.

*Program* is defined in the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules* as an organized system, process, or set of activities to achieve an *objective* or *performance measure*.



## **Expectations for Onsite Supervision by *Qualified Logging Professional***

The definition of a *qualified logging professional* requires that a logging *crew* is supervised by an individual who “has direct responsibility and is onsite regularly to consistently carry out the roles and responsibilities of the *wood producer*.” It is a best practice to have a *qualified logging professional* onsite, however it is understood that a logging *crew* will not be under the supervision of a *qualified logging professional* at all times, given the additional responsibilities placed on a supervisor, such as dealing with equipment failures, etc. Also, it is understood that the safety, environmental, and/or legal risks inherent with a logging site can vary. When determining whether a logging site needs a trained supervisor “onsite regularly,” it is the knowledge of such risks that need to be evaluated and considered. For a site with high biodiversity or water quality values, or a complicated harvest unit boundary, it is reasonable to expect regular onsite supervision of the *crew*. The principal of the logging company or their representative should be sufficiently knowledgeable about the harvest unit and its harvest plan to do a risk determination. Using this determination, the forester, contractor principal or their representative can determine the level of onsite supervision required to consistently carry out the roles and responsibilities of the *wood producer*, and whether additional trained supervisors are required on the harvest site.

### **Certified Logging Companies**

SFI Inc. recognizes the potential and value in promoting the use of *certified logging companies*. *Certified logging companies* are entities that hold an independent, in-the-forest verification of conformance with a logger certification *program*.

Recognizing the value of certified logging companies, *Certified Organizations* may be able to demonstrate conformance to some *indicators* in the SFI Standards by using *certified logging companies* to deliver raw materials. It is up to the *Certified Organization* to provide evidence to their *certification body* on which *indicators* may be met, and how, via the use of a *certified logging company*.

## **2. SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard**

### **Objective 1. *Biodiversity* in Fiber Sourcing**

Performance Measure 1.2 is intended to promote *conservation of Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value* or forest areas that harbor or consist of *imperiled* or *critically imperiled species* or *natural communities* through the course of fiber sourcing activities. This promotion takes place through three means: 1) an assessment of *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value* within the *wood and fiber supply area*, that is then made available to *wood producers*; 2) *programs* to address outreach and training; and, 3) incorporation of the results of the assessment toward promoting *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value conservation* on areas of *purchased stumpage*. Considered together, these elements should effectively promote the intended *conservation of Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value*.

The required *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value* assessment can be conducted at the scale of the *wood and fiber supply area* and may even be conducted collaboratively through one or more *SFI Implementation Committees*, or through multi-lateral engagement of *Certified Organizations* operating within the same affected geography, to achieve efficiencies of cost and scale. Such an assessment could be qualitative (i.e., describing the forest conditions and composition that would define *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value* in that location) or geographic (i.e., mapping of known *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value* through some credible method, such as remote sensing, use of USFS Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) data to achieve a meaningful scale for this purpose, sampling and ground-truthing, or other means). *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value* assessments may be conducted most efficiently using the widest array of available information, including NatureServe or heritage database information, remote sensing, *habitat* prediction models and other means.

Performance Measure 1.2 is intended to inform activities at a meaningful level, to help promote *conservation of Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value* that could be affected through harvest activities, but it does not necessarily require *stand-level* analysis. The requirements of this *performance measure* should be considered together, meaning that the assessment results generate information that can be transferred to landowners and loggers through outreach and training *programs*, etc., facilitating the use of that information at the level of individual harvest. Using the assessment results at the scale of *purchased stumpage* is the most specific level of application, since *Certified Organizations* are responsible for understanding the details of sourcing at this scale and for ensuring the conservation of *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value* at this scale, too.

## **Objective 2. Adherence to *Best Management Practices***

### ***Best Management Practices***

Objective 2 of the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* calls for adherence to *best management practices*: “To monitor the use of *best management practices* to *protect* water quality.”

The use of *best management practices* to *protect* water quality is a critical component of sustainable forest management and is emphasized in the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* with requirements for on-the-ground management, monitoring, training, and research. The *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* strengthened requirements for *best management practices* application with a new indicator:

“2.1.1 Use of written agreements for the purchase of raw material sourced directly from the forest is required and must include provisions requiring the use of *best management practices*.”

While it is not practical to have auditing requirements that go beyond reviewing *Certified Organizations’* contracts for purchasing raw material from their suppliers, to ensure they do require the use of *best management practices*, this indicator will further highlight the importance of *best management practices* and their use by all suppliers throughout the supply stream.

### 3. SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard – Transition to Credit Methodology and Claim Terminology

The *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard* replaces the terminology 'Average Percentage' and 'Volume Credit' with 'Percentage' and 'Credit' methods. The updated terminology is reflected in content claims used in supplier and delivery level identification in the *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard*.

*Certified Organizations* can update relevant documentation to align with the new standard language on release of the revised 2022 Standards. However, SFI recognizes that changes to processes may require additional work at many levels of operations. *Certified Organizations* may update their relevant documentation with revised claim language according to their own internal procedures and timelines, with the expectation that the transition will be completed within a reasonable time period.

#### SFI and PEFC Claim Alignment

*Primary* and *secondary producers* with a valid *SFI 2022 Chain of Custody* certificate can use their SFI chain-of-custody procedures to make PEFC chain of custody claims or apply the PEFC on-product logo provided they comply with the applicable requirements in PEFC ST 2002:2020 - Chain of Custody of Forest and Tree Based Products – Requirements and PEFC ST 2001:2020 - PEFC Trademark Rules. All PEFC trademark use is governed by the PEFC Trademark Standard (PEFC Trademark Rules, PEFC ST 2001:2020). All PEFC Trademark use and logo generator access follows relevant PEFC National Governing Body procedures by country/region.

SFI CLAIMS	PEFC CLAIMS	PEFC LABEL USE
SFI X% Certified Forest Content	X% PEFC Certified	Yes
SFI Credit or 100% as calculated under the credit method		
SFI at Least X% Certified Forest Content		
SFI 100% Certified Forest Content-Raw material from a forest certified to an acceptable forest management standard constitutes a claim of 100% certified forest content		
SFI X% SFI Recycled Content		
SFI X% Pre-Consumer Recycled		
SFI X% Post-Consumer Recycled		
SFI 100% from a Certified Forest	100% PEFC Origin	Yes
SFI X% Certified Sourcing or SFI Certified Sourcing	PEFC Controlled Sources	No

## Guidance on *SFI 2022 Chain of Custody, Part 3.3 Calculation of the Certified Percentage*

The following guidance supports SFI Chain of Custody Standard Requirement *3.3 Calculation of the Certified Percentage; 3.3.1 The SFI-certified organization shall calculate the certification percentage separately for each claim period according to the following formula.*

<b>Mixed inputs: Percentage Method</b> <b><math>P_c = V_c / (V_c + V_o) \times 100</math></b>	<i>P<sub>c</sub> Certification percentage</i> <i>V<sub>c</sub> Certified content</i> <i>V<sub>o</sub> Other raw material</i> <i>V<sub>n</sub> Neutral material<sup>12</sup></i>
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A company may use the calculation of the certified percentage to determine percentage output claims for recycled and certified forest content portions. Otherwise said, the formula is applied to each content claim separately to calculate the P<sub>c</sub> (certification percentage).

Official SFI Claims Using Percentage Method	Application of the calculation formula <sup>13</sup>		
	V <sub>c</sub>	V <sub>n</sub>	V <sub>o</sub>
SFI X% Certified Forest Content SFI at Least X% Certified Forest Content  <i>(note: to be used when company does not make claims on recycled)</i>	Certified Forest Content	Recycled (both pre- and post-consumer)  Non-forest material	Other than V <sub>c</sub> and V <sub>n</sub>
SFI X% Certified Forest Content SFI at Least X% Certified Forest Content  <i>(note: to can be used when company makes claims on recycled)</i>	Certified Forest Content	Non-forest material	Other than V <sub>c</sub> and V <sub>n</sub>

<sup>12</sup> Neutral sources: Raw material that is not counted towards or against the calculation of the certified content percentages in chain-of-custody tracking or certified sourcing tracking in SFI Sections 3 and 4. Below are the acceptable neutral sources.

- Agricultural products (e.g., cotton or other non-wood fibers and biomass from wood fiber legally classified as agricultural by state, provincial or local government) and agricultural residues.
- Post-consumer recycled content and pre-consumer recycled content may be tracked as a neutral source when not making post-consumer or pre-consumer claims about the product.

<sup>13</sup> The calculation formula used in the SFI COC Standard is consistent with international standard recycled content calculations where the recycled content is calculated from the total mass of the product (input material).

SFI X% Recycled Content	Recycled content		Other than Vc and Vn
SFI X% Pre-Consumer Recycled <sup>14</sup>	Pre-consumer recycled content		Other than Vc
SFI X% Post-Consumer Recycled <sup>2</sup>	Post-consumer recycled content		Other than Vc
SFI X% Certified Sourcing	SFI certified sourcing		Other than Vc
<b>PEFC Claims Using Percentage Method</b>			
X% PEFC Certified	100% PEFC Certified	Recycled (both pre- and post-consumer)	Other than Vc

**Calculation Example A: Without Neutral Materials** SFI-certified company has 30 tons of raw material. 5 tons qualify for recycled content (following post and pre recycled definitions in Section 14 of the SFI 2022 Standards), 10 tons are SFI Certified Forest Content and the remaining 15 tons qualify as SFI Certified Sourcing content.

<b>SFI CERTIFIED FOREST CONTENT RAW MATERIAL</b> SFI Certified Forest Content % = $10 \text{ tonnes} / (10 \text{ tonnes} + 20 \text{ tonnes}) \times 100$	<b>33% Certified Forest Content</b>
<b>RECYCLED CONTENT RAW MATERIAL</b> <sup>15</sup> Recycled Content% = $5 \text{ tonnes} / (5 \text{ tonnes} + 25 \text{ tonnes}) \times 100$	<b>17% Recycled Content</b>
<b>SFI CERTIFIED SOURCING</b> SFI Certified Sourcing % = $15 \text{ tonnes} / (15 \text{ tonnes} + 15 \text{ tonnes}) \times 100$	<b>50% Certified Sourcing</b>

**Calculation Example B: With Neutral Materials** SFI-certified company has 30 tons of raw material. 5 tons qualify for certified sourcing content, 10 tons are SFI Certified Forest Content and the remaining 15 tons are neutral sources<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>14</sup> Note: When making claims about *pre-* and *post-consumer recycled content*, both can count as *certified content* and the amount must be disclosed to the customer. For *organizations* choosing not to count *pre-* and *post-consumer recycled content*, the *pre-* and *post-consumer recycled content* is neutral and shall not be included in the calculation of the *certified content* percentages in Chain-of-Custody tracking.

<sup>15</sup> Recycled content includes both Pre-consumer recycled content and post-consumer recycled content. SFI-certified organization may use this formula specific to pre- or post-consumer recycled content for specific pre- and/or post-consumer recycled content claims.

<sup>16</sup> Neutral sources: Raw material that is not counted towards or against the calculation of the certified content percentages in chain-of-custody tracking or certified sourcing tracking in SFI Sections 3 and 4. Below are the acceptable neutral sources.

- Agricultural products (e.g., cotton or other non-wood fibers and biomass from wood fiber legally classified as agricultural by state, provincial or local government) and agricultural residues.

<p><b>SFI CERTIFIED FOREST CONTENT RAW MATERIAL</b>  SFI Certified Forest Content % = 10 tonnes/(10 tonnes + 5 tonnes) x 100</p>	<p><b>67% Certified Forest Content</b></p>
<p><b>SFI CERTIFIED SOURCING CONTENT RAW MATERIAL</b>  Recycled Content% = 5 tonnes/(5 tonnes + 10 tonnes) x 100</p>	<p><b>33% Certified Sourcing</b></p>
<p><b>NEUTRAL SOURCES</b>  Neutral sources 15 tonnes are not counted towards or against the calculation of the certified content percentages</p>	<p><b>n/a</b></p>

**4. SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard, SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard and SFI 2022 Certified Sourcing Standard — SFI Due Diligence System for Assessment Risk of Sourcing from *Controversial Sources***

The SFI due diligence system provides the framework for assessing the risk of sourcing from *controversial sources*, whether in the United States, Canada or offshore. Below are resources a *Certified Organization* can use to assist in addressing the elements of the *controversial sources* definition.

- a. Forest activities that are not in compliance with applicable state, provincial, federal, or international laws — The United States and Canada have a strong legal framework which *Certified Organizations* must abide by. Furthermore, SFI has strong existing measures in the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*, the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*, the *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard*, the *SFI 2022 Certified Sourcing Standard*, the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module*, and the *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families* to avoid illegal sources of supply.

When sourcing from countries outside the U.S. and Canada, *certified organizations* can refer to the latest Transparency International (TI) Corruption Perception Index (CPI). A score higher than 50 is considered low risk.

*Certified Organizations* shall also refer to SFI’s policy on *illegal logging* in SFI Section 8. This policy is specific to *organizations* that may harvest or trade wood fiber in violation of applicable laws and regulations in the country of harvest.

- b. Forest activities that are contributing to regional declines in *habitat conservation* and species *protection* (including *biodiversity* and *special sites, threatened and endangered species*) — SFI has strong existing measures in the *SFI 2020 Forest Management Standard* and the *SFI 2020 Fiber Sourcing Standard* regarding

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- Post-consumer recycled content and pre-consumer recycled content may be tracked as a neutral source when not making post-consumer or pre-consumer claims about the product.

*conservation of biodiversity*. The United States and Canada also have strong legal frameworks which *Certified Organizations* must abide by. *Certified Organizations* can refer to the latest [Environmental Performance Index \(EPI\) Score of Biodiversity and Habitat](#) of the country. A score higher than 50 is considered low risk.

- c. *Conversion sources* originating from regions experiencing forest area decline — Regions with a net loss of forest area <1% over the most recent 10 years of available data are considered low risk. *Certified Organizations* can refer to public data such as FAO, FIA ecoregional data, and Statistics Canada, Canadian Forest Service, state, provincial, or federal “State of the Forest” reports.
- d. Forest activities where the spirit of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at work (1998) are not met — The U.S. and Canada are both members of ILO; by virtue of that membership, they commit to promote and realize the principles set forth in the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at work (1998) through laws and regulations that include support of the basic principles of freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining; elimination of child labor and forced labor; and elimination of discrimination.
- e. Forest activities where the spirit of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007) are not met — United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) seeks to enhance harmonious and cooperative relations between the states and *Indigenous Peoples* in the spirit of partnership and mutual respect. The U.S. can refer to this study by Cornell Law School, and Canada can refer to the Canadian Constitution Act. Fiber from countries without the following regulatory frameworks will require a risk assessment:
  - i. Domestic legal regimes that consider regional particularities pertaining to *Indigenous Peoples’* rights, including (a) historical and cultural backgrounds of *Indigenous Peoples* and, (b) treaties, agreements, and other constructive arrangements between *Indigenous Peoples* and the state;
  - ii. Political or legal mechanisms for *Indigenous Peoples* to pursue their unique interests and seek just and fair redress based on the principles of justice, democracy, respect for human rights, non-discrimination, and good faith; and
  - iii. Right or ability of *Indigenous Peoples* to organize and advocate through self-determined representative institutions.
- f. Fiber sourced from areas without effective social laws — The United States and Canada have strong legal frameworks. Fiber from countries without effective laws addressing the following will need a risk assessment. *Certified Organizations* can refer to the latest Transparency International (TI) Corruption Perception Index (CPI). A score higher than 50 is considered low risk.

- i. workers' health and safety;
  - ii. fair labor practices;
  - iii. *Indigenous Peoples'* rights;
  - iv. anti-discrimination and anti-harassment measures;
  - v. prevailing wages and
  - vi. workers' right to organize.
- g. *Illegal Logging* including trade in CITES (The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) listed species — Harvesting and trading of wood fiber in violation of applicable laws and regulations in the country of harvest. The United States and Canada have strong legal frameworks. *Certified Organizations* can refer to the latest Transparency International (TI) Corruption Perception Index (CPI). A score higher than 50 is considered low risk. Refer to SFI's policy on Illegal Logging in SFI Section 8 Policies for more information.
- h. Conflict Timber — The country/region has a been identified as having high intensity violent conflicts according to the Heidelberg Conflict Barometer or the [Fragile States List](#).
- i. Genetically modified trees via *forest tree biotechnology* — SFI has strong existing measures in the SFI Policy on *Forest Tree Biotechnology* located in SFI Section 8 Policies. SFI's Policy on Forest Tree Biotechnology states,

"because genetically modified forest trees are not approved for commercial plantings in the United States and Canada, and the SFI Forest Management Standard is endorsed by the [Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification](#), which has restrictions on the use of genetically modified trees, the use of fiber from genetically modified trees via *forest tree biotechnology* is not approved for use in SFI-labeled products.

SFI realizes that much research is still being conducted to study the ecological cost benefits of genetically modified trees and regulations concerning *forest tree biotechnology* continue to evolve. As such research and regulations develop, SFI Inc. will review to understand the impacts of genetically modified trees from an ecological perspective and SFI will proactively review and update this policy as necessary."

## **5. SFI Audit Procedures**

### **Certifying Multiple Forest Management Units or Fiber Procurement Operations**

SFI recognizes that a *Certified Organization* might manage multiple forest management units/tenures and operate multiple manufacturing facilities. As such, a *Certified Organization* can choose which forest management units/tenures obtain SFI Forest Management certification. Isolated small forest management units for which the primary purpose is to buffer a



manufacturing facility are not required to be certified to the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*. These forest management buffer areas may include wood production as an additional goal, but not the primary goal, and activities in these buffer areas should reflect the commitment to SFI and be in compliance with the requirements of the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*. Furthermore, only those manufacturing facilities that are sourcing from the *wood and fiber supply area* of the land units/tenures that are certified to the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* are required to obtain *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* certification. *Certified Organizations* with multiple forest management units/tenures and multiple manufacturing facilities have two years to ensure certification to the respective SFI standards.

### **Primary Producers with SFI Chain-of-Custody and SFI Fiber Sourcing Certification**

1.2 Additional Requirements in the *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard*, requires *primary producers* to conform to the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* if they choose to get certified to the *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard*.

However, we understand the work requirements needed to obtain a certification to the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*, and given this work requirement, *primary producers* have two years to ensure certification to the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*. This two-year time frame will allow the primary producer to meet immediate market demands, while working towards fiber sourcing certification.

### **Exemption from Chain-of-Custody Surveillance Audits**

An SFI chain-of-custody *Certified Organization* can, upon receiving approval from their *certification body*, waive a surveillance audit if they have not sold any certified material since their last audit. The chain-of-custody *Certified Organization* must sign a declaration for their *certification body* stating that no material has been sold as SFI-certified since the last audit. The declaration must also include a commitment by the chain-of-custody *Certified Organization* to contact the *certification body* as soon as they wish to sell SFI-certified material. *Certification bodies* shall not waive more than two consecutive audits.

### **Scoping Suppliers into a Chain of Custody**

A *Certified Organization* that sources from *primary producers* can include these *organizations* in the scope of their *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard* certificate. The *Certified Organization* will be responsible for all chain of custody requirements of the *organizations* they scope into their own chain-of-custody procedures. The scoped-in *organizations* are subject to sample audits. *Certification bodies* shall follow the guidelines in Section 10 of the SFI 2022 Audit Procedures and Auditor Qualifications and Accreditation — Appendix 1 for Multi-site Organizations. If the *Certified Organization* scopes in *primary producers*, the *Certified Organization* is also responsible for all *SFI Implementation Committee*-related activity for that company.

## Guidance for the Use of Remote Auditing Techniques for SFI Audits

Advances in technology, coupled with improved *certification body* and *Certified Organization* processes, provide the means to improve on the effectiveness of traditional audit methodologies. This guidance discusses how *Certified Organizations* and *certification bodies* can conduct audits of the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*, *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*, *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody*, *SFI 2022 Certified Sourcing Standard* or SFI Modules using remote audit techniques to complement traditional audit techniques.

Remote audits using information and communications technology<sup>17</sup> (ICT) provide *certification bodies* the means to conduct rigorous and credible audits of *Certified Organization's* processes and their conformance with SFI standards requirements. Remote audits also allow *certification bodies* to optimize audit effectiveness and efficiency, while supporting and maintaining the integrity of the audit process.

### Objective for Remote Auditing

The objective of a remote audit is to determine the required level of confidence in some, or all, of a *Certified Organization's* processes by direct observations using ICT. Audits using ICT provide the opportunity for increased efficiency, increased safety, inclusion of *Certified Organization* personnel who may not be easily interviewed, and avoidance of travel restrictions.

### Preconditions for Remote Audits

The use of ICT for remote audits by *certification bodies* should be by mutual agreement with the *Certified Organization*. Examples of the use of ICT during audits may include:

- i. meetings via teleconference, including audio, video, and data sharing;
- ii. verification of evidence by means of remote access, either synchronously (in real time) or asynchronously (when applicable);
- iii. recording of information and evidence by electronic means; and
- iv. providing audio/visual access to remote locations or personnel or potentially hazardous locations (e.g., drones, cameras, etc.).

The *certification body* should identify and document all risks associated with ICT that may impact audit effectiveness, including the selection of the technologies, and how they are used. This review should ensure that the *Certified Organization* has the necessary infrastructure to support the use of ICT and is a viable candidate for remote audit.

Where a *Certified Organization* demonstrates a history of conformance at the system implementation level (or for the locations being assessed), audits using ICT may be considered for use when one of more of the following applies:

- i. Travel to a *Certified Organization's* location(s) is not possible (i.e., for safety reasons, travel restrictions, etc.).

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<sup>17</sup> Information and Communications Technology (ICT) is the use of technology for gathering, storing, retrieving, processing, analyzing, and transmitting information. It includes software and hardware such as smartphones, handheld devices, laptop computers, desktop computers, drones, video cameras, wearable technology, artificial intelligence, and others. The use of ICT may be appropriate for auditing both locally and remotely. (IAF MD 4:2018 – IAF MD for the Use of ICT for Auditing/Assessment Purposes)

- ii. The *certification body* determines a low level of risk when conducting the audit remotely.
- iii. The number of sites to be assessed is difficult for the *certification body* to completely fulfill within the required timeline.
- iv. The *Certified Organization* has a centrally controlled management system where evidence (records, data, etc.) can be accessed remotely.
- v. The situation requires the audit team to conduct a follow-up audit otherwise not achievable within a short timeline.
- vi. For *Certified Organizations* with an *SFI Forest Management Standard* or an *SFI Fiber Sourcing* certificate, the surveillance audit can be conducted remotely using ICT where:
  - a. the *certification body* can justify that the audit techniques used deliver sufficient confidence in the *Certified Organization's* compliance with the standard(s) requirements; and
  - b. no nonconformity was raised during the previous initial, surveillance or recertification audit, or the corrective action for the nonconformity can be clearly verified by other audit techniques.

Similarly, for *SFI Chain-of-Custody Standard* or *SFI Certified Sourcing Standard* audits, ICT may be considered for use if the *Certified Organization's* supply chain does not include high risk sources of fiber.

### **Planning and Scheduling Remote Audits**

The *certification body* should define criteria for determining when it is appropriate to perform part, or all, of an audit remotely. Criteria to consider include identification of the standard requirements appropriate for remote audit using ICT, and the eligibility of the *Certified Organization* for remote assessment (e.g., availability of records in electronic format, suitable internet connectivity, teleconferencing platforms, etc.).

When planning an audit using ICT, the *Certified Organization* and the *certification body* should:

- i. define the scope of the audit;
- ii. identify the records and documentation to be available during the audit;
- iii. identify the activities, sites/facilities, information, and personnel to be audited;
- iv. identify dates/times for conducting the audit; and
- v. test the ICT to be used for the remote audit, including the adequacy of internet or Wi-Fi connections.

Where the planning process identifies audit risks or opportunities, the audit plan should define how and to what extent ICT can be used for remote audit purposes to optimize audit effectiveness and efficiency while maintaining the integrity of the audit process. When ICT is used, it contributes to the total audit time, as additional planning may be necessary which may impact audit duration.

For *Certified Organizations* with an *SFI Forest Management Standard* or an *SFI Fiber Sourcing Standard* certificate, the surveillance and remote audits using ICT techniques may be

considered, where:

- i. the *certification body* can justify that the audit techniques used deliver sufficient confidence in the *Certified Organization's* conformance with the standard(s) requirements; and
- ii. no nonconformity was raised during the previous initial, surveillance or recertification audit or the corrective action for the nonconformity can be clearly verified by other audit techniques.

*Certified Organizations* with an *SFI Chain-of-Custody Standard* and/or an *SFI Certified Sourcing Standard* certificate that can demonstrate they have not sold any materials with an *SFI* claim since their last audit can ask to have the surveillance audit waived.

### **Conducting Remote Audits**

Conduct of the remote audit should follow normal audit plans and processes. Audits should include a summary of the events of the day(s), issues of concern, clarification of issues, nonconformances, and expectations.

### **Post Audit Activities — Remote Audits**

Findings (nonconformances, corrective actions, opportunities for improvement, etc.) need to be drafted by the audit team members and shared with the *Certified Organization* in a timely manner for acknowledgement, prior to closure of nonconformances.

The processing of nonconformances, and the continuing approval of certification, should follow the same processes that are utilized for onsite audits. Audit reports and related records should indicate the extent to which ICT has been used in carrying out the audit and the effectiveness of ICT in achieving the audit objectives.

## **6. *SFI Implementation Committees***

*Certified Organizations* established *SFI Implementation Committees* in 1995. *SFI Implementation Committees* are an integral part of *SFI* and play a vital role in maintain integrity of *SFI*, promoting training, education, and landowner outreach, and supporting and promoting responsible *forestry* at local levels. State, provincial, and regional *SFI Implementation Committees* are financially-autonomous committees reflecting significant geographic and organizational diversity. They involve a wide range of local community stakeholders.

The definition of *SFI Implementation Committee* in Section 14 of the *SFI 2022: Standard and Rules* is "A state, provincial, or regional committee organized by *Certified Organizations* to facilitate or manage the *programs* and alliances that support the growth of *SFI*, including sustainable forest management."

All *Certified Organizations* owning and/or operating forest product facilities, owning and/or managing forestland, or procuring fiber within the state or province are expected to participate in the *SFI Implementation Committees*. *Certified Organizations* are required to participate in the

committee where significant operations exist (i.e., majority of forestland owned and/or fiber procured). The expectation is that *Certified Organizations* with facilities within the scope of an *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* certificate will support all the *SFI Implementation Committees* in the regions, states, or provinces where they procure fiber. However, there may be regions, states, or provinces where a *Certified Organization* sources a de minimis amount of fiber for a given facility. In these situations, it is possible for a *Certified Organization* to meet the requirements of Performance Measure 6.2 of the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* in the regions where the majority of the *Certified Organization's* procurement occurs.

*SFI Implementation Committees* must submit the Annual Progress Report to *SFI* every year.

*SFI Implementation Committees* are governed by a governance document that was reviewed and updated for current relevance to *SFI* and to ensure consistency with the *SFI 2022 Standard and Rules*. The *SFI Implementation Committee* governance document will be updated in conjunction with future *SFI standard* revisions and may also be reviewed between scheduled revisions if there are significant changes to *SFI's* work.

## **7. Transition to the SFI 2022 Standards and Rules**

Changes adopted by the *SFI Inc.* Board of Directors to the *SFI standards* must be incorporated into a *Certified Organization's* policies, plans, and management activities within one year of adoption and publication. Similarly, changes to certification procedures and qualifications for *certification bodies* must be accomplished within one year of adoption and publication.

It is the *Certified Organization's* responsibility to work with the *certification body* to establish a surveillance audit schedule that meets the requirements outlined in Section 10 of the *SFI Audit Procedures and Auditor Qualifications and Accreditation*. Additional guidance regarding the transition is included below:

- The *SFI 2022 Standard and Rules* replace the *SFI 2015-2019 Standard*, which is the current standard implemented by *Certified Organizations* within their forest operations in United States and Canada.
- *SFI Inc.* developed the *SFI 2022 Standard and Rules* but does not conduct auditing and certification. All certification, recertification, and surveillance audits to the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules* shall be conducted by *certification bodies* accredited by the ANSI National Accreditation Board (ANAB) or the Standards Council of Canada (SCC) to conduct *certification* to *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules*.
- Accredited *certification bodies* are required to maintain audit processes consistent with the requirements of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 17021:2015 conformity assessment — requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems; and conduct audits in accordance with the principles of auditing contained in the ISO 19011:2018 Guidelines for Quality and/or Environmental Management Systems Auditing.

- ANAB and SCC-accredited certification to the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules* shall not be granted until they are published as standards.
- *Certified Organizations* have one year from the time the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules* take effect on January 1, 2022, to implement all new and revised requirements, and *Certified Organizations* must demonstrate conformance to the new requirements at their first surveillance audit following the implementation period. Earlier adoption is encouraged.
- Initial certification audits in 2022 must be conducted against the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules*.
- After March 31, 2022, all recertifications must be conducted against the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules*. For recertifications against the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules*, nonconformities against changes made in the revised *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules* shall be reported but will not adversely affect recertification until after December 31, 2022.
- Surveillance audits through December 31, 2022, may be conducted against either the *SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard*, the *SFI 2015-2019 Fiber Sourcing Standard* and/or the *SFI 2015-2019 Chain-of-Custody Standard* at the *Certified Organization's* choice. For surveillance audits after March 31, 2022, nonconformities against changes made in the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules* shall be reported but will not adversely affect certification status until December 31, 2022; these audits shall also include an assessment of action plans to fully transition to the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules* by December 31, 2022.
- After December 31, 2022, all surveillance audits must be conducted against the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules*.



# **SECTION 8 SFI POLICIES**

**October 7, 2021**

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## Part 1: SFI Policy on Illegal Logging<sup>18</sup>

SFI has strong existing measures in the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*, the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*, the *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard*, and the *SFI 2022 Certified Sourcing Standard*, the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module*, and the *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples, Families and Communities* to avoid illegal sources of supply. This appendix covers the issue as to whether an organization can certify one operation to the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*, the *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard* (Section 4) or *SFI 2022 Certified Sourcing Standard* (Section 5), the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* or the *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples, Families and Communities* in the SFI requirements document, while another operation controlled by the company is engaged in *illegal logging*. This is an evolving issue and as international laws, regulations, agreements, treaties, and definitions of *illegal logging* change, *SFI Inc.* will review and update the language as necessary.

- A. *SFI Inc.* will not license any person or entity to use SFI's trademarks or labels, and SFI may revoke any license previously granted, if the proposed licensee or an Affiliate of the licensee has been found to have engaged in *Illegal Logging* by a government authority in the jurisdiction where the logging occurred<sup>19</sup>, unless the evidence available to SFI supports a conclusion that, in the business judgment of the *SFI Inc.* Board, any incidents of *Illegal Logging* by the entity are followed by prompt corrective action and do not show a pattern of *Illegal Logging*.
- B. *SFI Inc.* will not license any person or entity to use SFI's trademarks or labels, and SFI may revoke any license previously granted, if the evidence available to SFI supports a conclusion that, in the business judgment of the *SFI Inc.* Board, the proposed licensee or an Affiliate of the licensee has engaged in a pattern of *Illegal Logging*.<sup>20</sup>
- C. Any person or entity whose application for an SFI license has been denied or whose license has been revoked pursuant to this section may reapply for a license upon a showing that any past *Illegal Logging* has been stopped, that appropriate actions have been taken to prevent it from recurring, and that the proposed licensee and its Affiliates do not knowingly engage in *Illegal Logging*. Such showing shall be supported by a third-party audit conducted by an *SFI certification body* accredited to conduct *2022 SFI Standard* certifications and shall include local expertise as part of the *audit team*.<sup>21</sup>
- D. As used in this section,
  - "*Illegal Logging*" means harvesting and trading of wood fiber in violation of applicable laws and regulations in the country of harvest (including trade in

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<sup>18</sup>As Approved by the SFI Board of Directors September 23, 2008.

<sup>19</sup> This enables SFI to take action that is based on a government finding (conviction, court decision, regulatory decision, fine etc.) of *Illegal Logging*. SFI would not make any factual determinations of *illegal logging*; they would be made by the government. No audit of overseas operations is required unless and until such a finding is made.

<sup>20</sup>This enables SFI to take action against a company that is known to engage in a pattern of *Illegal Logging*, but that has NOT been subject to government enforcement actions (perhaps because the local government is corrupt or ineffective). The SFI Board would need to make the factual determinations based on the best evidence available to it. No audit of overseas operations is required unless and until such a finding is made.

<sup>21</sup> The audit shall cover all operations in all jurisdictions where the *illegal logging* occurred.



CITES (The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) listed species.

- “Affiliate” means any person or entity that directly or indirectly controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with the proposed licensee.
- “Control” means owning a majority of the stock, appointing a majority of the directors, or otherwise having the practical or legal power to direct the operations of a person or entity.

## **Part 2: SFI Policy on Genetically Modified Trees via Forest Tree Biotechnology<sup>22</sup>**

The SFI Board of Directors reapproved the SFI policy on *forest tree biotechnology* on April 15, 2021. The original policy stated SFI will proactively review and update the policy as necessary. The use of genetically modified organisms is an evolving issue and as federal and international laws, regulations, agreements, treaties and marketplace recognition of the use of genetically modified trees via *forest tree biotechnology* change, *SFI Inc.* will continue to proactively review and update the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules* language and this *policy* as necessary.

- SFI Inc.* recognizes that genetically modified trees via *forest tree biotechnology* offers the potential to prevent the loss of tree species like the American Chestnut due to devastating diseases and to further improve the quality and *productivity* of trees, their resistance to insects and disease and to grow trees with characteristics that allow them to be more efficiently manufactured into building products, paper and to provide feedstock for bioenergy.
- SFI Inc.* recognizes that genetically modified trees are not approved for commercial *plantings* in the United States and Canada and, even if approved in the future, it will take many years for fiber from genetically modified trees to reach manufacturing facilities.
- SFI Inc.* realizes that much research is still being conducted to study the ecological cost benefits of genetically modified trees and regulations concerning forest biotechnology continue to evolve. *SFI Inc.* allows research on genetically modified trees via *forest tree biotechnology* and *SFI-certified organizations* shall adhere to all applicable federal, state, and provincial regulations and international protocols ratified by the U.S. or Canada depending on jurisdiction of management. As such research and regulations develop; *SFI Inc.* will review to understand the impacts of genetically modified trees from an ecological perspective.
- SFI Inc.* is endorsed by the Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification ([www.pefc.org](http://www.pefc.org)) which has restrictions on the use of genetically modified trees until December 31, 2022:

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<sup>22</sup> As approved by the SFI Board of Directors April 15, 2021.

*"Genetically modified trees shall not be used."*<sup>23</sup>

*Note: The restriction on the usage of genetically modified trees has been adopted based on the Precautionary Principle. Until enough scientific data on genetically modified trees indicates that impacts on human and animal health and the environment are equivalent to, or more positive than, those presented by trees genetically improved by traditional methods, no genetically modified trees will be used."*

*Note: The policy on the exclusion of material from genetically modified forest-based organisms remains in force until 31 December 2022."*

- E. Given the issues identified in item (b) regarding legal approval and lack of commercialization and in item (d) regarding PEFC requirements for endorsement of the *SFI program*, the use of fiber from genetically modified trees via *forest biotechnology* is not approved for use in *SFI* labeled products.
- F. *SFI Inc.* will proactively review and update the *SFI 2022 Standard and Rules* language and this *policy* as necessary.

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<sup>23</sup> PEFC ST 1003:2018, Sustainable Forest Management-Requirements, 8.4.7.



# **SECTION 9**

## **SFI STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT AND INTERPRETATIONS PROCESS**

**October 7, 2021**

*SFI 2022 Standards have been developed using an open, transparent, consultative, and consensus-based process that included a broad range of stakeholders. These Standards are based on ISO/IEC Guide 59 and Guide 2. In addition, the ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards was taken into consideration.*

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## 1. Procedures for SFI Standards Revision

### 1.1 Normative references

ISO Guides are normatively referenced in these standards. For dated references, only the cited edition applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

- i. ISO/IEC Guide 2, *Standardization and related activities — General vocabulary*.
- ii. ISO/IEC Guide 59, *Code of good practice for standardization*.
- iii. PEFC GD 1007, *Endorsement and Mutual Recognition of Certification Systems and their Revision*

### 1.2 SFI standards-setting principles

SFI is organized and operated for charitable and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Code), as stated in the Articles of Incorporation, to ensure the environmental, social, and economic sustainable development of the nation's forests, for the benefit of public and private stakeholders. *SFI Inc.* has sole responsibility for all activities necessary for the development, maintenance, implementation, promotion, and continual improvement of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® standards.

- i. The standards-setting process is governed by the key principles of: *Stakeholder engagement* — an opportunity for meaningful participation in the process that is open to all *stakeholders* through participation in task groups and public consultations.
- ii. *Balanced representation* — no single *stakeholder* group should dominate or be dominated in the process. While each individual is free to decide on their participation, *SFI Inc.* makes an effort to ensure that all relevant *stakeholder* groups are represented and considers an appropriate gender balance.
- iii. *Consensus* — standards are developed by consensus. Any sustained opposition to specific issues is resolved by means of dialogue whenever possible.
- iv. *Improvement* — periodic review of SFI standards seeks continual improvement and to ensure the standards continues to meet expectations of *stakeholders*.
- v. *Transparency* — *SFI Inc.* ensures relevant documents are posted to the [SFI website](#) or publicly available so interested parties can follow developments during and after the process.

### 1.3 Roles and Responsibilities

#### 1.3.1 SFI Board

SFI Board members include representatives of environmental, *conservation*, social professional and academic groups, independent professional loggers, small family forest owners, public officials, Indigenous peoples, labor, and the forest

products industry. The 18-member SFI Board of Directors has representatives from the main geographic regions of the U.S. and Canada and includes:

- Six directors from non-profit environmental / *conservation* organizations representing the environmental sector;
- Six directors from community or social interest groups such as universities, labor, independent professional loggers, family forest owners, Indigenous organizations, or government agencies representing the social sector, and
- Six directors from the forest, paper and wood products industry or other for-profit forest ownership or management entities representing the economic sector.

SFI Board members are invited by the Board Nominations Committee to participate as directors and must be approved by the full Board. The Board is a voluntary Board.

### **1. 3.2 SFI Resources Committee**

Each *SFI Inc.* Board member appoints one person from their organization (or other organization they may choose) to serve on the *SFI Inc.* Resources Committee (RC) or the Board member may choose to represent themselves on the Resources Committee. As such, the Resources Committee has the same equal representation of social, environmental, and economic interests and geographical scope as the *SFI Inc.* Board.

### **1. 3.3 SFI External Review Panel**

The SFI External Review Panel is an independent panel of volunteer experts that provides diverse perspectives and expertise to the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI®) while contributing to quality assurance and continuous improvement. The External Review Panel is made up of external experts and has representatives from the main geographic regions of the U.S. and Canada where the *SFI standards* are applied. Panel members provide external independent oversight to ensure the standard revision process is objective and credible and that all comments are treated equally and fairly. Its membership maintains a balance of technical skills and organizational experience, with members from each of the following categories — environmental/*conservation* groups, professional/academic groups, and public agencies (local, state, provincial, tribal or federal governments). Panel members can come from universities, government agencies, foundations, professional associations, and landowner/*conservation* organizations. The SFI External Review Panel selects its own members based on their individual expertise and experience, following an election process set out in its charter. It develops its own agenda to represent the public interest as an outside observer of SFI. All *stakeholders* can suggest candidates to the SFI External Review Panel for consideration.

### 1.3.4 Standard Revision Task Groups

The SFI Standard Revision Task Group prepares the first and subsequent drafts of the revised SFI standards for review by the SFI Resources Committee and ultimate approval of the *SFI Inc.* Board of Directors. The Task Group is established for the duration of the standard revision until completion in 2021. There are three Task Groups: Forest Management, Fiber Sourcing and Chain of Custody & Labels.

The SFI Standard Revision Task Group membership will be based on nominations received. Acceptance and refusal of nominations shall be justified in relation to the requirements for balanced representation of the Task Groups, considerations of an appropriate gender balance, relevance of the organization, an individual's competence, an individual's relevant experience and resources available for standard-setting. For the 2022 SFI Standards revision process all task group nominations received were accepted.

Under the direction of the respective Task Group Chairs, the Task Groups shall review all submitted comments from the first and second public comment periods and Standard Revision Workshops and webinars that correspond to each task group's focus area. The Task Groups will then prepare revised Standards text (first and subsequent drafts) for review by the SFI Resources Committee, incorporating their feedback as required.

To ensure a balanced representation of interests, the Task Groups shall:

- a. consist of the following interest groups:
  - Forest owner/manager
  - Manufacturer/processor/trader of forest-based products
  - Conservation organization
  - Customers & consumers
  - Scientific and technological community
  - Logging professionals
  - Workers & trade unions
  - Indigenous Peoples
  - Government
  - Education/academic group
  - Social-purpose organization
- b. include *stakeholders* with expertise relevant to the subject matter of the standard, those that affected by the standard, represent the geographical scope of the standard and those that can influence implementation of the standard.

In order to achieve balanced representation, to the extent possible, all identified *stakeholder* groups are represented. Participation targets of key *stakeholders* will be set and SFI, Inc. will proactively seek their participation by using outreach such as (but not limited to) personal emails, phone calls, meeting

invitations etc. When a *stakeholder* group is not represented and key *stakeholders* cannot be encouraged to participate, the standardizing body may consider alternative options.

Activities of the Task Group shall be organized in an open and transparent manner where:

- a. working drafts shall be available to all members of the Task Group,
- b. all members of the Task Group shall be given meaningful opportunities to contribute to the development or revision of the standard and to provide feedback on working drafts, and
- c. feedback and views given by any member of the Task Group shall be considered in an open and transparent way where the outcome of these considerations is recorded.

The decision of the Task Groups to recommend the drafts for review and approval by the Resources Committee shall be taken on the basis of consensus. In order to determine whether there is any sustained opposition, the Task Group can utilize the following methods:

- a. face-to-face meeting(s) where there is a verbal yes/no vote, a show of hands for a yes/no vote; a statement on consensus from the Chair when there are no dissenting voices or hands (votes); a formal ballot, etc.,
- b. telephone conference calls (s) where there is a verbal yes/no vote,
- c. email request to the Task Group for agreement or objection where the members provide a formal (written) response (vote), or
- d. combinations of these methods.

Where votes are used in decision-making, the SFI will determine and include decision-making thresholds that quantifies consensus. The threshold must be consistent with the consensus definition. However, a majority vote cannot override sustained opposition in order to achieve consensus.

When there is sustained opposition to a substantial issue, the issue shall be resolved using the following methods:

- a. finding a compromise through discussion and negotiation on the disputed issue within the task group,
- b. finding a compromise through direct negotiation between the *stakeholder(s)* making the objection and other *stakeholders* with different views on the disputed issue, and
- c. additional round(s) of public consultation (if necessary) where further *stakeholder* input can help to achieve consensus on unresolved issues. The standardizing body determines the scope and duration of any additional public consultation.

## 1.4 Procedures

The *Sustainable Forestry Initiative Standards* setting process shall be on a five-year cycle, which is consistent with international protocols for forest certification standard revision cycles. The SFI Standards development process is open, transparent and consensus<sup>24</sup> based and *SFI Inc.* Board decisions regarding final changes to the *SFI standards* shall be consistent with PEFC ST 1001: 2017 for consensus<sup>25</sup> based decision making. The *SFI Standards* review setting process shall begin with a public notice to all *stakeholders* prior to the start of the process. This announcement will include the end date of the review process and the effective date for the new standards. The start of the review process will be within five years of the SFI Board approval date of the current SFI Standards and Rules (April 15, 2021) and will be communicated on the SFI website, in newsletters and emails to all *stakeholders*. SFI shall identify *stakeholders* relevant to the objectives and scope of the standard-setting work. *Stakeholders* will be requested to nominate their representative(s) or themselves to Task Groups and the request to disadvantaged *stakeholders* and key *stakeholders* shall be made in a manner that ensures that the information reaches intended recipients and in a format that is easy to understand.

At the start of a review, *SFI Inc.* will evaluate the standard against appropriate PEFC International standards, national laws and regulations and other relevant standards to identify potential gaps in the standard. *SFI Inc.* will consider the latest scientific knowledge, research and relevant emerging issues. For the development of a new Standard SFI will develop a standard proposal document that includes:

- i. the scope of the standard,
- ii. justification of the need for the standard,
- iii. description of the intended outcomes,
- iv. assessment of potential negative impacts arising from implementing the standard, such as:
  - a. factors that could negatively affect the achievement of the outcomes,
  - b. unintended consequences of implementation,
  - c. actions to address the identified risks, and
- v. description of the stages of standard development and their expected timetable.

For a revision of a standard, SFI will develop a proposal that includes the scope of the standard and a description of the stages of the standards revision process.

*SFI Inc.* will initiate the periodic standards review process regardless of the information gathered from the gap analysis. Using the results from the periodic review, the SFI Board will direct whether a standard revision is warranted. If there is a circumstance

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<sup>24</sup> General agreement characterized by the absence of sustained opposition to substantial issues by any important part of the concerned interests and by a process that involves seeking to take into account the views of all parties concerned and to reconcile any conflicting arguments.

NOTE Consensus need not imply unanimity (ISO/IEC Guide 2).

<sup>25</sup> The *SFI Inc.* Board of Directors has a balance of stakeholders including representatives of environmental, *conservation*, social professional and academic groups, independent professional loggers, small family forest owners, public officials, labor and the forest products industry. The *SFI Inc.* Board of Directors voting structure in the *SFI Inc.* bylaws defines the consensus-based approach used for final approval of revisions to the SFI Standard: a minimum of eighty percent of those present, which must include at least two representatives of each Sector [environmental, social, economic] is required to approve any action of the Board.



whereby a need to revise the standard is not warranted, *SFI Inc.* will follow the requirements in PEFC ST 1001:2017, Sections 8.4 and 8.5 regarding *stakeholder* consultation and decision making. A *stakeholder* mapping exercise will be used to identify which interest sectors-both public and private-are relevant (environmental, economic, social) including *stakeholders* who may not be able to participate by conventional means and what means of communications will best reach each *stakeholder* group. This mapping exercise will be done at the beginning of each standard review process and will define who the *stakeholders* are and what is necessary to ensure all can participate in the process if they so choose.<sup>26</sup> The *stakeholder* task groups shall be based on nine major *stakeholder* groups as defined by Agenda 21 of the *United Nations Conference on Environment and Development* (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. At least the following groups shall be included in the *stakeholder* mapping:

- forest owners;
- business and industry;
- indigenous people;
- non-government organizations;
- scientific and technological community; and
- workers and trade unions.

Other groups shall be added if relevant to the scope of standard-setting activities.

Disadvantaged *stakeholders* and key *stakeholders* will be identified and any constraints to their participation in standard-setting activities will be addressed.

The process shall include an initial 30-day public comment period (the enquiry draft), a second 60-day public comment period (the working draft). The announcement of the 60-day comment period shall include the start and the end date, shall be posted to the SFI website before the start date, and shall be communicated by e-mail to SFI stakeholders identified by the SFI. A final draft shall be sent to the SFI Board of at least 45 days in advance of their meeting as per SFI Inc. by-laws.

The External Review Panel shall independently monitor the entire process including a review of all comments received on draft standards and their disposition.

Broad public and *stakeholder* involvement is important to SFI. The *SFI standards* review process shall be conducted on a national level in Canada and in the United States. *Stakeholders*, including disadvantaged and key *stakeholders* and those from the environmental community, forest products industry, private forest landowners, customers, local and federal government agencies, Indigenous organizations, trade associations, landowner associations, academia and all other *stakeholders* shall be

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<sup>26</sup> Stakeholders will be identified by doing a stakeholder mapping exercise that includes defining which interest sectors are relevant and why, and for each sector what are likely to be the key issues, who are the key stakeholders including those who may not be able to participate by conventional means, and what means of communication will best reach them.

invited to participate in the review process. The announcement of the start of the standards revision process and all subsequent public review periods shall be communicated publicly to all interested *stakeholders* with an invitation to provide comments on the standards and standard setting process.<sup>27</sup> *SFI Inc.* will review the standards and standard-setting process based on feedback received during the public comment periods.

The Standards Revision process is intended to be collaborative. While consensus on proposed *SFI standards* revisions is desirable there may be issues for which consensus cannot be achieved. The Task Groups established by the Resources Committee may forward multiple recommended options to the Resources Committee. Task Group chairs shall be fair to all viewpoints; however, they are charged with moving the process forward in a timely manner. If consensus is not achieved by the Task Groups and the Resources Committee, the issue (s) will be moved forward to the SFI Board of Directors for final resolution either by consensus or according to voting procedures outlined in the [SFI Board of Director bylaws](#). All recommendations developed by the Task Groups will be reviewed by the Board and may be accepted as is, modified, or returned to the Task Groups with instructions for additional consideration and discussion.

The draft of proposed changes (working draft) to the *SFI standards* shall be released and published to the SFI website, followed by an additional 60-day public comment period to allow all *stakeholders* an opportunity to provide additional comments regarding proposed changes.

This draft will also be presented and discussed with *SFI-certified organizations* and all other *stakeholders* at regional workshops conducted by *SFI Inc.* throughout the U.S. and Canada or via webinars. All *stakeholders* who have commented on proposed changes or who have proposed changes to the *SFI Standards* shall use this opportunity to raise any concerns regarding their comments and the manner in which the *SFI Standards* Review Task Group addressed their comments or suggested changes.

Formal complaints regarding the disposition of comments and standard-setting activities shall be submitted in writing to the [SFI External Review Panel \(ERP\) Secretariat](#) for review. The ERP shall acknowledge receipt of all complaints, gather and verify all necessary information to validate the complaint or appeal and impartially and objectively review all complaints and provide feedback to the Resources Committee regarding complaints where additional review and potential action by the Resources Committee is warranted. Once resolved, the decision on the complaint and the complaint process shall be communicated to the complainant.

The final draft of the proposed changes to the *SFI standards* shall be delivered to the *SFI Inc.* Board of Directors who will meet to discuss the *SFI standards* draft and begin the 45-day advance notice to review proposed changes to the standards before Board approval can occur.

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<sup>27</sup> The public announcement will include where to find the publicly available standards-setting procedures, the objectives, scope and steps of the standards setting process including key dates, information on how stakeholders can participate in the process, information on how to submit comments on the standards and how to be involved in standards revision workshops and task groups.

Upon completion of the SFI Board 45-day advance review period the *SFI standards* shall be finalized and approved by the SFI Board and published to the SFI website. When approved standards are launched, they shall be posted to the SFI website with the effective date, a contact name and the address for SFI Inc. as the standard setting organization. The date of the start of the next periodic review of the standard will be posted to the SFI website. All *Certified Organizations* have one year to fully implement new and revised *SFI standards* elements adopted by the SFI Board of Directors. For PEFC endorsed standards, *Certified Organizations* shall have one year from the date of the SFI standard's launch to fully implement the new and revised SFI requirements.

*SFI Inc.* shall maintain records regarding all comments and their disposition for review by the independent External Review Panel. All comments will be considered carefully, and records of their disposition maintained for a minimum of five years and posted to the [SFI website](#). As in any review process, it is not necessary to agree to every suggestion, but it is important that all comments be given consideration.

These written procedures shall be publicly available to all interested parties. Additional information on the *SFI standards* Development process, regional workshop reports and *stakeholder* comments submitted during both public comment periods and how they were addressed shall be publicly available and also maintained for a minimum of five years.

Printed copies of the standard will be available to *stakeholders* and may incur a minimal charge to cover printing and shipping costs. The standards will be published in English and may be translated into other languages; if there are inconsistencies, the English version of the standard is the reference.

## 2. SFI Standards Revision Process Table 1

Duration (in months) and order of the steps in the SFI Standards Revision Process (Table 1 of 2) (Process 2019-Dec 2020)	2019				2020												2021												2022	
	pre-Oct	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	
Stakeholder mapping exercise conducted, review process, areas of focus, and timeline published on <i>SFI Inc.</i> website																														
Invites to stakeholders sent to volunteer on a Forum Review Task																														
30-day public comment period begins—open to all stakeholders																														
First open standard revision workshop at SFI Annual Conference																														
<i>SFI Inc.</i> Staff synthesize comments for Standards Revision Task Groups																														
Standards Revision Task Groups meet and prepare first draft																														
SFI Resources Committee reviews first draft of SFI Standards incorporating work of the Task Groups																														
<i>SFI Inc.</i> Board meeting to review first draft																														
Post comments from the first review period and their disposition, publish any complaints and their status/resolution																														
Second (final) comment period begins for 60 days - open to all stakeholders																														
Regional review workshops/webinars - open to all stakeholders																														
<i>SFI Inc.</i> Staff synthesize comments for Standards Revision Task Groups																														
Standards Revision Task Groups meet and prepare second draft																														
SFI Resources Committee reviews second draft of SFI Standards incorporating work of the Task Groups																														
SFI Board updated on key changes in the second draft of the SFI Standards																														
Task Groups work on final draft of SFI Revised Standards																														
Board reviews draft SFI Standards																														

### 3. SFI Standards Revision Process Table 2

Duration (in months) and order of the steps in the SFI Standards Revision Process (Table 2 of 2) (Process Jan 2021-Jan 2022)	2019				2020												2021												2022	2026	
	pre-Oct	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	April	
Re-convene Standards Revision Task Groups and SFI Resources Committee for any relevant discussion																															
Resources Committee reviews final draft standards prior to Board review																															
Final draft to SFI Board for 45-day advanced notice period per <i>SFI Inc.</i> bylaws																															
SFI standards approved by the <i>SFI Inc.</i> Board of Directors																															
PEFC Assessment Process for SFI Forest Management Standard																															
New Standards published to SFI Inc website. <i>SFI Inc.</i> announces new SFI standards broadly via e-mails and press releases; effective date to begin implementation is January																															
<b>All SFI Certified Organizations required to conform to provisions in new SFI standards December 31, 2022.</b>																															
<b>Start of next Standards review period – April 15, 2026</b>																															

### 4. Interpretations

From time to time, a formal process may be needed to interpret the *SFI standards* and supporting documents. As part of *SFI Inc.*'s commitment to continual improvement of both the *SFI certification* process and the *SFI standards*, such concerns shall be submitted promptly to the *SFI Inc.* Interpretations Committee by contacting staff at *SFI Inc.* The *SFI Inc.* Interpretations Committee shall respond within 45 days of receipt.

It is neither the intent nor the responsibility of the *SFI Inc.* Interpretations Committee to resolve disputes arising through certification; nevertheless, the committee will provide opinions and direction to assist parties in answering interpretive questions. Through this process, SFI shall maintain a record of opinions and concerns available to both *Certified Organizations* and *certification bodies* to assist with certification planning. *SFI Inc.* shall periodically review this record and, where appropriate, recommend changes for inclusion in the *SFI standards* or *SFI audit procedures*.



# **SECTION 10**

## **SFI 2022 AUDIT PROCEDURES AND AUDITOR QUALIFICATIONS AND ACCREDITATION**

**October 7, 2021**

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## Introduction

All certification, recertification, and surveillance audits to Sections 2, 3, 4, and 5, the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* and the *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families* in the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules* document shall be conducted by *certification bodies* accredited by the ANSI National Accreditation Board (ANAB) or the Standards Council of Canada (SCC) to conduct *SFI certification*. Accreditation bodies accrediting *certification bodies* for audits to Sections 2, 3, 4, and 5, the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* and the *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families* in the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules* shall be International Accreditation Forum (IAF) Multilateral Recognition Arrangement signatories.

Information related to the accreditation process can be found on the websites of the [ANSI National Accreditation Board](#) and the [Standards Council of Canada](#).

Accredited *certification bodies* that provide certification services for *SFI* Sections 2 and 3 and the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* and the *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families* are required to maintain audit processes and conduct audits consistent with the requirements of the current version of:

- International Organization for Standardization ISO/IEC 17021-1 (Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems; and
- ISO/IEC TS 17021-2 (Competence requirements for auditing and certification of environmental management systems).

Accredited *certification bodies* that provide certification services for *SFI* Sections 4 and Section 5 are required to maintain audit processes and conduct audits consistent with the requirements of the current version of ISO/IEC 17065 (Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services).

ISO is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies. The preparation of International Standards is conducted by ISO technical committees.

The ISO/IEC 17021-1, ISO/IEC TS 17021-2 and ISO/IEC 17065 standards were prepared by the ISO Committee on Conformity Assessment (CASCO).

### 1. Scope

This *SFI Audit Procedures and Qualifications* document is intended to support, but not replace the audit process requirements contained in ISO/IEC 17021-1, ISO/IEC 17021-2 and ISO/IEC 17065, by providing specific requirements to *Certified Organizations* and *certification bodies*. It is applicable to all forest management, *fiber sourcing* organizations and chain-of-custody *certified organization* when conducting *third-party certification*, recertification, or surveillance audits to the *SFI 2022 Standards* Sections 2, 3,4, and 5, the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* and the *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families Indigenous Peoples and Families*.

When designing and implementing a program to evaluate conformance with the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*, *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*, the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* or the *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families*, *Certified Organizations* should reference ISO 19011 Guidelines for auditing management systems.

*Certification bodies* accredited for the *2022 SFI Chain of Custody Standard* shall also conform to the requirements of PEFC ST 2003-2020.

## **2. Normative Reference**

*Certification bodies* and *auditors* conducting third-party audits to SFI Sections 2 and 3 and the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* and the *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families* in the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules* document must conform to the requirements of ISO/IEC 17021-1 and ISO/IEC TS 17021-2, while those conducting third-party audits to *SFI* Section 4 and Section 5 must conform to the requirements of ISO/IEC 17065. In addition, all *certification bodies* and *auditors* conducting third-party audits to *SFI* Sections 2, 3, 4, 5 or the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* and the *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families* in the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules* document must conform to all applicable ANAB or SCC requirements and International Accreditation Forum (IAF) Mandatory Documents (e.g., IAF MD 1, IAF MD 2, IAF MD 4, IAF MD 5, IAF MD 11, etc.).

## **3. Terms and Definitions**

Definitions of terms can be found in the Section 14 of the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules* document.

## **4. Procedures for Implementing the *Principles* for *SFI* Auditing**

ISO/IEC 17021-1 Section 4 addresses general *principles* associated with auditing, including impartiality, competence, responsibility, openness, confidentiality, and responsiveness to complaints.

All information and documents, including working drafts and reports, shall be considered confidential. *Certification bodies* shall not release any information or documents without the prior written permission of the *Certified Organization*. *Auditors* shall conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner.

*Certification bodies* and *audit team* members and their employers shall not participate in an appraisal or advise a potential purchaser or broker a purchase of property audited within the prior three years without the written permission of the audited party. *Certification bodies*, *audit team* members, and employers shall notify the audited party of participation in such activities after the three-year period immediately upon initiation of such activities for a period of at least 10 years following the audit.

Prior to engaging in an audit and the *Certified Organization's* acceptance of the *audit team*, the *certification bodies* and *audit team* members shall disclose to the party requesting the audit any



prior land appraisal or assessment work or land brokerage activity or other professional services they or their employers conducted related to the property to be audited.

*Certification bodies* must successfully complete annual witness audits and periodic re-accreditation audits to maintain their accreditation status from ANAB or SCC.

## **5. SFI Audit Activities**

### **5.1 Initial Certification**

For the initial certification audit to be completed, the auditee must be a *Certified Organization* or be in the process of becoming one in which case the final certification decision is conditioned on becoming a *Certified Organization*. The SFI certificate(s), *Forest Management Standard, Fiber Sourcing Standard, Chain-of-Custody Standard, Certified Sourcing Standard, the SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* or the *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families* cannot be issued by the *certification body* until the applicant has become *Certified Organization*. It should be noted that the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules* is a publicly available document and, as such, anyone who wants to can offer their opinion on an organization's conformance to it. However, because "Sustainable Forestry Initiative" and "SFI" are registered service marks, an entity would infringe on this ownership in violation of the federal intellectual property laws if they were to use the service marks in a public claim about the opinion without becoming a *Certified Organization*.

### **5.2 Certification of Multiple Sites**

ISO/IEC 17021-1 clause 9.1.5 specifies that where multi-site sampling is utilized for the audit of a client's management system covering the same activity in various locations, the *certification body* shall develop a sampling *program* to ensure proper audit of the management system. The rationale for the sampling plan shall be documented for each client.

International Accreditation Forum Mandatory Document 1 (IAF MD 1) provides mandatory guidance for the consistent application of ISO/IEC 17021-1 Clause 9.1.5 that is subject to the specific requirements of relevant standards.

Within the context of the *SFI* Sections 2, 3, 4, 5, the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* or the *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families* of the *SFI 2022 Standards* and specific risks associated with certification of *forestry* operations, *Certification bodies* may apply alternative sampling approaches to IAF MD 1.

Additional information regarding multi-site certification (including the circumstances under which alternative sampling approaches to IAF MD-1 is permissible) is included in Appendix 1 of Section 10 in the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules* document.

### **5.3 Substitution and Modification of *SFI 2022 Sections 2 and 3 Standard Indicators***

*Certified Organizations*, with consent of the *certification body*, may substitute or modify *indicators* in *SFI 2022 Section 2 Forest Management Standard* and *SFI 2022 Section 3 Fiber Sourcing Standard* to address local conditions based on a thorough analysis and adequate justification. The *certification body* is responsible for ensuring revised *indicators* are consistent with the spirit and intent of the *SFI 2022 Sections 2 and 3 standards performance measures and indicators* and with the *principles of sustainable forestry*, and that the changes are appropriate for specific local conditions and circumstances and the *Certified Organization's* scope of operation.

Additional *indicators* beyond those identified in the *SFI 2022 Sections 2 and 3 Standards*, if included by the *Certified Organization*, shall be audited like all other *indicators*.

### **5.4 Determination of Conformance**

**5.4.1** The *certification body* shall assess conformance to each element of the *SFI 2022 Sections 2, 3, 4, 5 Standards*, the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* and the *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families*, *objectives*, *performance measures* and *indicators* within the scope of the audit. *SFI 2022 Standards'* elements are *objectives*, *performance measures* and *indicators*. The introduction (Section 1) to the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules* document is informative, and as such, is not an auditable element.

Evidence shall be compiled by examining operating procedures, materials relating to *forestry* practices and on-the-ground field performance, and through meetings or correspondence with employees, contractors and other third parties (e.g., government agencies, community groups, affected *Indigenous Peoples*, *conservation* organizations), as appropriate, to determine conformance to the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*, the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*, the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* and the *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families*.

**5.4.2** The *certification body* shall assess conformance to each element of the *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard* and *SFI 2022 Certified Sourcing Standard* requirements within the scope of the audit.

**5.4.3** The *certification body* shall ensure that the audit *objectives* and scope as well as the *auditor* time allocated to the audit:

- allow for accurate determination of conformance for the operating units within the scope of the audit;
- verify that the *SFI 2022 Standards Sections 2 and 3*, the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* or the *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families* programs conform to *SFI principles, policies, objectives, performance measures, indicators*, and any additional *indicators* that the *Certified Organization* chooses; and

- verify whether the *Certified Organization* has effectively implemented its *SFI 2022 Standards Sections 2 and 3 program* requirements on the ground and/or implemented the *SFI Section 4, and 5* requirements.

If a *major nonconformity* is found, a certificate of conformance shall not be issued until the *certification body* verifies that corrective action approved by the *lead auditor* has been implemented. For *major nonconformities* identified at surveillance, the *certification body* must verify implementation of the corrective action(s) within 90 days. A revisit may be required to verify implementation of corrective actions.

If a *minor nonconformity* is found, a certificate of conformance may be issued only after the *lead auditor* approves a corrective action plan that addresses the nonconformity within an agreed-upon period, not to exceed one year. Verification that the corrective action has been effectively implemented shall occur during the next audit.

For initial audits to the *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard* or *SFI 2022 Certified Sourcing Standard*, a non-conformity found during the audit will prevent the issue of the certificate until the certification body verifies that the corrective action is effectively implemented, in accordance with ISO/IEC 17065.

## **5.5 SFI Technical Audit Report to the Certified Organization**

ISO/IEC 17021-1 at clause 9.4.8 addresses audit report contents. In addition, the SFI audit report to the *Certified Organization* shall cover:

- a. the audit plan;
- b. a description of the audit process used;
- c. the number of *auditor* days used to conduct the audit, including both on-site and off-site audit activities;
- d. information regarding any meetings or correspondence between the *audit team* and government agencies, community groups, affected *Indigenous Peoples* and *conservation* organizations;
- e. documentation of the rationale for the substitution or modification of any *indicators* (*SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*);
- e. documentation of the rationale for the substitution or modification of any *indicators* (*SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*);
- f. description of the *Certification Organization's* chain of custody program (*SFI 2022 Chain of Custody Standard*);
- f. a schedule for surveillance and recertification;
- g. any specific focus areas for the next audit visit.

See Section 11 in the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules* document regarding the development and release of public summary audit reports. The public audit summary report shall be posted to the SFI website within 90 days of the certificate being issued. For surveillance audits the public summary audit report shall be posted within 90 days from the conclusion of the audit.

## 5.6 Recertification

**5.6.1** To maintain current *SFI 2022 Standard* certificates, *Certified Organizations* shall recertify their *programs* to the *SFI 2022 Sections 2, 3, 4, and 5 Standards*, the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* or the *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families* every five years.

## 5.7 Transferal of Certified Lands or Facilities

When one *Certified Organization* acquires the certified forest land or facilities of another *Certified Organization*, the *certification bodies* shall work with the parties involved to review the acquisition or sale. This review will determine the significance of changes that may occur with the transfer of ownership of the forestland and or facilities to determine the actions necessary in order to issue a new certificate to the party receiving the new assets. It is imperative that *Certified Organizations* notify their respective *certification body* as soon as possible when forestland and or facilities are being purchased or sold to ensure that lapses in certification status can be eliminated or *minimized*. Refer to IAF MD-02 for more information.

In order to *minimize* disruptions in operations due to the transfer of certified forestlands and or facilities from one *Certified Organization* to another, *the SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing* will respect current *SFI certifications* for the forestlands and or facilities involved in the transfer for a period of 90 days for SFI product labeling purposes provided:

- a. The parties involved request this grace period in writing prior to the transfer of the assets with documentation confirming that there will not be significant variation in the current operations, environmental management systems, personnel, etc. during the transfer.
- b. The party receiving the assets must provide documentation demonstrating the timeline for obtaining their new SFI certification from an accredited *certification body*.
- c. The party desiring to utilize the SFI product labels must be in full conformance with Sections 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* or the *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families* of the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules*.

## 6. Competence and Evaluation of *Certification Bodies*

### 6.1 Competence of *Audit Teams*

*Audit teams* shall have the competence (knowledge and skills) to conduct an audit in accordance with the *principles* of auditing.

For audits of SFI 2022 Sections 2 and 3 and audits of the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* or the *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous*

*Peoples and Families*, the *certification body* shall select *audit team* members appropriate to the scope, scale and geography of the operation being audited. Additionally, at least one member of the *audit team* shall have knowledge of *forestry* operations in the region undergoing the audit, at least one member shall have knowledge of applicable laws and regulations, at least one member shall have knowledge of the socio-demographics and cultural issues in the region, and at least one member shall be a professional forester as defined by the Society of American Foresters (SAF), the Canadian Institute of Forestry (CIF-IFC), or licensed or registered by the state(s) or province(s) in which the certification is conducted where applicable. For forest management audits, the *audit team* shall have expertise that includes plant and *wildlife* ecology, *silviculture*, forest modeling, forest operations, occupational safety and health, international labor standards, and hydrology. One specialist per discipline is not required to meet any of the above requirements. It is possible to have all the necessary competencies in a single auditor.

## 6.2 Competence of *Auditors*

ISO/IEC 17021:1 at Section 7.1 and Section 7.2 addresses general competence requirements for *certification bodies* providing audit and certification of management. This is supplemented by the environmental management system-specific competence requirements contained in ISO/IEC 17021-2 and ISO/IEC 19011 Guidelines for auditing management systems.

In addition to the competence requirements contained in ISO/IEC 17021-1 and ISO/IEC 17021-2 and ISO/IEC 19011, for certifications to the *SFI 2022 Standards*, *audit team* members shall have the education, formal training and experience that promote competency in and comprehension of:

- a. *forestry* operations as they relate to natural resource management, including *wildlife*, fisheries, recreation, ecology, etc.;
- b. international and domestic *sustainable forestry* management systems and performance standards including occupational safety and health, and labor standards; and
- c. certification requirements related to *SFI*.

*Audit team* members who have obtained a professional *degree* in *forestry* or a closely related field shall have a minimum of two years relevant work experience.

## 6.3 Maintenance and Improvement of Competence

All *audit team* members shall pursue ongoing personal and professional development in

- a. forest management science and technology;
- b. sustainable forest management systems and certification *programs* and standards;
- c. understanding and interpretation of federal, state, and provincial *forestry* and environmental laws and codes of practice; and

- d. certification procedures, processes and techniques, especially as these pertain to the *SFI 2022 Standards*.

An *auditor* who maintains Certified Forester, Registrar Accreditation Board, or Canadian Environmental Certification Approvals Board sustainable forest management *auditor* (EP(EMSLA)) certification, or equivalent, shall be considered to have fulfilled continuing education requirements.

## **7. Accreditation of *Certification Bodies***

SFI requires *certification bodies* to be accredited in order to conduct *SFI certifications* and issue certificates.

### **7.1 *Certification body***

An independent third party that is accredited by:

- a. ANSI National Accreditation Board (ANAB) as being competent to conduct certifications to the *SFI 2022 Standards* Sections 2, 3, 4, and 5, the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* or the *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families*.
- b. Standards Council of Canada (SCC) as being competent to conduct certifications to the *SFI 2022 Standards* Sections 2, 3, 4, and 5, the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* or the *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families Indigenous Peoples and Families*

# **Appendix 1: Audits of Multi-Site Organizations**

## **(Normative)**

### **Introduction**

Multi-site organizations may be audited on a site-by-site basis (all sites visited each year) or, in some cases, on a sample basis.

This appendix expands on Section 5.2 of the SFI Section 10 — *SFI Audit Procedures and Auditor Qualifications and Accreditation* document and provides additional normative guidance for *certification bodies* wishing to audit multi-site organizations on a sample basis.

### **1. Scope**

Audits of multi-site organizations applying a sampling approach to assess conformance with:

- i. Section 2 — *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*
- ii. Section 3 — *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*
- iii. Section 4 — *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard*
- iv. Section 5 — *SFI 2022 Certified Sourcing Standard*
- v. *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module*
- vi. *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families*

### **2. References**

IAF Mandatory Document for The Certification of Multiple Sites Based on Sampling Issue 2, Clause 6.1: Methodologies for Auditing of a Multi-site Organization Using Site Sampling (IAF MD1: 2018) — Normative for *SFI 2022 Standards Sections 2, 3, 4, and 5*.

IAF Mandatory Document for Duration of QMS and EMS Audits Issue 1 (IAF MD 5: 2015) — Informative.

### **3. Procedures for Implementing Audits of Multi-site Organizations**

#### **3.1 Eligibility Criteria for Multi-site Organizations**

- 3.1.1 Multi-site organizations using IAF MD1, Clause 6.1 as the basis for sampling shall also ensure the following eligibility criteria are established:
- a. The processes at all sites have to be substantially of the same kind and have to be operated to similar methods and procedures under a single management system.
  - b. The organization's management system shall be under a centrally controlled and administered plan and be subject to central management review and all relative sites (including the central administration function) shall be subject to the organization's internal audit *program*<sup>28</sup>.
  - c. It shall be demonstrated that the central office of the organization has established a management system in accordance with the *SFI 2022 Standards* and that the whole organization meets the requirements of the standard.
  - d. The organization should demonstrate its ability to collect and analyze data (including but not limited to the items listed below) from all sites including the central office and its authority and also demonstrate its authority and ability to initiate organizational change if required:
    - i. System documentation and system changes;
    - ii. Management review;
    - iii. Complaints;
    - iv. Evaluation of corrective actions;
    - v. Internal audit planning and evaluation of the results; and
    - vi. Different legal requirements.
- 3.1.2 A Central Function<sup>29</sup> shall be established that shall:
- a. represent the multi-site organization in the certification process, including communication and relationship with the certification body;
  - b. submit an application for the certification and its scope, including a list of participating sites;
  - c. ensure contractual relationship with the certification body;
  - d. submit to the certification body a request for extension or reduction of the certification scope, including coverage of participating sites;
  - e. establish written procedures for the management of the multi-site organization.
  - f. keep records relating to the central office and sites compliance with the requirements of the standard.
  - g. provide a commitment on behalf of the whole multi-site organization to establish and maintain practices and procedures in accordance with the requirements of the relevant standard;

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<sup>28</sup> As per the requirements in *SFI* Section 2 – Objective 17; *SFI* Section 3 – Objective 10; *SFI* Section 4 – Part 8.6 or Section 5 – Part 8.6

<sup>29</sup> The Central Function comprises the system of processes and procedures necessary to manage the multi-site organization and is not a physical location.



- h. provide all the sites with information and guidance needed for effective implementation and maintenance of practices and procedures in accordance with the relevant standard;
- i. maintain the organizational or contractual connection with all sites covered by the multi-site organization including the right of the Central Function to exclude any site from participation in the certification in case of serious nonconformities with the relevant standard;
- j. keep a register of all the sites of the multi-site organization, including (for the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*) the forest area associated with each participating site;
- k. maintain an internal audit or monitoring *program* sufficient to ensure overall organizational conformance with the relevant standard;<sup>30</sup>
- l. operate a review of the conformity of sites based on results of internal audit and/or monitoring data sufficient to assess organizational performance as a whole rather than at the individual site level;
- m. establish corrective and preventive measures if required and evaluate the effectiveness of corrective actions taken; and
- n. establish procedures for inclusion of new sites within the multi-site organization including an internal assessment of conformity with the standard, implementation of corrective and relevant preventive measures and a requirement to inform the relevant *certification body* of changes in participation prior to including the sites within the scope of the certification.

3.1.3 Functions and responsibilities of individual sites shall be established for:

- a. implementing and maintaining the requirements of the relevant standard;
- b. entering into a contractual relationship with the central office, including commitment on the compliance with the standard requirements and other applicable certification requirements.
- c. responding effectively to all requests from the Central Function or *certification body* for relevant data, documentation or other information whether in connection with formal audits or reviews or otherwise;
- d. providing full co-operation and assistance in respect of the satisfactory completion of internal audits, reviews, monitoring, relevant routine enquiries, or corrective actions; and
- e. implementing relevant corrective and preventive actions established by the central office.

3.1.4 Multi-Site Organizations using alternate approaches to sampling provided for in Section 10, clause 5.2 Certification of Multiple Sites of the Audit Procedures and *Auditor Qualifications and Accreditation* document shall meet all the eligibility requirements specified in Section 10, Appendix 1, clause 3.1.1 — 3.1.3 above. In addition, the following requirements must also be met:

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<sup>30</sup>Annual performance data on overall organizational conformance implies that all sites have been internally audited, or monitored, prior to the initial audit and subsequent audit.

- a. The alternate sampling approach must be accompanied by a written justification demonstrating that the same level of confidence in conformity with the *SFI 2022 Standards* across all the sites included in the certification can be obtained.
- b. A legal or contractual link shall exist between all sites.
- c. The scope and scale of activities carried out by participating sites shall be similar.

## 3.2 Sampling Approaches

3.2.1 *Certification bodies* auditing multi-site organizations using IAF MD1 as the basis for sampling shall meet the sample selection and intensity criteria established in IAF MD1, Clause 6.1.

3.2.2 *Certification bodies* auditing multi-site organizations using alternate approaches as the basis for sampling shall meet the following minimum sample selection and intensity criteria:

- a. stratification of the sites included within the multi-site certification based on the scope and scale of activities as well as previous audit findings, complaints and monitoring data collated by the central function;<sup>3132</sup>
- b. a formal documented evaluation of the inherent and control risks at each of the sites participating in the multi-site certification;
- c. a sample strategy designed to specifically address the identified risks;
- d. consideration of the need for an element of randomness within the sampling strategy to address previously unidentified risks;
- e. in cases where the multi-site organization maintains an internal audit *program* determined to be reliable the minimum sample size shall in no event be less than:
  - i.  $\sqrt{(n)}$  for initial certification audits<sup>33</sup>
  - ii.  $0.6 \sqrt{(n)}$  for surveillance audits
  - iii.  $0.8 \sqrt{(n)}$  for re-certification audits
- f. In cases where there the multi-site organization does not maintain an internal audit *program* determined to be reliable the minimum sample size shall in no event be less than  $\sqrt{(n)}$  for initial certifications, surveillance audits and re-certification audits; and

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<sup>31</sup> For example in a multi-site organization with three forest management operations and 15 procurement operations at a minimum, separate strata would be required for the woodlands and procurement operations. Under *SFI 2022* Sections 2 and 3, a range of processing facilities may be included under a single stratum to the extent that the nature and risks associated with the fiber supply are consistent across the facilities e.g., three sawmills a plywood mill and a pulp mill may be included within a single stratum if they are all using fiber with a similar risk profile (such as from a single state/province/region). If one of the sawmills imported tropical hardwoods, it would require a separate stratum.

<sup>32</sup> In determining the impact of previous audit findings on a sample strategy consideration shall be given to both the need to formally close out prior audit findings (which may require a site visit) and the implications of previous audit findings for ongoing conformance with the applicable standard(s) by individual sites.

<sup>33</sup>Where n = the number of sites within the stratum.

- g. In addition to site audits, the central function shall be audited on an annual basis.<sup>34</sup>

### 3.3 Audit Scope

3.3.1 At a minimum the audit sampling process shall address all elements of the standards on an:

- Annual basis for surveillance audits of conformance with SFI Sections 2, 3, 4, and 5, the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* or the *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families* of the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules* document.
- Every five years for re-certification audits of conformance with the SFI Section 2, 3, 4, and 5, the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* or the *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families* of the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules*.

### 3.4 Audit Duration

3.4.1 In determining the overall duration of multi-site audits the underlying objective is to maintain at least the same level of confidence that would be achieved under IAF MD1. When calculating audit days, consideration should be given to the general principles guiding audit time calculations outlined in ISO/IEC 17021-1 Section 9.1.4 Determining audit time, IAF-MD5 and IAF MD11 (for audits of integrated management systems).

### 3.5 Nonconformities

3.5.1 Nonconformities identified at the site or organizational level shall be addressed by the central function considering both the site level implications and the broader implications for the organization as a whole.

3.5.2 If a *major nonconformity* is found, a certificate of conformance shall not be issued until the *certification body* verifies that corrective action approved by the *lead auditor* has been implemented at both the site level and for the organization as a whole.

3.5.3 *Certification bodies* shall close out identified *minor nonconformities* at the next scheduled audit. This may require an amendment to the site sampling strategy to ensure that open site-level nonconformities are closed out at the next audit.<sup>35</sup>

### 3.6 Audit Reporting

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<sup>34</sup>Auditing of the central function will be primarily based on interviews, document and record review and may be conducted through any combination of off-site audit activities, additional activities carried out through electronic record access at individual sites or visits to the central office as appropriate.

<sup>35</sup> For example, where Operation A has a *minor nonconformity* raised in 2022, it will be necessary to close this out in 2023 regardless of whether Operation A was scheduled to be one of the sites sampled in 2023. As a result, the sampling strategy will need to include a process for closing out open site-level nonconformities.

3.6.1 At a minimum, the *certification body* shall prepare a technical audit report that addresses the multi-site organization as a whole. Individual site level reports may be developed to summarize site-level findings but do not eliminate the need for an organization level report.

3.7 Expanding the Scope of a *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard* or *SFI 2022 Certified Sourcing Standard* Certificates

- 3.7.1 Additional sites may be added by the *certification body* to an existing certificate between audits provided it is within the scope of the certificate. The number of sites that may be added between audits is limited to 100% of the existing sites at the previous audit. The following requirements shall be met:
- a. the *certification body* shall be informed by the *certified organization* in advance of its intent to add new sites between audits, including the number of sites to be added;
  - b. the *certification body* shall obtain from the *certified organization* the system procedures covering the additional sites, including the products covered by the scope of the certificate;
  - c. the *certification body* shall obtain the internal audit report for the site(s) being considered for inclusion in the certificate;
  - d. the certification body shall review results of the internal audit and determine if additional information is needed while considering the request of the *certified organization*;
  - e. based on the result of the review in (d), the *certification body* shall determine if an on-site audit of the additional site(s) is required or if the review as per (b), (c) and (d) shows sufficient evidence that the sites can be added;
  - f. if an on-site audit is not required before adding the additional site(s) to the certificate, these new site(s) shall be subject to on-site visit no later than the next scheduled audit, and
  - g. in case where remote audits are permitted, the on-site audit can be replaced by a remote audit provided:
    - i. audit of organizations that operate without physical possession are conducted remotely with the use of information and communication technology (ICT) tools in accordance with IAF MD 4.
    - ii. The certification body shall demonstrate that the full scope of the audit can be covered using ICT tools.
    - iii. organizations that operate with physical possession but have not sold any physical product with a *SFI* claim since the previous audit, are not eligible to be audited remotely according to this requirement.

*Certification Bodies* should reference to *SFI* Section 7 – Guidance: Guidance for the Use of Remote Auditing Techniques for *SFI* Audits

#### **4. Competence and Evaluation of *Certification Bodies***

- 4.1 Prior to conducting multi-site certification under the methodologies described in this appendix *certification bodies* shall have documented procedures in place to guide *audit teams* in the planning, conduct and reporting of multi-site certification audits.

#### **5. Public Communication and Claims Regarding Multi-Site Certificates**

- 5.1 For audits of the *SFI 2022 Section 2 and Section 3, the SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* or the *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families requirements, certification bodies* shall prepare a summary audit report that, in addition to the requirements of *SFI Communications and Public Reporting (Section 11)* in the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules* document, indicates:
- a. the fact that the certification is a multi-site certification;
  - b. whether the multi-site organization is a group certification organization;
  - c. the sampling approach (strata, location, number of sites sampled and the percentage of sites sampled within each stratum); and
  - d. any changes in the scope of the multi-site certification since the last public summary report.
- 5.2 Certificates issued to multi-site organizations shall be issued to the central function and include an appendix listing the participating sites. The central function shall provide a copy of the certificate to all participating sites. The certificate shall list all participants.

#### **6. Official Complaints**

- 6.1 In assessing the validity of complaints raised in relation to a specific site within a multi-site organization, *certification bodies* shall investigate the complaint at the site level and (where relevant) at the organizational level.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> For example, where a complaint has implications for the effectiveness of a process carried out by the central function (such as procedures, monitoring or internal audit) then the implications for the reliability of information from other sites within the organization shall also be considered.

## Appendix 2: Group Certification Organizations

[Normative]

### 1. Scope

Audits of *group certification organizations* to assess conformance with:

- i. Section 2 — *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*
- ii. Section 3 — *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*
- iii. Section 4 — *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard*
- iv. Section 5 — *SFI 2022 Certified Sourcing Standard*
- v. *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module*
- vi. *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families*

### 2 References

IAF Mandatory Document for The Certification of Multiple Sites Based on Sampling Issue 2, Clause 6.1: Methodologies for Auditing of a Multi-site Organization Using Site Sampling (IAF MD1: 2018) — Normative for *SFI 2022 Standards Sections 2, 3, 4, and 5*.

IAF Mandatory Document for Duration of Quality, Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems (IAF MD 5: 2019) — (Informative).

### 3 Group Certification Organizations

3.1 *Group certification organizations* formed to achieve *SFI 2022 Standards* certification shall meet the requirements in this Appendix.

Forest management *group certification organizations* formed to achieve *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*, the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* or the *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families* certification, shall submit all the forest area under management within the catchment area for the group certification (i.e., the group certification shall be defined in geographic terms at a logical scale such as county, region, state/province but once defined must include all sites managed by the central function within that geographic area). All *group members* in the *group certification organization* shall be subject to the internal monitoring and the internal audit program.

3.2 Commitment and policy

SFI 2022 Audit Procedures and Auditor Qualifications and Accreditation (Section 10) October 7, 2021

- 3.2.1 The *group certification organization* shall require a commitment:
- a. to comply with standard requirements and other applicable requirements of the certification system;
  - b. to integrate the *group certification organization* requirements in the group management system;
  - c. to continuously improve the group management system;
  - d. to continuously support the improvement of the sustainable forest management by group members of a forest management group certification organization.

The commitment may be part of a group management policy and shall be publicly available upon request.

- 3.2.2 Members in the group certification organization shall provide a commitment
- a. to follow the requirements of the management system;
  - b. to implement the requirements of the standard in their operations or facilities.

3.2.3 Where a *group certification organization* plans any changes in the group management system, these changes shall be included in a group management plan.

3.2.4 Where a forest management *group certification organization* decides to fulfil requirements of the standard at the group level, these requirements shall be considered in a group management plan.

3.2.5 The *group certification organization* shall determine and maintain the resources needed for the establishment, implementation, maintenance, and continual improvement of the group management system.

3.2.6 The group certification organization shall define the necessary competence of persons doing work in the group management system.

- 3.2.7 The *group certification organization* shall have communication processes in place to raise the awareness of *group members* concerning:
- a. the group management policy;
  - b. the requirements of the standard;
  - c. their contribution to the effectiveness of the group management system, including the benefits of improved group performance;
  - d. the implications of not conforming with the group management system requirements, and
  - e. the *group certification organization* shall determine the processes required for internal and external communications.

### 3.3 Organizational roles, responsibilities, and authorities for the *Group Certification*

## Organization

### 3.3.1 Functions and responsibilities of the Group Manager

The following functions and responsibilities of the group manager shall be specified:

- a. implement and maintain an effective management system covering all *group members*;
- b. represent the *group certification organization* in the certification process, including in communications and relationships with the *certification body*, submission of an application for certification, and contractual relationship with the *certification body*;
- c. establish written procedures for the management of the *group certification organization*;
- d. establish written procedures for the acceptance of new *group members* of the *group certification organization*. These acceptance procedures shall cover at least the verification of the applicant's information about contact details, clear identification of their forest property and its/their size(s);
- e. establish written procedures for the suspension and exclusion of *group members* who do not correct/close nonconformities. *Group members* excluded from any *group certification organizations* based on nonconformities cannot be accepted within 12 months after exclusion;
- f. keep documented information of:
  - i. the group manager and *group members'* conformity with the requirements of the standard,
  - iii. all *group members*, including their contact details, identification of their forest property and its/ their size(s) (for forest management *group certification organizations*), the certified area (for forest management *group certification organizations*),
  - iv. identification of affected *stakeholders* (for forest management group certification organizations),
  - v. the implementation of an internal monitoring program, its review and any preventive and/or corrective actions taken;
- g. documented information relevant to the group management system and the conformance with the requirements of the standard shall be up to date and adequately protected against loss of confidentiality, improper use, or loss of integrity.
- h. establish connections with all *group members* based on a binding written agreement which shall include the *group members* commitment to comply with the standard. The group manager shall have a written contract or other written agreement with all *group members* covering the right of the group manager to implement and enforce any corrective or preventive measures, and to initiate the exclusion of any *group member* from the scope of certification in



- i. the event of nonconformity with the standard;  
provide all *group members* with a document confirming participation in the *group certification organization*.
- j. provide all *group members* with information and guidance required for the effective implementation and maintenance of the standard;
- k. address nonconformities reported from *group members* which were identified under other certifications than the particular *group certification organization* and to ensure implementation with all *group members*;
- l. operate an internal monitoring program that provides for the evaluation of the group managers' conformity with the certification requirements;
- m. operate an annual internal audit program covering both *group members* and group manager;
- n. operate a management review of the *group certification organization* and act on the results from the review;
- o. provide full co-operation and assistance in responding effectively to all requests from the *certification body*, accreditation body for relevant data, documentation or other information; allowing access to the forest area covered by the *group certification organization* and/or other facilities;
- p. maintain appropriate mechanisms for resolving complaints and disputes relating to group management and the standard requirements.

### 3.3.2 Function and responsibilities of Group Members

The following functions and responsibilities of the *group members* shall be specified:

- a. to provide the *group member* with a binding written agreement, including a commitment on conformity with the standard requirements and other applicable requirements of the certification system; *group members* excluded from any certification group cannot apply for group membership within 12 months after exclusion;
- b. to provide the group manager with information about previous *group certification organization* participation;
- c. to comply with the standard and other applicable requirements of the certification system as well as with the requirements of the management system;
- d. to provide full co-operation and assistance in responding effectively to all requests from the group manager, or *certification body* for relevant data, documentation or other information; allowing access to the forest and/or facilities;
- e. to inform the group manager about nonconformities identified under other certifications than the particular *group certification organization*;
- f. to implement relevant corrective and preventive actions established by the group manager.

## 4. Evaluating the Group Certification Organization Performance

### 4.1 Monitoring of *Group Certification Organization* Performance

4.1.1 The *group certification organization* shall maintain an internal monitoring program that provides confidence in the conformity of the group organization with the standard requirements. The program shall determine:

- a. what shall be monitored and measured;
- b. the methods for monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation, as applicable, to ensure valid results;
- c. when the monitoring and measuring shall be performed;
- d. when the results from monitoring and measurement shall be analysed and evaluated;
- e. what documented information shall be available as evidence of the results.

4.1.2 The *group certification organization* shall evaluate the group management performance and the effectiveness of the group management system concerning the implementation of the standard requirements.

### 4.2 Internal Audit<sup>37</sup>

4.2.1 The annual internal audit program shall provide information on whether the *group certification organization's* management system:

- a. conforms to the *group certification organization's* own requirements for its group management system and the requirements of the certification standard;
- b. ensures the implementation of the standard requirements at the *group member* level;
- c. is effectively implemented and maintained.

4.2.2 The internal audit program shall cover the group manager and all *group members*. The group manager shall be audited annually. The *group members* may be selected on a sample basis.

4.2.3 The internal audit program which shall cover at least:

- a. the audit planning process;
- b. the audit criteria and scope;
- c. the competence and impartiality of the auditors;
- d. reporting the audit result to the *group certification organization* management;
- e. retaining of evidence of the implementation of the audit program and the audit results.

4.2.4 The internal audit program shall include procedures for<sup>38</sup>:

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<sup>37</sup> When designing and implementing a program to evaluate conformance with the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*, *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* or the *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families*, Certified Organizations should reference ISO 19011 Guidelines for auditing management systems.

<sup>38</sup> Group certification organizations should reference IAF MD-1 for further information regarding audit sample selection. *SFI 2022 Audit Procedures and Auditor Qualifications and Accreditation* (Section 10) October 7, 2021

- a. determination of the sample size;
- b. determination of sample categories;
- c. distribution of the sample to the categories;
- d. selection of the group members.

4.2.5 At least 25% of the audit sample should be selected at random with the remaining sites selected on the basis of a risk assessment.

#### 4.3 Nonconformity, corrective and preventative action

4.3.1 When a nonconformity occurs, the group manager shall implement corrective action and mitigate the impacts to the extent possible;

4.3.2 The group manager shall evaluate the need for preventative action to eliminate the causes of the nonconformity by:

- a. reviewing the nonconformity;
- b. determining the causes of the nonconformity;
- c. determining if similar nonconformities exist, or could potentially occur;
- d. implement any action needed;
- e. review the effectiveness of any corrective action taken;
- f. make changes to the group management system, if necessary.

4.3.3 The group manager shall retain documented information as evidence of:

- a. the nature of the nonconformities and any subsequent actions taken;
- b. the results of any corrective action.

4.3.4 A *group member* who was excluded from a *group certification organization* shall be internally audited by the group manager before they are allowed to re-enter the *group certification organization*. The internal audit shall not take place sooner than 12 months after the exclusion.

#### 4.4 Management review and Continual Improvement

4.4.1 An annual management review shall at least include:

- a. the status of actions from previous management reviews;
- b. changes in external and internal issues that are relevant to the *group certification organization's* management system;
- c. the status of conformity with the sustainable forest management standard, that includes reviewing the results of the internal monitoring program the internal audit and the *certification body's* evaluations and surveillance;
- d. information on the *group certification organization's* performance,

including trends in:

- i. nonconformities and corrective actions;
  - ii. monitoring and measurement results;
  - iii. audit results;
- e. opportunities for continual improvement.

4.4.2 The outputs of the management review shall include decisions related to continual improvement opportunities and any need for changes to the *group certification organization's* management system.

4.4.3 The *group certification organization* shall retain documented information as evidence of the results of management reviews.

## Appendix 3: *SFI* Certificate Requirements (Informative)

1. Certificate Statement: The X company operations or facility has been independently certified by Y, a *certification body* accredited to perform SFI audits that conform to the *SFI 2022 XXXXX Standard/Module*.
  
2. Certificate Meaning: The certificate holder has been independently certified by an certification body accredited to perform audits to the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard, the SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard, the SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard or the SFI 2022 Certified Sourcing Standard, the SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* or the *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families* and has received a license from the *SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing* authorizing use of the *SFI* trademark.
  
3. Certificate Content: All SFI certificates shall have the following information, at a minimum, on the certificate:
  - a. certificate number: The numbering system will have a three-letter abbreviation of the *SFI certification body's* name, followed by "SFIFM; SFIFS; SFICS, SFICOC, SFISLGCM, or SFISCFMMIPFC" followed by the certification body identifier for that organization.
  - b. scope of the certification granted including the standard;
  - c. for *SFI-Chain of-Custody* or *Certified Sourcing* certificates the certificate shall:
    - i. list whether it is an individual, multi-site or group certificate and
    - ii. the products covered by the certificate
  - d. date of issuing or renewing certificate and the expiry date. The issue date on a certificate shall not be before the date of the certification decision.
  - e. where the certificate includes an appendix to the certificate, the certificate shall include a reference to the appendix, and the appendix shall be considered as part of the certificate and be provided whenever the certificate is requested.
  - f. The SFI off-product logo trademark (see below) must be placed on the certificate.
  
  - g. The symbol of the accreditation body (ANAB or SCC) for the certification body conducting the certification must be placed on the certificate.





# **SECTION 11**

## **COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC REPORTING**

**October 7, 2021**

1. Preparing and Submitting a Public Report — SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard \_\_ 207
2. Preparing and Submitting a Public Report — SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard \_\_\_\_\_ 209

## 1. Preparing and Submitting a Public Report — *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*

A *Certified Organization* shall provide a summary audit report (one copy must be in English) to *SFI Inc.* after the successful completion of certification, recertification, or surveillance audit to the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*. The summary audit report will be posted on the [SFI Inc. website](#) for public review.

1.1 The *certification body* shall prepare the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* summary audit report, which shall include, at a minimum:

- a. a description of the audit process, *objectives* and scope;  
This shall include:
  - the specific SFI objectives that were within the scope of the audit;
  - a description of the sampling approach (consistent with IAF MD-1 and, where appropriate, adopting a risk-based approach) outlining the strata, location and number of sites sampled and the percentage of sites sampled within each stratum;
  - the sampling size, including the number of roads, harvesting blocks and silviculture sites physically inspected during the audit.
- b. a description of substitute *indicators*, if any, used in the audit and a rationale for each;
- c. the name of *Certified Organization* that was audited, including its SFI representative;
- d. a general description of the *Certified Organization's* forest land included in the audits;

This shall include:

- a general description of the management plan outlining forest management policies and objectives;
- an outline of the area of ownership (including the number of acres/hectares under management and provide a description of key ecological features);
- a general description of major timber types with a general characterization of management approaches used (natural regeneration vs. planting, thinning regimes, even-aged vs. uneven-aged silvicultural);
- The long-term harvest level and the participant's conformance to this.

**Guidance to Certification Bodies per Section 7 – Long-term Sustainable Harvest Levels – Temporal Scale:**

It is *SFI's* expectation that certification bodies shall audit sustainable harvest levels based on the criteria specified in Performance Measure 1.1, taking into account the maintenance of *landscape level biodiversity*, and confirming that any increases in planned harvest level(s) are consistent with the *SFI Certified Organization's* forest management plan. Additionally, sustainable harvest levels or government regulated allowable annual harvest should not be exceeded for extended periods of time unless a substantive ecological rationale is developed to justify the elevation, examples of which could include a response to forest health emergencies such as beetle epidemics or sanitation logging of forests impacted by catastrophic wildfire, ice storm or wind damage. In instances where harvest levels are exceeded for extended periods, a documented plan must be in place to demonstrate how harvest planning will achieve a return to the long-term sustainable harvest levels over one rotation.

- e. a description of the audit team. This shall include the names and professional qualifications of the lead auditor, all *audit team* members and any *technical experts* who participated in the audit. This may include the names and affiliations of any audit observers and an explanation of their roles;
- f. the dates the audit was conducted and completed. This shall include the number of auditor days spent to conduct the audit, broken down by auditor time spent off and on-site. This shall include the specific woods operations visited if there is more than one operation/region associated with the certificate, and;
- g. a summary of the findings, including general descriptions of evidence of conformity and any nonconformities (reported at the Performance Measure level) and corrective action plans to address them, opportunities for improvement, and exceptional practices.  
  
This shall include:
  - a description of the evidence examined for each SFI objective within the scope of the audit.
  - an update on the status of previous non-conformities, if any.
- h. the certification recommendation.



## 2. Preparing and Submitting a Public Report — *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*

A *Certified Organization* shall provide a summary audit report (one copy must be in English) to *SFI Inc.* after the successful completion of certification, recertification, or surveillance audit to the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*. The summary audit report will be posted on the [SFI Inc. website](#) for public review.

2.1 The *certification body* shall prepare the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* summary audit report, which shall include, at a minimum:

- a. a description of the audit process, *objectives* and scope;

This shall include:

- the specific SFI objectives that were within the scope of the audit
- a description of the sampling approach (consistent with IAF MD-1 and, where appropriate, adopting a risk-based approach) outlining the strata, location and number of sites sampled and the percentage of sites sampled within each stratum;
- the sampling size, including the number of roads, harvesting blocks and silviculture sites physically inspected during the audit.

- b. a description of substitute *indicators*, if any, used in the audit and a rationale for each;
- c. the name of *Certified Organization* that was audited, including its SFI representative;
- d. a general description of the *Certified Organization's fiber sourcing* and manufacturing operations included in the audit.

This shall include:

- an outline of the manufacturing operations within the scope of the certificate (including the types of mills and their relative reliance of procurement for their fiber needs);
- a general description of the *fiber sourcing* program, specifically indicating whether or not the organization has a *purchased stumpage* program;
- a general description of the *verifiable monitoring system* in place and
- an outline of the area from which fiber is procured.

- e. a summary of the *Certified Organization's* assessment for *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Values* within its *wood and fiber supply area*.
- f. a description of the *audit team*. This shall include the names and professional qualifications of the lead auditor, all *audit team* members and any *technical experts* who participated in the audit. This may include the names and affiliations of any audit observers and an explanation of their role.

- g. the dates the audit was conducted and completed. This shall include the number of auditor days spent to conduct the audit, broken down by auditor time spent off and on-site. This shall include identification of the Organization's manufacturing units (if any) that are supplied from the sites inspected.
- h. a summary of the findings, including general descriptions of evidence of conformity and any nonconformities (reported at the Performance Measure level) and corrective action plans to address them, opportunities for improvement, and exceptional practices.

This shall include:

- a description of the evidence examined for each SFI objective within the scope of the audit.
  - an update on the status of previous non-conformities, if any.
- i. the certification recommendation.



# **SECTION 12 PUBLIC INQUIRIES AND OFFICIAL COMPLAINTS**

**October 7, 2021**

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## Introduction

A process that openly investigates concerns and official complaints is an important component of any legitimate certification *program*. The transparency requirements of the *SFI 2022 Standards* and supporting documents allow individuals and organizations to bring forward questions and concerns using two different processes as outlined in this section.

The “Public Inquiries Regarding Inconsistent Practices” (number 1 below) shall be used for general inquiries from the public and to promptly review and apply corrective actions, if warranted, in situations where isolated deficiencies in implementing the requirements of the *SFI 2022 Forest Management, SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing, SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody, or SFI 2022 Certified Sourcing Standards* may have occurred.

Inquiries that involve multiple or systemic instances of alleged nonconformity that challenge the validity of a certification shall be addressed using the process outlined in “Official Complaints Questioning the Validity of a Certification” (number 2 below).

In instances where there is disagreement on the process to be applied, *SFI Inc.* shall serve as the higher authority in determining which process is most appropriate.

### **1. Public Inquiries regarding Inconsistent Practices against the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* or *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard***

Any individual or organization (the complainant) with information or claims about a *Certified Organization's* individual *practices* that may be in nonconformity may seek to have those claims investigated.

The complainant shall present specific claim(s) of inconsistent *practice* in writing and in sufficient detail to the *Certified Organization*. Within 45 days of receipt of the claim of inconsistent *practice*, the *Certified Organization* shall respond to the complainant and forward a copy of the claim of inconsistent practice and its response to their *certification body* for review at the next audit.

The *certification body* shall investigate the validity of the inconsistent practice report and the *Certified Organization's* response and resolution of the claim at the time of the next scheduled audit. Once the certification body has completed its investigation of the inconsistent practice report it shall communicate its findings to the complainant and the certified organization.

In the event litigation is involved between the complainant and *Certified Organization*, the inconsistent *practices* process shall be suspended pending resolution of the litigation. It shall be re-started following resolution of the litigation if *SFI* nonconformity issues remain.

## **2. Official Complaints Questioning the Validity of a Certification to *SFI* Sections 2, 3, 4, and 5**

The official complaint process is an important component of any legitimate certification *program*, including *SFI*. The official complaint process allows individuals or organizations to have their complaint regarding the validity of a certification openly and independently investigated. A complaint does not challenge the credibility or the content of the *SFI 2022 Standards*, rather it challenges the audit findings and the decision to grant the certification, or events that have happened since the last audit that questions the maintenance of the certification.

### **2.1 Official Complaint Process**

- 2.1.1** The complainant communicates their concerns and in sufficient detail to the *to the Certified Organization and the Certified Organization's certification body*.
- 2.1.2** For complaints regarding a *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard Certified Organization*, the *Certified Organization* and the *certification body* shall acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 10 working days. The *certification body* may request additional specifics associated with the concerns and will investigate the issue in accordance with their official complaint procedures that were approved by their accreditation body.
- 2.1.3** If the *certification body* finds a sound basis for the official complaint then it shall require the *Certified Organization* to take corrective action to address the complaint and advise the complainant accordingly.
- 2.1.4** If the *certification body* does not find a sound basis for the complaint and determines the certification was appropriately granted and *Certified Organization's* performance has not changed since the certification, it would inform the complainant of this.
- 2.1.5** If the findings of the *certification body* do not satisfy the complainant they can bring their complaint to the accreditation body that accredited the *certification body* for investigation ([ANSI National Accreditation Body](#) or the [Standards Council of Canada](#)). The accreditation body would then conduct its own investigation into the complaint as the highest authority.
- 2.1.6** In the event litigation is involved between the complainant and the *Certified Organization*, the complaint process shall be suspended pending resolution of the litigation. It shall be re-started following resolution of the litigation if *SFI* nonconformity issues remain.

### 3. Challenges or Complaints regarding *SFI* On-Product Label Use (Section 6)

Any party with information or claims about the *practices* of a *Certified Organization*, or questions about the validity of a *Certified Organization's* label use in accordance with the requirements of *SFI* Section 6 — Rules for Use of the *SFI On-Product Labels and Off-Product Marks* may seek to have those claims investigated by contacting the *SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing*. Complaints will be addressed by the *SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing* within 45 days.

Upon reviewing the information, the *SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing* may:

- a. seek more information from the complainant or the *Certified Organization* before making a final determination; or
- b. find that the complaint is without merit and no further action is required; or
- c. find that corrective actions are necessary; or
- d. if the *Certified Organization* fails to take appropriate corrective measures or if no action would be sufficient to remedy the situation, suspend the label license.



## **Optional Modules (Section 13)**

**October 7, 2021**

*SFI Inc.* has developed a process for SFI to address emerging issues and new opportunities through modules. These include opportunities around small land certification, Indigenous land certification, community land certification, urban forestry certification, as well as modules for species at risk. Optional modules are developed by *SFI Inc.* and approved by the *SFI Inc.* Board of Directors. These modules will provide implementation assistance using case studies or optional certification requirements to address specific issues of benefit to SFI. Any modules developed prior to the next standard review process will be added in this section.

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# SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module

## PREAMBLE

The Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) and American Forest Foundation (AFF) collaboratively developed a small lands module that is based on the foundation of the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* and incorporates the AFF Standards of Sustainability for Forest Management under the American Tree Farm System ("AFF Standards"). Lands certified through this module in the United States will be certified under the American Tree Farm System (ATFS) with resultant "certified forest content" under the *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard*. Lands certified in Canada to the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* will be "SFI certified" and the resultant fiber also "certified forest content" under the *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard*.

Due to the interdependence of the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*, AFF 2021 Standards, and this *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module*, revision to any of these standards will trigger a collaborative review and potential revision to the module as needed to ensure consistency and continual improvement.

## 1. GENERAL

### 1.1 Scope

This module applies to *Certified Organizations* certified to the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*.

#### 1.1.1 Maximum size of ownership eligible for certification under this Module

A non-industrial, small forest ownership, under the scope of this *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module*, shall have no more than 20,000 acres or 8,000 hectares in aggregate across their entire ownership, regardless of whether it is managed by the *landowner* or a *landowner agent*. Those *landowners* with more than 20,000 acres or 8,000 hectares in aggregate across their entire ownership shall be certified to the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*. If the small forest or woodlot owner meets eligibility requirements, individual parcels of land that fall within the *wood and fiber supply area* are eligible for inclusion in the *certified area*.

#### 1.1.2 What the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* Does

The *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* offers certification to a group of small family forest lands, under one certificate, that is managed by a *Certified Organization* that is certified to the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*. The *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* allows *landowners* to sell and *Certified Organization* to procure fiber as certified forest content. Lands certified to this module in the United States are certified to ATFS via the AFF Standards. Lands certified to this module in Canada are *SFI certified*.

### **1.1.3 What the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* Covers**

The *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* covers:

- requirements of the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* that include measures to broaden the practice of conservation of biodiversity, use of forestry best management practices to protect water quality, provide outreach to *landowners*, and utilize the services of forest management and harvesting professionals and
- forest management requirements consistent with the 2021-2026 AFF Standards to promote the health and sustainability of America's family forests. These Standards are designed as a tool to help woodland owners be effective stewards of the land as they adaptively manage renewable resources; promote environmental, economic, and social benefits; and work to increase public understanding of sustainable forestry.
- additional requirements relating to the management of the *Group Certification Organization*<sup>39</sup> and additional requirements for sustainable forest management.

### **1.1.4 Geographic Application of the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module***

The *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* applies to organizations (the *Certified Organization*, *landowners* and others involved in the fiber supply chain) in the United States and Canada.

### **1.1.5 Timing of Applicability**

The *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* is dependent on the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* and the AFF 2021-2026 Standards of Sustainability as its foundation. Revision to either of these standards will trigger a collaborative review and potential revision to the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* to ensure consistency and continual improvement. If the module is not reviewed and approved by both the SFI Board of Directors and AFF Board of Trustees, it will expire with the earliest expiry of either the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* or AFF's 2021-2026 Standards. If either SFI or AFF wish to make changes to the module, both organizations must agree and will work to make changes through a collaborative process.

## **1.2 References**

This *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* incorporates, by dated or undated reference, provisions from other publications. These normative and informative references are cited at the appropriate places in the text and the publications are listed hereafter. For dated and undated references, the latest edition of the application applies.

### **1.2.1 Normative references**

- i. ISO/IEC 17021 — Conformity Assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems,

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<sup>39</sup> The requirements for the management of the Group Certification Organization are based on Appendix 2 of Section 10 of the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules* and are consistent with AFF's Independently Managed Group requirements

- ii. ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004 — Standardization and Related Activities – General Vocabulary
- iii. IAF MD 1:2007 - Certification of Multiple Sites Based on Sampling
- iv. *SFI 2022* Standards and Rules:
  - Section 3 — *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*
  - Section 8 — *SFI Policies*
  - Section 10 — *SFI 2022 Audit Procedures and Auditor Qualification and Accreditation*
  - Section 11 — Communication and Public Reporting
  - Section 13 — Optional Modules
  - Section 14 — *SFI Definitions*
- v. Interpretations for the Requirements for the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules*

For the purposes of this Module, the relevant definitions given in ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004 apply together with the definitions in the *SFI Definitions* (Section 14).

### 1.2.2 Informative References

- i. 2021-2026 — American Forest Foundation Standards of Sustainability for the American Tree Farm System
- ii. 2021-2026 American Forest Foundation Standards of Sustainability for the American Tree Farm System Guidance
- iii. 2021-2026 American Tree Farm System (ATFS) Independently Managed Group (IMG) Standards
- iv. American Tree Farm System (ATFS) Eligibility Requirements
- v. PEFC ST 1002:2018 — Group Forest Management Certification
- vi. PEFC ST 1003:2018 — Sustainable Forest Management – Requirements
- vii. Section 7 — Guidance to *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules*
- viii. Section 9 — *SFI Standards Development and Interpretations Process*
- ix. Section 12 — Public Inquiries and Official Complaints

### 1.3 Definitions

For the purposes of this module, the relevant definitions given in ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004 apply together with the definitions in the *SFI Definitions* (Section 14) together with the following definitions.

- **certified area**

The forest area covered by a *group forest certificate* representing the sum of forest areas owned by *landowners* that are *Group Members*. Lands certified to this module in

the United States are certified to the American Tree Farm System (ATFS). Lands certified to this module in Canada are *SFI* certified.

- **group certification organization**

A specific type of multi-site organization where forest owners, forest owners' organizations, forest managers, forest products manufacturers or forest products distributors without a pre-existing legal or contractual link can form a group for the purposes of achieving certification and gaining eligibility for a sampling approach to certification audits against this module (Appendix 1 to Section 10).

- **group forest certificate**

A document confirming that the *group certification organization* complies with the requirements for certification to this module.

- **group manager**

An organization with overall responsibility for ensuring the conformity of forest management in the *certified area* of the *Group Certification Organization* to the certification requirements in this module.

The *Group Manager* must be a *Certified Organization, certified to the SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*, with a fiber sourcing program that acquires roundwood and/or field-manufactured residual chips.

- **group member**

*Landowners* who own land to be certified by the group forest certification or *landowner agents* covered by the *group forest certificate* who have the legal authority to implement the certification requirements within the *wood and fiber supply area*.

- **landowner**

Non-industrial entity or individual that holds title to the property.

- **landowner agent**

A *qualified resource professional, a qualified logging professional, a certified logging company, wood producer* or other individual or organization that has the legal authority to manage forestland and implement the certification requirements on certified lands at the direction of *landowner* members within the *wood and fiber supply area*.

## **2. SFI SMALL LANDS GROUP CERTIFICATION MODULE PRINCIPLES**

*SFI Certified Organizations* believe that non-industrial forest *landowners* have an important stewardship responsibility and a commitment to society, and they recognize the importance of maintaining viable commercial, family forest and conservation forest land bases.

*SFI Certified Organizations* are aware that family forest ownership is made up of large numbers of small forest holdings. The limited revenues from forest management operations on the small properties of these *landowners*; periodicity of their management activities and

revenues; as well as a limited financial ability to demonstrate their conformity with forest management certification system requirements, represent significant barriers to forest certification.

*SFI-certified organizations* shall have a written policy (or policies) to implement and achieve the principles defined in *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* together with the following principles in this module:

## **2.1 Voluntary Participation**

The *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* is based on a respect for property rights and on the voluntary commitment and participation of both *landowners* and *landowner agents*. Participation in the *Group Certification Organization* shall not require or bind *landowners* to harvest and sell timber or to supply the *Certified Organization*; participation also shall not prohibit *landowners* from participating in another *Group Certification Organization* outside ATFS or supplying another customer. Any supply commitments shall be stated in separately negotiated contracts between *landowners* and customers, and not as part of the written agreement(s) required by the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module*. SFI and *Certified Organizations* are committed to compliance with the competition laws of the United States and Canada, and the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* shall not be construed to conflict with those laws.

## **2.2 Shared Responsibility**

The *Certified Organization*, as the *Group Manager* and the *Group Member* have shared responsibility for and commitment to sustainable forestry practices on the land they own, manage or from which they procure raw material.

## **2.3 Efficiency**

The *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* uses a *wood and fiber supply area* ("supply area") approach to achieving sustainable forest management (e.g., planning or monitoring of forest resources) where the supply area approach is more suitable and efficient due to the limited size and resources of individual *landowners*. The results of the *wood and fiber supply area* approach must be consistent with and inclusive of the forest management practices implemented by individual *landowners* and/or resource/logging professionals. Lands certified to this module in the United States are certified to ATFS. Lands certified to this module in Canada are SFI certified.

## **3. REQUIREMENTS FOR MANAGEMENT OF THE GROUP**

### **3.1 Responsibilities of the *Group Manager*<sup>40</sup>:**

- 3.1.1** To ensure a commitment on behalf of the whole *Group Certification Organization* to establish and maintain practices and procedures in accordance with the requirements of this *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module*.
- 3.1.2** To represent the whole *Group Certification Organization* in the certification process, including communications and relationships with the certification body, submission

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<sup>40</sup> The requirements for the management of the group are based on eligibility criteria of chapter 4.1.1-4.1.4 of Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 to Section 10. In cases where the requirements of this document differ from Appendix 1 to Section 10, the requirements of this document are definitive.

of an application for certification under this module and contractual relationship with the certification body.

- 3.1.3** To form a formal relationship with all *Group Members* based on a written agreement established directly between the *Group Manager* and each *Group Member* (every *landowner* and every *landowner agent*). The written agreement shall include<sup>41</sup>:
- The *Group Manager's* enumeration of the conditions of participation in the group and *group forest certificate*, including disclosure of *Group Members ineligibility to participate in an ATFS State program or IMG*;
  - The *Group Manager's* right and responsibility to implement and enforce any corrective or preventive measures, and to initiate the suspension of any *Group Member* from the scope of certification in the event of nonconformity with the requirements of the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module*.
  - The *Group Member's* commitment to comply with the requirements of the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module*;
  - The *Group Member's* agreement to participate and comply with the conditions of membership and forest management operations as recommended in the *wood and fiber supply area plan* (or their own conforming forest management, where applicable);
  - The *Group Member's* agreement to be included under the scope of the *Group Manager's group forest certificate*.
- 3.1.4** To establish procedures for inclusion of new *Group Members* within the *Group Certification Organization* including an internal assessment of conformity with the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module*, implementation of corrective and relevant preventive measures.
- 3.1.5** To establish procedures for expulsion of *Group Members* from the *Group Forest Certificate*, in cases of unresolved nonconformity, ownership transition or other circumstances, as appropriate, including documentation and timely reporting of decertification.
- 3.1.6** To maintain and achieve compliance with all requirements of the *SFI 2022 SFI Fiber Sourcing Standard* that outline relationship between the *Certified Organization*, *landowners*, and resource/logging professionals; and management review and continuous improvement (Objectives 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 10 and 11).
- 3.1.7** To establish written procedures for the management of the *Group Certification Organization* and clearly define and assign responsibilities for sustainable forest management and compliance with the certification requirements of this module.

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<sup>41</sup> While the written agreement is established directly between the *Group Manager* and each *Group Member*, trained *landowner agents* may facilitate and transmit written agreements between *Group Manager* and *landowner* members.

**3.1.8** To provide all *Group Members* with information and guidance needed for effective implementation and maintenance of practices and procedures in accordance with the requirements of this *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module*<sup>42</sup>.

**3.1.9** To ensure all *Group Managers* and *Landowner Agents* have been trained to implement the requirements of the module specific to AFF's Standards of Sustainability for Certification and section 4.3 Forest Management Practices. *Group Managers* and *Landowner Agents* shall attend an ATFS inspector training at least once during every Standards eligibility period. Training in accordance with 4.3 Forest Management Practices may be accomplished through *SFI* Implementation Committees or other means.

**3.1.10** To keep records on:

- A. the *Certified Organizations'* and the *Group Members'* conformity with the relevant certification requirements as spelled out by this Small Lands Module.
- B. all *Group Members*, including their contact details and, for *landowner* members, identification of their property and its/their sizes.
- C. the *certified area*.
- D. a record of operations carried out on the forest lands owned by the *Group Members* to support the internal monitoring program.
- E. the implementation of an internal monitoring program, its review and any preventive and/or corrective measures.
- F. the *wood and fiber supply area* plan as defined in 4.1, and the individualized goals and strategies for *landowners*, and/or the individual landowner management plan as defined in 4.2, as applicable.
- G. In the US, *Group Managers* share records of items A, B, C and E at least annually with AFF for documentation in the ATFS database to enable verification of the certified status of the *certified area*. In Canada, *Group Managers* share records of items A, B, C and E at least annually with *SFI*.

**3.1.11** To maintain an annual internal audit or monitoring program sufficient to ensure conformance with the requirements of the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module*<sup>43</sup> by the organization and individual *Group Members*. The *Group Certification Organization* must implement an annual monitoring protocol in accordance with the following:

- i. The sample size should be calculated based on the number of Group Members.

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<sup>42</sup> The *Group Manager* should within the framework of Objective 3 (Use of Qualified Resource Professionals, Qualified Logging Professional and Certified Logging Companies), Objective 6 (Training and Education) and Objective 7 (Community Involvement and Landowner Outreach) of the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* provide *Group Members* with information and guidance on the requirements of the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* that are relevant to them and management operations on their land.

<sup>43</sup> The internal audit/monitoring program should accommodate various verification and monitoring mechanisms required by the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*.

ii. The size of the sample should generally be the square root of the number of Group Members, rounded up to the upper whole number.

iii. Twenty-five percent of the sample should be selected at random.

iv. The size of the sample may be adapted up or down by a standard taking into account the following:

- results of a risk assessment
- results of internal monitoring or independent audits
- quality/level of confidence of internal annual monitoring
- use of technologies allowing gathering of information for specific requirements
- based on other means of gathering information about activities on the ground

**3.1.12** To operate a review of the conformity of *Group Members* based on results of internal audit and/or monitoring data sufficient to assess performance of the *Group Certification Organization* as a whole rather than at the individual *Group Member's* level<sup>44</sup>.

**3.1.13** To establish corrective and preventive measures if required and evaluate the effectiveness of corrective actions taken.

**3.1.14** To communicate to the relevant *Certification Body* those *Group Members* with serious and continuing non-conformities that have not been resolved and that resulted in the *Group Member's* expulsion from the *group certification organization* based on the results of internal audits and/or the monitoring program.

**3.1.15** To consider within its internal audit/monitoring program information from the *Group Member* on continuing non-conformities that have been found if the *Group Member* is part of another *group certification organization*.

**3.1.16** For landowners in the United States, to maintain and update the members of the group organization and report to AFF or update the ATFS database to reflect entries and departures of *Group Members* from the *Group Organization*.

## **3.2 Responsibilities of the *Group Members*:**

**3.2.1** To commit through a written agreement with the *Group Manager* to implement and maintain the relevant requirements<sup>45</sup> of the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module*;

**3.2.2** To respond effectively to all requests from the *Group Manager* or a certification body for relevant data, documentation or other information whether in connection

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<sup>44</sup> The review of the conformity and the corrective and preventive measures should be performed within the framework of Objective 10 of the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* (Management Review and Continuous Improvement).

<sup>45</sup> The *Group Manager* should within the framework of Objective 3 (Use of Qualified Resource Professionals, Qualified Logging Professional and Certified Logging Companies), Objective 6 (Training and Education) and Objective 7 (Community Involvement and Landowner Outreach) of the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* provide *Group Members* with a specific list and guidance on the requirements of the *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module* that are relevant to them and management operations on their land.



with formal audits or reviews or other requirements;

- 3.2.3** To provide full co-operation and assistance in respect of the satisfactory completion of audits, reviews, monitoring, relevant routine inquiries or corrective actions;
- 3.2.4** To implement relevant corrective and preventive actions required by the *Group Manager*, and
- 3.2.5** To inform the *Group Manager* of any continuing non-conformities if the *Group Member* is part of another *group certification organization*.

#### **4. REQUIREMENTS FOR SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT**

The *Group Manager* shall ensure compliance of the *Group Certification Organization* with the requirements outlined in *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*<sup>46</sup> and the following additional requirements outlined in 4.1 the *Wood and Fiber Supply Area Plan* and 4.3 Forest Management Practices on *Certified Area*.

##### **4.1 Wood and Fiber Supply Area Plan**

The *Group Manager* shall develop and update a *wood and fiber supply area plan* that adequately covers the fiber procurement area by the *Group Certification Organization*. The plan shall:

- 4.1.1** Be based on a long-term resource analysis including periodic or ongoing forest inventory, mapping and monitoring of forest resources; and include or be based on analysis of social, environmental and economic impacts of forest operations on forest resources;
- 4.1.2** Promote the maintenance and enhancement of the quantity of forest resources. Promote afforestation of agricultural and treeless land into forests. Identify risks of conversion of forests to non-forest uses and measures to mitigate this risk.
- 4.1.3** Be consistent with applicable legislation and land-use plans;
- 4.1.4** Include a description of forest resources, their different uses and functions, and objectives for their management;
- 4.1.5** Include analysis and determination of long-term sustainable harvest levels by monitoring *growth and drain* trends across the *wood and fiber supply area*. The monitoring system shall identify trends and develop forest management activities, on the *certified area*, to promote sustainable harvesting levels on the *wood and fiber supply area*.
- 4.1.6** Include a review of non-timber activities and opportunities (e.g., conservation of soil, air and water quality, carbon, biological diversity, wildlife and aquatic habitats, recreation and aesthetics); and sustainable management and use of those non-timber forest products that are affected by forest management practices;
- 4.1.7** Review results of monitoring of harmful agents, such as environmentally or

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<sup>46</sup> This list and guidance also includes Interpretations for the Requirements for the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules* relevant to the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* or to the additional requirements.

economically undesirable wildfire, pests, diseases, invasive exotic plants and animals and list or provide information on measures to protect forests from those agents to maintain and improve long-term forest health, productivity and economic viability;

- 4.1.8** Include identification and mapping of sensitive sites and areas with high biodiversity values on the *certified area* and the *wood and fiber supply area*;
- 4.1.9** Include identification and mapping of areas with specific water and soil protection functions, including steps to ensure their protection, maintenance and enhancement of their protective functions;
- 4.1.10** Include description of appropriate silviculture and regeneration methods to achieve forest management objectives identified in 4.1 and 4.3;
- 4.1.11** Be made available to the relevant *landowners* and/or *landowner agents* and provide the basis for the *Certified Organization's* verification, internal audit or monitoring program<sup>47</sup>;
- 4.1.12** Be made publicly available, except confidential business and personal information and other information made confidential by legislation or for the protection of cultural sites or sensitive natural resources; and
- 4.1.13** Identify *landowner* goals and strategies and silviculture for achieving those goals to be applied to each individual *landowner* appropriate to the size, scale and intensity of small lands certified via the module.

## **4.2. Group Member's Management Plan**

*In the event that a landowner, or landowner agent, opts to have and implement a written forest management plan for an individual group member, it shall be consistent with the size of the ownership and the scale and intensity of the forest activities.*

- 4.2.1** Management plan shall be active, adaptive and embody the *landowner's* current objectives, remain appropriate for the land certified and reflect the current state of knowledge about natural resources and sustainable forest management.
- 4.2.2** Management plan shall:
  - a. Describe current forest conditions, *landowner's* objectives, management activities aimed at achieving *landowner's* objectives, document a feasible strategy for activity implementation and include a map accurately depicting significant forest-related resources.
  - b. Demonstrate consideration of the following resource elements: forest health, soil, water, wood and fiber production, threatened or endangered species, special sites, invasive species and Forests of Recognized Importance<sup>48</sup> (in the United States) or *Forests with Exceptional*

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<sup>47</sup> The Objective 3 (Use of Qualified Resource Professionals, Qualified Logging Professional and Certified Logging Companies), Objective 6 (Training and Education) and Objective 7 (Community Involvement and Landowner Outreach) of the *SFI 2022Fiber Sourcing Standard* provides a framework for communicating the content of the forest management plan or its relevant parts to *landowners*, resource and logging professionals and for its on-the-ground implementation.

<sup>48</sup> Globally, regionally and nationally significant large forest landscape areas of exceptional ecological, social, cultural or biological values. These forests are evaluated at the landscape level, rather than the stand level, and are recognized for a combination of unique values, rather than a single attribute.

*Conservation Value* (in Canada). Where present and relevant to the property, the plan shall describe management activities related to these resource elements.

- c. Where present, relevant to the property and consistent with *landowner's* objectives, the plan preparer should consider, describe and evaluate the following resource elements: fire, wetlands, desired species, recreation, forest aesthetics, biomass and carbon.

**4.2.3** The *Landowner* or *landowner agent* should monitor for changes that could interfere with the management objectives as stated in management plan. When problems are found, reasonable actions are taken.

### **4.3 Forest Management Practices on *Certified Area***

The *Group Manager* shall ensure through a *verifiable monitoring system* that:

**4.3.1** *Landowner* shall comply with all relevant federal, state, provincial, county, and municipal laws, regulations and ordinances governing forest management activities.

4.3.1.1 *Landowner* shall comply with all relevant laws, regulations and ordinances and will correct conditions that led to adverse regulatory actions, if any.

4.3.1.2 *Landowner* should obtain advice from appropriate qualified natural resource professionals or qualified contractors who are trained in, and familiar with, relevant laws, regulations, and ordinances.

**4.3.2** Reforestation or afforestation shall be achieved by a suitable process that ensures adequate stocking levels.

4.3.2.1 Reforestation or afforestation shall achieve adequate stocking of desired species reflecting the *landowner's* objectives, within five years after regeneration harvest, or an appropriate time frame for local conditions, or within a time interval as specified by applicable regulation.

**4.3.3** *Landowner* shall meet or exceed practices prescribed by state or provincial forestry best management practices that are applicable to the property.

4.3.3.1 *Landowner* shall implement specific state or provincial forestry best management practices that are applicable to the property.

4.3.3.2 *Landowner* shall minimize road construction and other disturbances within riparian zones and wetlands.

**4.3.4** *Landowner* shall consider a range of forest management activities to control pests, pathogens, and unwanted vegetation.

4.3.4.1 *Landowner* should evaluate alternatives to pesticides for the prevention or control of pests, pathogens, and unwanted vegetation to achieve specific management objectives.

4.3.4.2 Pesticides used shall be approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in the United States or the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) of Health Canada, and applied, stored, and disposed of in accordance with EPA or PMRA approved labels and by persons appropriately trained, licensed, and supervised.

- 4.3.5** When used, prescribed fire shall conform with *landowner's* objectives and all applicable rules, laws, and regulations.
- 4.3.6** Prescribed burns shall conform with the landowner's objectives and state and local laws and regulations. Forest management activities shall protect habitats and communities occupied by threatened or endangered species as required by law.
- 4.3.6.1 *Landowner* shall confer with natural resource agencies, state or provincial natural resource heritage programs (i.e., NatureServe databases), qualified natural resource professionals or other current sources of information to determine occurrences of threatened or endangered species on the property and their habitat requirements.
- 4.3.6.2 Forest management activities shall incorporate measures to protect identified threatened or endangered species on the property.
- 4.3.7** *Landowner* should address the desired species and/or desired forest communities when conducting forest management activities, if consistent with *landowner's* objectives.
- 4.3.7.1 *Landowner* should consult available and accessible information on management of the forest for desired species and/or forest communities and integrate it into forest management.
- 4.3.8** *Landowner* should make practical efforts to promote forest health.
- 4.3.8.1 *Landowner* should make practical efforts to promote forest health, including prevention, control or response to disturbances such as wildland fire, invasive species and other pests, pathogens or unwanted vegetation, to achieve specific management objectives.
- 4.3.9** Where present, forest management activities should maintain or enhance Forests of Recognized Importance (in the United States) or *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value* (in Canada).
- 4.3.9.1 Appropriate to the scale and intensity of the situation, forest management activities should incorporate measures to contribute to the conservation of identified Forests of Recognized Importance (in the United States) or *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value* (in Canada).
- 4.3.10** *Landowner* should manage the visual impacts of forest management activities consistent with the size of the forest, the scale and intensity of forest management activities and the location of the property.
- 4.3.10.1 Forest management activities should apply visual quality measures compatible with appropriate silvicultural practices.
- 4.3.11** Forest management activities shall consider and maintain any special sites relevant on the property.
- 4.3.11.1 *Landowner* shall make a reasonable effort to locate and protect special sites appropriate for the size of the forest and the scale and intensity of forest management activities.
- 4.3.12** *Landowner* should use qualified natural resource professionals and qualified contractors when contracting for services.

- 4.3.12.1 *Landowner* should seek qualified natural resource professionals and qualified contractors.
- 4.3.12.2 *Landowner* should engage qualified contractors who carry appropriate insurance and comply with appropriate federal, state, provincial and local safety and fair labor rules, regulations, and standard practices.
- 4.3.12.3 *Landowners* should retain appropriate contracts or records for forest product harvests and other management activities to demonstrate conformance to the standards.
- 4.3.12.4 *Landowner* or designated representative shall monitor forest product harvests and other management activities to ensure they conform to their objectives. Harvest, utilization, removal, and other management activities shall be conducted in compliance with the *landowner's* objectives and to maintain the potential of the property to produce forest products and other benefits sustainably.

# SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families

## 1. GENERAL

### 1.1 Scope

The *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families* (the module) applies to individual *small-scale forest properties or forest licenses* and to groups of small-scale forests co-operating for the purposes of obtaining *sustainable forest management* certification.

The module offers the managers of small-scale public forests, including those within the jurisdiction of Indigenous governments, and owners of small-scale private forests the opportunity to participate individually or within a *group certification organization*, to benefit from the economies of scale afforded by working with a group of small-scale forest owners and managers of forest licenses.

### 1.2 Eligibility for certification under the *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families*

Any *small-scale forest property or forest license* managed or owned by Indigenous peoples, families, communities, or joint ventures where the total area in timber production does not exceed 20,000 hectares is eligible for certification to the module. The total area certified to the module may exceed 20,000 hectares when the non-timber producing areas and areas managed for *conservation* or recreation purposes are included.

*Small-scale forest properties and forest licenses* between 5,000 and 20,000 hectares must be under the management of a *qualified resource professional* or an individual that meets the legal requirements for planning and supervising forest management practices for the jurisdiction.

*Small-scale forest properties and forest license* include but are not limited to:

- Small forest properties or woodlots;
- British Columbia Woodlot Licences;
- Forestlands owned or managed by First Nations or Métis peoples, families, communities, or joint ventures (e.g., First Nations Woodland Licences — British Columbia; County Forests — Ontario); and
- Crown forest licensed to communities (e.g., Community Forest Agreement — British Columbia; Lots Intramunicipaux — Quebec; Community Forests - Nova Scotia).

Forests with more than 20,000 hectares of land managed for timber production shall certify to the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*.

Land used for purposes other than *sustainable forest management* are not within the scope of this module. Forestland converted from forest to non-forest uses shall not be certified to this *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and*

*Families*. This does not apply to forestlands used for forest management infrastructure such as forest roads, log processing areas, recreation trails or hunting.

**1.3** What the *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families* does

Private forest ownership in Canada consists of more than 450,000 forestland owners. In addition, there are many small-scale forests under the management of communities, Indigenous peoples, or the federal government on behalf of Indigenous peoples. The limited revenues from forest management operations on small-scale forests, their periodic management activities, as well as a limited financial ability to demonstrate their conformity to the requirements of a forest management certification system, may present significant barriers to certification.

The module offers a pathway to certification for individual forests or for a group of forests operating as a *group certification organization* under a single certificate. The module allows *members* to sell fiber as *certified forest content* and satisfies the requirements for the use of *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard*.

The *certified organization* as defined in this module can also provide the management structure to address the forest management requirements associated with carbon-offset protocols.

**1.4** What the *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families* covers:

- requirements of the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* applicable to small-scale managed forests that seek to enhance forest management *practices* to address the *conservation* of *biodiversity*, protection of water quality and quantity, *soil health* and productivity, reforestation, and the use of *qualified resource professionals* and *qualified logging professionals* where available;
- additional requirements for *sustainable forest management* that are applicable to small-scale managed forests; and
- requirements relating to the management of the *group certification organization* (see Part 4).

**1.5** Geographic Application of the *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families*

The module applies to individually owned forests or managed public forests and *group certification organizations* in Canada.

## **2. References**

This module incorporates, by dated or undated reference, provisions from other publications. These normative and informative references are cited at the appropriate places in the text and the publications are listed in 2.1. For dated and undated references, the latest edition of the application applies.

## 2.1 Normative references

- i. ISO/IEC 17021-1 — Conformity Assessment – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems
- ii. ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004 — Standardization and Related Activities – General Vocabulary
- iii. *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules:*
  - Section 2 — *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*
  - Section 8 — SFI Policies
  - Section 10 — SFI 2022 Audit Procedures and Auditor Qualification and Accreditation
  - Section 11 — Communication and Public Reporting
  - Section 13 — Optional Modules
  - Section 14 — SFI Definitions
- iv. Interpretations for the Requirements for the SFI 2022 Standards and Rules  
For the purposes of this module, the relevant definitions given in ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004 apply together with the definitions in the SFI Definitions (Section 14).

## 2.2 Informative References

- i. PEFC ST 1002:2018 — Group Forest Management Certification
- ii. PEFC ST 1003:2018 — Sustainable Forest Management – Requirements
- iii. Section 4 — *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard*
- iv. Section 6 — Rules for Use of *SFI On-Product Labels and Off-Product Marks*
- v. Section 7 — Guidance to SFI 2022 Standards and Rules
- vi. Section 9 — SFI Standards Development and Interpretations Process
- vii. Section 12 — Public Inquiries and Official Complaints

## 2.3 Definitions

All italicized terms in the SFI *Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families* are defined in Appendix 1.

## 3. PRINCIPLES

The principles underlying this module are based on a belief that small-scale forest landowners and land managers have an important stewardship responsibility and commitment to society, and that they recognize the importance of managing forests for *conservation* and traditional values, in addition to commercial benefits. Landowners, managers and *members of group certification organizations* understand the need to keep forestland as forest and protected from conversion to non-forest use.



Individual forest landowners, land managers and *group certification organizations* certified to the module shall have written procedures to implement and achieve the requirements included in the module, that are consistent with and advance the following principles:

1. *Sustainable Forestry*

To practice *sustainable forestry* means meeting the needs of the present while promoting the ability of future generations to meet their own needs by practicing a land stewardship ethic that integrates *reforestation* and the managing, growing, nurturing and harvesting of trees for useful products, and for the provision of *ecosystem services* such as the *conservation* of soil, air and water quality and quantity, *climate change adaptation and mitigation*, *biological diversity*, *wildlife* and *aquatic habitats*, recreation and aesthetics.

2. *Forest Productivity and Health*

To provide for regeneration after harvest, maintain the health and productive capacity of the forest land base, and to *protect* and maintain *long-term* soil health and *productivity*. In addition, to *protect* forests from economically, environmentally or socially undesirable impacts of wildfire, pests, diseases, *invasive species* and other damaging agents and thus maintain and improve *long-term forest health* and *productivity*.

3. *Protection of Water Resources*

To *protect* and maintain the water quality and quantity of water bodies and *riparian areas*, and to conform with forestry *best management practices* to *protect* water quality, to meet the needs of both human communities and ecological systems.

4. *Protection of Biological Diversity*

To manage forests in ways that *protect* and promote *biological diversity*, including animal and plant species, *wildlife habitats*, *ecologically and culturally important* species, threatened and endangered species (i.e., *Forest with Exceptional Conservation Values*) and native *forest cover types* at multiple scales.

5. *Aesthetics and Recreation*

To manage the visual impacts of forest operations, and to provide recreational opportunities for the public.

6. *Protection of Special Sites*

To manage lands that are geologically or *culturally important* in a manner that takes into account their unique qualities.

7. *Legal Compliance*

To comply with applicable federal, provincial, state, and local *forestry* and related environmental laws, statutes, and regulations.

8. *Research*

To support advances in sustainable forest management through research, science, and technology.

9. *Training and Education*

To improve the practice of *sustainable forestry* through training and education *programs*.

10. Community Involvement and Social Responsibility, and Respect for Indigenous Rights  
To broaden the practice of *sustainable forestry* on all lands through community involvement, socially responsible practices, and through recognition and respect of *Indigenous Peoples'* rights and *traditional forest-related knowledge*.

11. Transparency

To broaden the understanding of forest certification to the *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families*. by documenting certification audits and making the findings publicly available.

12. Continual Improvement

To continually improve the practice of forest management, and to monitor, measure and report performance in achieving the commitment to *sustainable forestry*.

13. Responsible *Fiber Sourcing*

To use and promote sustainable forestry across a diversity of ownership and management types in the United States and Canada that is both scientifically credible and socially, environmentally, and economically responsible and to avoid sourcing from *controversial sources* both domestically and internationally.

#### **4. REQUIREMENTS FOR MANAGEMENT OF A *GROUP CERTIFICATION ORGANIZATION***

The requirements of Part 4 apply only to the manager and members of a *group certification organization*. Part 4 does not apply to individual *land managers* or landowners.

##### 4.1 Responsibilities of the *group certification organization* manager<sup>49</sup>:

- 4.1.1 Provide a commitment<sup>50</sup> on behalf of the *group certification organization* to establish and maintain *practices* and procedures in accordance with the requirements of this module.
- 4.1.2 Represent the *group certification organization* in the certification process, including communications and relationships with the *certification body*, submission of an application for a certification audit and the contractual relationship with the *certification body*.
- 4.1.3 Establish a formal relationship with each *member* based on a written agreement that shall include the *member's* commitment to participate in the *group certification organization* and comply with the conditions of membership, the requirements of the module and have their lands or tenures included in the *forest certificate*. The written agreement shall:
  - i. cover general information on the size and location of the area covered by the forest certificate and the management goals,

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<sup>49</sup> The requirements for the management of the group are based on eligibility criteria in Appendix 3 of this Module.

<sup>50</sup> The requirement for *member* commitment is consistent with a requirement for a policy (or policies) to maintain and achieve principles of the *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples, Families and Communities* and the principles of the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*.

- ii. give the manager access to the *member's* forest management plan, and
  - iii. give the manager the authority to identify and require any corrective or preventive measures and to initiate the suspension of any *member* from the *forest certificate* in the event of continuing nonconformity with the requirements of the module.
- 4.1.4 Establish procedures for inclusion of new *members* within the *group certification organization* including an internal assessment of conformity with the module as well as identification and implementation of corrective and preventive measures. The procedures will include receiving and reviewing applications from potential *members*, management plans and a field inspection of the managed forest to identify conditions that may require corrective action.
- 4.1.5 Maintain and achieve conformance with all requirements of the module.
- 4.1.6 Establish written procedures for the management of the *group certification organization* and clearly define and assign responsibilities for *sustainable forest management* and conformance with the requirements for certification to the module.
- 4.1.7 Provide all *members* with information and guidance needed for effective implementation and maintenance of *practices* and procedures in accordance with the requirements of this module. This includes:
- i. information sessions on various aspects of *sustainable forest management* including *best management practices* and *practices for protection of wildlife and soil health*.
  - ii. information on *threatened and endangered species*, as well as species at risk, found in the region including their habitat and requirements for protection.
  - iii. information on provincial and local regulations applicable to forest management.
- 4.1.8 Keep records on:
- i. all *members*, including their contact details, identification of their tenure or property and the *certified area*;
  - ii. the total area covered by the group *forest certificate*;
  - iii. *commercial harvesting operations* carried out on the forests owned/managed by the group *members*;
  - iv. the internal monitoring program and audits;
  - v. the *members'* conformity with the certification requirements of the module and
  - vi. forest management Objectives as defined in Part 5.
- 4.1.9 Maintain an annual monitoring program sufficient to ensure conformance with the requirements of the module by the *group certification organization* and individual *members*. The monitoring program shall be based on *members'* reports of *commercial harvesting operations* and a sampling of *members'* properties provided:

- i. it is based on an appropriate risk management methodology considering:
    - a. the scale and type of *members'* activities (*commercial harvesting operations, road/trail construction, pesticide use, reforestation, silviculture*);
    - b. geographic distribution of *members* within the area covered by the *group certification organization*;
    - c. categories of forestland ownership or tenure and size; and,
    - d. previous non-conformities;
  - ii. the number of sites sampled equals at least the square root of the total number of participating *members* who have reported management activities in accordance with Part 5 during the interval between the annual monitoring programs.
- 4.1.10 Establish and maintain a system to monitor the conformity of *members* based on results of the monitoring data sufficient to assess performance of the *group certification organization*. This shall include a system for collecting, reviewing, and reporting information to the manager regarding progress in achieving conformity with the module.
- 4.1.11 Establish corrective and preventive measures as required and evaluate the effectiveness of corrective actions taken by *members* of the *group certification organization*.
- 4.1.12 Based on the results of the monitoring program, communicate to the relevant *certification body* those *members* with serious and continuing non-conformities that have not been resolved and that resulted in the *member's* removal from the *group certification organization*.
- 4.1.13 Prepare an annual summary report detailing:
- i. evaluation of achievement of the forest management Objectives as defined in Part 5;
  - ii. the *members* in the *group certification organization*;
  - iii. the total *certified area*;
  - iv. the area covered by forest management activities;
  - v. the types of forest management activities used by *members* (*commercial harvesting operations, road/trail construction and maintenance, reforestation silviculture*);
  - vi. a list of known *special sites*;
  - vii. the volumes of products harvested; and
  - viii. the progress of conformance with the module including the implementation of an internal monitoring program and measures to address preventative and/or corrective actions.

4.1.14 Establish a *program(s)* to:

- i. support and promote mechanisms for public outreach, including other forest owners and managers and
- ii. engage at the local or provincial level on issues related to *sustainable forest management*.

4.1.15 Establish a *program* to respond annually to the SFI annual progress report surveys.

4.2 Responsibilities of the *member*:

- 4.2.1 To commit, through a written agreement with the *group certification organization* manager, to implement and maintain the relevant requirements of the module as listed in Part 5.
- 4.2.2 To present a forest management plan that is appropriate to the size of the forest property or tenure, the *member's* management goals, the scale and intensity of management as determined by a *qualified resource professional* or other qualified individual.
- 4.2.3 To respond effectively to all requests from the manager or a *certification body* for relevant data, documentation, or other information whether in connection with third-party audits, internal monitoring, annual reports on forest management operations, reviews, or other requirements.
- 4.2.4 To implement relevant corrective and preventive actions required by the manager.

## **5. REQUIREMENTS FOR *SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT***

The individual forest landowner, *land manager* or *group certification organization* manager shall ensure conformance with the requirements in Part 5 for implementing forest management Objectives 1-9 and forest management *practices* on the *certified area*. Where the term *member* is used, the individual forest landowner or land manager shall understand these requirements to apply to him/her.

Examples of forest management goals are:

- i. improve age class distribution;
- ii. promote *long-term* sustainable harvest levels;
- iii. increase hardwood component;
- iv. increase amount of saw-timber;
- v. promotion of *non-timber forest products* (e.g., maple syrup);
- vi. encourage *afforestation* of marginal/sub-marginal lands no longer suitable for agriculture;
- vii. support of *programs* for *conservation* of *old growth forests*, *biological diversity*, and water quality and quantity;
- viii. promotion of *integrated pest management practices*; and
- ix. promotion of opportunities for recreation.
- x. additional goals as determined by the *landowner* and *land manager*.

(Note: Guidance text appears throughout this section inside boxes. This guidance is meant to inform the forest landowner, land managers and *group certification organization* managers about the intent of the *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families* and how it may be applied on-the-ground. Guidance text is not considered normative language. Where the term *member* is used, the individual forest landowner, land manager may consider this guidance as being appropriate to him/her.)

**Objective 1 — Forest Management Planning:** To ensure forest management plans include *long-term* sustainable harvest levels and measures to avoid conversion to non-forest use.

(Note: *Members* may consider adopting some of the forest management goals in the Guidance box above to improve *forest health* and *productivity*, promote *biodiversity* and protect water quality and quantity on the *certified area*.)

Using *members* and/or land managers information sessions, an on-going monitoring system, and individual outreach to *members*, the manager shall ensure that the following aspects of forest management are implemented in conformance with the requirements of the module.

The management plan shall:

- i. be appropriate to the size of the managed forest, the *member's* or land manager's forest management goals, and the scale and intensity of management.
- ii. describe present forest conditions and forest conditions to be achieved;
- iii. make all practical efforts to promote *forest health*, including prevention, control, or response to disturbances such as wildfire, *invasive species* and other pests, pathogens, or unwanted vegetation, to achieve specific forest management goals;

- iv. address species at risk and their *habitat* requirements as well as measures to conserve these species and their *habitats* within the area of management;
- v. include measures to address known *special sites* and
- vi. provide information on other local, provincial, and federal regulations applicable to forest management and *threatened and endangered* species including species at risk.

Forests from 10 hectares to 20,000 hectares in area are eligible for certification under the module. The management plans will reflect the management goals, size of the forest and the scale of management operations. Larger forests will require an inventory upon which to base an assessment of the *long-term* sustainable harvest level and to permit planning and scheduling of harvest operations. Smaller forests require a simpler management plan.

Small-scale forest properties and forest licenses between 5,000 and 20,000 hectares must be under the management of a *qualified resource professional* or an individual that meets the legal requirements for conducting forest management for the jurisdiction.

The forest management plan is based on sound forest management science and embodies the *members or land manager's* current management goals. It describes the present forest conditions and provides a practical schedule of *silvicultural* treatments to achieve the management goals. It includes: a map showing significant features of the forest and includes considerations of *forest health, conservation of soil productivity, and water quality; timber production; protection of threatened and endangered species including species at risk; and special sites, traditional forest-related knowledge, and ecologically important sites.* Forest management operations such as road construction, *commercial harvesting operations* and *reforestation* should be covered by an operating plan or comply with *best management practices.* See Appendix 2 for additional information regarding forest management plans.

**Objective 2 — Forest Health and Productivity.** To ensure *long-term* forest *productivity, carbon storage and conservation* of forest resources through prompt *reforestation, afforestation, minimized* chemical use, soil *conservation, and protecting* forests from damaging agents.

- i. An operating plan shall be prepared for each harvest activity (other than cutting volumes for *personal use or cultural use*) to document appropriate *silviculture* and regeneration methods and other forest management *practices;*
- ii. All harvested areas shall be promptly regenerated through *planting* or direct seeding within two years or two *planting* seasons, or by planned natural regeneration methods within five years. Desirable advanced natural regeneration shall be protected during harvest;
- iii. Plantings of *native* or non-*invasive* naturalized tree species are preferred. In exceptional circumstances where *exotic tree species* are planted, they should not increase the risk to *native* ecosystems;

- iv. The use of fire is allowed as a *silvicultural* or forest management technique for achievement of defined forest management goals (e.g., enhancing the growth of *non-timber forest products*, enhancement of *wildlife* forage, hazard abatement near communities, etc.);
- v. The use of *integrated pest management* is preferred. When pesticides are used, they shall be the *least-toxic and narrowest-spectrum pesticides* necessary to achieve forest management goals. The use of pesticides shall be controlled and minimized with preference for the use of *integrated pest management* methods;
- vi. Use of pesticides registered for the intended use and applied in accordance with label requirements; and
- vii. The use of WHO Type 1A and 1B pesticides<sup>51</sup>, chlorinated hydrocarbons and any pesticides banned by the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants is prohibited.

The *member* ensures adequate stocking with desirable and site-adapted species throughout the harvested area by prompt tree planting or natural regeneration within five years of harvesting. Tending of young trees may be required to achieve free-to-grow status. Use of prescribed burning, when it is utilized, complies with all local and provincial regulations.

*Afforestation*, where it is practiced, should consider potential ecological impacts of the selection and *planting* of tree species in non-forested landscapes avoiding conversion of native grasslands and *wetlands* to forests.. *Afforestation* should be considered for soils that are marginal or sub-marginal for agricultural use (stony soils, steep topography, etc.). *Afforestation* can increase habitat for forest-dependent *wildlife*, moderate stream flow and contribute to the rural economy.

Although pesticides can be an effective *silvicultural* tool, *members* should first consider *integrated pest management* techniques. Pesticides are to be used by trained and licensed applicators.

**Objective 3 — Protection and Maintenance of Water Resources:** To *protect* the water quality and quantity of rivers, streams, lakes, *wetlands*, and other water bodies through meeting or exceeding *best management practices*.

- i. *Members* shall implement federal and provincial water quality *best management practices* and *practices* to *protect* water quantity during all phases of management activities.
- ii. Contract provisions shall specify conformance to *best management practices*.
- iii. Harvest and road building activities shall be conducted during weather conditions that *minimize* impacts on residual trees, *biodiversity*, water quality and quantity and soil resources.

<sup>51</sup> Exemptions are allowed where no other viable alternative exists.



- iv. *Member* shall have measures for the *protection* of rivers, streams, lakes, *wetlands*, other water bodies and *riparian areas* during all phases of management, including the layout and construction of roads and *skid trails* to maintain water quality and quantity.
- v. Use *qualified logging or qualified resource professionals* where they are available if the *member* is not conducting the work him/herself.
- vi. Harvesting and log transportation operations shall be conducted in conformity with the requirements of this module.

Carry out forest management and road construction operations during weather conditions that *minimize* site disturbance. The *member* applies provincial regulations and *best management practices* to mitigate impacts of forestry operations on water resources. *Members* should have written agreements with contractors that have completed training *programs* and are recognized as *qualified logging or resource professionals* where they are available. *Members* should keep records of harvests and ensure the efficient utilization of all felled trees.

Road construction and other operations likely to cause soil disturbance are *minimized* in *riparian areas* and near *wetlands*. Drainage structures of sufficient size are installed to maintain natural drainage patterns and do not impede the passage of fish.

**Objective 4 — Conservation of Biological Diversity:** To maintain or advance *conservation of biological diversity* at the *stand-* and *landscape-*level and across a diversity of *forest cover types*, vegetation cover types and successional stages, including the *conservation* of forest plants and animals, including *aquatic species*, *as well as threatened and endangered species*, *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value*, *old-growth forests*, and *ecologically important sites*.

- i. Implementation of *practices*, as guided by regionally based *best scientific information*, or *traditional forest-related knowledge* to retain *stand-level wildlife habitat* elements such as snags (where safe to do so), stumps, mast trees, down woody debris, den trees and nest trees.
- ii. Identification and *protection* of *non-forested wetlands*, including bogs, fens and marshes, and *vernal pools* that are *ecologically important*.
- iii. Maintain *habitat* for *threatened and endangered* species including species at risk by providing age class diversity wherever feasible and appropriately considering other *conservation* and ecological factors or *culturally important* species.
- iv. The *member* shall have access to information on the occurrence, *habitat*, and requirements for *protection of threatened and endangered* species including species at risk found in the *certified area* covered by the *forest certificate*.

The *member* is aware of the presence and location of *ecologically important sites* such as *vernal pools, riparian areas, wetlands, stick nests and den trees*. The *member* has received and has used information on local occurrence of *threatened and endangered* species including species at risk and requirements for *habitat protection*. Use of *qualified logging or resource professionals* where available should be considered for planning and conducting forest management activities.

**Objective 5 — Management of *Visual Quality and Recreational Benefits*:** To manage the visual impact of forest operations and provide recreational opportunities for the public.

- i. When considering harvest opening size the *member* shall take into account:
  - a. relevant regulations applicable to tree harvesting;
  - b. management plan goals and current *stand* conditions;
  - c. topography and viewpoints; and
  - d. local values and *practices* regarding harvest opening size.
- ii. Average size of clearcut harvest areas does not exceed 50 hectares (120 acres), except when necessary to meet regulatory requirements, achieve positive ecological outcomes or to respond to forest health emergencies or other natural catastrophes.
- iii. Trees in clearcut harvest areas are at least 3 years old or 1.5 meters high at the desired level of stocking before adjacent areas are clearcut, or as appropriate to address operational and economic considerations, alternative methods to reach the intent of the Objective are utilized by the *member*.
- iv. On public forests, provide recreational opportunities for the public, where consistent with forest management goals.

The *member* applies the appropriate management *practices* to determine the cut block size and shape in order to mitigate impacts on aesthetics.

**Objective 6 — *Protection of Special Sites*** To manage lands that are geologically or *culturally important* in a manner that takes into account their unique qualities.

- i. Using information such as existing natural heritage data, *traditional forest-related knowledge*, or expert advice, *members* shall be aware of heritage and cultural sites on their properties or tenures and will consider local values when conducting operations to *minimize* impacts on these sites.

Heritage sites such as stone walls, old foundations, or other sites of geological or *cultural importance*, including sites of cultural importance for *Indigenous Peoples*, are identified before a forest management operation takes place. The *member* or *land manager* uses good judgement based on local values to decide on protection.

**Objective 7 — Recognize and Respect *Indigenous Peoples’* Rights:** To recognize and respect *Indigenous Peoples’* rights and traditional knowledge.

- i. *Members* managing forestland that is wholly or partially on public lands shall recognize and respect *Indigenous Peoples’* rights. This requires a *program* for conferring with affected *Indigenous Peoples* to enable *members* to:
  - a. understand and respect *traditional forest-related knowledge*;
  - b. identify and protect spiritually, historically, or *culturally important* sites;
  - c. address the use of *non-timber forest products* of value to *Indigenous Peoples* in areas where *members* have management responsibilities on public lands; and
  - d. respond to *Indigenous Peoples’* inquiries and concerns received.
- ii. Where Crown government agencies responsible for consultation with affected *Indigenous Peoples* regarding forest management operations on forestland exist, these agencies shall be the primary means of communicating with *Indigenous Peoples* whose rights may be affected by the *member’s* management *practices*, unless explicitly delegated to the *member* by said agency through written direction or regulation.

Consultation is required only when the forestland under management is wholly or partially on public land. In all cases *Certified Organizations* shall respect the processes, laws, and direction received from relevant government agencies derived through nation-to-nation relationships where the certification takes place. Where appropriate, *Certified Organizations* should consider consultation regarding *traditional forest-related knowledge*.

**Objective 8 — Legal and Regulatory Compliance:** To comply with applicable federal, provincial, and *local* laws and regulations.

- i. The *member* shall either a) hold legal title to the property and shall ensure that property boundaries are clearly defined, or b) demonstrate legal tenure for public forestlands and ensure that tenure boundaries are clearly defined;
- ii. There is a program to ensure legal and regulatory compliance. The program shall ensure that *members*:
  - a. are aware of applicable federal, provincial, and *local* environmental laws and regulations, including those specific to *sustainable forest management* and the recognition of *Indigenous Peoples’* rights;
  - b. have a system to achieve compliance with applicable federal, provincial, or *local* laws and regulations; and
  - c. have access to information on *threatened and endangered* species including species at risk in the *certified area*.

The manager of a *group certification organization* should provide all *members* a copy of all applicable laws and regulations. These regulations can be provided in digital format. *Members* should use this information to ensure compliance. Use of *qualified logging* or *resource professionals* where available should be considered for conducting forest management activities.

**Objective 9 — Community Involvement and Outreach:** To broaden the *practice* of *sustainable forestry* through public outreach, education, and involvement and to support the efforts of *SFI Implementation Committees*.

- i. *Members* and managers of *group certification organizations* shall engage with their provincial or regional *SFI Implementation Committee*.
- ii. *Members* and managers of *group certified organizations* promote certification among the forest owners and managers community.
- iii. When requested by the *members*, the manager of the *group certification organization* shall organize an annual meeting to review the activities, accomplishments and problems encountered during the year, as well as future plans for the *group certification organization*.

Having the *group certification organization* manager represent their *members* on the *SFI Implementation Committee* will assist with representing *members* within the provincial or regional SFI community. This will allow *members* to stay informed about developments with the SFI program.

Annual meetings of the *group certification organization* are an effective means of sharing group accomplishments, discussing developments in forest management and learning of updates to provincial programs supporting small-scale private forest *members* or small-scale public forest tenures.

## Appendix 1. Definitions (normative)

The following definitions apply to *italicized* words in the SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families.

**acceptable forest management standards:** These standards are all endorsed in the United States and Canada by the Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes (PEFC).

- *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*
- Canadian Standards Association (CAN/CSA-Z809)
- SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families

**afforestation:** Establishment of forest through planting and/or deliberate seeding on land that, until then, was under a different land use, implies a transformation of land use from non-forest to forest (source: FAO 2018).

**aquatic species:** Animals that live on or within water during some stage of their development.

**best management practices (BMPs):** A practice or combination of practices for *protection* of water quality that is determined by a federal, provincial, state, or *local* government or other responsible entity, after problem assessment, examination of alternative practices, and appropriate public participation, to be the most effective and practicable (including technological, economic, and institutional considerations) means of conducting a forest management operation while addressing any environmental considerations.

**best scientific information:** Available factual information that is generally accepted by the broad scientific community. It includes but is not limited to peer-reviewed scientific information obtainable from any source, including government and non-governmental sources, that have been verified by field testing to the maximum extent feasible.

**biological diversity, biodiversity:** The variety and abundance of life forms, processes, functions, and structures of plants, animals, and other living organisms, including the relative complexity of species, communities, gene pools and ecosystems at spatial scales that range from local to regional to global.

**certification body:** An independent third party that is accredited by:

- ANSI-ASQ National Accreditation Board (ANAB) as being competent to conduct certifications to the SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard, SFI Fiber Sourcing Standard, SFI Chain-of-Custody Standard or SFI Certified Sourcing Standard, SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module, or SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families.
- Standards Council of Canada (SCC) as being competent to conduct certifications to the SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard, SFI Fiber Sourcing Standard, SFI Chain-of-Custody Standard or SFI Certified Sourcing Standard, SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module, or SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families.

**certified area:** The forest area covered by a *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* or *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families* certificate. In the

group certification context, the certified area is the sum of forest areas of the participants and covered by a group forest certificate.

**certified forest content:** Raw material from lands third-party certified to *acceptable forest management standards*.

**certified organization:** An organization certified by an accredited *certification body* to be in conformance with the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard, SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families, SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard, SFI 2022 Chain of Custody Standard* and/or the *SFI 2022 Certified Sourcing Standard*.

**commercial harvesting operations:** Wood harvested for sale or trade.

**conservation:** 1. *Protection* of plant and animal *habitat*. 2. The management of a renewable natural resource with the objective of sustaining its *productivity* in perpetuity while providing for human use compatible with sustainability of the resource.

**culturally important:** Having significance for or being representative of human activities or beliefs (e.g., documented areas such as cemeteries, sacred sites).

**ecologically important:** Ecologically important can be defined as applying to *natural communities*, biological, ecological, or physical features which, either by themselves or in a network, contribute significantly to an ecosystem's productivity, *biodiversity*, and resilience. Ecologically important areas may be so identified by the inclusion of viable occurrences of species or *natural communities* that are integral to the identity or function of an ecosystem, but which may be relatively uncommon on the landscape, including species or ecological communities with a high "S-Rank" or "G-Rank" from NatureServe, subject to the discretion of the *Certified Organization*.

**exotic tree species:** A tree species introduced from outside its natural range. This does not include species that have become naturalized in an area and have a naturally reproducing population. (Note: Hybrids of *native* species or *native* plants that have been derived from genetic tree improvement and biotechnology *programs* are not considered exotic species.)

**forest certificate:** A document confirming that an individual small-scale forest or *members* of a *group certification organization* conform to the requirements for certification to the *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families*.

**forest cover type:** Classification of a forest *stand* by the dominant tree species or combination of tree species present. Unless required to use a regulatory system of *forest cover type* classification the *Certified Organization* shall use the Society of American Foresters Forest Cover Types of the United States and Canada (Eyre, 1980).

**forest health:** The perceived condition of a forest derived from concerns about such factors as its age, structure, composition, function, vigor, presence of unusual levels of insects or disease, and resilience to disturbance.

**Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value:** *Critically imperiled (G1)* and *imperiled (G2)* species and ecological communities.

**critically imperiled:** A plant or animal or community, often referred to as G1, that is globally extremely rare or, because of some factor(s), especially vulnerable to extinction. Typically, five or fewer occurrences or populations remain, or very few individuals (<1,000), acres (<2,000 acres or 809 hectares), or linear miles (<10 miles or 16 kilometers) exist (Further information can be found under *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value* in Section 7 of the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules*).

**imperiled:** A plant or animal or community, often referred to as G2, that is globally rare or, because of some factor(s), is very vulnerable to extinction or elimination. Typically, six to 20 occurrences, or few remaining individuals (1,000 to 3,000), or acres (2,000 to 10,000 acres or 809 to 4,047 hectares), or linear miles (10 to 50 miles or 16 to 80.5 kilometers) exist. (Further information can be found under *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value* in Section 7 of the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules*.)

**group certification organization:** A specific type of multi-site organization where forest owners, forest owners' organizations, forest managers, forest products manufacturers or forest products distributors without a pre-existing legal or contractual link can form a group for the purposes of achieving certification and gaining eligibility for a sampling approach to certification audits.

**habitat:** 1. A unit area of environment. 2. The place, natural or otherwise (including climate, food, cover and water) where an individual or population of animals or plants naturally or normally lives and develops.

**Indigenous Peoples:** Inclusive of all *Indigenous Peoples* residing in Canada. More specifically, *Indigenous Peoples* includes peoples that are recognized by section 35(2) of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

In Canada, Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada provides a list of the 619 recognized First Nations by province. Rights-holding Métis communities in Canada, as per S. 35(2) of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, include but are not limited to governing members of the Métis National Council as well as the Métis Settlements General Council.

**integrated pest management:** The careful consideration of all available pest control techniques and subsequent integration of appropriate measures that discourage the development of pest populations and keep pesticides and other interventions to levels that are economically justified and reduce or minimize risks to human health and the environment (source: FAO 2018).

**invasive species(invasive):** Species introduced from another country or geographic region outside its natural range that may have fewer natural population controls in the new environment, becoming a pest or nuisance species.

**land manager:** An individual or organization authorized by the *member/license* holder to manage their forestland within the *certified area* and has the ability and management authority to implement the certification requirements of the *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families*.

**landscape:** 1. A spatial mosaic of multiple ecosystems, landforms, and plant communities across a defined area irrespective of ownership or other artificial boundaries and repeated in similar form throughout. 2. An area of land characterized by:

- similar biogeoclimatic conditions that influence site potential;
- similar historical disturbance regimes that influence vegetation structure and species composition; and
- sufficient size to provide the range of *habitat* conditions for naturally occurring communities (except for a few megafauna with large spatial needs, e.g., wolves).

**least-toxic and narrowest-spectrum pesticide:** A chemical preparation used to control site-specific pests that *minimizes* impact to non-target organisms and causes the least impact to while meeting management objectives. The management objectives should consider the target pest, the degree of control needed, and other issues, such as season and timing of application, rates and methods, terrain, forest conditions, and the presence or absence of water bodies.

**local** (when used in Objective 11 Forest Management Standard and Objective 4 Fiber Sourcing Standard): a level of government below federal, state or province such as county, district, city, township, municipality, town, or parish.

**long-term:** Extending over a relatively long time period — for the *SFI 2022 Standards*, this means the length of one forest management rotation or longer.

**member:** A *land manager* or landowner who has agreed to join the *group certification organization* and conform with the requirements of the *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families*.

**minimize:** To do only that which is necessary and appropriate to accomplish the task or Objective described.

**native:** Species of ecological communities occurring naturally in an ecological region, as neither a direct or indirect consequence of recent human activity. (Ecological Regions of North America: Levels I-II)

**natural community:** Natural communities are combinations of *native* plants and animals that are regularly found together in particular settings. Human-caused disturbances have been minimal, consistent with historical disturbance regimes (e.g., prescribed fire), or the natural community has recovered from that disturbance, or the human-caused disturbance falls within the range of natural disturbance. (Adapted from NatureServe).

**non-forested wetland:** A transitional area between aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems that does not support tree cover and is inundated or saturated for periods long enough to produce hydric soils and support hydrophytic vegetation.

**non-timber forest products (NTFPs):** Products derived from forests other than round wood or wood chips. Examples include, but are not limited to, seeds, fruits, nuts, honey, maple syrup, and mushrooms.

**old-growth forests:** A forested ecosystem distinguished by old trees and related structural attributes, such as tree size, down woody debris, canopy levels, and species composition.



*Certified Organizations* should utilize a definition specific to their region and particular forest types.

**personal use:** Firewood or logs cut for personal use, not for sale or trade, limited to 50 cubic metres per year.

**planting:** The establishment of a group or *stand* of young trees created by direct seeding or by *planting* seedlings or plantlets.

**practice(s):** The actual application or use of an idea, belief, or method, as opposed to theories relating to it.

**productivity:** The inherent capacity of a particular site or ecosystem to produce a crop or tree *stand*, often measured in volume or height.

**program:** An organized system, process or set of activities to achieve an Objective.

**protection (or protect):** Maintenance of the status or integrity, over the *long term*, of identified attributes or values including management where appropriate and considering historical disturbance patterns, fire risk and *forest health* when determining appropriate *conservation* strategies.

**qualified logging professional:** A person with specialized skills in timber harvesting who has successfully completed *wood producer* training *programs* and continued education requirements recognized by *SFI Implementation Committees* as meeting the spirit and intent of performance measures under Objective 13 in the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* or Objective 6 in the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*.

- a. Each crew must include a *qualified logging professional* who (1) has completed the *SFI Implementation Committee* approved *wood producer* training *program*; (2) is an owner of, employee of, or contracted by the *wood producer*; (3) has direct responsibility and is on-site regularly to consistently carry out the roles and responsibilities of the *qualified logging professional* under the *SFI 2022 Standard(s)* (e.g., safety, *protection* of soils, streams, and other water bodies).
- b. To be considered a *qualified logging professional*, an individual must complete the required training appropriate to their level of responsibility (e.g., owner, supervisor, employee) within the specified time period required by their *SFI Implementation Committee*. *SFI Implementation Committees* have the flexibility to require different training requirements for owners of logging businesses versus training requirements for other employees (e.g., supervisors). Once classified as a *qualified logging professional*, the individual must complete the required *SFI Implementation Committee* maintenance training within the prescribed time period to retain their status as a *qualified logging professional*.

**qualified resource professional:** A person who by training and experience can make forest management recommendations. Examples include foresters, soil scientists, hydrologists, forest engineers, forest ecologists, fishery and *wildlife* biologists or technically trained specialists in such fields.

**reforestation:** The reestablishment of forest cover either naturally or by seeding or *planting* of seedlings.

**riparian area:** Transition zone characterized by vegetation or geomorphology adjacent to rivers, streams, lakes, *wetlands*, and other water bodies.

**SFI Implementation Committee:** A state, provincial, or regional committee organized by *Certified Organizations* to facilitate or manage the *programs* and alliances that support the growth of SFI certification, including sustainable forest management.

**SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families:** The *principles, policies*, and requirements that detail specific small-scale forest management requirements for *Certified Organizations*.

**SFI Section 10 - 2022 Audit Procedures and Auditor Qualifications and Accreditation:** The *principles* and guidelines that detail specific requirements to *Certified Organizations* and *certification bodies* for conducting audits to the *SFI 2022 Forest Management, Fiber Sourcing and Chain-of-Custody Standards*.

**SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard:** The requirements that detail processes for tracking fiber content from *certified forest content, recycled content, and certified sourcing*.

**SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard:** The *principles, policies, objectives, performance measures* and *indicators* that detail specific forest management requirements for *Certified Organizations*.

**silviculture:** The art and science of controlling the establishment, growth, composition, health, and quality of forests and woodlands to meet the diverse needs and values of *land managers* and society on a sustainable basis.

**skid trail:** A temporary path through the woods to transport felled trees or logs to a collection area for further transportation.

**small-scale forest property or forest license:** Forests on public, title, treaty, reserve/reservation, fee-simple, or private land, that are owned or managed by an individual, group of investors or a municipality or county, that meet the size requirements in clause 1.1.2, are eligible to participate in an *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families* certification program.

**soil health:** The continued capacity of soil to function as a vital living ecosystem that sustains plants, animals, and humans. (USDA)

**special sites:** Sites that include geologically unique or *culturally important* features.

**stand:** A contiguous group of trees sufficiently uniform in age, composition, and structure, and growing on a site of sufficiently uniform quality, to be a distinguishable unit.

**sustainable forestry:** To meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs by practicing a land stewardship ethic that

integrates *reforestation* and the managing, growing, nurturing, and harvesting of trees for useful products and *ecosystem services* such as the *conservation* of soil, air and water quality, carbon, *biological diversity*, *wildlife* and *aquatic habitats*, recreation, and aesthetics.

**sustainable forest management:** The management of forests and forestland in a way and at a rate that maintains their *biodiversity*, productivity, regeneration capacity, vitality, and potential to fulfil ecological, economic, and social functions.

**Sustainable Forestry Initiative Inc. (SFI):** *SFI Inc.* is a 501c (3) non-profit charitable organization, and is solely responsible for maintaining, overseeing and improving the Sustainable Forestry Initiative. *SFI Inc.* directs all elements of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative including the *SFI Standard(s)*, including forest management, *fiber sourcing*, and chain-of-custody certifications, *and* labeling and marketing. *SFI Inc.* is overseen by a three-chamber board of directors representing social, environmental, and economic sectors.

**threatened and endangered:** Listed under The U.S. Endangered Species Act or The Canadian Species at Risk Act and listed under applicable state or provincial laws requiring *protection*.

**traditional forest-related knowledge:** Forest-related knowledge owned and maintained by *Indigenous Peoples* as a result of their traditional use of or tenure on forestland.

**vernal pool:** A seasonal *wetland* with sufficient water present during amphibian breeding season, absence of fish, and presence of *wetland* obligate fauna.

**visual quality:** The seen aspects of both the land and the activities that occur upon it.

**wetland:** (1) seasonally or permanently water-logged areas characterized by vegetation adapted for life in saturated /flooded conditions; (2) *wetlands* can be forested, shrubby or open and include bogs, fens, swamps, marshes, shallow open water areas or *non-forested wetlands*; (3) *wetlands* may be stagnant systems (e.g., bogs, *vernal pools*), slow flowing (e.g., fens, swamps) or have fluctuating water levels (e.g., marshes, shallow open water).

**wildlife:** Aquatic (marine and freshwater) and terrestrial fauna.

**wood producer:** A person or organization, including loggers and wood dealers, involved in harvesting, or regularly supplying wood fiber directly from the forest for commercial purposes.

## Appendix 2. Forest Management Plan (informative)

In some jurisdictions, small-scale forest landowners and managers of small-scale public forests are required to use a government approved forest management plan template. For those jurisdictions where this is not a requirement, this Appendix details the elements that should be considered when preparing a forest management plan. An illustrative table of contents is included to assist with preparation.

The forest management plan should document the following information:

- a. names and contact information of the registered landowner(s) or tenure holder(s) (i.e., the *group certification organization's members*)
- b. forest location (e.g., lot, concession, township, county) or tenure document
- c. the size of the managed forest
- d. a map (or aerial photo) showing:
  - i. property boundaries
  - ii. existing infrastructure (roads, trails, etc.)
  - iii. location of watercourses and wetlands
  - iv. area under management for timber production
  - v. area managed for *conservation/recreation* purposes
  - vi. known forest values (e.g., *special sites*), etc.
- e. description of forest *stands*
- f. prioritization of the management goals for the next 10-year period (e.g., timber production, recreation, *conservation*, maple syrup production, etc.)
- g. professional recommendations to achieve the management goals
- h. schedule of management operations including the timing of the next harvest, *silvicultural* activity, or construction of access roads/trails
- i. a brief history of the property (length of ownership, past management activities, etc.)
- j. a basic inventory of the forest under the plan. At a minimum, this inventory should consist of the species composition, basal area, and level of stocking

Where the *land manager* or *member* has access to some or all of the above information in digital format, it may be possible to represent the location and schedule of forest management operations using GIS or similar tools.

A list of legislation and policies (federal, provincial, *local*) that may affect forest management activities on the forest will be available to all *group certification organization members*.

A forest operations prescription/operating plan should be required for all road construction, *silvicultural* treatments, and *commercial harvest operations*. A municipal permit may also be required.

## Example Table of Contents for a Forest Management Plan

1: Property Owner or Tenure Holder Information	
1.1 Registered Property Owner(s) / Tenure Holder .....	
1.2 Plan Author Information .....	
2: Property or Tenure Location Information.....	
2.1 Property / Tenure Location .....	
2.2 Federal, Provincial and Local Policies and Regulations .....	
3: Property / Tenure History .....	
3.1 History.....	
3.2 Species at Risk .....	
3.3 Local Natural Heritage Features .....	
4: Property / Tenure Map & Surrounding Area.....	
5: Member Forest Management Goals .....	
5.1 General Management Goals .....	
5.2 Detailed Property / Tenure management outcomes .....	
5.3 Strategies to Meet Property / Tenure Goals .....	
6: Detailed Property / Tenure Map .....	
7: Managed Forest Compartment Descriptions.....	
7.1 Forest Inventory Techniques.....	
7.2 Forest Compartment Summary by Land Parcel .....	
7.3 General Forest Soil & Drainage Description .....	
7.4 Wildlife Habitat Inventory .....	
8: Ten-Year Activity Summary 202X–202X .....	
9: Report of Activities 202X–202X.....	
10: Access Trails.....	
10.1 Access Trail Goals .....	
10.2 Basic Trail Design Concepts .....	
10.3 Trail Construction Best Management Practices.....	
11: Wildlife & Cavity Trees.....	
12: Coarse Woody Debris & Fine Woody Debris .....	
13: Buffer Zones Around Water & Open Wetlands.....	

## **Appendix 3 – Requirements for Group Certification Organizations (normative)**

**(taken from SFI Section 10 – SFI 2022 Audit Procedures and Auditor Qualifications and Accreditation: Appendix 2, Group Certification Organizations)**

### **1. Scope**

*Audits of group certification organizations to assess conformance with the SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families.*

### **2. References**

IAF Mandatory Document for The Certification of Multiple Sites Based on Sampling Issue 2, Clause 6.1: Methodologies for Auditing of a Multi-site Organization Using Site Sampling (IAF MD1: 2018)

IAF Mandatory Document for Duration of Quality, Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems (IAF MD 5: 2019) — (Informative).

### **3. Group Certification Organizations**

3.1 *Group certification organizations* formed to achieve *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families* certification shall meet the requirements in this Appendix.

*Group certification organizations* formed to achieve *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families* certification, shall submit all the forest area under management within the area for the group certificate. All *members* in the *group certification organization* shall be subject to the internal monitoring and the internal audit program.

3.3 Commitment and policy

3.2.1 The *group certification organization* shall require a commitment:

- e. to comply with module requirements and other applicable requirements of the certification system;
- f. to integrate the *group certification organization* requirements in the group management system;
- g. to continuously improve the group management system;
- h. to continuously support the improvement of the sustainable forest management by *members* of the module group certification organization.

The commitment may be part of a group management policy and shall be publicly available upon request.

- 3.2.2 *Members* in the *group certification organization* shall provide a commitment
  - c. to follow the requirements of the management system;
  - d. to implement the requirements of the module in their operations.
- 3.2.3 Where a *group certification organization* plans any changes in the group management system, these changes shall be included in a group management plan.
- 3.2.4 Where a *group certification organization* decides to fulfil requirements of the module, these requirements shall be considered in a group management plan.
- 3.2.5 The *group certification organization* shall determine and maintain the resources needed for the establishment, implementation, maintenance, and continual improvement of the group management system.
- 3.2.6 The group certification organization shall define the necessary competence of persons doing work in the group management system.
- 3.2.7 The *group certification organization* shall have communication processes in place to raise the awareness of group *members* concerning:
  - f. the group management policy;
  - g. the requirements of the module;
  - h. their contribution to the effectiveness of the group management system, including the benefits of improved group performance;
  - i. the implications of not conforming with the group management system requirements, and
  - j. the *group certification organization* shall determine the processes required for internal and external communications.
- 3.3 Organizational roles, responsibilities, and authorities for the *Group Certification Organization*
  - 3.3.1 Functions and responsibilities of the Group Manager
 

The following functions and responsibilities of the group manager shall be specified:

    - q. implement and maintain an effective management system covering all group *members*;
    - r. represent the *group certification organization* in the certification process, including in communications and relationships with the *certification body*, submission of an application for certification, and contractual relationship with the *certification body*;
    - s. establish written procedures for the management of the *group certification organization*;
    - t. establish written procedures for the acceptance of new *members* of the *group certification organization*. These acceptance procedures

- shall cover at least the verification of the applicant's information about contact details, clear identification of their forest property and its/their size(s);
- u. establish written procedures for the suspension and exclusion of *members* who do not correct/close nonconformities. *Members* excluded from any *group certification organizations* based on nonconformities cannot be accepted within 12 months after exclusion;
  - v. keep documented information of:
    - ii. the group manager and *members'* conformity with the requirements of the module,
    - iii. all *members*, including their contact details, identification of their forest property and its/ their size(s),
    - iv. the certified area,
    - v. identification of affected *stakeholders* (for forest management group certification organizations),
    - vi. the implementation of an internal monitoring program, its review and any preventive and/or corrective actions taken;
  - w. documented information relevant to the group management system and the conformance with the requirements of the module shall be up to date and adequately protected against loss of confidentiality, improper use, or loss of integrity.
  - x. establish connections with all *members* based on a binding written agreement which shall include the *members* commitment to comply with the module. The group manager shall have a written contract or other written agreement with all *members* covering the right of the group manager to implement and enforce any corrective or preventive measures, and to initiate the exclusion of any *member* from the scope of certification in the event of nonconformity with the module;
  - y. provide all *members* with a document confirming participation in the *group certification organization*.
  - z. provide all *members* with information and guidance required for the effective implementation and maintenance of the module;
  - aa. address nonconformities reported from *members* which were identified under other certifications than the particular *group certification organization* and to ensure implementation with all *members*;
  - bb. operate an internal monitoring program that provides for the evaluation of the group certification organization's conformity with the module requirements;
  - cc. operate an annual internal audit program covering both *members* and group manager;
  - dd. operate a management review of the *group certification organization* and act on the results from the review;



- ee. provide full co-operation and assistance in responding effectively to all requests from the *certification body*, accreditation body for relevant data, documentation or other information; allowing access to the forest area covered by the *group certification organization*;
- ff. maintain appropriate mechanisms for resolving complaints and disputes relating to group management and the module requirements.

### 3.3.2 Function and responsibilities of Members

The following functions and responsibilities of the *members* shall be specified:

- g. to provide the group manager with a binding written agreement, including a commitment on conformity with the module requirements and other applicable requirements of the certification system; *members* excluded from any certification group cannot apply for group membership within 12 months after exclusion;
- h. to provide the group manager with information about previous *group certification organization* participation;
- i. to comply with the module and other applicable requirements of the certification system as well as with the requirements of the management system;
- j. to provide full co-operation and assistance in responding effectively to all requests from the group manager, or *certification body* for relevant data, documentation or other information; allowing access to the forest;
- k. to inform the group manager about nonconformities identified under other certifications than the particular *group certification organization*;
- l. to implement relevant corrective and preventive actions established by the group manager.

## 4. Evaluating the Group Certification Organization Performance

### 4.1 Monitoring of *Group Certification Organization* Performance

4.1.1 The *group certification organization* shall maintain an internal monitoring program that provides confidence in the conformity of the group organization with the module requirements. The program shall determine:

- f. what shall be monitored and measured;
- g. the methods for monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation, as applicable, to ensure valid results;
- h. when the monitoring and measuring shall be performed;
- i. when the results from monitoring and measurement shall be analysed and evaluated;
- j. what documented information shall be available as evidence of the results.

4.1.2 The *group certification organization* shall evaluate the group management performance and the effectiveness of the group management system concerning the implementation of the module requirements.

### 4.3 Internal Audit<sup>52</sup>

- 4.2.1 The annual internal audit program shall provide information on whether the *group certification organization's* management system:
- a. conforms to the *group certification organization's* own requirements for its group management system and the requirements of the module;
  - b. ensures the implementation of the module requirements at the *member* level;
  - c. is effectively implemented and maintained.
- 4.2.2 The internal audit program shall cover the group manager and all *members*. The group manager shall be audited annually. The *members* may be selected on a sample basis.
- 4.2.3 The internal audit program which shall cover at least:
- f. the audit planning process;
  - g. the audit criteria and scope;
  - h. the competence and impartiality of the auditors;
  - i. reporting the audit result to the *group certification organization* management;
  - j. retaining of evidence of the implementation of the audit program and the audit results.
- 4.2.4 The internal audit program shall include procedures for<sup>53</sup>:
- e. determination of the sample size;
  - f. determination of sample categories;
  - g. distribution of the sample to the categories;
  - h. selection of the *members*.

4.2.5 At least 25% of the audit sample should be selected at random with the remaining sites selected on the basis of a risk assessment.

### 4.3 Nonconformity, corrective and preventative action

- 4.3.1 When a nonconformity occurs, the group manager shall implement corrective action and mitigate the impacts to the extent possible;
- 4.3.2 The group manager shall evaluate the need for preventative action to eliminate the causes of the nonconformity by:
- g. reviewing the nonconformity;
  - h. determining the causes of the nonconformity;
  - i. determining if similar nonconformities exist, or could potentially occur;
  - j. implement any action needed;
  - k. review the effectiveness of any corrective action taken;
  - l. make changes to the group management system, if necessary.

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<sup>52</sup> When designing and implementing a program to evaluate conformance with the *SFI* Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families, Certified Organizations should reference ISO 19011 Guidelines for auditing management systems.

<sup>53</sup> Group certification organizations should reference IAF MD-1 for further information regarding audit sample selection.

4.3.3 The group manager shall retain documented information as evidence of:

- c. the nature of the nonconformities and any subsequent actions taken;
- d. the results of any corrective action.

4.3.4 A *member* who was excluded from a *group certification organization* shall be internally audited by the group manager before they are allowed to re-enter the *group certification organization*. The internal audit shall not take place sooner than 12 months after the exclusion.

#### 4.5 Management review and Continual Improvement

4.4.1 An annual management review shall at least include:

- f. the status of actions from previous management reviews;
- g. changes in external and internal issues that are relevant to the *group certification organization's* management system;
- h. the status of conformity with the module, that includes reviewing the results of the internal monitoring program the internal audit and the *certification body's* evaluations and surveillance;
- i. information on the *group certification organization's* performance, including trends in:
  - iv. nonconformities and corrective actions;
  - v. monitoring and measurement results;
  - vi. audit results;
- j. opportunities for continual improvement.

4.4.2 The outputs of the management review shall include decisions related to continual improvement opportunities and any need for changes to the *group certification organization's* management system.

4.4.3 The *group certification organization* shall retain documented information as evidence of the results of management reviews.



# **SECTION 14 SFI DEFINITIONS**

**October 7, 2021**

**The following definitions apply to *italicized* words in the Requirements for the SFI 2022 Standards and Rules.**

**acceptable forest management standards:** These standards are all endorsed in the United States and Canada by the Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes (PEFC).

- *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*
- *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module*
- *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families*
- Canadian Standards Association (CAN/CSA-Z809)
- Canadian Standards Association (CAN/CSA-Z804)
- *American Tree Farm System* (ATFS) individual and group certification

**adaptation:** Climate change adaptation refers to actions that reduce the negative impact of climate change, while taking advantage of potential new opportunities. It involves adjusting policies and actions because of observed or expected changes in climate.

**afforestation:** Establishment of forest through planting and/or deliberate seeding on land that, until then, was under a different land use, implies a transformation of land use from non-forest to forest (source: FAO 2018).

**Alliance for Zero Extinction:** A global initiative of *biodiversity conservation* organizations, which aims to prevent extinctions by identifying and safeguarding key sites where species are in imminent danger of disappearing. The goal of the Alliance is to create a front line of defense against extinction by eliminating threats and restoring *habitat* to allow species populations to rebound.

**American Tree Farm System® (ATFS):** A national *program* that promotes the sustainable management of forests through education and outreach to private forest landowners.

**aquatic habitat:** An area where water is the principal medium and that provides the resources and environmental conditions to support occupancy, survival, and reproduction by individuals of a given species.

**aquatic species:** Animals that live on or within water during some stage of their development.

**auditor:** A person with the competence to conduct an audit (ISO 19011:2018).

**audit team:** One or more *auditors* conducting an audit, supported if needed by *technical experts* (ISO 19011:2018).

**available regulatory action information:** Statistics or regulatory compliance data collected by a federal, state, provincial, or local government agency. Note: Although conformance with laws is the intent, *certification bodies* are directed to look for a spirit and general record of compliance rather than isolated or unusual instances of deviation.

**best management practices (BMPs):** A practice or combination of practices for *protection* of water quality that is determined by a federal, provincial, state, or local government or other responsible entity, after problem assessment, examination of alternative practices, and

appropriate public participation, to be the most effective and practicable (including technological, economic, and institutional considerations) mea

ns of conducting a forest management operation while addressing any environmental considerations.

**best scientific information:** Available factual information that is generally accepted by the broad scientific community. It includes but is not limited to peer-reviewed scientific information obtainable from any source, including government and non-governmental sources, that have been verified by field testing to the maximum extent feasible.

**bioenergy feedstock:** Biomass used to produce renewable energy. Biomass includes any organic products and byproducts derived from trees, plants, and other biological organic matter, including limbs, bark and other cellulosic material, organic byproducts from wood pulping, and other biologically derived materials.

**biological diversity, biodiversity:** The variety and abundance of life forms, processes, functions, and structures of plants, animals, and other living organisms, including the relative complexity of species, communities, gene pools and ecosystems at spatial scales that range from local to regional to global.

**certification body:** An independent third party that is accredited by:

- ANSI-ASQ National Accreditation Board (ANAB) as being competent to conduct certifications to the SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard, SFI Fiber Sourcing Standard, SFI Chain-of-Custody Standard or SFI Certified Sourcing Standard, SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module, or SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples, Families and Communities.
- Standards Council of Canada (SCC) as being competent to conduct certifications to the SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard, SFI Fiber Sourcing Standard, SFI Chain-of-Custody Standard or SFI Certified Sourcing Standard, SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module, or SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples, Families and Communities.

**certified area:** The forest area covered by a *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* or *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples, Families and Communities* certificate. In the group certification context, the certified area is the sum of forest areas of the participants and covered by a group forest certificate.

**certified content:** Raw material that can count towards the calculation of *certified content* percentages in chain-of-custody tracking. Below are the acceptable *certified content* sources.

**certified forest content:** Raw material from lands third-party certified to *acceptable forest management standards*.

**acceptable forest management standards:** These standards are all endorsed in the United States and Canada by the Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes (PEFC).

- SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard
- *SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module*
- *SFI Small Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families*
- Canadian Standards Association (CAN/CSA-Z809)
- Canadian Standards Association (CAN/CSA-Z804)
- American Tree Farm System (ATFS) individual and group certification.

**post-consumer recycled content:** Material generated by households or by commercial, industrial and institutional facilities in their role as end-users of the product, which can no longer be used for its intended purpose. Any claims about post-consumer recycled content by Program Participants or label users shall be accurate and consistent with applicable law. Program Participants and label users are encouraged to consult the U.S. Federal Trade Commission’s guidelines on environmental claims in product advertising and communication and the guidelines on environmental labeling and advertising issued by the Fair Business Practices Branch of Industry Canada’s Competition Bureau, as appropriate, and to seek additional information and direction from national accreditation bodies, national standards bodies and national, state and provincial consumer protection and competition laws.

**pre-consumer recycled content:** Material diverted from the waste stream during a manufacturing process. It does not include materials such as rework, regrind or scrap generated in a process and capable of being reclaimed within the same process.

Any claims about *pre-consumer recycled content* by *Program Participants* or *label users* shall be accurate and consistent with applicable law. *Program Participants* and *label users* are encouraged to consult the U.S. Federal Trade Commission’s guidelines on environmental claims in product advertising and communication and the guidelines on environmental labeling and advertising issued by the Fair Business Practices Branch of Industry Canada’s Competition Bureau, as appropriate, and to seek additional information and direction from national accreditation bodies, national standards bodies and national, state and provincial consumer protection and competition laws.

**certified logging company:** An entity that holds independent, in-the-forest verification of conformance with a logger certification program. The logger certification program shall require its members to:

- a. require its key personnel to complete *SFI Implementation Committee* approved *qualified logging professional* logger training *program(s)*;
- b. comply with all applicable laws and regulations and measures to protect *wildlife habitat* including *Forest with Exceptional Conservation Value* (critically imperiled and imperiled species and ecological communities);
- c. use *best management practices* to protect water quality;
- d. adhere to a logging safety *program*;
- e. comply with acceptable silviculture and utilization standards;
- f. use aesthetic management techniques where applicable, and
- g. adhere to a management or harvest plan that is *site* specific and agreed to by the forest landowner.

**Certified Organization:** An organization certified by an accredited *certification body* to be in conformance with the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*, *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families* and/or the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* and/or the *SFI 2022 Chain of Custody Standard* and/or the *SFI 2022 Certified Sourcing Standard*.

**certified sourcing:** Raw material sourced from the following sources confirmed by a *certification body*.

- Fiber that conforms with the SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard; and/or
- Pre-Consumer Recycled Content: Forest and tree-based material recovered from waste during a manufacturing process. Excluded is reutilization of materials such as rework, regrind or scrap generated in a process and capable of being reclaimed within the same process that generated it. Excluded are by-products resulting from primary production processes, such as sawmilling by-products (sawdust, chips, bark, etc.) or forestry residues (bark, chips from branches, roots, etc.) as they are not considered waste.

Any claims about pre-consumer recycled content by Certified Organizations or label users shall be accurate and consistent with applicable law. Certified Organizations and label users are encouraged to consult the U.S. Federal Trade Commission's guidelines on environmental claims in product advertising and communication and the guidelines on environmental labeling and advertising issued by the Fair Business Practices Branch of Industry Canada's Competition Bureau, as appropriate, and to seek additional information and direction from national accreditation bodies, national standards bodies and national, state and provincial consumer protection and competition laws; and/or

- *Post-Consumer Recycled Content:* Forest and tree-based material generated by households or by commercial, industrial, and institutional facilities in their role as end-users of the product which can no longer be used for its intended purpose. This includes returns of material from the distribution chain and material from salvage from demolition.

Any claims about *post-consumer recycled content* by *Certified Organizations* and *label users* shall be accurate and consistent with applicable law. *Certified Organizations* and *label users* are encouraged to consult the U.S. Federal Trade Commission's guidelines on environmental claims in product advertising and communication and the guidelines on environmental labeling and advertising issued by the Fair Business Practices Branch of Industry Canada's Competition Bureau, as appropriate, and to seek additional information and direction from national accreditation bodies, national standards bodies, and national, state and provincial consumer protection and competition laws; and/or

- *Certified forest content:* Includes content from specific forest tracts that are third-party certified to conform with the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* or other *acceptable forest management standards* (e.g., CAN/CSA-Z809, CAN/CSA-Z804, and ATFS); and/or
- *Non-controversial sources:* If the raw material is sourced from outside of the United States and Canada, the organization shall establish adequate measures to ensure that the labeled products do not come from *controversial sources*. See Section 4, Part 7 or Section 5, Part 7 on the process to avoid *controversial sources*. Up to one third of the supply for *secondary producers* can come from *non-controversial sources* for use of the *Certified Sourcing* label; the other two-thirds must come from the sources defined under



the *certified sourcing* definition — fiber that conforms with the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*, and/or *pre-consumer recycled content*, and/or *post-consumer recycled content*, and/or *certified forest content*.

**claim period:** Time period for which the chain-of-custody claim applies.

**climate change:** A change in the state of the climate that can be identified (e.g., by using statistical tests) by changes in the mean and/or the variability of its properties and that persists for an extended period typically decades or longer. *Climate change* may be due to natural internal processes or external forcing's or to persistent anthropogenic changes in the composition of the atmosphere or in land use. Note: Taken from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPPC).

**conservation:** 1. *Protection* of plant and animal *habitat*. 2. The management of a renewable natural resource with the objective of sustaining its *productivity* in perpetuity while providing for human use compatible with sustainability of the resource.

**controversial sources:**

- c. Forest activities which are not in compliance with applicable state, provincial, federal, or international laws.
- d. 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*).
- e. *Conversion sources* originating from regions experiencing forest area decline.
- f. Forest activities where the spirit of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at work (1998) are not met.
- g. Forest activities where the spirit of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007) are not met.
- h. *Fiber sourced from areas without effective social laws*
- i. *Illegal Logging* including trade in CITES (The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) listed species.
- j. *Conflict Timber*.
- k. Genetically modified trees via *forest tree biotechnology*.

**illegal logging:** Harvesting and trading of wood fiber in violation of applicable laws and regulations in the country of harvest.

**fiber sourced from areas without effective social laws:** The United States and Canada have a strong legal framework. Fiber from countries without effective laws addressing the following will need a risk assessment:

1. workers' health and safety;
2. fair labor practices;
3. *Indigenous Peoples'* rights;
4. anti-discrimination and anti-harassment measures;
5. prevailing wages; and

6. workers' right to organize.

**conflict timber:** "Timber that has been traded at some point in the chain of custody by armed groups, be they rebel factions or regular soldiers, or by a civilian administration involved in armed conflict or its representatives, either to perpetuate conflict or take advantage of conflict situations for personal gain. (...) Conflict timber is not necessarily illegal." Note: Definition in quotations as used by the United Nations Environment Programme.

**conversion sources:** Roundwood and/or chips produced from conversion of forestland to other land uses resulting in regional forest area decline.

**crew:** An organized group of forest workers under the leadership of a designated person at a single site. A crew might contain a single person or dozens depending on the task and operation involved.

**critically imperiled:** A plant or animal or community, often referred to as G1, that is globally extremely rare or, because of some factor(s), especially vulnerable to extinction. Typically, five or fewer occurrences or populations remain, or very few individuals (<1,000), acres (<2,000 acres or 809 hectares), or linear miles (<10 miles or 16 kilometers) exist. (Further information can be found under *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value* in Section 7 — Guidance to SFI 2022 Standards.)

**culturally important:** Having significance for or being representative of human activities or beliefs (e.g., documented areas such as cemeteries, sacred sites).

**degree:** A professional academic *degree* (e.g., bachelor's) or equivalent.

**direct supplier:** An individual or organization with whom a *Certified Organization* has a direct contractual relationship for *fiber sourcing*.

**ecologically important:** Ecologically important can be defined as applying to *natural communities*, biological, ecological, or physical features which, either by themselves or in a network, contribute significantly to an ecosystem's productivity, *biodiversity*, and resilience. Ecologically important areas may be so identified by the inclusion viable occurrences of species or *natural communities* that are integral to the identity or function of an ecosystem, but which may be relatively uncommon on the landscape, including species or ecological communities with a high "S-Rank" or "G-Rank" from NatureServe, subject to the discretion of the *Certified Organization*.

**economic viability:** The economic incentive necessary to keep forest ownerships profitable and competitive, and to keep people gainfully employed.

**ecosystem services:** Components of nature, directly enjoyed, consumed, or used to yield human well-being.

**exotic tree species:** A tree species introduced from outside its natural range. This does not include species that have become naturalized in an area and have a naturally reproducing population. (Note: Hybrids of *native* species or *native* plants that have been derived from genetic tree improvement and biotechnology *programs* are not considered exotic species.)

**fiber sourced from areas without effective social laws:** The United States and Canada have a strong legal framework. Fiber from countries without effective laws addressing the following will need a risk assessment:

- a. workers' health and safety;
- b. fair labor practices;
- c. Indigenous Peoples' rights;
- d. anti-discrimination and anti-harassment measures;
- e. prevailing wages; and
- f. workers' right to organize.

**fiber sourcing:** Acquisition of roundwood (e.g., sawlogs or pulpwood) and field-manufactured or primary-mill residual chips, pulp, and veneer to support a forest products facility.

**forest cover type:** Classification of a forest *stand* by the dominant tree species or combination of tree species present. Unless required to use a regulatory system of *forest cover type* classification the *Certified Organization* shall use the Society of American Foresters Forest Cover Types of the United States and Canada (Eyre, 1980).

**forest health:** The perceived condition of a forest derived from concerns about such factors as its age, structure, composition, function, vigor, presence of unusual levels of insects or disease, and resilience to disturbance.

**forest inventory:** 1. A set of objective sampling methods that quantify the spatial distribution, composition, and rates of change of forest parameters within specified levels of precision for management purposes. 2. The listing of data from such a survey.

**Forest Legacy Program:** The Forest Legacy Program, a voluntary U.S. government program in partnership with the states, supports state efforts to *protect* environmentally sensitive forest lands that are privately owned.

**forest tree biotechnology:** As commonly used, *forest tree biotechnology* encompasses structural and functional studies of genes and genomes (including development and application of genetic markers); various methods of vegetative reproduction such as micropropagation, tissue culture, and somatic embryogenesis; and genetic modification (GM), which is the physical manipulation and asexual insertion of genes into organisms.

**forestry:** The profession embracing the science, art, and practice of creating, managing, using and conserving forests and associated resources for human benefit and in a sustainable manner to meet desired goals, needs and values.

**forestry enterprise:** A business engaged in the management of forestland, having its own functions and administration, and comprising one or more operating units (this does not include independent contractors).

**Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value:** *Critically imperiled (G1)* and *imperiled (G2)* species and ecological communities.

**critically imperiled:** A plant or animal or community, often referred to as G1, that is globally extremely rare or, because of some factor(s), especially vulnerable to extinction.

Typically, five or fewer occurrences or populations remain, or very few individuals (<1,000), acres (<2,000 acres or 809 hectares), or linear miles (<10 miles or 16 kilometers) exist (Further information can be found under *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value* in Section 7 of the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules*).

**imperiled:** A plant or animal or community, often referred to as G2, that is globally rare or, because of some factor(s), is very vulnerable to extinction or elimination. Typically, six to 20 occurrences, or few remaining individuals (1,000 to 3,000), or acres (2,000 to 10,000 acres or 809 to 4,047 hectares), or linear miles (10 to 50 miles or 16 to 80.5 kilometers) exist. (Further information can be found under *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value* in Section 7 of the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules*.)

**geographic information system (GIS):** An organized collection of computer systems, personnel, knowledge, and procedures designed to capture, store, update, manipulate, analyze, report and display forms of geographically referenced information and descriptive information.

**green-up requirement:** Previously clearcut harvest areas must have trees at least 3 years old or 5 feet (1.5 meters) high at the desired level of stocking before adjacent areas are clearcut.

**group certification organization:** A specific type of multi-site organization where forest owners, forest owners' organizations, forest managers, forest products manufacturers or forest products distributors without a pre-existing legal or contractual link can form a group for the purposes of achieving certification and gaining eligibility for a sampling approach to certification audits.

**group member:** A forest owner/manager, manufacturing or processing organization covered by the group certificate, who has the ability to implement the requirements of the certification standard.

**growing stock:** All the trees growing in a forest or in a specified part of it that meet specified standards of size, quality, and vigor; generally expressed in terms of number or volume.

**growth and drain:** The average annual net increase in the volume of trees during the period between inventories (including the increment in net volume of trees at the beginning of the specific year surviving to its end, plus the net volume of trees reaching the minimum size class during the year, minus the volume of trees that died during the year, and minus the net volume of trees that became cull trees during the year) minus the net volume of *growing stock* trees removed from the *forest inventory* during a specified year by harvesting, cultural operations such as timber *stand* improvement, or land clearing.

**growth-and-yield model:** A set of relationships, usually expressed as equations, and embodied in a computer program or tables, that provides estimates of future *stand* development given initial *stand* conditions and a specified management regime.

**habitat:** 1. A unit area of environment. 2. The place, natural or otherwise (including climate, food, cover and water) where an individual or population of animals or plants naturally or normally lives and develops.

**high-biodiversity wilderness areas:** The world's largest-remaining tracts of tropical forest that are more than 75% intact. These areas are characterized by extraordinary biological richness, including exceptional concentrations of endemic species, and are also of crucial importance to climate regulation, watershed *protection*, and maintenance of traditional Indigenous lifestyles.

**illegal logging:** Harvesting and trading of wood fiber in violation of applicable laws and regulations in the country of harvest (including trade in CITES (The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) listed species.

**imperiled:** A plant or animal or community, often referred to as G2, that is globally rare or, because of some factor(s), is very vulnerable to extinction or elimination. Typically, six to 20 occurrences, or few remaining individuals (1,000 to 3,000), or acres (2,000 to 10,000 acres or 809 to 4047 hectares), or linear miles (10 to 50 miles or 16 to 80.5 kilometers) exist. (Further information can be found under *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value* in *SFI Section 7 — Guidance to SFI 2022 Standards*.)

**improved planting stock:** Products of tree improvement *programs* in which the parent trees were selected through Mendelian crosses for increased growth, pest resistance, or other desirable characteristics.

**indicator:** A specific metric that provides information about an organization's *forestry* and environmental performance, and that is integral to assessing conformance to the *SFI 2022 Standards' objectives and performance measures*.

**Indigenous Peoples:** Inclusive of all *Indigenous Peoples* residing in Canada and the United States. More specifically, *Indigenous Peoples* are defined in the United States as members of federally recognized tribes and in Canada as those peoples that are recognized by section 35(2) of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

In the United States, the US Department of Interior: Bureau of Indian Affairs publishes a list of each of the [573 federally recognized tribes](#).

In Canada, Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada provides a list of the [619 recognized First Nations](#) by province. Rights-holding Métis communities in Canada, as per S. 35(2) of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, include but are not limited to governing members of the Métis National Council as well as the Métis Settlements General Council.

**integrated pest management:** The careful consideration of all available pest control techniques and subsequent integration of appropriate measures that discourage the development of pest populations and keep pesticides and other interventions to levels that are economically justified and reduce or minimize risks to human health and the environment (source: FAO 2018).

**invasive species(invasive):** Species introduced from another country or geographic region outside its natural range that may have fewer natural population controls in the new environment, becoming a pest or nuisance species.

**label users:** Any *Certified Organization*, label licensee, secondary manufacturer, publisher, printer, retailer or distributor who has obtained a license to use the label; met *Section 6 — Rules For Use Of SFI On-and Off-Product Labels*; and obtained approval from the *SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing* to use the *SFI* on-product label for at least one product or manufacturing unit.

**land classification:** The process of designating areas of land into classes or strata that are sufficiently homogeneous in their physical, vegetative and development attributes.

**landscape:** 1. A spatial mosaic of multiple ecosystems, landforms, and plant communities across a defined area irrespective of ownership or other artificial boundaries and repeated in similar form throughout. 2. An area of land characterized by:

- similar biogeoclimatic conditions that influence site potential;
- similar historical disturbance regimes that influence vegetation structure and species composition; and
- sufficient size to provide the range of *habitat* conditions for naturally occurring communities (except for a few megafauna with large spatial needs, e.g., wolves).

**lead auditor:** An *auditor* appointed to lead an *audit team*. Also referred to as an *audit team leader* (ISO 19011:2018, 3.14, note 1).

**least-toxic and narrowest-spectrum pesticide:** A chemical preparation used to control site-specific pests that *minimizes* impact to non-target organisms and causes the least impact to while meeting management objectives. The management objectives should consider the target pest, the degree of control needed, and other issues, such as season and timing of application, rates and methods, terrain, forest conditions, and the presence or absence of water bodies.

**local** (when used in Objective 11 Forest Management Standard and Objective 4 Fiber Sourcing Standard): a level of government below federal, state or province such as county, district, city, township, municipality, town, or parish.

**long-term:** Extending over a relatively long time period — for the *SFI 2022 Standards*, this means the length of one forest management rotation or longer.

**major nonconformity:** One or more of the *SFI 2022 Standard(s) performance measures or indicators* has not been addressed or has not been implemented to the extent that a systematic failure of a *Certified Organization's* SFI system to meet an *SFI objective, performance measure or indicator* occurs.

**management responsibilities on public lands:** Accountability for developing plans and translating public agencies' missions, goals, and *objectives* to an organized set of actions.

**minimize:** To do only that which is necessary and appropriate to accomplish the task or *objective* described.

**minor nonconformity:** An isolated lapse in *SFI 2022 Standard(s)* implementation which does not indicate a systematic failure to consistently meet an *SFI objective, performance measure or indicator*.

**mitigation:** Climate change mitigation consists of actions to limit the magnitude or rate of global warming and its related effects. This generally involves reductions in human emissions of greenhouse gases.

**multi-site organization:** An organization having an identified central function (hereafter referred to as a central office — but not necessarily the headquarters of the organization) at which certain activities are planned, controlled, or managed and a network of local offices or branches (sites) at which such activities are fully or partially carried out.

**native:** Species of ecological communities occurring naturally in an ecological region, as neither a direct or indirect consequence of recent human activity. (Ecological Regions of North America: Levels I-II)

**natural community:** Natural communities are combinations of *native* plants and animals that are regularly found together in particular settings. Human-caused disturbances have been minimal, consistent with historical disturbance regimes (e.g., prescribed fire), or the natural community has recovered from that disturbance, or the human-caused disturbance falls within the range of natural disturbance. (Adapted from NatureServe).

**natural regeneration:** Establishment of a plant or a plant age class from natural seeding, sprouting, suckering, or layering.

**neutral sources:** Raw material that is not counted towards or against the calculation of the *certified content* percentages in chain-of-custody tracking or *certified sourcing* tracking in *SFI* Sections 3 and 4. Below are the acceptable *neutral sources*.

- Agricultural products (e.g., cotton or other non-wood fibers and biomass from wood fiber legally classified as agricultural by state, provincial or local government) and agricultural residues.
- *Post-consumer recycled content* and *pre-consumer recycled content* may be tracked as a *neutral source* when not making post-consumer or pre-consumer claims about the product.

**non-forested wetland:** A transitional area between aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems that does not support tree cover and is inundated or saturated for periods long enough to produce hydric soils and support hydrophytic vegetation.

**non-timber forest products (NTFPs):** Products derived from forests other than round wood or wood chips. Examples include, but are not limited to, seeds, fruits, nuts, honey, maple syrup, and mushrooms.

**objective:** In the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* and *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*, a fundamental goal of sustainable forest management.

**Office of Label Use and Licensing:** Provides administrative support and oversight of SFI on-product labeling and serves as the depository for *SFI 2022 Standards* certificates SFI 2022 Section 6 on-product label use certificates and PEFC ST 2002:2020 Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products-Requirements, February 14, 2020 certificates, and other documents that must be submitted to receive approval for use of the SFI on-product labels and claims.

**old-growth forests:** A forested ecosystem distinguished by old trees and related structural attributes, such as tree size, down woody debris, canopy levels, and species composition. *Certified Organizations* should utilize a definition specific to their region and particular forest types.

**origin:** The attributes of the raw material used in the product. This can be *certified forest content, certified sourcing or pre-consumer or post-consumer recycled content*.

**organization:** Person or group of people that has its own functions with responsibilities, authorities, and relationships to achieve its objectives.

**other credible chain-of-custody standards:** Standards capable of tracking fiber back to a forest certified to the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard, the SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples, Families and Communities* or other acceptable standards recognized by SFI. They include:

- PEFC ST 2002:2020 Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products-Requirements, February 14, 2020, and chain of custody standards endorsed by PEFC. See PEFC.org.

**other wood supplier:** A person who or organization that infrequently supplies wood fiber on a small scale, such as farmers and small-scale land-clearing operators.

**outsourcing:** Practice of activities relevant for an *organization's* chain-of-custody being performed by another legal entity, without continuous supervision or control from the organization. Not considered as outsourcing are transportation, (un)loading and warehousing of materials/products, unless there is a risk that materials with different material categories or certified content are mixed with each other.

**performance measure:** A means of judging whether an *objective* has been fulfilled.

**planting:** The establishment of a group or *stand* of young trees created by direct seeding or by *planting* seedlings or plantlets.

**policy:** A written statement of commitment to meet an *objective* or to implement a defined *program* or plan to achieve an *objective* or outcome.

**post-consumer recycled content:** Forest and tree-based material generated by households or by commercial, industrial and institutional facilities in their role as end-users of the product which can no longer be used for its intended purpose. This includes returns of material from the distribution chain and material from salvage from demolition.

Any claims about *post-consumer recycled content* by *Certified Organizations* or *label users* shall be accurate and consistent with applicable law. *Certified Organizations* and *label users* are encouraged to consult the U.S. Federal Trade Commission's guidelines on environmental claims in product advertising and communication and the guidelines on environmental labeling and advertising issued by the Fair Business Practices Branch of Industry Canada's Competition Bureau, as appropriate, and to seek additional information and direction from national accreditation bodies, national standards bodies and national, state and provincial consumer protection and competition laws.



**practice(s):** The actual application or use of an idea, belief, or method, as opposed to theories relating to it.

**pre-consumer recycled content:** Forest and tree-based material recovered from waste during a manufacturing process. Excluded is reutilization of materials such as rework, regrind or scrap generated in a process and capable of being reclaimed within the same process that generated it. Excluded are by-products resulting from primary production processes, such as sawmilling by-products (sawdust, chips, bark, etc.) or forestry residues (bark, chips from branches, roots, etc.) as they are not considered waste.

Any claims about *pre-consumer recycled content* by *Certified Organizations* or *label users* shall be accurate and consistent with applicable law. *Certified Organizations* and *label users* are encouraged to consult the U.S. Federal Trade Commission's guidelines on environmental claims in product advertising and communication and the guidelines on environmental labeling and advertising issued by the Fair Business Practices Branch of Industry Canada's Competition Bureau, as appropriate, and to seek additional information and direction from national accreditation bodies, national standards bodies and national, state and provincial consumer protection and competition laws.

**primary producers:** Manufacturing units that manufacture forest products and source 50% or more (by weight) of their wood-based raw materials directly from *primary sources*. *Primary producers* can include companies that manufacture roundwood, wood chips, and/or composite products.

**primary sources:** Roundwood (logs or pulpwood) and wood chips. Wood chips include:

- Field Manufactured Chips — chips produced from roundwood in the forest.
- Primary Chips — chips produced from roundwood other than in the forest or as residuals from production of other wood products.
- Mill Residual Chips — chips produced from slabs or other residuals from a primary operation.

**principle:** The vision and direction for sustainable forest management as embodied in the *principles* of the *SFI 2022 Standards*.

**product group:** Set of products manufactured or traded in the specified processes which are covered by the organization's chain of custody. *Product groups* can cover several sites.

**productivity:** The inherent capacity of a particular site or ecosystem to produce a crop or tree *stand*, often measured in volume or height.

**program:** An organized system, process or set of activities to achieve an *objective* or *performance measure*.

**protection (or protect):** Maintenance of the status or integrity, over the *long term*, of identified attributes or values including management where appropriate and considering historical disturbance patterns, fire risk and *forest health* when determining appropriate *conservation* strategies.

**public land:** SFI-certified land that is owned or administratively managed by a government entity (federal, state, provincial, county, or local), excluding easements or other encumbrances held by a government entity on private land.

**purchased stumpage:** Standing timber under a contractual agreement that gives the *Certified Organization* the right and obligation to harvest the timber.

**qualified logging professional:** A person with specialized skills in timber harvesting who has successfully completed *wood producer training programs* and continued education requirements recognized by *SFI Implementation Committees* as meeting the spirit and intent of *performance measure* under Objective 13 in the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* or Objective 6 in the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard*.

- l. Each crew must include a *qualified logging professional* who (1) has completed the *SFI Implementation Committee* approved *wood producer training program*; (2) is an owner of, employee of, or contracted by the *wood producer*; (3) has direct responsibility and is on-site regularly to consistently carry out the roles and responsibilities of the *qualified logging professional* under the *SFI 2022 Standard(s)* (e.g., safety, protection of soils, streams, and other water bodies).
- m. To be considered a *qualified logging professional*, an individual must complete the required training appropriate to their level of responsibility (e.g., owner, supervisor, employee) within the specified time period required by their *SFI Implementation Committee*. *SFI Implementation Committees* have the flexibility to require different training requirements for owners of logging businesses versus training requirements for other employees (e.g., supervisors). Once classified as a *qualified logging professional*, the individual must complete the required *SFI Implementation Committee* maintenance training within the prescribed time period to retain their status as a *qualified logging professional*.

**qualified resource professional:** A person who by training and experience can make forest management recommendations. Examples include foresters, soil scientists, hydrologists, forest engineers, forest ecologists, fishery and *wildlife* biologists or technically trained specialists in such fields.

**recycled content:** *Pre-consumer recycled content* and *post-consumer recycled content*.

**reforestation:** The reestablishment of forest cover either naturally or by seeding or *planting* of seedlings.

**riparian area:** Transition zone characterized by vegetation or geomorphology adjacent to rivers, streams, lakes, *wetlands*, and other water bodies.

**secondary producers:** Manufacturing units that produce forest products and source 50% or more (by weight) of their wood-based raw materials from *secondary sources*. *Secondary producers* can include manufacturers of finished forest products, such as plywood, furniture, windows, magazines, printers or catalogs, and manufacturers using market pulp.

**secondary sources:** Semi-finished solid wood, paper, market pulp, recycled wood fiber, or composite products obtained from a *primary producer* and/or a *secondary producer*.

**SFI certification:** A systematic and documented verification process to obtain and evaluate evidence objectively to determine whether a *Certified Organization* conforms to the requirements of *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules*.

**SFI Implementation Committee:** A state, provincial, or regional committee organized by *Certified Organizations* to facilitate or manage the *programs* and alliances that support the growth of SFI certification, including sustainable forest management.

**SFI 2022 Audit Procedures and Auditor Qualifications and Accreditation:** The *principles* and guidelines that detail specific requirements to *Certified Organizations* and *certification bodies* for conducting audits to the *SFI 2022 Forest Management, Fiber Sourcing and Chain-of-Custody Standards*.

**SFI 2022 Certified Sourcing Standard:** The requirements that detail processes for the use of the SFI Certified Sourcing label and claims.

**SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard:** The requirements that detail processes for tracking fiber content from *certified forest content, recycled content, and certified sourcing*.

**SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard:** The *principles, objectives, performance measures and indicators* that detail specific *fiber sourcing* requirements for *Certified Organizations*.

**SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard:** The *principles, policies, objectives, performance measures and indicators* that detail specific forest management requirements for *Certified Organizations*.

**SFI Small Lands Group Certification Module:** A collaboratively developed group certification module based on the foundation of the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard* and incorporates the AFF Standards of Sustainability for Forest Management under the American Tree Farm System ("AFF Standards"). The principles and requirements detail processes for forest management by *group certification organizations*.

**SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples and Families:** The *principles, policies, objectives, performance measures and indicators* that detail specific forest management requirements for *Certified Organizations*.

**silviculture:** The art and science of controlling the establishment, growth, composition, health, and quality of forests and woodlands to meet the diverse needs and values of landowners and society on a sustainable basis.

**site:** A site is a permanent location where an organization carries out work or a service.

**skid trail:** A temporary path through the woods to transport felled trees or logs to a collection area for further transportation.

**soil health:** the continued capacity of soil to function as a vital living ecosystem that sustains plants, animals, and humans. (USDA)

**special sites:** Sites that include geologically unique or *culturally important* features.

**stakeholder:** A person, group, community or *organization* with an interest in the subject of the standard.

**stand:** A contiguous group of trees sufficiently uniform in age, composition, and structure, and growing on a site of sufficiently uniform quality, to be a distinguishable unit.

**sustainable forestry:** To meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs by practicing a land stewardship ethic that integrates *reforestation* and the managing, growing, nurturing, and harvesting of trees for useful products and *ecosystem services* such as the *conservation* of soil, air and water quality, carbon, *biological diversity*, *wildlife* and *aquatic habitats*, recreation, and aesthetics.

**Sustainable Forestry Initiative Inc. (SFI):** *SFI Inc.* is a 501c(3) non-profit charitable organization, and is solely responsible for maintaining, overseeing and improving the Sustainable Forestry Initiative. *SFI Inc.* directs all elements of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative including the *SFI Standard(s)*, including forest management, *fiber sourcing*, and chain-of-custody certifications, *and* labeling and marketing. *SFI Inc.* is overseen by a three-chamber board of directors representing social, environmental, and economic sectors.

**technical expert:** A person who provides specific knowledge or expertise to the *audit team* (ISO 19011 2018, 3.16).

**third-party certification:** An assessment of conformance to the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules* conducted according to the requirements of *SFI Section 10 SFI 2022 Audit Procedures and Auditor Qualifications and Accreditation*, and ISO 19011 by a qualified *certification body*.

**threatened and endangered:** Listed under The U.S. Endangered Species Act or The Canadian Species at Risk Act and listed under applicable state or provincial laws requiring *protection*.

**traditional forest-related knowledge:** Forest-related knowledge owned and maintained by *Indigenous Peoples* as a result of their traditional use of or tenure on forestland.

**varietal seedlings:** Genetically identical individuals produced through vegetative reproduction methods, such as micropropagation, tissue culture or somatic embryogenesis.

**verifiable monitoring system:** A system capable of being audited by a third party that includes:

- a. a means to characterize the Certified Organization's wood and fiber supply area, which may include sources certified to a standard that requires conformance with best management practices, including those sources from certified logging professionals;
- b. a process to identify and use sources of available data (e.g., state or provincial monitoring programs, certification status of suppliers) in the use of best management practices; and
- c. a method to assess supplier performance, if needed, to supplement available data.

**vernal pool:** A seasonal *wetland* with sufficient water present during amphibian breeding season, absence of fish, and presence of *wetland* obligate fauna.

**visual quality:** The seen aspects of both the land and the activities that occur upon it.

**visual quality management:** Minimization of the adverse visual effects of forest management activities.

**wetland:** (1) seasonally or permanently water-logged areas characterized by vegetation adapted for life in saturated /flooded conditions; (2) *wetlands* can be forested, shrubby or open and include bogs, fens, swamps, marshes, shallow open water areas or *non-forested wetlands*; (3) *wetlands* may be stagnant systems (e.g., bogs, *vernal pools*), slow flowing (e.g., fens, swamps) or have fluctuating water levels (e.g., marshes, shallow open water).

**wildlife:** Aquatic (marine and freshwater) and terrestrial fauna.

**wood and fiber supply area:** The geographic area from which a *Certified Organization* procures, over time, most of its wood and fiber from *wood producers*.

**wood producer:** A person or organization, including loggers and wood dealers, involved in harvesting, or regularly supplying wood fiber directly from the forest for commercial purposes.