



# What buyers need to know

Certification  
and Canada's forests



Forest Products  
Association of Canada

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# Canada's certification record

- In 1993, FPAC became a founding member of the Canadian Sustainable Forestry Certification Coalition and established a website dedicated to providing information on the status of all Canadian forest certifications ([www.sfms.com](http://www.sfms.com)).
- In 1999, each FPAC member-company with forest operations committed itself to seek independent, third-party certification of their forest management activities.
- By 2001, Canada had achieved independent, third-party certification on the largest area of managed forests in the world – over 67 million hectares (165 million acres).
- The Canadian forest industry actively supports the international *Mutual Recognition* initiative seeking to develop an equivalency mechanism between credible certification standards.



# Why

buyers want more  
**environmental  
guarantees**

Concern over diminishing natural resources and the state of the environment in general has raised public and media attention around forestry. People want to know if harvested areas are being regenerated, if wildlife habitat is being protected and if the biodiversity of the forest is being maintained.

For their part, buyers want to show their customers and the public that they're making responsible purchasing decisions.

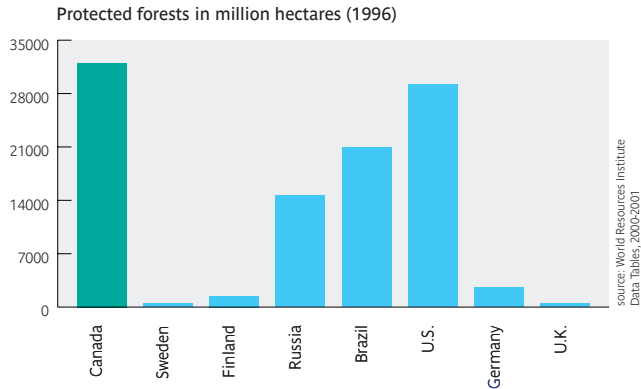
In a global market, where a customer can be thousands of miles away, providing evidence of well-managed forests is increasingly being done through independent, third-party "certification".

Canada is a world leader in forest conservation, protection and sustainable use. With consumption of wood and paper growing, world demand should be met from countries with well-managed forests like Canada.

# why choose Canadian forest products?



## Canada has the largest area of protected forests in the world



Canada's forest strategy is based on prudent harvesting and the regeneration of all harvested areas. We also maintain one of the largest undisturbed forests in the world, most of which will never be harvested.

### A Unique Forest Management Process

Almost all of Canada (94%) is publicly owned. Under the Canadian constitution, the country's 10 provinces and 3 territories have responsibility for forest management. And because of public ownership, government agencies and forest companies are required to seek the views of a variety of forest users, including Aboriginal groups, local communities, and environmental organizations in order to incorporate recreational, social, wildlife and economic values into forest management planning.

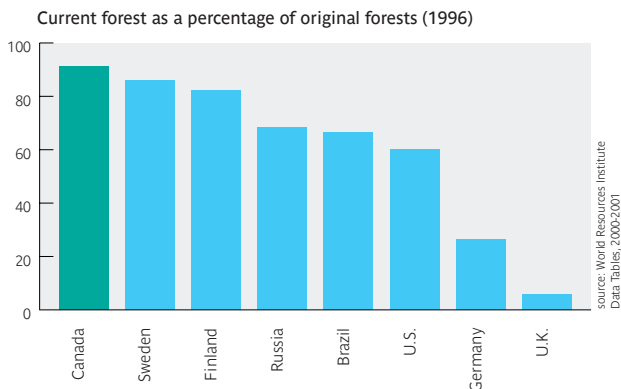
### Conserving Biodiversity

Canada was the first developed nation at the 1992 Earth Summit to sign the Convention on Biological Diversity, which is intended to conserve ecosystem, species and genetic diversity. Following Canada's ratification of the Convention, federal, provincial and territorial governments conducted broad-based consultations with industry, the scientific community, conservation groups, academia and Aboriginal groups, which paved the way for the Canadian Biodiversity Strategy, released in 1995.

### Partnering with First Nations

An independent study conducted in 1998 revealed a growing list of successful business relationships and involvement in Canadian forest management planning and fieldwork by Aboriginal communities. This growth has been supported by the creation of the First Nation Forestry Program in 1996. With \$25 million in federal funding, the First Nation Forestry Program has supported close to 1,000 projects and helped 3,900 First Nations workers gain valuable experience and create more business opportunities in forest-based businesses.

## Canada has more area of original forest cover than any other country



## Canada's Forest Laws

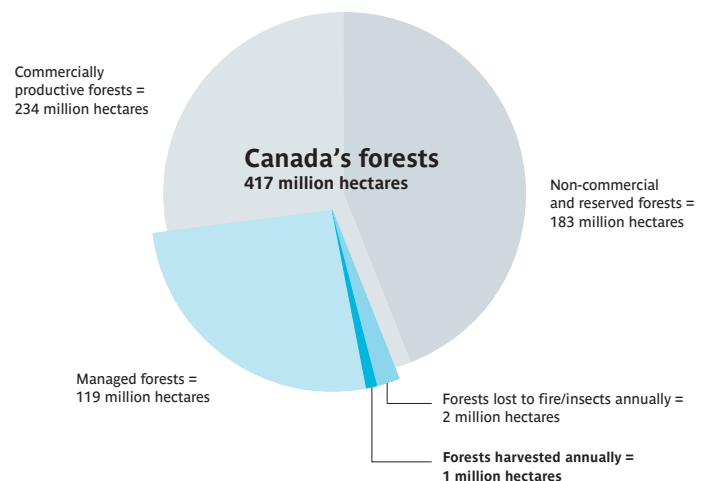


- 94% of Canada's forests are publicly owned and strictly regulated to protect the environment.
- All forestry companies operating on public land are obligated by law to seek public input on their long-term forest management and development plans. When the plans and consultations are completed, they are submitted to government foresters for review and approval.
- Harvested areas are required by law to be promptly regenerated. Forest policies and regulations also safeguard biodiversity, soil and water quality and other ecological values.
- Canadian harvests are limited by annual allowable cuts (AAC), which are set by government chief foresters and are based on the sustainable growth rate of the forest.
- Any major use or activity impacting on Canada's public lands is subject to environmental assessment and public review processes.

## Forest Facts

- The total land area of Canada is 927 million hectares, about half of which is covered by forest (417 million hectares/ 1,030 million acres).
- Only one-quarter of Canada's forests are managed for commercial use (119 million hectares/ 294 million acres).
- Annually, Canada harvests less than 1% of its managed forest, approximately 1 million hectares (2.5 million acres).
- Canada has 83 million hectares (205 million acres) of legally protected land, including 32 million hectares (79 million acres) of protected forests.
- More than half of Canada's forests are naturally reforested. Natural regeneration is supplemented by the planting of 600 million seedlings per year.
- Over 30 different species of trees are used in replanting activities across Canada in order to remain faithful to the natural biodiversity of each area.

**Canada harvests less than 1% of its managed forests annually**





# Certification:

## a growing market initiative

### **What is certification?**

Certification is primarily about providing objective evidence of sustainable forestry management. It functions much like a financial audit, where independent experts verify a company's performance against a set of objective standards and procedures for sustainability.

But certification is also about meeting social and community expectations. Are companies making their plans public, are they consulting neighbours as well as sharing the economic benefits by maintaining stable community employment? Credible certification standards include these types of considerations.

### **Does certification give companies a market advantage?**

In a way, yes. By providing an independent assurance of responsible forest management practices, certification helps consumers choose. Companies that can provide third-party audits have the added value of providing certainty, accountability and verifiability to retailers and consumers who want to give preference to products from well-managed forests.

While forest certification standards are currently voluntary initiatives, they may eventually become "the cost of doing business" in a global market. Consider that over 100 countries manufacture and sell wood and paper products to consumers worldwide. Certification provides consumers, regardless of their location, with an objective, easily understood assurance that the forests from which a product came are being well-managed.

### **What is "chain-of-custody"?**

Chain-of-custody refers to the ability to track wood from the time it leaves the forest through the processing and marketing channels to the final consumer. Chain-of-custody is of particular interest to buyers of manufactured products who want to verify that a certified product genuinely comes from a certified source. In some cases, labelling is being used to identify wood from a certified forest.



# Canada's certification record

In 1999, the Forest Products Association of Canada Board committed each member to seek independent audits of their forest management systems and practices. Today, every member is implementing third-party certification.

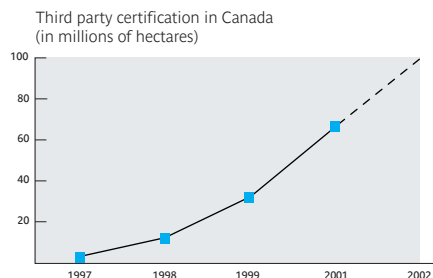
#### The Four Major Certification Standards Used in Canada

- CSA (Canadian Standards Association)
- FSC (Forest Stewardship Council)
- ISO (International Organization for Standardization)
- SFI (Sustainable Forestry Initiative)

CSA



Canada's National Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) Standard is based on international criteria for sustainable forest management and Canada's own national SFM criteria which were developed by the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers. Approved in 1996, the CSA standard has a stringent public participation requirement, and companies are required to respect national criteria for SFM at the local level as well as address any additional local values. Third party evaluations, such as the Council of European Paper Industries, have ranked the CSA amongst the best standards in the world. CSA recently launched an optional chain-of-custody and labelling program in July 2001.



By August 2001, Canadian companies had achieved third-party certification on over 67 million hectares (165 million acres) of forests – the largest area of certified forests in the world.



## FSC

The Forest Stewardship Council is an international body which accredits certification organizations and endorses national or regional standards based on ten overarching forest management principles and 56 criteria. The goal of FSC is to promote environmentally responsible, socially beneficial and economically viable management of the world's forests. Founded in 1993, by a diverse group of representatives from environmental organizations, the timber trade, forestry professionals, indigenous peoples, community forestry organizations and certifiers, the FSC places a strong emphasis on social and public participation elements. FSC standards are performance-based standards, developed by stakeholder groups. Standards for most regions of Canada are under development at this time.



## ISO 14001

International Organization for Standardization The ISO 14001 standard is the most widely recognized standard for environmental management system (EMS) in the world. Established in 1994, ISO 14001 uses a management system approach for setting measurable goals and objectives, and demonstrating environmental achievements through a cycle of planning, implementation and measurement. While not specific to forestry, ISO 14001 requires companies to have the policies and processes in place to meet or exceed all environmental regulations and to continually improve environmental performance. In Canada, most companies using ISO 14001 for forestry are incorporating sustainable forestry criteria consistent with those set out by the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers, which are nationally and internationally recognized.



## SFI

The Sustainable Forest Initiative was developed by The American Forest & Paper Association for its membership, and is now available for use by any interested party through a licensing arrangement. This standard was developed for application in the USA where the vast majority of lands are privately owned and therefore, there is somewhat less of an emphasis on public participation. The SFI program is a comprehensive systems and performance-based standard that integrates the perpetual regeneration and harvesting of trees with the protection of wildlife, soil and water quality, biodiversity, and ecologically significant sights. Over the past three years, AF&PA has strengthened the credibility of the standard by introducing a third-party certification process and an independent Sustainable Forestry Board with broad representation of interests to govern SFI. Canadian companies who export to the US are interested in this standard for the potential US market place recognition.



## Why Canadian Companies Are Certification Leaders

Canada's forest management practices are among the best in the world, and a key factor in that achievement is the expanded role of public participation. Canada's tradition of public dialogue is also behind the forest industry's commitment to certification. By voluntarily submitting their forest management activities to third-party audits, Canadian companies want to provide independent evidence of their good practices to buyers and consumers, as well as demonstrate their willingness to be publicly accountable.

### **Renewing Canada's National Commitment to Sustainable Forests**

In 1998, Canadians renewed their commitment to sustainable forests nationwide by adopting a new five-year strategy aimed at bringing together the ecological, economic, social and cultural aspects of forest conservation and use. The new National Forest Strategy (1998-2003) is a collective attempt by government, industry, environmental organizations, Aboriginal associations and others, to develop a formula that reconciles the growing range of expectations placed on Canada's forests and forest managers. Like its predecessor, the National Forest Strategy is the result of extensive public consultations by the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers, the 14 federal, provincial and territorial ministers responsible for forests.



## Promoting Sustainable Forests Worldwide

### **Pursuing Agreements on International Forest Principles**

Canada is a member of the Montreal Process, a working group of 12 countries representing almost 90 percent of the world's boreal and temperate forests outside Europe (Argentina, Australia, Chile, China, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, the United States and Uruguay). Together with industry, international environmental and non-governmental organizations, the 12 countries have developed a framework of internationally agreed-upon criteria and indicators for the conservation and sustainable management of temperate and boreal forests, which are also consistent with those developed for Europe through the Helsinki process:

- conservation of biological diversity
- maintenance of productive capacity of forest ecosystem
- maintenance of forest ecosystem health
- conservation and maintenance of soil and water resources
- maintenance of forest contribution to global carbon cycles
- maintenance and enhancement of long-term multiple socio-economic benefits to meet the needs of society
- legal, institutional and economic framework for forest conservation and sustainable management

## Working Towards Mutual Recognition Of Certification Standards



To be useful to buyers and consumers, certification must remain a credible tool for communicating sustainable practices. That's why Canada's forest industry actively supports the international Mutual Recognition initiative seeking to develop an equivalency mechanism between credible certification standards.

Over a dozen countries, including Canada, are involved in an "international mutual recognition framework" process, an initiative undertaken by the International Forest Industry Roundtable (IFIR). Its goal is to establish a high threshold for recognizing credible certification standards and provide a critical mass of credibly certified forest products to the market. In Europe, the Pan European Forest Certification Council (PEFCC) is also building a mutual recognition framework for certification standards that can be applied in Europe. To date, four national forest certification standards (Finland, Norway, Sweden and Germany) have been approved by the PEFCC. The objective of both these initiatives is to ensure certification:

- remains a useful tool for demonstrating sustainable forest management by determining rigorous criteria and indicators for certification claims
- is made user-friendly for retailers and consumers by providing an equivalency process

## What are the features of a credible certification standard?



The IFIR has proposed the following criteria as a basis for recognizing credible certification standards:

- conforms with nationally accepted standards for sustainable forest management
- is open and accessible to all interested stakeholders
- is scientifically supported
- includes continual improvement
- is non-discriminatory among forest types, sizes and ownership structures
- produces repeatable and consistent independent audits
- employs independent and internationally accredited auditors
- is based on transparent processes
- provides clear and substantiated claims

# From certification to purchasing policies



Most companies have a corporate environmental protection policy that covers their operating practices, as well as their purchasing criteria.

### **What a good purchasing policy includes**

An effective environmental purchasing policy should use clear language and provide the buyer with the greatest range of purchasing options.

### **Clear terms and definitions**

Employ nationally or internationally accepted terms of reference and avoid using expressions that are not well defined, such as “endangered forests”. This is not a scientific classification and carries different meanings for different people. Using vague concepts can place unintended obligations on buyers if these concepts are broadly defined in the future.

### **Purchasing choices**

Ensure environmental requirements give a company purchasing choices. Specifying a particular label or certification can limit a buyer’s ability to purchase supplies. No certification scheme can meet the demand for global wood products, and buyers risk not being able to meet their needs by having exclusive criteria.

### **Inclusive vs. exclusive certification policies**

In keeping with internationally accepted principles of free trade, purchasing policies must be non-discriminatory and transparent. In the early days of certification, some buyers committed themselves to only one type of certification standard. Since then, numerous credible standards have been developed, and exclusive certification policies have been recognized as counter-productive as one certification standard alone cannot meet the global demand for wood products.

## How major buyers are linking sustainability and supply

Although each company addresses purchasing policies differently, the following provides an example of clear, objective guidelines for forest product suppliers:

### Example of an Effective Procurement Policy

**To ensure that wood and paper products are coming from renewable sources, we will give preference to suppliers who subscribe to sustainable forestry management and independently verified certification programs.**

**Certified forest products are those materials that originate in forests that have been independently audited and certified by a credible, independent third-party as being well managed according to nationally or internationally recognized principles. It will incorporate, without being limited to, the following objectives:**

- conservation of biodiversity;
- conservation of soil and water quantity and quality;
- maintenance of contributions to global ecological cycles;
- protection of a representative network of forested areas;
- regulation of harvest levels with regard to long-term productivity;
- continual improvement
- integration of timber and non-timber values

**Examples of credible certification programs include the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Sustainable Forest Management Standard, the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification program, the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 14001 EMS program and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) by the American Forest and Paper Association.**

“It is probably preferable to maintain the flexibility inherent in having many certification systems and to avoid marketplace distortions that could arise in the case of a monopoly. Therefore the opportunity must be taken now to ensure that other systems are also recognized as mechanisms to develop an international mutual recognition system.”

*The Volpe Report, Government of Canada, June 2000*

# The **5** **top**

# questions buyers ask





## Q1

### **What's the best certification standard?**

The short answer is that no one system does it all. Although all certification standards would like to be considered the best, each has its strengths and weaknesses. Some are adapted to their country's forests, like the Canadian and Finnish national standards. Others have a more international framework allowing for a potentially broad recognition by customers worldwide. Still others emphasize social and labour considerations, providing critical governing principles and processes in less regulated forest environments.

### **Wouldn't it be easier to have just one?**

In a perfect world, yes. In a competitive marketplace, no.

Like forest companies themselves, certification standards are competing for recognition in the marketplace as well as for the revenues that are generated from auditing activities and label usage fees. While certification approaches vary, credible standards all have the same objective: sustainable forestry.

### **What do governments say?**

In June 2000, the all-party Canadian House of Commons Standing Committee on Natural Resources and Government Operations unanimously endorsed a multiple certification system approach for the following reasons:

- it respects the rights of countries to establish national standards based on their diverse forests
- it allows forest products companies to choose a certification approach that is best suited to their operations
- it gives customers the ability to buy products based on their preference
- it creates cost-effective tendencies in the marketplace



## Q2

### **Is Canada running out of trees?**

Absolutely not. In fact, Canada has maintained almost 92% of its original area of forest cover, more than any other country. This means only 8% of all of forests has ever been converted to farmland or cities. Annual harvesting levels in Canada are strictly controlled by government foresters and all harvested areas must be promptly regenerated. In total, only one quarter of Canada's 417 million hectares forests are managed for timber production and less than 1% of that working forest is harvested annually.



### **Do your products come from “old-growth” forests?**

It’s important to note that *every major certification standard allows for sustainable harvesting in old-growth forests*. All agree that the real issue is about balanced and sustainable forest practices. In this regard, Canada is one of the few developed nations still richly endowed with large areas of natural forests, with strong government controls and a public review process:

- Canada has more of its original forest area than any country in the world
- Canada has the largest area of protected forests in the world
- Canada has the largest area of certified forests in the world
- Canada was the first developed nation at the 1992 Earth Summit to sign the Convention on Biological Diversity, which is intended to conserve ecosystem, species and genetic diversity

Purchasing policies which include restrictions on old-growth harvesting are often well-intentioned, but misguided. And they are particularly detrimental to Canadian forestry companies because the large majority of Canada’s forests are over 100 years old. Climate plays a large role in this equation as trees in Canada mature more slowly (generally 60-200 years) compared to 8-10 years in the tropics. This fact also affects the age at which harvesting would occur.



### **Why do companies clear-cut?**

Every major certification standard recognizes that clear-cutting is an acceptable form of silviculture, particularly in shade-intolerant forests which are naturally regenerated by forest fire. In Canada, most forests are shaped by large forest fires and certain native trees will only grow back in large, opened areas. In this way, harvesting mimics the renewal process of fires. Over the years, the forest industry has continually reduced the size and modified the shape of its harvesting operations, including clear-cuts. This is the result of a better understanding of the need for natural habitat corridors for wildlife, to reduce the possibility of erosion, as well as to meet the needs of other forest users, such as hikers and campers.



### **Do you work with environmental and native groups?**

Given the public ownership of Canada's forests, native, community and environmental groups contribute significantly to the public discussion on forestry. Canada's forest industry has developed a growing reputation for its innovative approach to dialogue, negotiations and achieving consensus in forest management with all stakeholders.

#### **Protecting Species At Risk**

Since 1998, Canada's forest industry has been working with conservation groups, such as the Sierra Club of Canada, the Wildlife Federation, and the Canadian Nature Federation to develop a cooperative framework for federal legislation on species at risk. In 2000, their joint report was submitted to the Federal Government to help shape the forth-coming law.

#### **New Quebec Forest Act**

In June 2001, the Government of Quebec amended the province's Forest Act to include stronger policies on public participation and greater harmonization of forest uses and forest protection. Originally implemented in 1986, the new Act concludes a five-year review process during which Quebecers from a wide range of interests submitted over 500 briefs to the government during public hearings and parliamentary committee meetings.

#### **Ontario's Lands for Life Achievement**

In 1999, the Government of Ontario announced 378 new protected areas, totaling 2.4 million hectares (6 million acres) in the commercial forest zone of the province. It was the largest single expansion of protected areas in Canadian history. The Ontario Forest Accord was negotiated by government with forest companies and conservation groups including WWF Canada.

#### **B.C. Coast Forest Conservation Initiative – A World First**

In March 2001, forest companies, environmental groups, communities, contractors and other local interests reached agreement on recommendations that will protect the environmental, social and economic values on over 4.8 million hectares (12 million acres) of British Columbia's Central Coast, an area called the Great Bear Rainforest by environmental groups. The CFCI Joint Solutions Project was a voluntary initiative by companies and environmental groups committed to promoting new approaches to conservation and economic issues on the North and Central Coast of B.C. Among the recommendations accepted by the B.C. government was the creation of a 200,000 acre protection area for the Kermode bear, a rare white subspecies of the black bear.

#### **Sharing Biodiversity Research**

In 1996, FPAC established a national Biodiversity Program where member companies, government, academic and public institutions share their learning and on-the-ground wildlife research results on-line. The goal of the industry-funded program is to help integrate biodiversity conservation into forest management planning across Canada. Canadian forest companies are also partners in the Sustainable Forest Management Network with government and 23 Canadian universities. Over 100 researchers and 150 graduate students are currently involved in sustainable forest research.

#### **Integrating Traditional Native Knowledge**

The Waswanipi Cree Model Forest in northern Quebec is basing its forest practices on a trapline system in use for ages by Cree hunters. The forest's management strategy will be based on studies describing the area's natural ecosystems and wildlife attributes from both western science and Cree knowledge, and a careful documentation of the community's future forest requirements. Only then will the plan consider timber supply potential.

## Life-cycle analysis and the future of



# environmental consumerism

While certification standards and chain-of-custody tracking help us evaluate products on the basis on sustainable forest management criteria, products may eventually be evaluated on the basis of a “life-cycle analysis”.

Life-cycle analysis is an evolving process for assessing environmental effects at all stages of a product’s life including resource procurement, manufacturing, construction, service life and de-commissioning or disposal at the end of the useful life of a product. It is designed to help us understand the total environmental impact of products, including the production process.

### **Wood – The Final Word**

The Canadian Wood Council recently commissioned the ATHENA™ Sustainable Materials Institute to compare the environmental impact of constructing a house using wood framing, metal framing and concrete. The house selected for the study was a 2,400 square foot, single-family home typical of many North American homes.

The study confirmed the 1999 findings of the well-respected British research firm Building Research Establishment (BRE), which concluded that **in home-building, wood is not only the preferred choice, it is also the best environmental choice.**

The manufacturing of wood construction products:

- releases fewer contaminants into the world’s supply of water and air
- consumes fewer natural resources.

The results showed that all three houses were considered equal in meeting code requirements, but that the wood-frame house is significantly easier on the environment. The environmental advantage of wood construction would further increase if the metal and concrete houses did not also enjoy the benefits a wood roof. (source: *A Case Study Life Cycle Analysis for Residential Buildings*, Canadian Wood Council)



## Web contacts

<b>The American Forestry and Paper Association (AFPA) Sustainable Forest Initiative (SFI)</b>	<a href="http://www.afandpa.org/forestry/sfi">www.afandpa.org/forestry/sfi</a>
<b>Sustainable Forestry Board (SFI)</b>	<a href="http://www.aboutsfb.org">www.aboutsfb.org</a>
<b>Alberta Forest Products Association</b>	<a href="http://www.abforestprod.org">www.abforestprod.org</a>
<b>Athena Sustainable Materials Institute Building Research Establishment</b>	<a href="http://www.athenasmi.ca">www.athenasmi.ca</a> <a href="http://www.bre.co.uk">www.bre.co.uk</a>
<b>Canada's Forest Network</b>	<a href="http://www.forest.ca">www.forest.ca</a>
<b>Canadian Forest Service</b>	<a href="http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/cfs-scf">www.nrcan.gc.ca/cfs-scf</a>
<b>Canadian Sustainable Forestry Certification Coalition</b>	<a href="http://www.sfms.com">www.sfms.com</a>
<b>Canada's Model Forests</b>	<a href="http://mf.ncr.forestry.ca">http://mf.ncr.forestry.ca</a>
<b>Canadian Standards Association (CSA)</b>	<a href="http://www.csa-international.org">www.csa-international.org</a>
<b>Canadian Wood Council</b>	<a href="http://www.cwc.ca">www.cwc.ca</a>
<b>Council of Forest Industries</b>	<a href="http://www.cofi.org">www.cofi.org</a>
<b>Forest Alliance of B.C.</b>	<a href="http://www.fabc.bc.ca">www.fabc.bc.ca</a>
<b>Forest Engineering Research Institute of Canada</b>	<a href="http://www.feric.ca">www.feric.ca</a>
<b>Forest Stewardship Council Canada (FSC)</b>	<a href="http://www.fsccanada.org">www.fsccanada.org</a>
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<b>New Brunswick Forest Products Association</b>	<a href="http://www.nbforestry.com">www.nbforestry.com</a>
<b>Nova Scotia Forest Products Association</b>	<a href="http://www.nsfpa.ns.ca">www.nsfpa.ns.ca</a>
<b>Ontario Forest Industries Association</b>	<a href="http://www.ofia.com">www.ofia.com</a>
<b>Quebec Forest Industries Association</b>	<a href="http://www.aifq.qc.ca">www.aifq.qc.ca</a>
<b>Quebec Lumber Manufacturers Association</b>	<a href="http://www.sciage-lumber.qc.ca">www.sciage-lumber.qc.ca</a>
<b>Standards Council of Canada (SCC)</b>	<a href="http://www.scc.ca">www.scc.ca</a>
<b>World Resources Institute</b>	<a href="http://www.wri.org">www.wri.org</a>



The Forest Products Association of Canada (FPAC) is the voice of Canada's wood, pulp and paper producers nationally and internationally in government, trade and environmental affairs. We provide an active forum for advancing ideas and issues of key importance to the Canadian forest products industry and the 1,200 communities it sustains across the country.

With the help of member-companies, FPAC develops programs to promote Canada's leadership in sustainable forest management and environmental stewardship. FPAC builds on almost 100 years of experience as the former Canadian Pulp and Paper Association (CPPA).



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