

**Raising the Bar for Sustainability: The Graphic Arts Community Chooses SFI® Certification and Supports Responsible Forest Management Worldwide.**

By Kathy Abusow, President and CEO, Sustainable Forestry Initiative

As designers and artists, you are at the forefront of trends and have a glimpse of tomorrow's messages today. I'm sure you can agree there was time when environmental responsibility was a niche for a few select clients. That time is gone. The environment is everyone's responsibility.

The design community is a part of this too. Environmental options for paper are much greater than in the past because of the hundreds of paper producers and printers who play an active role in responsible forestry through Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI®) certification. The SFI program - managed by SFI Inc, a non-profit organization - is an internationally endorsed certification program that enables companies to meet the growing market demand for forest products from 3<sup>rd</sup> party certified well-managed forests.

And demand is clearly on the rise.

Over the past year at SFI, we've seen unprecedented growth. Small and large forest managers and land owners across North America are certifying to SFI's standard. By early spring we reached the 150 million acre milestone, representing an 11% increase in certified forest area in 2007.

This momentum is happening in the marketplace too in our tracking and labeling programs. The 100<sup>th</sup> chain-of-custody printer was recently certified, there's been a 750% increase in the number of certified locations since 2006, and there are more certified paper products than ever before. As a result, more companies across the supply chain can now label their products as SFI certified. This translates to quality selection and reliable supply, but most importantly, it means designers, specifiers and consumers can be confident that the product they use - be it reams of paper or packaging - comes from well-managed forests.

The SFI label is a visual cue - like the recycling logo - it provides the marketplace with a valuable tool to buy responsibly. And recycling is an important piece of the puzzle, but it usually only accounts for a fraction of the paper product. Until recently, few have been asking where the rest of the wood fibre in the paper comes from - that is changing. SFI certification helps complete the equation.

Since SFI is already among the world's largest forest certification programs, supply of product is strong. However, the more individuals request certified product, the stronger the signal to the marketplace that transparency and environmentally-responsible products are not a niche and should be the norm. Ultimately this encourages better forest management practices around the world. This is critically important given that only 10% of the world's forests are currently certified.

When you choose SFI certified paper, you not only demonstrate your commitment to the environment, but also help your clients meet their own commitments. Together, you raise the bar for sustainability in business, promote responsible forestry, and ultimately, play an active role in finding environmental solutions that benefit everyone.

Finding SFI products is simple. Visit [www.sfiprogram.org](http://www.sfiprogram.org) for a list of products and suppliers, and ask your printer for SFI certified paper. By doing so, you'll join a growing community of companies, land-owners, and social and environmental organizations all committed to improving forest practices on globally.

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**Kathy Abusow Bio:**

Kathy Abusow is President and CEO of SFI Inc., a 501c(3) non-profit organization solely responsible for maintaining, overseeing and improving the Sustainable Forestry Initiative program. SFI Inc. directs all elements of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative program including the SFI Standard, chain-of-custody certification, fiber sourcing, labeling and marketing. SFI Inc. is overseen by a three-chamber Board of Directors representing social, environmental and economic sectors.

Kathy has authored numerous publications related to forest certification, green building and responsible procurement. She earned an undergraduate degree from McGill University with studies at Leningrad State University in Russia and a M.A. from Harvard University in Regional Studies: Russia, Eastern Europe, Central Asia, with a concentration in sustainable development of natural resources.