



**Section 6. Guidance to SFI 2015-2019 Standard
January 6, 2014**

Section 6

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Objective 4: Forests with Exceptional <i>Conservation Value</i>	3
2.1 NatureServe Resources for Global and Occurrence Ranks	4
2.2 Occurrence Quality.....	5
3. Objective 4: <i>Wildlife Habitats Diversity and Invasive Exotic Plants and Animals</i>	6
3.1 <i>Wildlife Habitats Diversity</i>	6
3.2 <i>Invasive Exotic Plants and Animals</i>	6
4. Objective 10: Best Management Practices Monitoring	7
5. Objective 12: <i>Biodiversity Hotspots and High-biodiversity Wilderness Areas</i>	7
5.1 <i>Biodiversity Hotspots and High-Biodiversity Wilderness Areas</i>	8
5.2 Resources for the <i>Conservation of Biological Diversity</i>	13
6. Objectives 11 and 17: Certified Logging Professionals and Use of Trained Loggers.....	16
6.1 <i>Certified Logging Professionals</i>	16
6.2 Use of Trained Loggers	17
7. ILO Core Conventions.....	18
8. <i>SFI Implementation Committees</i>	19
9. Transition to the <i>SFI 2015-2019 Standard</i>	22

1. Introduction

SFI Inc. completes a review of its standard and supporting documents every five years, which is consistent with international protocols for forest certification standard revision cycles. The fourth public review, conducted in 2013-2014, led to the *SFI 2015-2019 Standard* and supporting documents.

This guidance document is intended to assist *SFI Certified Program Participants* and *certification bodies* in interpreting and implementing new and existing provisions in the *SFI 2015-2019 Standard*.

This document provides additional information that may help *Certified Program Participants* make management decisions to meet *SFI Standard* requirements. *SFI Inc.* routinely researches ways to improve the functionality of the *SFI* program; thus this document may be updated over time.

2. Objective 4: Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value

Objective 4 of the 2014-2019 *SFI Standard* extends the *biodiversity* requirements to *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value* (FECV).

Objective 4. *Conservation of Biological Diversity* including *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value*. To manage the quality and distribution of *wildlife habitats* and contribute to the *conservation of biological diversity* by developing and implementing *stand-* and *landscape-level* measures that promote a diversity of types of *habitat* and successional stages, and *conservation* of forest plants and animals, including *aquatic* species.

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, *SFI Certified Program Participants* can use the NatureServe database to identify species and communities for protection. Learn more about NatureServe *Conservation Status Assessments* at:

www.natureserve.org/publications/ConsStatusAssess_StatusFactors.jsp

2.1 NatureServe Resources for Global and Occurrence Ranks

Identification and protection of *critically imperiled* and *imperiled species* and communities is a step-wise 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/ Natural Heritage Programs rank viability of element occurrences (community or species) using standard methodologies to yield an element occurrence ranking. A standard set of Element Occurrence Rank Specifications is developed and maintained for each element, and then applied 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 Standard* requires that *Certified Program Participants* have “plans to locate and protect known sites associated with viable occurrences of *critically imperiled* and *imperiled species* and communities.”

Under the *SFI 2015-2019 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 there is less potential for viability (C-), they are to be managed at the *Certified Program Participant's* discretion.

Element occurrences with poor estimated viability (D) would not be protected under the *SFI 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 assessed and determined to be of C- or D quality. Occurrences ranked F are not covered under the *SFI 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 Program Participants* are encouraged to seek additional information on occurrence ranking from NatureServe (www.natureserve.org/prodServices/eodraft/5.pdf) and/or collaborate with qualified *conservation* experts.

2.2 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 the quality of an occurrence provides the basis for assessing stresses – the degradation or impairment – of element occurrences 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 and 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 requires significant effort to be maintained or restored to its desired status.

Key ecological factors vary by element type, but all are grouped into three categories of size, condition and landscape context. Each of these three categories 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 measure progress toward local *conservation* objectives.

Definitions of these categories are:

Size is a measure of the area or abundance of the *conservation* element's occurrence. It may simply be a measure of the occurrence's patch size or geographic coverage, and it may also include an estimate of sub-population size or density. Minimum dynamic area, one aspect of size, is the area needed to ensure survival or re-establishment of a population or community after natural disturbance.

Condition is an integrated measure of the composition, structure and biotic interactions that characterize the occurrence. This includes factors such as reproduction, age structure, biological composition (e.g. presence of native versus *invasive exotic plants and animals*; 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, fragmentation of ecological communities and systems, and the ability of any element to respond to environmental change through dispersal, migration, or re-colonization. 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.

3. Objective 4: *Wildlife Habitats Diversity and Invasive Exotic Plants and Animals*

Objective 4 includes performance measures and indicators for *conservation of biological diversity*. Additional information is provided here for *wildlife habitats diversity* and *invasive exotic plants and animals*.

3.1 *Wildlife Habitats Diversity*

Programs to promote *conservation of biological diversity* should 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 proper selection of harvesting methods including clearcutting and the use of prescribed fire.

3.2 *Invasive Exotic Plants and Animals*

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, *invasive exotic plants and animals* are "any species, including its seeds, eggs, spores, or other biological material capable of propagating that species, that is not native to that ecosystem, whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health." Examples would include gypsy moth and kudzu, but not the barred owl.

SFI Certified Program Participants should become knowledgeable about invasive exotic plants and animals 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. erosion control or seed selection for wildlife plots) to limit the introduction, impact and spread of invasive exotic plants and animals. Indicator 4.1.6

does not require an *SFI Certified Program Participant* to eliminate *invasive exotic plants and animals* on their land. In some places *invasive exotic plants and animals* are well established and eradication by the *SFI Certified Program Participants* is unrealistic.

Experts in this area believe the most effective means of addressing *invasive exotic plants and animals* include:

- a. awareness building,
- b. monitoring,
- c. preventing new introductions, and
- d. eliminating new occurrences.

SFI Certified Program Participants should emphasize these as priorities in their programs. Forest practices that reduce the abundance of *invasive exotic plants and animals* are preferred if they can be addressed within the context of the *SFI Certified Program Participant's* overall management objectives.

4. Objective 10: Best Management Practices Monitoring

Objective 10 of the *SFI 2015-2019 Standard* calls for adherence to *Best Management Practices*: "To broaden the practice of *sustainable forestry* through 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 Standard* with requirements for on-the-ground management, monitoring, training and research. The *SFI 2015-2019 Standard* strengthened requirements for *best management practices* application with a new indicator:

"10.1.2 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 Program Participants'* contracts for purchasing raw material from their suppliers to ensure they do require the use of *best management practices*, this new indicator will further highlight the importance of *best management practices* and their use by all suppliers throughout the supply stream.

5. Objective 12: Biodiversity Hotspots and High-biodiversity Wilderness Areas

Objective 12 of the *SFI 2015-2019 Standard* calls for *fiber sourcing policies* that promote *conservation* of forests and *biodiversity* in areas outside of the United States and Canada identified as *biodiversity hotspots* and *high-biodiversity wilderness areas*.

Objective 12. Promote *Conservation of Biological Diversity, Biodiversity Hotspots and High-biodiversity wilderness areas*. To broaden the practice of *sustainable forestry* by conserving *biological diversity, biodiversity hotspots and high-biodiversity wilderness areas*.

Performance Measure 12.1. *Certified Program Participants* shall ensure that their *fiber sourcing programs* support the *principles of sustainable forestry*, including efforts to promote *conservation of biological diversity*.

Indicator:

1. *Fiber sourcing* from areas outside the United States and Canada promotes *conservation* of:
 - a. *biodiversity hotspots* and *high-biodiversity wilderness areas* utilizing information from Conservation International; and
 - b. *biological diversity* utilizing information from organizations such as the World Resources Institute, the *Alliance for Zero Extinction*, World Wildlife Fund, and International Union for Conservation of Nature.

This document provides additional information drawn from Conservation International, the *Alliance for Zero Extinction*, World Wildlife Fund, World Resources Institute and the International Union for Conservation of Nature to aid *SFI Certified Program Participants* in implementing these requirements.

Areas identified by any of these organizations may be wholly or partially within the United States and Canada. For the purposes of the *SFI Standard*, these areas are addressed by NatureServe or equivalent processes to identify *critically imperiled* and *imperiled* species and communities in North America (see earlier section regarding Objective 4: *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value*).

Compliance with the *SFI 2015-2019 Standard* does not mean that that *Certified Program Participants* must cease all raw material or procurement activities from all unmanaged forests within these areas. Rather, the emphasis is on seeking assurance that fiber and logs are secured from areas harvested legally, and avoiding actions that serve to cause or encourage further destruction of remaining original primary vegetation. Working to increasingly meet fiber and wood production needs from plantations and managed forests enhances efforts to protect remaining biologically diverse habitats. *Certified Program Participants* can work with *conservation* organizations, government entities and others to provide additional guidance on aligning business and *conservation* objectives within these regions.

5.1 Biodiversity Hotspots and High-Biodiversity Wilderness Areas

Since 2002, the *SFI program* has relied on Conservation International's definitions of *biodiversity hotspots* and *high-biodiversity wilderness areas* (formerly major tropical wilderness areas) to identify areas of potential concern for *Certified Program Participants* who source fiber from overseas. Conservation International (www.conservation.org) seeks to empower societies to responsibly and sustainably care for nature for the well-being of humanity through a strong foundation of science, partnership and field demonstration. Conservation International maintains a list of global priority areas with exceptional biological value, and works to protect them.

5.1.a *Biodiversity Hotspots*

The *biodiversity hotspots* hold especially high numbers of endemic species, yet their combined area of remaining habitat covers only 2.3 percent of the Earth's land surface. Each hotspot faces extreme threats and has already lost at least 70 percent of its original natural vegetation. Over 50 percent of the world's plant species and 42 percent of all terrestrial vertebrate species are endemic to the 34 *biodiversity hotspots*.

Africa and Madagascar

(http://www.conservation.org/explore/africa_madagascar/pages/priorities.aspx)

CAPE FLORISTIC REGION

Evergreen fire-dependent shrublands characterize the landscape of the Cape Floristic Region.

COASTAL FORESTS OF EASTERN AFRICA

Though tiny and fragmented, the forest remnants that make up the Coastal Forests of Eastern Africa contain remarkable levels of *biodiversity*.

EASTERN AFROMONTANE

The mountains of the Eastern Afromontane hotspot are scattered along the eastern edge of Africa, from Saudi Arabia in the north to Zimbabwe in the south.

GUINEAN FORESTS OF WESTERN AFRICA

The lowland forests of West Africa are home to more than a quarter of Africa's mammals, including more than 20 species of primates.

HORN OF AFRICA

The arid Horn of Africa has been a renowned source of biological resources for thousands of years.

MADAGASCAR & THE INDIAN OCEAN ISLANDS

Madagascar and its neighboring island groups have an astounding total of eight plant families, four bird families, and five primate families that live nowhere else on Earth.

MAPUTALAND-PONDOLAND-ALBANY

Maputaland-Pondoland-Albany, which stretches along the east coast of southern Africa below the Great Escarpment, is an important center of plant endemism.

SUCCULENT KAROO

The Succulent Karoo of South Africa and Namibia boasts the richest succulent flora on earth, as well as remarkable endemism in plants.

Asia-Pacific (http://www.conservation.org/explore/priority_areas/hotspots/asia-pacific/Pages/asia-pacific.aspx)

EAST MELANESIAN ISLANDS

Once largely intact, the 1,600 East Melanesian Islands are now a hotspot due, sadly, to accelerating levels of habitat loss.

HIMALAYA

The Himalaya Hotspot is home to the world's highest mountains, including Mount Everest.

INDO-BURMA

Encompassing more than two million square kilometers of tropical Asia, Indo-Burma is still revealing its biological treasures.

JAPAN

The islands that make up the Japanese Archipelago stretch from the humid subtropics in the south to the boreal zone in the north, resulting in a wide variety of climates and ecosystems.

MOUNTAINS OF SOUTHWEST CHINA

With dramatic variations in climate and topography, the Mountains of Southwest China support a wide array of habitats including the most endemic-rich temperate flora in the world.

NEW CALEDONIA

An island the size of New Jersey in the South Pacific Ocean, New Caledonia is the home of no less than five endemic plant families.

NEW ZEALAND

A mountainous archipelago once dominated by temperate rainforests, New Zealand harbors extraordinary levels of endemic species.

PHILIPPINES

More than 7,100 islands fall within the borders of the Philippines hotspot, identified as one of the world's biologically richest countries.

POLYNESIA-MICRONESIA

Comprising 4,500 islands stretched across the southern Pacific Ocean, the Polynesia-Micronesia hotspot is the epicenter of the current global extinction crisis.

SOUTHWEST AUSTRALIA

The forest, woodlands, shrublands and heath of Southwest Australia are characterized by high endemism among plants and reptiles.

SUNDALAND

The spectacular flora and fauna of the Sundaland Hotspot are succumbing to the explosive growth of industrial forestry in these islands.

WALLACEA

The flora and fauna of Wallacea are so varied that every island in this hotspot needs secure protected areas to preserve the region's *biodiversity*.

WESTERN GHATS & SRI LANKA

Faced with tremendous population pressure, the forests of the Western Ghats and Sri Lanka have been dramatically impacted by the demands for timber and agricultural land.

Europe and Central Asia

(http://www.conservation.org/explore/europe_central_asia/pages/priorities.aspx)

CAUCASUS

The deserts, savannas, arid woodlands and forests that comprise the Caucasus hotspot contain a large number of endemic plant species.

IRANO-ANATOLIAN

Forming a natural barrier between the Mediterranean Basin and the dry plateaus of Western Asia, the mountains and basins that make up the Irano-Anatolian Hotspot contain many centers of local endemism.

MEDITERRANEAN BASIN

The flora of the Mediterranean Basin is dramatic. Its 22,500 endemic vascular plant species are more than four times the number found in all the rest of Europe.

MOUNTAINS OF CENTRAL ASIA

Comprising two of Asia's major mountain ranges, the Mountains of Central Asia were known to early Persians as the "roof of the world."

North and Central America

(http://www.conservation.org/explore/priority_areas/hotspots/north_central_america/Pages/north_central_america.aspx)

CALIFORNIA FLORISTIC PROVINCE

The California Floristic Province is a zone of Mediterranean-type climate and has the high levels of plant endemism characteristic of these regions.

CARIBBEAN ISLANDS

The Caribbean Islands support exceptionally diverse ecosystems, ranging from montane cloud forests to cactus scrublands, which have been devastated by deforestation and encroachment.

MADREAN PINE-OAK WOODLANDS

Encompassing Mexico's main mountain chains, and isolated mountaintop islands in Baja California and the southern United States, the Madrean Pine-Oak Woodlands is an area of rugged mountainous terrain, high relief and deep canyons.

MESOAMERICA

The Mesoamerican forests are the third largest among the world's hotspots. Their spectacular endemic species include quetzals, howler monkeys and 17,000 plant species.

South America

(http://www.conservation.org/explore/priority_areas/hotspots/south_america/Pages/south_america.aspx)

ATLANTIC FOREST

The Atlantic Forest of tropical South America boasts 20,000 plant species, 40 percent of which are endemic.

CERRADO

The Cerrado region of Brazil, comprising 21 percent of the country, is the most extensive woodland-savanna in South America.

CHILEAN WINTER RAINFALL-VALDIVIAN FOREST

A virtual continental island bounded by the Pacific Ocean, the Andes Mountains and the Atacama Desert, the Chilean Winter Rainfall-Valdivian Forest harbors richly endemic flora and fauna.

TROPICAL ANDES

The richest and most diverse region on Earth, the Tropical Andes region contains about a sixth of all plant life in less than one percent of the world's land area.

TUMBES-CHOCÓ-MAGDALENA

Tumbes-Chocó-Magdalena is bordered by two other hotspots: Mesoamerica to the north and the Tropical Andes to the east.

5.1.b High-Biodiversity Wilderness Areas

(http://www.conservation.org/explore/priority_areas/wilderness/Pages/default.aspx)

High-biodiversity wilderness areas are areas where the vegetation is still over 70 percent intact.

Amazonia

Spanning nine South American countries, the Amazonia wilderness is unlike any other, supporting more than 40,000 species of plants, with three-quarters of them found nowhere else.

Congo Basin

Seven African nations share the second-largest expanse of tropical wilderness in the world. Unlike other landscapes in the region, a great portion of the remote Congo Basin forests have remained intact.

New Guinea

The world's biggest tropical island and its outlying islands contain the largest remaining wilderness in the entire Asia-Pacific. New Guinea and its neighbors are home to thousands of species known to science, and possibly many yet to be discovered.

North American Deserts

This arid, mostly desert region covering northern Mexico and the southwestern United States contains more unique species than any other desert on the planet, including the majority of all known cactus species.

Miombo-Mopane Woodlands and Savannas of Southern Africa

Quite possibly the single largest block of dry woodlands in the world, this wilderness region stretches across 10 countries, supporting large numbers of wildlife and people who depend on its natural resources.

5.2 Resources for the *Conservation of Biological Diversity*

The following table provides information on each organization referenced in Indicator 12.1.b in the *SFI Standard*. This information is intended to provide background information on each resource and internet links are provided for further details.

Organization & Website	Overview of Organization & Goals	How Sites are Classified	For More Information
<p><i>Alliance for Zero Extinction (AZE)</i> (http://www.zeroextinction.org)</p>	<p><i>AZE</i> is a joint global initiative of 52 <i>biodiversity conservation</i> organizations, aimed to prevent extinctions by identifying and safeguarding key sites where species are in imminent danger of disappearing. Its goal is to create a front line of defense against extinction by eliminating threats and restoring habitat to allow species populations to rebound. The purpose of the Alliance is to identify sites in most urgent need of <i>conservation</i>, and to act together to prevent species extinctions.</p>	<p><i>AZE</i> has identified the last remaining sites for the world's most highly threatened species, 93 percent of which are threatened primarily by habitat destruction.</p> <p>The data gathering process was performed over a period of many months with input from regional experts, as well as experts in the five <i>AZE</i> taxa (mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and conifers) from around the world. The data was verified using existing databases such as the IUCN Red List, BirdLife International's global database, and the Global Amphibian Assessment. <i>AZE</i> scientists, working in collaboration with an international network of experts, have so far identified 595 such sites that must be effectively protected to prevent the extinction of 794 of the world's most threatened species including mammals, birds, some reptiles (crocodilians, iguanas, turtles and tortoises), amphibians and</p>	<p>The Alliance for Zero Extinction has released an updated set of sites, coinciding with the 2010 meeting of the parties on the Convention on Biological Diversity in Nagoya, Japan. http://www.zeroextinction.org/sitespecies.htm</p>

Organization & Website	Overview of Organization & Goals	How Sites are Classified	For More Information
		<p>conifers (many sites have more than one <i>AZE</i> “trigger species” confined to them). Additionally, <i>AZE</i> uses the following criteria to identify priority sites (a site must meet all three to qualify): Endangerment, Irreplaceability, and Discreteness.</p>	
<p>International Union for the <i>Conservation of Biodiversity</i> (IUCN) (http://www.iucn.org/what/biodiversity/)</p>	<p>IUCN’s work on <i>biodiversity</i> includes comprehensive research on the status of <i>biodiversity</i> and thousands of individual animal and plant species; action to protect specific species; managing and restoring natural areas, national parks and other protected areas; and promoting the sustainable use of natural resources. IUCN also provides the knowledge, standards and tools for <i>biodiversity conservation</i> for governments, community organizations, the United Nations and business. The IUCN Species Programme, working with the IUCN Species Survival Commission, has for more than four decades been assessing the <i>conservation</i> status of species, subspecies, varieties and even selected subpopulations on a global scale in order to highlight taxa threatened with extinction, and therefore promote their <i>conservation</i>.</p>	<p>The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™ provides taxonomic, <i>conservation</i> status and distribution information on plants and animals that have been globally evaluated using the IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria. The main purpose of the IUCN Red List is to catalogue and highlight those plants and animals that are facing a higher risk of global extinction (i.e. those listed as Critically Endangered, Endangered and Vulnerable). The IUCN Red List also includes information on plants and animals that are categorized as Extinct or Extinct in the Wild; on taxa that cannot be evaluated because of insufficient information (i.e. are Data Deficient); and on plants and animals that are either close to meeting the threatened thresholds or that would be threatened were it not for an ongoing taxon-specific <i>conservation</i> programme (i.e. are Near Threatened).</p>	<p>Access the <i>conservation</i> status of species here: http://www.iucnredlist.org/</p> <p>A how-to guide to the IUCN Red List: http://www.iucnredlist.org/documents/redlist_website_users_guide.pdf</p>
<p>World Resources Institute (WRI) Intact Forest Landscapes (http://www.intactforests.org/)</p>	<p>An Intact Forest Landscape (IFL) is an unbroken expanse of natural ecosystems within the zone of current forest extent, showing no signs of significant human activity, and large enough that all native <i>biodiversity</i>, including viable populations of wide-ranging species, could be maintained. The IFL concept and its technical definition were introduced to help create, implement and monitor policies concerning the human impact on forest landscapes at the regional or country levels. The essence of the approach is to use high spatial resolution satellite</p>	<p>An IFL is an unbroken expanse of natural ecosystems within the zone of current forest extent, showing no signs of significant human activity and large enough that all native <i>biodiversity</i>, including viable populations of wide-ranging species, could be maintained. Although all IFL are within the forest zone, some may contain extensive naturally tree-less areas, including grasslands, wetlands, lakes,</p>	<p>The global IFL map can be found here: http://www.intactforests.org/worldmap.html</p>

Organization & Website	Overview of Organization & Goals	How Sites are Classified	For More Information
	<p>information to establish the boundaries of large undeveloped forest areas, and use these boundaries as a baseline for monitoring. Developed by a group of non-governmental environmental organizations (Greenpeace, World Resources Institute, Global Forest Watch, Biodiversity Conservation Center, International Socio-Ecological Union, and Transparent World), the IFL concept, mapping and monitoring algorithms have been used both in regional and global forest monitoring projects and in scientific research.</p>	<p>alpine areas and ice. This definition builds on the definition of Frontier Forest developed by WRI (Bryant et al., 1997). Technically, an IFL is defined as a territory within today's global extent of forest cover which contains forest and non-forest ecosystems minimally influenced by human economic activity, with an area of at least 500 km² (50,000 ha) and a minimal width of 10 km (measured as the diameter of a circle that is entirely inscribed within the boundaries of the territory). Areas with evidence of certain types of human influence are considered disturbed, and consequently not eligible for inclusion, e.g. settlements, transportation infrastructure such as roads, railways, pipeline and power transmission lines; agriculture and timber production; industrial activities during the last 30 to 70 years, such as logging, mining, oil and gas exploration and extraction and peat extraction.</p>	
<p>World Wildlife Fund (WWF) (http://www.worldwildlife.org/science/ecoregions/global200.html)</p>	<p>WWF uses the best available scientific knowledge to preserve the diversity and abundance of life on Earth and the health of ecological systems, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protecting natural areas and wild populations of plants and animals, including endangered species; • promoting sustainable approaches to the use of renewable natural resources; and • promoting more efficient use of resources and energy and the maximum reduction of pollution <p>WWF's Global 200 attempts to identify a set of ecoregions whose <i>conservation</i> would achieve the goal of saving a broad diversity of the Earth's</p>	<p>WWF researchers analyzed global patterns of <i>biodiversity</i> to identify a set of the Earth's terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecoregions that harbor exceptional <i>biodiversity</i> and are representative of its ecosystems. They placed each of the Earth's ecoregions within a system of 30 biomes and biogeographic realms to facilitate a representation analysis.</p> <p><i>Biodiversity</i> features were compared among ecoregions to assess their irreplaceability or distinctiveness. These features included species richness, endemic species, unusual higher taxa, unusual ecological or evolutionary phenomena, and the global</p>	<p>Global 200 maps can be found at (http://www.nationalgeographic.com/wildworld/)</p> <p>http://www.nationalgeographic.com/wildworld/profiles/global200_index.html</p> <p>WWF Wildfinder Tool: http://www.worldwildlife.org/science/wildfinder/</p>

Organization & Website	Overview of Organization & Goals	How Sites are Classified	For More Information
	<p>ecosystems.</p> <p>These ecoregions include those with exceptional levels of <i>biodiversity</i>, such as high species richness or endemism, or those with unusual ecological or evolutionary phenomena.</p> <p>WWF, in collaboration with the National Geographic Society developed an interactive map and descriptions of the Global 200 available through a Wild World website.</p>	<p>rarity of habitats. This process yielded 238 ecoregions – the Global 200 – comprising 142 terrestrial, 53 freshwater and 43 marine priority ecoregions. Ecoregions were also assigned a conservation status, with those most at-risk assigned “critical” or “endangered”.</p>	

6. Objectives 11 and 17: Certified Logging Professionals and Use of Trained Loggers

6.1 Certified Logging Professionals

SFI Inc. recognizes the potential and value in promoting the use of *certified logging professionals*, and the *SFI 2015-2019 Standard* encourages their use with revisions made to indicators under performance measure 11.1 and performance measure 17.1.

“11.1.2 List of *certified logging professionals* and *qualified logging professionals* maintained by *Certified Program Participant*, state or provincial agency, loggers’ association or other organization.”

“17.1.5 Program to promote the use of *certified logging professionals* (where available), *qualified resource professionals* and *qualified logging professionals*.”

Certified logging professional programs are in their infancy in terms of their development and are not in widespread use. The *SFI 2015-2019 Standard* recognizes these limitations while encouraging their use by *Certified program participants* where they are available and after consideration of other factors involved in developing contractual relationships. *Certified logging professionals* are those professionals who have completed *SFI Implementation Committee* approved training programs and who have also successfully completed and are members in good standing of a credible *certified logging professional* program recognized by the *SFI Implementation Committee*.

SFI Implementation Committees will review, when requested, *certified logging professional programs* to determine if they meet the criteria in indicator 17.2.3. This process is identical to the one currently in use by *SFI Implementation Committees* for evaluating credible logger training programs.

Indicator 17.2.3: Participation in or support of *SFI Implementation Committees* to establish criteria for recognition of logger certification *programs*, where they exist, that include:

- (a) completion of *SFI Implementation Committee* recognized logger training *programs* and meeting continuing education requirements of the training *program*;

- (b) independent in-the-forest verification of conformance with the logger certification *program* standards;
- (c) compliance with all applicable laws and regulations including responsibilities under the U.S. Endangered Species Act, the Canadian Species at Risk Act and other measures to protect *wildlife habitat*;
- (d) use of *best management practices* to protect of water quality;
- (e) logging safety;
- (f) compliance with acceptable *silviculture* and utilization standards;
- (g) aesthetic management techniques employed where applicable; and
- (h) adherence to a management or harvest plan that is site specific and agreed to by the forest landowner.

6.2 Use of Trained Loggers

Logger training is a very effective tool in promoting sustainable forest management, and has been a key component of the *SFI Standard* since its inception. The *SFI 2015-2019 Standard* strengthened requirements for logger training with revisions to 11.1.1, 17.1.5, 17.2.1 and 17.2.2.

"11.1.1. *Program* to promote the use of *certified logging professionals* (where available), *qualified resource professionals* and *qualified logging professionals*."

"17.1.5. *Certified Program Participants* shall have written agreements for the use of certified logging professionals (where available) or wood producers that have completed training programs and are recognized as qualified logging professionals. "

"17.2.1. Participation in or support of *SFI Implementation Committees* to establish criteria and identify delivery mechanisms for *wood producers'* training courses and periodic continuing education that address:

- a. awareness of *sustainable forestry principles* and the *SFI* program;
- b. *best management practices*, including streamside management and road construction, maintenance and retirement;
- c. *reforestation, invasive exotic plants and animals, forest resource conservation, aesthetics, and special sites*;
- d. awareness of responsibilities under the U.S. Endangered Species Act, the Canadian Species at Risk Act, and other measures to protect *wildlife habitat* (e.g. *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value*);
- e. awareness of rare forested natural communities as identified by provincial or state agencies, or by credible organizations such as NatureServe, The Nature Conservancy, etc.
- f. logging safety;
- g. U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (COHS) regulations, wage and hour rules, and other provincial, state and local employment laws;
- h. transportation issues;

- i. business management;
- j. public *policy* and outreach; and
- k. awareness of emerging technologies.

"17.2.2 The SIC-approved wood producer's training programs shall have a continuing education component with coursework that supports the current logger training programs, safety and the principles of sustainable forestry."

Program is defined in the *SFI 2010-2014 Standard* as an organized system, process or set of activities to achieve an *objective* or *performance measure*. Indicators 11.1.1 and 17.1.5 requires *Certified program participants* to develop a *program* for the purchase of their raw material from logging professionals who have completed training programs. They should strive to limit their deliveries from untrained loggers to no more than 5% with allowances for turnover in the logging workforce, availability, timing and length of training programs, *other wood suppliers* (defined as a person or organization who infrequently supplies wood fiber on a small scale, such as farmers and small-scale land-clearing operators), and availability of trained logging professionals locally. This cap on deliveries by untrained loggers also needs to recognize that catastrophic events (severe storms, wildlife, beetle epidemics) can result in large-scale salvage efforts over comparatively short periods of time which can result in increased deliveries by untrained loggers.

7. ILO Core Conventions

Performance measure 15.2 was added to address differences in U.S. labor law and the ILO core conventions. Additional guidance is provided here for application of 15.2 for independent contractors and for *Certified Program Participants*.

Application of 15.2 for independent contractors operating on lands owned or controlled by *Certified Program Participants*:

- *Certification bodies* at the time of the audit will collect and review information the *Program Participant* 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 *Program Participant*, *SFI Inc.* and the *SFI ILO* Task Force. Information received will be reviewed every 6 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 15.2 shall only apply to the core conventions not fully covered by existing U.S. or Canadian law.
 - Right to Organize (No. 87)
 - Right to Organize 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, and 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 15.2 for *Certified Program Participants* with respect to their employees operating on lands owned or controlled by *Certified Program Participants*:

- *Certification bodies* at the time of the audit will collect and review information the *Certified Program Participant* 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 15.2 through the inconsistent practices procedures outlined in the *SFI* Public Inquires and Official Complaints (Section 11) requirements, item 3.
- All information collected through the inconsistent practices process will be reviewed every 6 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 15.2 shall only apply to the core conventions not fully covered by existing U.S. or Canadian law.
 - Right to Organize (No. 87)
 - Right to Organize 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 “grandfathered in” as meeting the requirements in indicator 15.2 but must still participate in the information gathering process with their *certification bodies* (for independent contractors) and the inconsistent practices process in item 8.4 of the *SFI* Public Inquires and Official Complaints (Section 11) requirements to aid in resolution of any issues that may be identified.

8. *SFI Implementation Committees*

SFI Certified Program Participants established state *SFI Implementation Committees* in 1995 and the first provincial *SFI Implementation Committee* in 2001. *SFI Implementation Committees* provide a strong foundation for the *SFI program* and make important contributions in assuring *SFI Standard* conformance and *SFI program* recognition. The state, provincial and regional *SFI Implementation Committees* are semi-autonomous committees reflecting significant geographic and organizational diversity. This flexible, grassroots

infrastructure is a fundamental strength of the *SFI program* and its goal to promote responsible forestry across all forest ownerships.

The definition of *SFI Implementation Committee (SIC)* in the *SFI 2015-2019 Standard* is: A state, provincial, or regional committee organized by *SFI Certified Program Participants* to facilitate or manage the *programs* and alliances that support the growth of the *SFI program*, including sustainable forest management."

In 2009, *SFI Inc.* developed an ad-hoc committee to review the *SFI Implementation Committee* governance document for relevance to the current *SFI program*, and to ensure consistency with the *SFI 2010-2014 Standard*. This committee reinforced the need for this governance document to ensure consistency with the current *SFI Standard*. 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 *SFI program* changes.

Some key elements from the governance document and how they relate to the *SFI 2015-2019 Standard* are included here.

Vision Statement

SFI Implementation Committees (SICs) are an integral part of the *SFI program* and play a vital role in promoting training and landowner outreach, maintaining integrity of the *SFI program* and supporting and promoting responsible forestry and the *SFI program* at local levels.

Mission Statement

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) defines the *SIC Mission*, ensuring *SIC* goals and priorities are based on recommendations from the *SIC Governance Review Ad-hoc Committee*. The MOU clarifies both the *SIC mission* and supports obligations for *SFI Certified Program Participants* as follows:

- I. Overall *SIC Mission* – Effectively facilitate or manage at a state, provincial or regional level the programs and alliances which support the growth of sustainable forest management through the *SFI program*.
- II. Core *SIC Mission* – Priorities for all *SICs*:
 - A. Training & Education – Establish criteria and identify delivery mechanisms for logging professional, forest resource professional and wood producer training, and defining what it means to be "*SFI trained*".¹ Establish criteria for recognition of *certified logging professional programs*, where they exist.²

¹ *SFI 2015-2019 Standard* Indicator 17.2.1.

² *SFI 2015-2019 Standard* Indicator 17.2.3.

- B. Inconsistent Practices – Establish protocols for addressing, investigating, and responding to *SFI Standard* non-conformity allegations and inconsistent practices, and allegations regarding non-*Certified Program Participant* forest management practices.³
 - C. Landowner Outreach – Focus landowner outreach efforts on education and technical assistance.⁴
 - D. Informational Resources -- Focus informational resource efforts on increasing *SFI* program recognition, awareness and support with groups, such as local opinion leaders and forestry resource professionals.⁵
 - E. Annual Reporting -- Submit the *SIC* Annual Progress Report to *SFI Inc.*
 - F. *SFI* Program Integrity⁶ -- Protect the integrity of the *SFI* program by:
 - a) ensuring proper *SIC* service mark usage;
 - b) alerting *SFI Inc.* when improper communications or misleading claims are observed;
 - c) avoiding the appearance of participation or compliance by non-*SFI Certified Program Participants*; and
 - d) avoiding appearance of third-party certification by non-certified *SFI Certified Program Participants*.
- III. Secondary *SIC* Mission – Below are priorities which may be determined by each *SIC*; however, individual participants may choose not to participate or support these objectives.
- A. Training & Education -- Provide delivery mechanisms for logging professional, and forest resource professional, and wood producer training to address *SFI* program needs not adequately provided by other programs.
 - B. Market Outreach – Sponsor active market outreach efforts in local communities that may include paid advertising.
 - C. Recruitment – Encourage large landowners and all forest products facilities to enroll as *SFI Certified Program Participants*; encourage family forest owners to participate in American Tree Farm System or similar programs recognized by the *SFI* program, as appropriate.
 - D. Forest Management Statistics – Encourage government agencies to provide accessible timely, accurate harvest and regeneration statistics, in support of a *Certified Program Participant's* sustainable forestry programs.⁷
 - E. Research – Promote forestry research, science, and technology, upon which sustainable forest management decisions are based.⁸

SIC Organization

³ *SFI 2015-2019 Standard* Performance Measure 18.3

⁴ *SFI 2015-2019 Standard* Indicators 18.1.1. – 18.1.2.

⁵ *SFI 2015-2019 Standard* Performance Measure 18.2.

⁶ *SFI 2015-2019 Standard* Indicators 18.3.1. and 18.3.2.

⁷ *SFI 2015-2019 Standard* Performance Measure 16.2.

⁸ *SFI 2015-2019 Standard* Objective 16.

SICs are semi-autonomous committees reflecting significant geographic and organizational diversity. This flexible, grassroots infrastructure is a fundamental strength of the *SFI* program and our goal to promote sustainable forestry across all ownerships. The following is intended to clarify support expectations and provide guidance to ensure consistency, while still maintaining *SIC* flexibility.

9. Transition to the *SFI 2015-2019 Standard*

Changes adopted by the *SFI Inc.* Board of Directors to the *SFI Standard* must be incorporated into a *Certified Program Participant'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 Program Participant's* responsibility to work with the *certification body* to establish a surveillance audit schedule that meets the requirements outlined in the Section 9 *SFI 2015-2019* Audit Procedures and Auditor Qualifications and Accreditation. Additional guidance regarding the transition is included below:

- The *SFI 2015-2019 Standard* replaces the *SFI 2010-2014 Standard*, which is the current standard implemented by organizations within their forest operations in United States and Canada.
- *SFI Inc.* developed the *SFI 2015-2019 Standard*, but does not conduct auditing and certification. All certification, recertification and surveillance audits to the *SFI 2015-2019 Standard* shall be conducted by *certification bodies* accredited by the ANSI-ASQ National Accreditation Board (ANAB) or the Standards Council of Canada (SCC) to conduct *SFI certification*.
- Accredited *certification bodies* are required to maintain audit processes consistent with the requirements of International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 17021:2011 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 19011:2011 Guidelines for Auditing Management Systems.
- ANAB- and SCC-accredited certification to *the SFI 2015-2019 Standard* shall not be granted until it is published as a standard.
- *SFI Certified Program Participants* have one year from the time the *SFI 2015-2019 Standard* takes effect on January 1, 2015 to implement all new and revised requirements, and *Certified Program Participants* must demonstrate conformance to the new requirements at their first surveillance audit following the implementation period. Earlier adoption is encouraged.
- Initial certification audits in 2015 must be conducted against the *SFI 2015-2019 Standard*.
- After March 31, 2015 all re-certifications must be conducted against the *SFI 2015-2019 Standard*. For re-certifications against the *SFI 2015-2019 Standard* *nonconformities* against

changes made in the revised *SFI 2015-2019 Standard* shall be reported but will not adversely affect re-certification until after December 31, 2015.

- Surveillance audits through December 31, 2015 may be conducted against either the *SFI 2010-2014 Standard* or *SFI 2015-2019 Standard* at the Certified Program Participant's choice. For surveillance audits after March 31, 2015, *nonconformities* against changes made in the revised *SFI 2015-2019 Standard* shall be reported but will not adversely affect certification status until December 31, 2015; these audits shall also include an assessment of action plans to fully transition to the *SFI 2015-2019 Standard* by December 31, 2015.
- After December 31, 2015 all surveillance audits must be conducted against the *SFI 2015-2019 Standard*.