

Kathy Abusow
President and CEO
Sustainable Forestry Initiative, Inc.
Full-length biography

Kathy Abusow is President and Chief Executive Officer of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative, Inc. (SFI®), a fully independent, non-profit organization. The SFI® program is a comprehensive and rigorous sustainable forestry certification standard that covers more than 160 million certified acres (over 65 million ha.) in the U.S. and Canada and includes over 800 organizations that use the SFI forest certification, chain of custody and fiber sourcing standard or are SFI on-product label users.

In her leadership role at SFI, Kathy works with government organizations, small or large companies as well as conservation groups to promote forest certification along the entire supply chain.

Previously, Kathy managed a forest certification and market acceptance consultancy where she worked with government, trade organizations, and corporations around the world on marketplace issues such as procurement policy design, and green building rating tool's acceptance of wood and certified products. Over the past 15 years, Kathy has authored numerous publications related to forest certification and responsible procurement and is internationally respected for her technical expertise on forest certification standards including SFI, CSA, FSC and PEFC.

Kathy has served on several CSA committees, as well as the American National Standards Institute's (ANSI) ASQ National Accreditation Board Committee of Experts for Sustainable Forestry accreditation, and is past chair of the Society of American Foresters' Sustainability and Certification Working Group.

She is a member of the U.S. Green Building Council, Canadian Green Building Council, and a supporter of the GreenGlobes green building rating tool's inclusive approach to forest certification standards. Kathy is a member of the Canadian Institute of Forestry, and serves on the boards for the Canadian Forestry Association and the World Forestry Center. Kathy is chair of PEFC's US governing body and is a member of the PEFC Canada governing body.

Kathy's understanding of forest certification standards, chain of custody, conformity assessment and accreditation on both a technical and strategic level has contributed to the market acceptance and inclusive procurement of a variety of standards in use in North America. Kathy is active member of the CSA Sustainable Forest Management Technical Committee and a past member of FSC Canada's Great Lakes St.-Lawrence standards development committee.

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 and natural resources.