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Contact: Rick Cantrell, Vice President & COO  
703 875-9500 ext 26

**CORPORATE LEADERS AND CONSUMERS EMBRACE  
PRODUCTS FROM RESPONSIBLY MANAGED FORESTS  
Progress Report Details Tremendous SFI® Growth**

ARLINGTON, VA – A progress report issued today by the independent non-profit Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI) shows tremendous growth in the forest certification program, reflecting a rapidly expanding desire by companies, markets and consumers for responsible forest management and products. The SFI program is one of the largest and most widely accepted forest certification programs in the world, and is backed by strict labeling requirements that are used to tell consumers what they are buying.

SFI Inc.: Making a Difference on the Ground ([www.sfiprogram.org](http://www.sfiprogram.org)) explains why almost 500 organizations across the United States and Canada are directly involved with the SFI program. This is more than twice as many as at the start of 2007 when there were 21 SFI chain-of-custody certifications at 48 locations, and 212 program participants with 135 million acres (54.6 million hectares) of SFI-certified lands. When the 2007 progress report was completed in mid-June 2008, there were 235 chain-of-custody certifications at 637 locations, and 226 program participants with 152.6 million acres (61.7 million hectares) of certified lands. On top of this, many program participants and other organizations have SFI fiber sourcing certificates or meet the program's responsible procurement requirements.

“SFI Inc. stands for responsible forest management in North America and responsible procurement around the world,” said SFI President and CEO Kathy Abusow. “Our steady growth shows that corporate leaders, international markets and consumers at home share this view.” She added it is important to look back at what SFI Inc. and its partners achieved in 2007, and to look ahead to the future as SFI Inc. conducts a public review process leading to the SFI 2010-14 Standard.

The progress report highlights comments from the SFI External Review Panel, a group of independent experts (including academics, government officials, foresters and NGO representatives) who provide external oversight of the SFI program.

“Having already demonstrated solid achievements in improving forestry practices over tens of millions of acres in North America since 1995, in 2007 (SFI Inc.) greatly expanded consumer awareness of the importance of certified forest products through a significant expansion of its product labeling,” said panel chair Richard W. (Dick) Brinker, Dean and Professor in the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences at Auburn University.

“Increased recognition of the important role of forests in maintaining environmental integrity, supporting sustainable economic activity, and protecting vital community values is resulting in growing demand for sustainably produced forest products,” Brinker said. “The SFI label is increasingly recognized by a concerned public as a trusted symbol of products from well-managed forests.”

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Some of the SFI program's achievements in 2007 included:

- Training a total of 6,576 resource and logging professionals in responsible forestry, bringing the total trained through SFI Implementation Committee programs since 1995 to 110,778.
- Creating new awards, including the Leadership in Conservation Research Award, to recognize strong collaborative partnerships that improve forestry practices.
- Supporting forest research, with an investment of \$100.2 million (US) by program participants. The total invested since 1995 is close to \$1 billion (US).
- Agreeing to join sponsors such as the World Bank, USAID and the U.S. Forest Service to support an international Forest Trends forum in early 2008 where international experts explored ways to respond to the complex issues around illegal logging and associated trade.
- Establishing an SFI marketing strategy to promote the benefits of forest certification and the value of the SFI brand.

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### **About SFI Inc.**

SFI Inc. is a 501c(3) non-profit charitable organization, and is solely responsible for maintaining, overseeing and improving the Sustainable Forestry Initiative program ([www.sfiprogram.org](http://www.sfiprogram.org)), a sustainable forestry certification program that is internationally recognized and among the largest in the world. Across North America, 152.6 million acres (61.7 million hectares) are certified to the SFI 2005-2009 Standard, which is based on principles and measures that promote sustainability, including measures to protect water quality, biodiversity, wildlife habitat, species at risk and forests with exceptional conservation value. The SFI Standard includes unique fiber sourcing requirements that promote responsible forest management on all suppliers' lands. SFI Inc. also has chain-of-custody certification, which is used to tell buyers how much certified fiber is in a specific product.