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Global Forestry Leaders Express Mutual Support for Advancing Sustainable Forestry

Washington D.C., Geneva Switzerland — The [Sustainable Forestry Initiative Inc. \(SFI\)](#), [American Forest Foundation \(AFF\)](#) and the [Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification \(PEFC\)](#) made announcements this week expressing mutual support for new approaches to forest management planning and certification, which will help streamline forest certification, and ensure access to the global marketplace. Among these efforts, the [American Tree Farm System \(ATFS\)](#) announced a joint effort by AFF, the [Florida Forest Service](#) and the [University of Florida](#) for a pilot landscape management plan to encourage sustainable forestry and bring more wood grown on family-owned forests into the sustainable global supply chain.

Both SFI and ATFS are endorsed by PEFC, which helps both certification systems connect effectively to the global marketplace. All three certification systems provide guidelines for management, to ensure that forests are managed to the highest possible environmental and sustainability standards. The SFI label, which can be found on a variety of products emanating from sustainable forests, helps consumers know that they're purchasing products that represent responsible forestry.

"AFF's innovative approach will ensure many more American family forest owners have access to tools such as certification which is increasingly required by retailers. Family forest owners worldwide in our 40 national certification systems will be able to benefit from this approach. This is a very exciting development," said Ben Gunneberg, Secretary General of PEFC International.

The new certification approach will reduce barriers for landowners and look at management planning from the landscape level, taking into account conservation priorities and the latest science. It aims to improve overall forest health and conserve and promote benefits for habitat, biodiversity and clean water. "Our success during the past 75 years is in part to our deep understanding of family woodland owners and their needs," said AFF President and CEO Tom Martin. "Our woodland owners offer enormous possibilities for both forest stewardship and sustainable wood sourcing. But in order to tap this potential we must build long-lasting, meaningful relationships with them, continuously provide them with tools, and support them over the long term ownership of their land."

"Time Inc. strongly supports the growth of certification in the supply chain. As a founder of the SFI Forest Partners Program, we were pleased to recognize the Florida Forest Service's leadership in achieving SFI certification on state lands last week," said Guy Gleysteen, Senior Vice President of Production at Time Inc. "The Florida Forest Service leadership and commitment to responsible forestry is demonstrated even further by their partnership with AFF and the University of Florida to grow small land certification in the state."

"This really puts all the pieces of the sustainable forestry story together from the local to the global level. We have an innovative initiative happening through AFF with small landholders that links them to the continent-wide reach of SFI in North America, which in turn is connected to the international level by PEFC. The more we work together at the local level and with our global partners, like ATFS and PEFC, we can help connect the dots between landowners, brand owners and customers around the world who are looking for integrated, sustainable, supply chains," said Kathy Abusow, President and CEO of SFI Inc.

"By participating in the SFI Forest Partners Program, we are helping infuse the forest products industry with an increased supply of certified timber. Although responsible forest management has been a priority of the Florida Forest Service since the beginning, this new certification provides conscientious consumers with the guarantee that our focus is on protecting, renewing and sustaining healthy forests," said Jim Karels, Florida



State Forester. "Now that we have achieved SFI certification of our state lands, we are in a stronger position to work on growing certification across small landowners in partnership with ATFS."

Integrating a sustainable supply chain from the local to the global level is a key priority for SFI, a theme that was reinforced at the [SFI Annual Conference](#) in Olympic Valley, California last week. Presentations and panel discussions focused on the local to global challenges and opportunities, involving Tom Martin and the leadership of PEFC. The Florida Forest Service, a division of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, [recently achieved certification](#) of two of Florida's largest state forests, Blackwater River and Tate's Hell State Forests, to the [SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard](#).

About Florida Forest Service

The Florida Forest Service manages more than one million acres of public forest land while protecting 26 million acres of homes, forestland and natural resources from the devastating effects of wildfire. To learn more about Florida Forest Service programs, visit www.FreshFromFlorida.com.

About American Forest Foundation (AFF)

The [American Forest Foundation](#) (AFF) works on the ground with families, teachers and elected officials to promote stewardship and protect our nation's forest heritage. A commitment to the next generation unites our nationwide network of forest owners and teachers working to keep our forests healthy and our children well-prepared for the future they will inherit.

About the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Inc. (SFI)

SFI® Inc. is an independent, non-profit organization responsible for maintaining, overseeing and improving the internationally recognized SFI Program. Across the U.S. and Canada, approximately 270 million acres are certified to the SFI forest management standard. In addition, the SFI Program's unique fiber-sourcing requirements promote responsible forest management on all suppliers' lands. SFI works to ensure conservation of water quality, wildlife habitat and other critical forest attributes through application of the standards, through its unique research requirements, and through grants made in support of conservation and community-related objectives. SFI on-product labels identify both certified sourcing and chain-of-custody claims to help consumers make responsible purchases. SFI Inc. is governed by a three-chamber [board of directors](#) representing environmental, social and economic sectors equally. Learn more at www.sfiprogram.org and www.sfiprogram.org/Buy-SFI.

About Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certifications (PEFC)

PEFC, the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification, is a global alliance of the world's leading national forest certification system. More than 260 million hectares of forests are certified to PEFC's internationally recognized Sustainability Benchmarks, supplying more than 16,000 Chain of Custody certified companies with responsibly sourced timber and wood-based products. PEFC was founded by small- and family forest owners to demonstrate excellence in sustainable forest management. For more information, please visit www.pefc.org.

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