



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### PEFC Week Brings International Partners Together to Address Sustainable Forestry

**Geneva, Switzerland; Washington D.C.** — Promoting sustainable forest management and having it recognized and rewarded in the supply chain from the local to the global level is a key priority shared by the many delegates who attended the [2015 PEFC Forest Certification Week](#) last week in Montreux, Switzerland.

**Ben Gunneberg, PEFC International's CEO and Secretary General**, opened the 20<sup>th</sup> PEFC General Assembly with an empowering [video](#) and noted, **"As a grassroots organization PEFC has an extremely important role to play in achieving the [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#), as we can deliver 14 of the 17 UN goals on the ground through our work with forest certification and forest-dependent communities."** The 17 goals are part of the United Nation's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by world leaders at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit in September 2015 to end poverty in order to achieve sustainable development.

**"If we want to continue to grow a strong future for forests and the people that depend upon them, we must expand the reach and relevance of forest certification programs and better quantify and communicate the resulting positive conservation and community impacts," said Kathy Abusow, Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) President and CEO.** "As to expanding the reach and relevance, I would like to extend my warmest thanks to **Hans Drielsma, outgoing PEFC International Board member who had the vision to secure PEFC's entrance into Asia with the formation of PEFC Asia almost a decade ago.** This vision has now become a reality with unprecedented growth in the Chinese market, stability in the Japanese market, and a consistent flow of new members and interest from South East Asian nations to join the PEFC family."

Dr. Hans Drielsma, who served on the PEFC International Board of Directors from 2006-2015 for three terms of service and chaired numerous standards review committees and working groups over the years, is a professional forester with 40 years' experience, including senior executive roles with Forestry Tasmania and State Forests NSW. **The seeds that were planted with the formation of PEFC Asia, are now bearing fruit, and there were many examples of this during 2015 PEFC Week.**

- **Representatives from China, Vietnam, South Korea, Philippines, Nepal, Thailand, and India**, among many others, all spoke during 2015 PEFC Week about the strength, commitment and dedication of PEFC to sustainable forest management and responsible supply chains that consider and address economic, social and environmental values.
- **The China Forest Certification Council (CCFC) was recognized by PEFC International for leading the way with the most acres certified in China** in the last year compared to any other PEFC member nation. Other PEFC members awarded for the greatest growth in certified forest area were PEFC Sweden and PEFC Canada, each increasing their area of certified forest by more than a million hectares.
- **Wang Wei, Chairman of the China Forest Certification Council (CFCC), detailed the Chinese government's announcement regarding new national Forest Certification Rules which set the requirements for all forest certifications operating in China.** Certification bodies wishing to conduct forest management (FM) and chain-of-custody (COC) audits, including CFCC, PEFC and FSC in China, will have to be authorized to conduct business in China by the Certification and Accreditation Administration (CNCA) of China and will have to be accredited by the China National Accreditation Service for Conformity Assessment (CNAS), and CNCA's approval must

be completed before the end of 2015, otherwise the certification bodies have to quit the business until they get the approval by CNCA. CNAS is a member of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) in China. New entrant certification bodies are welcome provided they successfully meet the requirements set out by CNCA and CNAS. Certification bodies that have already achieved accreditation by CNAS including the domestic ones such as Zhonglin Tianhe and Jilin Songbai etc. and the foreign invested ones such as BV and SGS etc., already received approval by CNCA, and they are in the conformity assessment application process by CNAS.

- According to the Forest Certification Rules, forest certification bodies which have received approval by CNCA shall carry out the certification audits against China's national standards (which were endorsed by PEFC in 2014) or China's sector standards, and they should also revise their internal technical documents according to these rules. **In order to maintain market stability in the transition stage, FSC forest management and FSC chain of custody certificate holders shall implement the Chinese national forest management and chain of custody standards in order to keep their current FSC certificates during upcoming annual audits.**

#### **Other highlights of the 2015 PEFC Forest Certification Week included:**

- **PEFC Italy showcased a [video](#) which highlighted PEFC certified wood at the World Expo 2015 in Milan.** Expo pavilions from several countries including Austria, Belgium, China, France and Thailand featured PEFC certified wood for their walls, roofs, railings and in some instances their entire structures.
- **PEFC Spain** shared highlights from a recipe book "Cuisine from the Forests" which were a catalyst in raising awareness for non-timber forest products from forests certified to PEFC. The book highlighted the merits of wild food products, and was declared the **Best Sustainable Cookbook in Spanish by the jury of the Gourmand World Cookbook Awards.** The products featured in this book were non timber forest products from certified forests recognized by PEFC.
- **[New Zealand](#) was recognized as the latest country to achieve PEFC endorsement.** With the endorsement of the New Zealand Forest Certification Scheme, the country's forest owners can now obtain certification for their responsible management practices. The New Zealand Standard for Sustainable Forest Management (NZS AS 4708:2014) is an adoption of the PEFC endorsed Australian Forestry Standard (AS 4708:2013) and demonstrates how regions are increasingly working together to promote consistency and collaboration in meeting shared objectives.

**The week also saw new [PEFC International Board](#) members voted in, including Brian Kernohan, Director of Policy and Environmental Advocacy at Hancock Natural Resources Group**, which operates in the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Brazil and Chile. "Brian's appointment is fitting recognition for his leadership on sustainability. He has long been an advocate for certification, and is Past Chair of the SFI Resources Committee," said Abusow. Brian delivered a presentation on [quantifying the conservation impact of SFI certification](#) during the 2015 PEFC Week which represents new thinking being advanced by SFI to capture and communicate the value of responsibly managed forests and responsibly sourced forest products. "Topics like water conservation, climate change and biodiversity are useful lenses for us to use to quantify the important conservation work happening in the SFI community. Given that SFI is a part of the PEFC family, PEFC's endorsement of SFI means that our conservation success stories are also a part of PEFC's success globally," said Brian Kernohan.

**Other newly elected PEFC board members include Dieter Koinig-Woehl, member of the European Works Council of Stora Enso since 1999.** He is also a member of the standing committee of the European Federation of Building and Wood Workers. Also, **Michal Proschek-Hauptman, CEO of the Environmental Umbrella Organisation was re-elected to the PEFC Board.**

**The entire PEFC community warmly thanked Bill Street, outgoing Chairman of the PEFC International Board,** for his tireless service. He has advanced the cause of sustainable forestry in many



ways, not the least of which was the impressive expansion of PEFC during his eight-year tenure. Bill was also formerly Chief of Staff for the Woodworkers Department of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, one of the largest industrial trade unions in North America and the largest representative of wood and forestry workers.

Next year's 2016 PEFC Week will take place in Bali, Indonesia, marking the second time PEFC Week has taken place in Asia, following a PEFC General Assembly in Malaysia in 2013. Find more information on the 2015 PEFC Forest Certification Week in the [PEFC newsletter](#) or go to [www.pefc.org](http://www.pefc.org).

### **About Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certifications (PEFC)**

PEFC, the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification, is a leading global alliance of national forest certification systems. 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](http://www.pefc.org).

### **About the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Inc. (SFI)**

SFI® Inc. is an independent, non-profit organization that is solely responsible for maintaining, overseeing and improving the SFI program, which is internationally recognized by PEFC. SFI works collaboratively with conservation groups, local communities, youth, resource professionals, landowners and countless other organizations and individuals who share our passion for and commitment to healthy forests, responsible purchasing and sustainable communities. Since 2010, SFI has awarded more than 60 Conservation and Community Partnership grants totaling more than \$1.9 million to foster education, research and pilot efforts to better inform future decisions about our forests. When leveraged with project partner contributions, that total investment exceeds \$7.1 million. Certifications to the SFI Standard represent enormous scale with more than 100 million hectares certified to the SFI Forest Management Standard across Canada and the USA, and millions of additional acres positively influenced through the application of the SFI Fiber Sourcing Standard and the SFI Chain-of-Custody Standard. SFI Program Participants ship products to over 120 countries around the world and thereby value SFI's endorsement by PEFC. SFI Inc. is governed by a three chamber [board of directors](#) representing environmental, social and economic sectors equally. Learn more at [www.sfiprogram.org](http://www.sfiprogram.org).

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