



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **THE SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY INITIATIVE CONTINUES TO ENGAGE THE INTERNATIONAL FOREST COMMUNITY THROUGH PEFC ENDORSEMENT**

**WASHINGTON, DC** — The Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) Inc. announced today that the SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard has again met the rigorous third-party assessment of the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC). This is SFI's fourth PEFC assessment. The SFI Program was first endorsed in 2005. PEFC is an umbrella organization that endorses national forest certification systems developed collaboratively by diverse stakeholders, tailored to local priorities and conditions.

"SFI makes important contributions that address the unique needs of North America's forests and communities, and is a valuable national member working with PEFC to elevate the role of responsible forestry," said Ben Gunneberg, Secretary General of PEFC. "Only forest certification standards that meet our rigorous meta-standard and that are developed in an open, transparent manner through a multi-stakeholder process are endorsed by PEFC."

PEFC's sustainable forest management criteria are founded on internationally recognized criteria and indicators developed by government agencies around the world. The SFI Program was re-endorsed by PEFC after a 60-day public comment period, a detailed examination and third-party assessment against nearly 200 criteria by a PEFC-approved assessor and a review by the PEFC Panel of Experts. The criteria are grouped into four broad categories covering the degree of transparency and how the standard was developed; what it contains in terms of specific forestry measures; its third-party accreditation policies; and how rigorously it is administered. PEFC members vote whether to endorse each certification program.



Forest certified to SFI in New Brunswick, Canada. Photo: Phil Riebel

"We are extremely proud to be endorsed by PEFC International and to be a part of a global network with national members in 42 countries who share a commitment to sustainable forest management. PEFC's endorsement reinforces our position as an internationally respected program with tough requirements to strengthen forest practices and support communities across North America," said Kathy Abusow, President and CEO of SFI Inc.

This continued PEFC endorsement also increases SFI's international recognition through products certified to SFI Standards, which are sold in more than 120 countries around the world. In addition, SFI's global recognition is augmented through recognition by other sustainability groups including the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, The Sustainability Consortium and GreenBlue.

Forests certified to the SFI Forest Management Standard now cover more than 113 million hectares across North America, accounting for 40% of PEFC's total certified area globally. This PEFC endorsement means fiber from forests certified to SFI will continue to be accepted as certified content for use in both SFI chain-of-custody certification and product labels and PEFC chain-of-custody certification and product labels.

This vast landscape provides habitat for a wide range of species and flyways for migratory birds. The scale of this landscape amplifies the importance of SFI's effort to measure the conservation-related values of forests under the influence of SFI's Standards. PEFC's recognition of this work is complemented by SFI's recent membership in the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), which is another important example of how SFI is leveraging its international partnerships to advance forest conservation.

In Canada and the U.S., in addition to SFI, PEFC has also endorsed the CAN/CSA-Z809 Sustainable Forest Management Standard and the American Tree Farm System.



### **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)**

The Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI) stands for future forests. SFI® is an independent, non-profit organization dedicated to promoting forest sustainability and supporting the links between sustainable forests and communities through grant programs, carefully targeted research, direct leadership of critical initiatives, and partnerships that effectively contribute to multiple conservation objectives. SFI's Forest Management, Fiber Sourcing and Chain of Custody Standards work to ensure the health and future of forests. Through application of these certification standards, SFI's on-product labels help consumers make responsible purchasing decisions. The SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard also meets the rigorous third-party assessment of the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC). SFI Inc. is governed by a three-chamber [board of directors](#) representing environmental, social and economic sectors equally. Learn more at [sfiprogram.org](http://sfiprogram.org).

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