



# SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY INITIATIVE

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## **Sustainable Forestry Initiative, Inc. Names President/CEO**

Arlington, VA. July 23, 2007 -- The Sustainable Forestry Initiative, Inc. (SFI, Inc.) today announced that it has named Kathy Abusow as its new president and chief executive officer.

SFI, Inc. is the fully independent organization responsible for the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Program. The SFI® program is a comprehensive and rigorous sustainable forestry certification system that encompasses more than 133 million certified acres across the U.S. and Canada and includes over 200 program participants. Abusow becomes only the second person to hold the presidency of North America's leading forest certification program.

For the past 15 years Abusow has operated Abusow International Ltd., a successful forest certification and market acceptance consultancy. She is highly respected internationally as both a technical expert on certification standards and on related marketplace issues such as procurement policy design and green building rating tools acceptance of wood and certified products.

Norm L. Christensen, Jr., Professor of Ecology and Past Dean of the Nicholas School of the Environment, Duke University, and Vice Chair of the SFI Board, noted “Kathy is an expert in her field, and we are very fortunate to have her energy, experience and knowledge to lead the SFI Program at this important time.”

Abusow said, “I am committed to growing SFI’s recognition and importance among conservation groups, buyers, forest managers, industry, and policy makers. Forest certification is a significant tool in the marketplace and among policy setters and so it is essential to keep certification programs relevant and in tune with changing landscapes, as well as market expectations. I look forward to working with staff to build upon SFI’s reputation in a responsive, rigorous, and innovative manner.”

Abusow replaces William H. Banzhaf, who has led SFI, Inc. and its predecessor organization since 2002. A certified forester, Banzhaf’s career also included service as the chief executive officer of the Society of American Foresters. Mr. Banzhaf retired on June 30, 2007.

John A. Luke, Jr., Chair of the SFI Board and Chairman and CEO of MeadWestvaco Corporation praised Banzhaf’s service saying, “Bill led the SFI program through a challenging and difficult Standard review in 2004, leading to the development of one of the most comprehensive sustainable forestry standards in the world. He has been a tireless advocate for the SFI program, and without his vision and leadership this program would not be as comprehensive and successful as it is today.”

Banzhaf said, “We have seen significant changes in the SFI program since 2002, including the international recognition it earned through its endorsement by the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes (PEFC). I am very proud to have been able to lead the start up of SFI, Inc. over the past year. With the new non-profit organization now in place, I am confident Kathy will be able to take SFI to the next level. The Board has made an outstanding selection.”

**About SFI, Inc.**

SFI, Inc. is a 501c(3) non-profit organization and is solely responsible for maintaining, overseeing and improving the Sustainable Forestry Initiative Program. SFI, Inc. directs all elements of the SFI program including the SFI Standard, chain of custody certification, labeling and marketing.

SFI, Inc. is overseen by a multi-stakeholder Board of Directors with representatives from environmental and conservation organizations, public officials, professional and academic groups, forest products industry, independent logging professionals and forest landowners.

For more information about the SFI program, visit [www.sfiprogram.org](http://www.sfiprogram.org)