



SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY INITIATIVE

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For Immediate Release

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SFI® Applauds USDA Announcement Promoting Wood in Green Building

WASHINGTON – The Sustainable Forestry Initiative ® (SFI®) praised Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack’s announcement yesterday promoting the use of wood as a green building material. Secretary Vilsack noted that “wood has a vital role to play in meeting the growing demand for green building materials.”

SFI and a diverse coalition of organizations had called on US Department of Agriculture (USDA) to adopt a more inclusive approach to green building, including recognizing multiple green building rating systems and encouraging the use of wood products from responsibly managed forests. “SFI has invested an enormous amount of energy into constructively raising awareness of the need for green building rating tools to recognize the contribution of wood as a natural and environmentally-responsible renewable resource. We thank Secretary Vilsack for his leadership and for sending a message that the Administration is serious about the role wood can play in supporting green building initiatives, rural communities, and the overall sustainability of the forest sector. The USDA strategy makes it clear that opportunities for wood and choice in green building rating tools are part of the solution,” stated SFI President and CEO Kathy Abusow.

The Sustainable Forestry Initiative was honored to be a sponsor at the International Year of Forests celebration yesterday evening where Secretary Vilsack laid out a three-part plan addressing the Forest Service’s and USDA’s current green building practices. The plan includes the following parts:

1. The U.S. Forest Service will preferentially select wood in new building construction while maintaining its commitment to certified green building standards. USDA will also make a commitment to using wood and other agricultural products as it fulfills President Obama's executive order on Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy, and Economic Performance.
2. The Secretary has asked the U.S. Forest Service to examine ways to increase its already strong commitment to green building by reporting to him on ways to enhance the research and development being done around green building materials.
3. The U.S. Forest Service will actively look for opportunities to demonstrate the innovative use of wood as a green building material for all new structures of 10,000 square feet or more using recognized green building standards such as LEED, Green Globes or the National Green Building Standard.

Abusow noted, “SFI is excited to see the explicit recognition of the Green Globes standard and the National Green Building Standard, both of which recognize multiple forest certification standards



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including SFI. Opening the door to other green building rating systems increases opportunities for third party certified wood to be used and recognized in green buildings.”

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About SFI Inc.

SFI Inc. is an independent 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable organization, and is solely responsible for maintaining, overseeing and improving the internationally recognized Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) program (www.sfiprogram.org). Across North America, more than 180 million acres/73 million hectares are certified to the SFI forest management standard, making it the largest single forest standard in the world. SFI chain-of-custody certification tells buyers how much of the fiber in a product is from certified forests, certified sourcing and/or post-consumer recycled content. The SFI program’s unique fiber sourcing requirements promote responsible forest management on all suppliers’ lands. SFI Inc. is governed by a three-chamber board of directors representing environmental, social and economic sectors equally.