

Kathy Abusow

President and CEO

Sustainable Forestry Initiative Inc. (SFI)

Kathy Abusow became President and CEO of SFI Inc. in 2007, the same year that the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® became a fully independent, non-profit organization. SFI plays a central role in strengthening the vital links between sustainable forestry, responsible purchasing and thriving communities. The internationally-recognized SFI Program is governed by a diverse, independent board representing conservation, economic and social interests equally.



Since Kathy joined SFI, forests certified to the SFI® Forest Management Standard have grown from 140 million acres to more than a quarter billion acres across public and private lands from Canada's Boreal to the US South. Added to that are millions more positively influenced by the SFI Fiber Sourcing Standard, which has as a key component the responsible procurement of forest products. However, under Kathy's leadership, SFI has become much more than a set of forestry standards, it has become a strong community that engages in conservation projects, youth education and community building initiatives. Kathy launched several signature programs and a number of notable memorandums of understanding including:

- The SFI Conservation and Community Grants Program launched in 2010, which has, together with leveraged funds from partners, invested \$7.2 million in forest research in collaboration with conservation and community groups.
- The SFI Forest Partners Program, established in 2012 with founding partners Time Inc., National Geographic Society, Macmillan and Pearson, works to increase SFI forest management, fiber sourcing and chain-of-custody certification throughout the supply chain.
- MOUs with Habitat for Humanity International and Habitat for Humanity Canada that are focused on building sustainable housing, and supporting communities and families. SFI has helped support the Aboriginal Housing Program, and recently brought a diverse team of women volunteers together to support an Aboriginal family in the Ottawa area. The build was dubbed the "Women in Wood Build."
- An MOU between SFI and the Canadian Council of Aboriginal Business that helps to offer a brighter future for Aboriginal communities. The agreement supports the Progressive Aboriginal Relations certification program. It promotes corporate social responsibility and Aboriginal business and employment opportunities, especially for youth, in forest communities.
- A memorandum of mutual support with Boy Scouts of America focused on working together to demonstrate forest stewardship and environmental education for America's youth.
- A collaboration between SFI and the Girl Guides of Canada focuses on helping the environment in fun and inspiring ways. The project, with support from Ducks Unlimited Canada, involves building and installing duck nest boxes.
- A memorandum of mutual support with the National Wild Turkey Federation, a recognized leader in wildlife conservation, is focused on restoring wild turkey populations and the habitats they depend on.

Kathy is a founding member of Nature Canada's Women for Nature Initiative — a partnership of 75 women of influence who demonstrate their passion for nature and pass their values on to others to drive change. She also serves on the National Leadership Council for Lift Philanthropy Partners, a Canadian not-for-profit venture philanthropy organization that invests in social purpose organizations that address skills development, literacy and numeracy, and Aboriginal opportunities to help enrich the quality of life of vulnerable and at-risk Canadians. Women Building Futures is one such organization that has increased its scale and impact thanks to the efforts of Lift Philanthropy Partners.

A sought after speaker, Kathy has led, moderated, and spoken at well-respected international forums including the Greenbuild International Conference "Women in Green Power breakfast in DC", the Economist's World Forest Summit in Stockholm, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, Fortune Brainstorm Green, RISI's North American Forest Products conference, and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certifications (PEFC) Stakeholder Forum.

Kathy earned an undergraduate degree from McGill University, with studies at Leningrad State University, and an M.A. from Harvard University with a concentration in sustainable development of natural resources.

Kathy sits on numerous technical and advisory committees and is also a member of the board of the World Forestry Center, and is Chair of the PEFC U.S. Governing Body.



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