INTRODUCTION

**SFI® — ONE PROGRAM, THREE STANDARDS**

The Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Inc. (SFI) is an independent, non-profit organization dedicated to promoting sustainable forest management. SFI Inc. is governed by a three-chamber Board of Directors representing environmental, social and economic sectors equally. The SFI Board sets SFI’s strategic direction and is ultimately responsible for maintaining, overseeing and improving the internationally recognized SFI program. Forests certified to the SFI Standard cover a quarter-billion acres, stretching from Canada’s boreal forest to the U.S. South, and the SFI Fiber Sourcing and Chain-of-Custody Standards extend their reach further across North America and globally. Endorsement by the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) increases SFI’s international recognition and enhances marketing opportunities for SFI Program Participants around the world.

SFI Standards are revised every five years following an inclusive, public review process, which includes recommendations from multi-stakeholder committees. SFI also holds standard revision workshops in cities across North America. The process includes an initial 60-day open public comment period, a second 60-day open public comment period and a final draft review period of at least 45 days by the SFI Board. As part of the standard revision process, the SFI External Review Panel provides external independent oversight to ensure the standard revision process is objective and credible and that all comments are treated equally and fairly.

The SFI External Review Panel is an independent body of experts that provides diverse perspectives and expertise to the SFI program while contributing to quality assurance and continual improvement. This volunteer panel is made up of 15 to 18 external experts representing conservation, environmental, forestry, academic, public and government organizations.

Sustainably managed forests make a vital contribution to society by providing economic, environmental and social benefits indispensable to our quality of life. SFI Program Participants make a commitment to sustainable forest management that encompasses a variety of responsibilities including maintaining forest productivity and health and protecting water quality, biological diversity and special sites. This commitment also involves providing employee, contractor and harvesting professionals with training and education, supporting research, and broadening the practice of sustainable forestry through landowner outreach and community involvement.

**SFI SPANS THE SUPPLY CHAIN: FOREST MANAGEMENT, FIBER SOURCING, CHAIN OF CUSTODY AND ON-PRODUCT LABELS**

SFI Standards are based on principles that promote continual improvement in sustainable forest management practices. SFI sets standards for forest management and fiber sourcing, as well as chain-of-custody practices — all of which are third-party audited by accredited certification bodies. The SFI program has on-product labels to help buyers and consumer interact with the forestry supply chain by supporting responsible forestry by choosing products with the SFI label. The three SFI standards are:

- SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard
- SFI 2015-2019 Fiber Sourcing Standard
- SFI 2015-2019 Chain-of-Custody Standard

**SFI PRINCIPLES**

The following SFI Principles apply to the SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard and SFI 2015-2019 Fiber Sourcing Standard. These SFI Principles are supported by additional mandatory requirements including more specific objectives, performance measures and indicators.

1. **Sustainable Forestry**

   To practice sustainable forestry to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs by practicing a land stewardship ethic that integrates reforestation and the managing, growing, nurturing and harvesting of trees for useful products and ecosystem services such as the conservation of soil, air and water quality, carbon, biological diversity, wildlife and aquatic habitats, recreation and aesthetics.

2. **Forest Productivity and Health**

   To provide for regeneration after harvest and maintain the productive capacity of the forest land base, and to protect and maintain long-term forest and soil productivity. In addition, to protect forests from economically or environmentally undesirable levels of wildfire, pests, diseases, invasive exotic plants and animals, and other damaging agents and thus maintain and improve long-term forest health and productivity.

3. **Protection of Water Resources**

   To protect water bodies and riparian areas, and to conform with forestry best management practices to protect water quality.

4. **Protection of Biological Diversity**

   To manage forests in ways that protect and promote biological diversity, including animal and plant species, wildlife habitats, and ecological or natural community types.

5. **Aesthetics and Recreation**

   To manage the visual impacts of forest operations, and to provide recreational opportunities for the public.

6. **Protection of Special Sites**

   To manage lands that are ecologically, geologically or culturally important in a manner that takes into account their unique qualities.

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1  This introduction is informative, and as such, is not an auditable element.
2  Words in italics throughout the SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules are listed in Section 13 – SFI Definitions.
7. Responsible Fiber Sourcing Practices in North America
To use and promote among other forest landowners sustainable forestry practices that are both scientifically credible and economically, environmentally and socially responsible.

8. Legal Compliance
To comply with applicable federal, provincial, state, and local forestry and related environmental laws, statutes, and regulations.

9. Research
To support advances in sustainable forest management through forestry research, science and technology.

10. Training and Education
To improve the practice of sustainable forestry through training and education programs.

11. Community Involvement and Social Responsibility
To broaden the practice of sustainable forestry on all lands through community involvement, socially responsible practices, and through recognition and respect of Indigenous Peoples’ rights and traditional forest-related knowledge.

12. Transparency
To broaden the understanding of forest certification to the SFI Standards by documenting certification audits and making the findings publicly available.

13. Continual Improvement
To continually improve the practice of forest management, and to monitor, measure and report performance in achieving the commitment to sustainable forestry.

14. Avoidance of Controversial Sources including Illegal Logging in Offshore Fiber Sourcing*
*Applies only to the SFI 2015-2019 Fiber Sourcing Standard
To avoid wood fiber from illegally logged forests when procuring fiber outside of North America, and to avoid sourcing fiber from countries without effective social laws.

Geographic Application

FIBER SOURCING STANDARD
What the Standard Does
The SFI 2015-2019 Fiber Sourcing Standard promotes responsible forestry practices based on 14 Principles, 13 Objectives, 21 Performance Measures and 55 Indicators. These fiber sourcing requirements include measures to broaden the practice of biodiversity, use forestry best management practices to protect water quality, provide outreach to landowners, and utilize the services of forest management and harvesting professionals.

What the Standard Covers
The SFI 2015-2019 Fiber Sourcing Standard applies to any organization that owns or has management authority for forestlands.

What the Standard Covers
The SFI 2015-2019 Chain-of-Custody Standard applies to any organization that sources, processes, manufactures, handles, trades, converts or prints forest-based products.

Geographic Application

CHAIN-OF-CUSTODY STANDARD
What the Standard Does
The SFI 2015-2019 Chain-of-Custody Standard is an accounting system that tracks forest fiber content through production and manufacturing to the end product. Companies can use chain-of-custody certification to track and communicate how much of their product comes from certified lands, fiber sourcing, recycled content or non-certified forest content.

What the Standard Covers
The SFI 2015-2019 Chain-of-Custody Standard applies to any organization that sources, processes, manufactures, handles, trades, converts or prints forest-based products.

Geographic Application
The SFI 2015-2019 Chain-of-Custody Standard applies to any organization globally.

ON-PRODUCT CHAIN-OF-CUSTODY LABELS
What the Labels Do
The SFI program has on-product labels to help buyers and consumer interact with the forestry supply chain by supporting responsible forestry by choosing products with the SFI label.

What the SFI Certified Chain-of-Custody Labels Cover
The SFI Certified Chain-of-Custody labels communicate the use of fiber from certified forests or certified sourcing or recycled content. These products do not contain controversial sources and
the content is calculated using one of three optional approaches for chain of custody: physical separation, average percentage and the volume credit method.

What the SFI Certified Sourcing Label Covers
The SFI Certified Sourcing label does not make claims about certified forest content. It tells buyers and consumers that fiber in a product comes from legal and responsible sources. These sources are from a company that conforms to the SFI 2015-2019 Fiber Sourcing Standard, or comes from pre- or post-consumer recycled content, or from a certified forest and does not contain controversial sources.

SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing
The SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing is a centralized body that reviews and approves all label use requests from qualified organizations using the SFI label with a valid certificate issued by an accredited certification body. Prior to gaining access to the SFI labels, an organization must conform with Section 5 - Rules for Use of SFI On-Product Labels and Off-Product Marks, which includes requirements for green marketing claims and eco-labels.

Geographic Application
SFI Certified Chain-of-Custody labels apply to any organization globally.

THIRD-PARTY INDEPENDENT CERTIFICATION
The SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules requires third-party independent certification audits by competent and accredited certification bodies for all three certifications — forest management certification, fiber sourcing certification and chain-of-custody certification. All certification bodies must be accredited by a member of the International Accreditation Forum (i.e., ANSI-ASQ National Accreditation Board [ANAB], American National Standards Institute [ANSI] or the Standards Council of Canada [SCCC]). For more details, refer to auditor procedures in Section 9 of the SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules.

CERTIFICATION BODIES
The following certification bodies have completed an accreditation program and are approved to perform certification audits to SFI Standards.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accredited certification body qualified to conduct audits to SFI Standards</th>
<th>SFI Forest Management</th>
<th>SFI Fiber Sourcing</th>
<th>SFI Chain of Custody</th>
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<td>Bureau de normalisation du Québec - Enregistrement de système (BNQ)</td>
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<td>Bureau Veritas Certification</td>
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<td>KPMG Performance Registrar Inc.</td>
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<td>Timber Products Inspection, Inc.</td>
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<td><strong>SFI CHAIN OF CUSTODY</strong></td>
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GLOBAL RECOGNITION OF THE SFI STANDARD

PEFC’s endorsement of SFI adds international value to SFI’s position as a highly respected, third-party certification program in North America. PEFC sets minimum benchmarks that national forest certification programs must meet or exceed to be endorsed. PEFC endorsement increases international recognition and enhances marketing opportunities for SFI Program Participants around the world. PEFC benchmarks cover a wide variety of requirements, including but not limited to:

• Standard setting requirements that conform with ISO/IEC Guide 59.
• Principles, criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management established through intergovernmental processes — including the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE), the Montréal Process and a variety of intergovernmental processes related to Africa, Asia and South America.
• Requirements for third-party certification bodies to be accredited by national members of the International Accreditation Forum — including ANSI, ANAB and SCC.

A GLOBAL VISION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

SFI officially came into being in 1995 as one of the forest sector’s contributions to the vision of sustainable development established by the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). Following UNCED, many nations began to consider how they would measure and track their progress toward the goal of sustainability. This conference led to the Montréal Process.

By endorsing and working with the Montréal Process criteria and indicators, participating countries have made a national commitment to work toward the sustainable management of their forests. Montréal Process criteria and indicators are intended to track progress at a national level and provide an international reference for policy-makers. Many can be reinforced and supported at a local level and are, therefore, reflected in the SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management and SFI 2015-2019 Fiber Sourcing Standards.

The SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard also recognizes and adopts the principles outlined in the United Nations Declaration for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). The Declaration says that consideration should be given to Indigenous Peoples’ rights to maintain and strengthen their distinct spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise used lands and territories. In adopting the UNDRIP articles, SFI Program Participants are encouraged to communicate and collaborate with local Indigenous Peoples in order to better understand their traditional practices and experiences with respect to forest management.

BROADENING GLOBAL MARKET LEADERSHIP

The SFI community is building credible, responsible market leadership. We understand that the buying decisions of consumers, corporate leaders and governments prove how much they care about using natural resources sustainably. That’s why encouraging responsible purchasing is an SFI priority. SFI encourages private and public sector leaders to include SFI in their policies as part of responsible wood, paper and packaging purchasing.

SFI IS RECOGNIZED BY MARKET LEADERS

The trend toward recognizing all forest certification standards is on the rise. GreenBlue, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBSCD), The Sustainability Consortium and the National Association of State Foresters have made statements supporting an inclusive approach to recognizing certification.

• GreenBlue, a non-profit that equips business with the science and resources to make products more sustainable, recognizes SFI for supporting environmental quality throughout the paper supply chain.
• The Sustainability Consortium, which works to improve consumer product sustainability, recognizes the value of SFI certification standards in its key performance indicators.
• The National Association of State Foresters, a non-profit comprising the directors of state forestry agencies, renewed a resolution recognizing SFI as a credible standard.
• The World Business Council for Sustainable Development is the leading platform for strategic collaboration for the global forestry industry and its value-chain partners. WBCSD’s Forest Solutions Group recognizes and supports SFI.

SFI KEY DIFFERENTIATORS

SFI GRASSROOTS INVOLVEMENT

The work of SFI starts with a standard but SFI is much more — it’s a community that stands for the future of forests. Our grassroots infrastructure of 34 SFI Implementation Committees across North America fosters community engagement through landowner outreach, wood producer training, Habitat for Humanity builds, and working with youth in community and conservation projects to foster an appreciation of conservation and forest management. This grassroots network involves private landowners, independent loggers, forestry professionals, local government agencies, academics, scientists and conservationists.

1 Both Canada and the United States officially endorsed UNDRIP in 2010.
2 Article 25 of UNDRIP states that, “Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard.”
**SFI Forest Partners® Program**

SFI is expanding the SFI Forest Partners® Program to encourage more organizations to engage in responsible sourcing. Time Inc., the National Geographic Society, Macmillan Publishers and Pearson are founding partners of the SFI Forest Partners® Program. They are investing in our forests by making five-year commitments to increase the source of certified forest products. The program is also supported by Hearst Enterprises and is open to other businesses in the supply chain that want to support the growth of certification.

**SFI’s Commitment to Conservation Research**

SFI’s commitment to research is also evidence that SFI is more than just a standard. In fact, the SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management and SFI 2015-2019 Fiber Sourcing Standards are the only forestry standards in the world that requires participants to support forestry research. These activities include improving forest health, productivity and sustainability, enhancing wildlife and fish habitats, improving landscape and ecosystem management, fostering biodiversity and improving water quality. Better management of forest resources and enhancing the environmental benefits and performance of forest products are also central to the SFI research mission. Since 1995, SFI Program Participants have invested $1.4 billion in research to promote sustainable forestry.

The quarter of a billion acres of forestland certified to SFI is a living laboratory that shows how environmental, economic and social interests can coexist. Supporting research is a central tenet of the SFI program. We see it as a way to further the conservation value of SFI-certified forests and to SFI’s fiber sourcing requirements.

SFI is also committed to building grassroots support for sustainable forestry. The SFI Conservation and Community Partnerships Grant Program fosters partnerships between organizations interested in improving forest management in the United States and Canada, and responsible procurement globally.

**SFI Stands for Future Forests**

SFI stands at the intersection of sustainable forests and sustainable communities. SFI Program Participants are the foundation of this success, SFI Implementation Committees are the grassroots network that broadens the reach, and customers and buyers can support the growth of certified forests, research and conservation by recognizing SFI in the marketplace.

SFI is committed to promoting sustainable forest management in North America and responsible procurement of forest products globally. The future of forests will be secured when products, services and values derived from well-managed forests are valued in the marketplace. We stand for future forests.