

SFI LACKS ELEMENTS OF CREDIBLE CERTIFICATION

Forest certification should help consumers choose wood and paper products from forests managed to exemplary environmental and social standards. The American Forest & Paper Association's *Sustainable Forestry Initiative* (SFI) lacks important elements of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), which represents the threshold for credible certification.

Fully independent and not excessively influenced by timber industry.	FSC: yes	SFI: no
Strong forest and environmental protection standards.	FSC: yes	SFI: no
Strong community protection standards.	FSC: yes	SFI: no
Product content monitoring (chain of custody) consistently required.	FSC: yes	SFI: no
Consistent link between product labels/claims and certified forests.	FSC: yes	SFI: no
Strong certification and accreditation process.	FSC: yes	SFI: no
Transparency and stakeholder participation consistently required.	FSC: yes	SFI: no
Certifies some of the most environmentally destructive timber companies in North America.	FSC: no	SFI: yes

Independence and Balance

	FSC	SFI
○ System is governed by an equal balance of environmental, social, and economic interests.	yes	no
○ Governing bodies are predominantly independent, with environmental and social interests free of bias for the industry.	yes	no
○ System is governed by a membership open to all stakeholders.	yes	no
○ System is predominantly funded by independent sources, e.g., sources other than the companies being certified	yes	no
○ Prohibits companies from modifying the certification standards during their own assessments.	yes	no

Forest and Environmental Protection Standards

	FSC	SFI
○ Requires management for natural forest components and ecosystem function at meaningful levels.	yes	no
○ Prohibits replacement of natural forests by tree plantations that lack biological diversity.	yes	no
○ Establishes meaningful limits on large-scale clearcutting.	yes	no
○ Requires protection of most remaining old growth in certified forests.	yes	no
○ Requires protection of all other high conservation value forests.	yes	no
○ Requires and consistently implements protection of all imperiled, threatened, and endangered species.	yes	no
○ Encourages forest practices that reduce the need for routine, intensive chemical use.	yes	no

o Bans use of the most toxic chemicals, such as chlorinated hydrocarbons.	yes	no
o Protects forests from being replaced by subdivisions and other non-forest land uses.	yes	no
o Requires restoration of natural forests on significant portions of larger existing plantations.	yes	no
o Clearly prohibits logging levels that exceed forest growth levels.	yes	no
o Prohibits use of genetically modified trees and other genetically modified organisms (GMOs).	yes	no
o Standards address differences in forest types and regions.	yes	no
o Recognizes the need for more conservation-oriented standards for public forests.	yes	no

Community Protection Standards

FSC SFI

o Consistently protects indigenous peoples' rights.	yes	no
o Requires workers to be paid competitive wages. Requires reinvestment in local communities.	yes	no
o Explicitly requires verification of compliance with social and international laws and policies.	yes	no

Labeling, Procurement, and Certified Forests

FSC SFI

o To carry labels, all (non-recycled) product lines must contain wood from FSC or SFI certified forests.	yes	no
o Label claims must be directly proportionate to the amount of FSC or SFI certified content in the product line.	yes	no
o Wood from all types of illegal logging, non-certified high conservation value forests, plantation conversion, and human rights violations is excluded from labeled product lines.	yes	no

Chain of Custody

FSC SFI

o Chain of custody monitoring is required for all product lines bearing labels and marketing claims.	yes	no
o Chain of custody monitoring verifies the accuracy of supplier information, including source forests' location.	yes	no

Certification and Accreditation Process

FSC SFI

o Standards emphasize "on the ground" outcomes, with field audits needed to determine compliance with most standards.	yes	no
o Requires comprehensive stakeholder notification and consultation during certification audits.	yes	no

Transparency

FSC SFI

o Requires peer review of all certification decisions.	yes	no
o Governance is transparent.	yes	no

Certified Timber Companies

FSC SFI

o Certifies companies that log endangered species' habitats, violate forestry and wildlife laws, manage nearly all of their forests as plantations lacking biological diversity, replace forests with plantations or non-forest land uses, use excessive chemical applications, use inadequate water quality protections, and/or use other unacceptable practices.	no	yes
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(Comparison based on FSC and SFI standards and certified companies in the U.S. as of October, 2006. Results in Canada would be similar.)