

APPENDIX C: FOREST CERTIFICATION

As of 2010, more than 7.2 million acres (44 percent) of Wisconsin's private and public forest lands have achieved third-party certification by one or more "Forest Certification Systems." The forest certification programs active in Wisconsin include the American Tree Farm System (ATFS), Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI). Forest land enrolled in a forest certification system must comply with the system's standards for responsible forest management. The goal of each system is to ensure that on-the-ground forest management meets a set of rigorous, comprehensive measures of sustainable forest management and environmental protection.

HOW DOES CERTIFICATION HELP PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY?

Forest certification systems are market-based, non-regulatory means to assure end users that the wood products they purchase have been grown, managed, and harvested in socially acceptable and environmentally responsible ways. The metrics that have been developed by each system serve to provide a common understanding of what sustainable forest management is and a way to measure whether a landowner or land manager is achieving that goal. These market-based solutions provide landowners, land managers and the forest products industry with an economic incentive to pursue sustainable forest management as a means to maintain existing markets and to expand market share as consumer demand for certified products grow.

FOREST CERTIFICATION SYSTEMS: SUMMARY AND OVERVIEW

THE AMERICAN TREE FARM SYSTEM

The American Tree Farm System (ATFS), started in the 1940s, was the first program in the United States to have measureable standards and to recognize landowners who met those standards. This program grew out of the forest products industry's need to demonstrate to the public that their management practices were sustainable." You can learn more about the American Tree Farm System and their Standards of Sustainability at www.treefarmssystem.org/cms/pages/26_19.html.

The American Tree Farm System 2010 - 2015 Standards of Sustainability has eight Standards which are used to evaluate sustainable forest management. Each Standard has Performance Measures and Indicators, which further define the requirements of the standard and are used by the auditor(s) to determine compliance.

- Standard 1..... Commitment to Practicing Sustainable Forestry
- Standard 2..... Compliance with Laws
- Standard 3..... Reforestation and Afforestation
- Standard 4..... Air, Water, and Soil Protection
- Standard 5..... Fish, Wildlife, and Biodiversity
- Standard 6..... Forest Aesthetics
- Standard 7..... Protect Special Sites
- Standard 8..... Forest Product Harvests and Other Activities

ATFS EXAMPLE*

An Example of a complete section of the Standard (2) with one of the Performance Measures (2.1) and one of the Indicators (2.1.1) within the ATFS requirements:

Standard 2: Compliance with Laws

Forest management activities comply with all relevant federal, state and local laws, regulations and ordinances.

- **Performance Measure 2.1**

Forest owner must comply with all relevant federal, state, county, and municipal laws, regulations, and ordinances.

- *Indicator 2.1.1: Forest owner must comply with all relevant laws, regulations and ordinances and will correct conditions that led to **adverse regulatory actions**, if any.*

* The example provided for each of the certification systems describe how each system addresses compliance with laws.

THE FOREST STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) grew out of concerns over tropical deforestation and the need to develop “guidelines for “best practices” in relation to the sustainable management of natural forests.” The first General Assembly of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) was a meeting of loggers, foresters, environmentalists, and sociologists in 1993 who were determined to act on the recommendations from the Rio Earth Summit. Their goal was to develop a system that would “use market forces to promote socially beneficial, environmentally appropriate, and economically viable forest management.” You can learn more about Forest Stewardship Council and their Principles and Criteria at http://fscus.org/standards_criteria/index.php.

The Forest Stewardship Council has ten Principles which are used to evaluate sustainable forest management. Each Principle is defined by a number of criteria and indicators which are assessed to verify compliance.

Principle 1 Compliance with Laws and FSC Principles

Principle 2 Tenure and Use Rights and Responsibilities

Principle 3 Indigenous Peoples’ Rights

Principle 4 Community Relations and Worker’s Rights

Principle 5 Benefits from the Forest

Principle 6 Environmental Impact

Principle 7 Management Plan

Principle 8 Monitoring and Assessment

Principle 9 Maintenance of High Conservation Value Forests

Principle 10 Plantation Management

FSC EXAMPLE*

An Example of a complete section of the Principle (1) with one of the Criteria (1.1) and two of the Indicators (1.1.a and 1.1.b) within the FSC requirements:

Principle 1: Compliance with Laws and FSC Principles

Forest management shall respect all applicable laws of the country in which they occur, and international treaties and agreements to which the country is a signatory, and comply with all FSC Principles and Criteria.

• **Criteria 1.1**

Forest management shall respect all national and local laws and administrative requirements.

- *Indicator 1.1.a: Forest management plans and operations demonstrate compliance with all applicable federal, state, county, municipal, and tribal laws, and administrative requirements (e.g., regulations). Violations, outstanding complaints or investigations are provided to the Certifying Body (CB) during the annual audit.*
- *Indicator 1.1.b: To facilitate legal compliance, the forest owner or manager ensures that employees and contractors, commensurate with their responsibilities, are duly informed about applicable laws and regulations.*

* The example provided for each of the certification systems describe how each system addresses compliance with laws.

THE SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY INITIATIVE

As forest certification and standards for sustainable forest management began to take shape, the American Forest and Paper Association evaluated the emerging systems and made the decision to develop a certification system that would be appropriate to private and industry-managed forest lands throughout the temperate forests of North America. Established in 1995 the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) became an independent third party certification system in 1998. You can learn more about the Sustainable Forestry Initiative and their Standard at www.sfiprogram.org/sustainable_forestry_initiative_standard.php.

The Sustainable Forestry Initiatives 2010 - 2014 Standard has defined 14 guiding principles that are the basis for 20 objectives used to evaluate sustainable forest management. The applicable objectives depend upon the type of operation being assessed. Each Objective has Performance Measures which are further defined by Indicators which are assessed to verify compliance.

Forest Land Management Objectives

- Objective 1 Forest Management Planning
- Objective 2 Forest Productivity
- Objective 3 Protection and Maintenance of Water Resources
- Objective 4 Conservation of Biological Diversity including Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value
- Objective 5 Management of Visual Quality and Recreational Benefits
- Objective 6 Protection of Special Sites
- Objective 7 Efficient Use of Forest Resources

Fiber Sourcing Objectives

- Objective 8 Landowner Outreach
- Objective 9 Use of Qualified Resource and Qualified Logging Professionals
- Objective 10....Adherence to Best Management Practices
- Objective 11....Promote Conservation of Biological Diversity, Biodiversity Hotspots and High-Biodiversity Wilderness Areas
- Objective 12....Avoidance of Controversial Sources including Illegal Logging

- Objective 13....Avoidance of Controversial Sources including Fiber Sourced from Areas without Effective Social Laws

Forest Land Management and Fiber Sourcing Objectives

- Objective 14....Legal and Regulatory Compliance
- Objective 15....Forestry Research, Science, and Technology
- Objective 16....Training and Education
- Objective 17....Community Involvement in the Practice of Sustainable Forestry
- Objective 18....Public Land Management Responsibilities
- Objective 19....Communications and Public Reporting
- Objective 20....Management Review and Continual Improvement

SFI EXAMPLE*

An Example of a complete section of Objective 14 with one of the Performance Measures (14.1) and three of the Indicators (1, 2, and 3) within the SFI requirements for Forest Land Management and Fiber Sourcing:

Objective 14: Legal and Regulatory Compliance

Compliance with applicable federal, provincial, state and local laws and regulations.

- **Performance Measure 14.1.**

Program Participants shall take appropriate steps to comply with applicable federal, provincial, state and local forestry and related social and environmental laws and regulations.

- *Indicator 1: Access to relevant laws and regulations in appropriate locations.*
- *Indicator 2: System to achieve compliance with applicable federal, provincial, state or local laws and regulations.*
- *Indicator 3: Demonstration of commitment to legal compliance through available regulatory action information.*

* The example provided for each of the certification systems describe how each system addresses compliance with laws.

RELATING CERTIFICATION STANDARDS, PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES TO WISCONSIN FOREST MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

When working on forest land enrolled in a forest certification system the manager is responsible to

understand the applicable Forest Certification System's Standards and their implementation. The following table provides a summary of ATFS Standards, FSC Principles, and SFI Objectives which might apply to management practices discussed in each chapter of *Wisconsin Forest Management Guidelines (FMG)*. This list is not inclusive and may change as each certification system improves and updates their Standards.

FMG CHAPTER	STANDARD / PRINCIPLE / OBJECTIVE(S) THAT APPLY		
	ATFS	FSC	SFI
CHAPTER 2 Silvicultural Principles	<i>(*System does not directly address material covered in this FMG Chapter.)</i>	Principle 4: Community Relations and Workers' Rights Principle 6: Environmental Impact Principle 8: Monitoring and Assessment Principle 9: Maintenance of High Conservation Value Forests Principle 10: Plantation Management	Objective 4: Conservation of Biological Diversity Including Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value
CHAPTER 3 Wildlife Habitat	Standard 5: Fish, Wildlife and Biodiversity	Principle 6: Environmental Impact Principle 10: Plantation Management	Objective 4: Conservation of Biological Diversity Including Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value
CHAPTER 4 Visual Quality	Standard 6: Forest Aesthetics	Principle 6: Environmental Impact	Objective 5: Management of Visual Quality and Recreational Benefits
CHAPTER 5 Riparian Areas and Wetlands	Standard 4: Air, Water and Soil Protection	Principle 1: Compliance with Laws and FSC Principles Principle 6: Environmental Impact Principle 8: Monitoring and Assessment Principle 10: Plantation Management	Objective 3: Protection and Maintenance of Water Resources Objective 10: Adherence to Best Management Practices

Table C-1A: Summary table of ATFS Standards, FSC Principles, and SFI Objectives and their relationship to Wisconsin Forest Management Guidelines Chapters

FMG CHAPTER	STANDARD / PRINCIPLE / OBJECTIVE(S) THAT APPLY		
	ATFS	FSC	SFI
CHAPTER 6 Cultural Resources	Standard 7: Protect Special Sites	Principle 3: Indigenous Peoples' Rights Principle 4: Community Relations and Workers' Rights Principle 6: Environmental Impact	Objective 6: Protection of Special Sites
CHAPTER 7 Forest Soil Productivity	Standard 4: Air, Water and Soil Protection	Principle 6: Environmental Impact Principle 10: Plantation Management	Objective 2: Forest Productivity
CHAPTER 8 Invasive Plants, Insects and Diseases	Standard 1: Commitment to Practicing Sustainable Forestry Standard 4: Air, Water and Soil Protection Standard 5: Fish, Wildlife and Biodiversity	Principle 1: Compliance with Laws and FSC Principles Principle 6: Environmental Impact Principle 8: Monitoring and Assessment Principle 10: Plantation Management	Objective 2: Forest Productivity Objective 4: Conservation of Biological Diversity Including Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value Objective 10: Adherence to Best Management Practices
CHAPTER 9 Economics	<i>(*System does not directly address material covered in this FMG Chapter.)</i>	Principle 5: Benefits from the Forest	<i>(*System does not directly address material covered in this FMG Chapter.)</i>
CHAPTER 10 Forest Management Planning	Standard 1: Commitment to Practicing Sustainable Forestry Standard 8: Forest Product Harvests and Other Activities	Principle 2: Tenure and Use Rights and Responsibilities Principle 6: Environmental Impact Principle 7: Management Plan Principle 8: Monitoring and Assessment Principle 9: Maintenance of High Conservation Value Forests Principle 10: Plantation Management	Objective 1: Forest Management Planning

Table C-1B: Summary table of ATFS Standards, FSC Principles, and SFI Objectives and their relationship to Wisconsin Forest Management Guidelines Chapters (continued)

FMG CHAPTER	STANDARD / PRINCIPLE / OBJECTIVE(S) THAT APPLY		
	ATFS	FSC	SFI
CHAPTER 11 General Operational Guidelines	<i>(*System does not directly address material covered in this FMG Chapter.)</i>	Principle 6: Environmental Impact	<i>(*System does not directly address material covered in this FMG Chapter.)</i>
CHAPTER 12 Forest Road Construction and Maintenance	Standard 4: Air, Water and Soil Protection	Principle 6: Environmental Impact Principle 10: Plantation Management	Objective 2: Forest Productivity Objective 5: Management of Visual Quality and Recreational Benefits
CHAPTER 13 Timber Harvesting	Standard 3: Reforestation and Afforestation Standard 8: Forest Product Harvests and Other Activities	Principle 4: Community Relations and Workers' Rights Principle 5: Benefits from the Forest Principle 6: Environmental Impact Principle 7: Management Plan Principle 8: Monitoring and Assessment Principle 9: Maintenance of High Conservation Value Forests	Objective 2: Forest Productivity Objective 7: Efficient Use of Forest Resources Objective 9: Use of Qualified Resource and Qualified Logging Professionals
CHAPTER 14 Pesticide Use	Standard 2: Compliance with Laws Standard 4: Air, Water and Soil Protection	Principle 6: Environmental Impact Principle 10: Plantation Management	Objective 2: Forest Productivity
CHAPTER 15 Reforestation and Afforestation	Standard 3: Reforestation and Afforestation	Principle 6: Environmental Impact Principle 10: Plantation Management	Objective 2: Forest Productivity
CHAPTER 16 Intermediate Silvicultural Treatments	<i>(*System does not directly address material covered in this FMG Chapter.)</i>	Principle 9: Maintenance of High Conservation Value Forests	<i>(*System does not directly address material covered in this FMG Chapter.)</i>

Table C-1C: Summary table of ATFS Standards, FSC Principles, and SFI Objectives and their relationship to Wisconsin Forest Management Guidelines Chapters (continued)

FMG CHAPTER	STANDARD / PRINCIPLE / OBJECTIVE(S) THAT APPLY		
	ATFS	FSC	SFI
CHAPTER 17 Fire Management	(*System does not directly address material covered in this FMG Chapter.)	Principle 4: Community Relations and Workers' Rights Principle 5: Benefits from the Forest Principle 6: Environmental Impact Principle 7: Management Plan Principle 10: Plantation Management	Objective 2: Forest Productivity
CHAPTER 18 Forest Recreation Management	(*System does not directly address material covered in this FMG Chapter.)	(*System does not directly address material covered in this FMG Chapter.)	Objective 5: Management of Visual Quality and Recreational Benefits

Table C-1D: Summary table of ATFS Standards, FSC Principles, and SFI Objectives and their relationship to Wisconsin Forest Management Guidelines Chapters (continued)

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES?

Comparing these systems to identify the one that best fits a landowner's needs can be difficult. The Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes (PEFC) may be able to help. PEFC are Conformance Standards designed to evaluate Forest Certification Systems. PEFC was originally developed to provide mutual recognition of European national forest certification programs. Originally known as the "Pan European Forest Certification System" the name was changed when its membership was expanded to include countries outside of Europe. *"The role of PEFC is to provide a framework for the development of mutual recognition for national or sub-national forest certification schemes that have been developed locally according to internationally recognized requirements for sustainable forest management systems."* PEFC has developed a set of standards used to review forest certification systems' standards and operations. The American Tree Farm System (ATFS) and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) have both been certified by PEFC. The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) has chosen not to seek certification by PEFC.

Each program has strengths and weaknesses depending upon the type of operation being evaluated. For example, ATFS was developed specifically with family forest and non-industrial forestlands in mind; SFI was developed with private, industry-managed lands as a primary target audience, and FSC was developed with a focus on affecting global forest sustainability. To identify the best fit and understand the differences, it is important for landowners, managers and forest products companies to evaluate the trade-offs of each in the context of their own operations and opportunities to access existing and emerging markets.

THE FUTURE?

A great deal has changed since the early 1900s when the concept of sustainable forest management was first discussed. As our understanding of what sustainable forest management means grows and evolves so does forest certification and the demand of society for goods and services from sustainably managed sources. Forest certification is one way that we can evaluate management practices and measure progress towards the goal of sustainable forest management.

