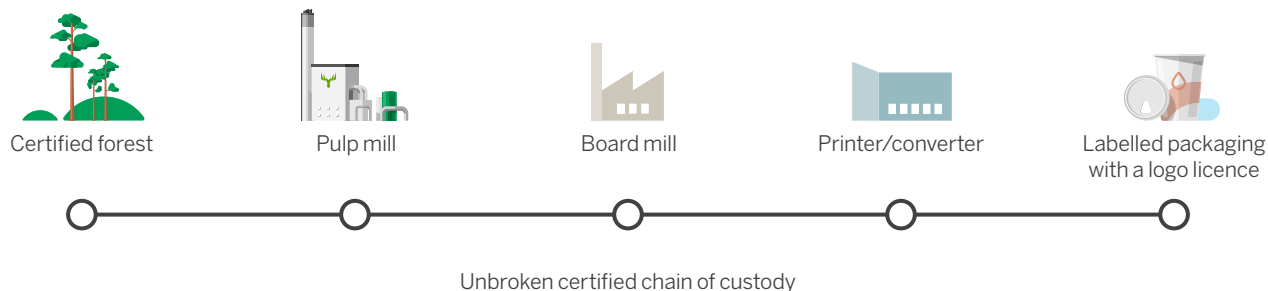


Facts about forest certification

– what you should know about certified forests and the products that come from them

Forest certification provides companies and consumers with an assurance that the wood fibres used to make, for example, packaging and graphic materials originate from forests that have been managed sustainably. Forest certification schemes are voluntary accreditation schemes that support the wellbeing of forests and confirm the legality of wood's origin. They also ensure good conditions for people who work in forests, ensure that forests can be used for recreational purposes and safeguard the rights of indigenous people. Only about 11%¹ of the world's forests are certified compared to well over 80%² in Finland and 66%³ in Sweden.

ALL PARTIES IN THE VALUE CHAIN NEED TO COMPLY WITH THE CHAIN OF CUSTODY CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS



WHAT IS A CHAIN OF CUSTODY?

The certification process has two main parts: forest certification and certification of the chain of custody. The chain of custody system makes it possible to trace and document the flow of wood raw material and the products made from it throughout the supply chain. With a chain of custody certificate, a producer can prove that the wood raw material used in its products comes from certified or controlled forests.

In order for a producer to be able to apply a forest certification label to their board and paper products, the products must be made from certified wood fibre and there

must be an unbroken chain of custody from the forest to the printer or converter.

Both PEFC and FSC® chain of custody require that only certified or controlled wood is used; it is not permitted to use wood from unknown sources.

“There must be an unbroken chain of custody from the forest to the printer or converter.”

WHAT ARE THE LEADING FOREST CERTIFICATION SCHEMES?

The two most common forest certification standards are the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) and the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC); both schemes ensure sustainable forest management and help conserve biodiversity and preserve the valuable habitats and biotopes that are typical of forests. Globally, PEFC-certified forests cover 298 million hectares⁴ while FSC-certified forests cover over 165 million hectares⁵ (2024).

Both standards target the implementation of sustainable forest management practices as well as safeguarding the habitats of plants and animals. Both standards also focus on respecting the rights of local communities and forestry workers. PEFC and FSC are both committed to the same objective: forest certification according to credible, independently verified standards of responsible forest management. Both certifications are granted by independent, accredited certification bodies.

FSC was originally created to implement sustainable forest management for tropical forest areas whilst PEFC was established in response to the specific needs of small and family forest owners, such as those in Finland, where forest regulation was already in place.

PEFC is an umbrella organisation that works by endorsing national forest certification systems developed through multi-stakeholder processes tailored to local priorities and conditions. PEFC has endorsed the North American Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI), the US-based American Tree Farm System (ATFS) and the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Sustainable Forest Management Standard.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN WHEN WE TALK ABOUT PEFC CONTROLLED SOURCES OR FSC CONTROLLED WOOD?

In both cases the wood supply company ensures that the forest from which the wood is harvested meets the criteria of controlled origin, including legal, ecological and social factors. Forest management and sourcing practises are monitored by the wood sourcing company and verified by its external chain of custody auditor.

As the wood in this case is not PEFC or FSC certified, the logos of the respective schemes cannot be applied to the paper or board product. FSC controlled wood can only be sold to customers that hold FSC chain of custody certification. The origin of PEFC and FSC controlled wood is traceable.

CAN RECYCLED FIBRE-BASED PRODUCTS HOLD A FOREST CERTIFICATION?

Products made from recycled wood fibres can hold a certification, such as PEFC Recycled or FSC Recycled, which proves the volume of recycled fibre material they contain. However, the certification does not provide any guarantee of traceability or the sustainability of the origin of wood fibres.

”Both FSC and PEFC certification guarantee that the wood comes from sustainably managed forests.”



Forest certification in a nutshell

- Supports sustainable forest management including water protection
- Provides traceability and confirms the legality of the origin of the wood
- Helps conserve biodiversity
- Safeguards good conditions for people working in forests as well as the rights of indigenous peoples
- Ensures that forests can continue to be used for recreational purposes

4) <https://www.pefc.org/discover-pefc/facts-and-figures>

5) <https://fsc.org/en/about-us>