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Sustainability

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About Certifying the Supply Chain

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Sustainability Report

Related Links

- American Tree Farm System® (ATFS)
- Certificacao Florestal (CERFLOR)
- Forest Stewardship Council™ (FSC®)
- International Standards Org. (ISO)
- Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC)
- Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI®)

## Certifying the Supply Chain



Certification is a voluntary means of auditing conformance to a standard set forth by an independent organization. When it comes to sourcing wood fiber used to make paper and packaging products, certification of forestry-related operations represents the highest standard of stewardship and traceability that a company can provide to its customers.

Third-party certification is employed elsewhere in the marketplace to provide consumers with assurances of good practices. For example, accounting methods and reports are third-party certified for financial reporting, attesting to the validity of the accounting procedures and accuracy of the reports. In a similar fashion, third-party certification attests to responsible management of forests and fiber sources.

We demonstrate our commitment to sustainable forest management and fiber sourcing practices through third-party certification to a number of independent standards including the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI®), the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC), the Forest Stewardship Council™ (FSC®) and the Brazilian Forest Certification Standard (Cerflor).

**Learn about the similarities and differences between SFI and FSC.**

Our company supports the existence of multiple certification standards to increase the amount of certified fiber and the concept of mutual recognition, which acknowledges that responsible forest management can be achieved through a number of credible certification systems. For instance, PEFC is a global umbrella organization that certifies national and regional certification standards and supports the promotion of sustainable forest management and chain-of-custody. PEFC recognizes the SFI® Standard, the Cerflor (Brazilian) Standard, the American Tree Farm System® (ATFS), and the Canadian Standards Association (CSA), to name a few.

The diagram below depicts the journey of trees from the forest to the customer -- and the points at which operations can be certified by specific standards.

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## CERTIFYING THE SUPPLY CHAIN

How third-party certifications cover the supply chain from forest to consumer



The management, harvest and reforestation of forestlands can be assessed by conformance to a responsible forest management standard. Forests can be certified to one of a number of forest management certification standards, e.g. SFI®, FSC®, Cerflor, ATFS. International Paper, which no longer owns much land in the U.S. controls the purchase and harvest of wood fiber through certification to a procurement management standard. The overall flow of wood fiber can be tracked and monitored by implementing a chain-of-custody system.

Fiber procurement certification is unique to SFI® Inc. and stands apart from other forest certification programs by supporting responsible forest management not only on SFI®-certified lands but also on millions of additional acres that are not certified – both in North America and offshore. This ensures fiber from risky sources does not make its way into the supply chain of SFI® program participants.

In North America, program participants must comply with all applicable laws to protect the environment, workers and local communities. They must go beyond this to improve forest practices proactively through logger education and by encouraging their suppliers to use the services of qualified resource and logging professionals. This expertise helps to promote best management practices that protect water quality; to identify and protect important habitat elements for wildlife, including critically imperiled and imperiled species and communities; and to foster prompt reforestation of harvested sites.

When SFI® program participants source fiber from jurisdictions outside of North America that may lack effective laws, they must complete a risk assessment to avoid illegal sources of supply, and they must promote the conservation of biodiversity hotspots and major tropical wilderness areas.

Certification and chain-of-custody are terms that are often used interchangeably; however, they actually describe two different but related processes. At the root of all certification systems is the goal of protecting our forests so that they are economically viable and provide enjoyment and environmental benefits for today and for future generations. A chain-of-custody certification is a system that tracks fiber movement from the forest to the consumer and allows companies to make claims about the percentage of certified and/or recycled fiber within their products.