

Forest Certification in Canada and Around the World

Tony Rotherham, RPF

Forest certification has become a common practice for many forest product companies and forest management organizations around the world. There are approximately 310 million *ha* of forest certified to a variety of standards worldwide; and this represents approximately 10% of the world's forests. Canada has 40% of all certified forest land in the world, more than any other country.

Canada

Let us look at Canada, the global leader. There are three certification programs used by Canadian forest management organizations.

They are:

- CAN CSA Z809 the SFM standard developed by a multi-interest Technical Committee working under the aegis of the Canadian Standards Association (CSA). This standard is based on the Criteria and Indicators for SFM approved by the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers (CCFM). The Prefix "CAN" indicates that it is a National Standard of Canada approved by Canada's national standards governing body- The Standards Council of Canada.
- The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) has three regional standards approved for use in Canada. They are FSC Boreal, FSC British Columbia, FSC Maritimes. The FSC Great Lakes- St. Lawrence standard has not been approved by FSC International but several areas of forest have been certified to the requirements of this draft standard.
- The Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI) 2005-2009 standard is also extensively used in Canada. SFI Inc. is a 501c(3) non-profit organization and is overseen by a three-chamber Board of Directors representing social, environmental and economic sectors.

The Canadian Sustainable Forestry Certification Coalition, in its January 31st, 2008 "Certification Status Report" ([www. CertificationCanada.org](http://www.CertificationCanada.org)) reports the three programs had registered certifications totalling 137.8 million *ha* of forest

with an Allowable Annual Cut (AAC) of 122 million m³. This report is the only certification status report that includes a statement of production from the certified forests. Volume of production from certified forests indicating the supply of certified wood, is a more meaningful statistic than the area certified. The areas and Allowable Annual Cut for these certification programs are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 – Canadian Certified Forest Programs

Program	AAC Millions m³	%	Area Millions ha	%
CSA	62.7	56	77.8	56
SFI	40.9	37	39.1	28
FSC	8.9	8	24.4	18
Total*	122	100	137.8	100

* Some forests have been certified to two standards, the total may be less than the sum of all three programs to avoid double counting

Canadian forest management organizations have achieved certified status on 138 million *ha* (74%) of the estimated 185 million *ha* of forest land that is under management in this country. 160 million *ha* of the 185 million *ha* is under public ownership, and 25 million *ha* is under private ownership.

International Forest Certification

Looking now at the international scene there are two forest certification programs that operate around the world. These are the FSC and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes better known by its acronym, PEFC. The CSA and SFI standards used in Canada are fully endorsed and recognized members of the PEFC program.

The international programs have a lot in common and one significant difference. Both FSC and PEFC work with national working groups that develop forest management standards. The FSC groups base their standards on the 10 FSC Principles of good forest management. The PEFC national working groups base their standards on the Criteria and Indicators for SFM approved by their national governments through the UN Intergovernmental Process on C&I for SFM. Both programs review the standards developed by national working groups before approving them. The FSC does this internally. The PEFC engages an

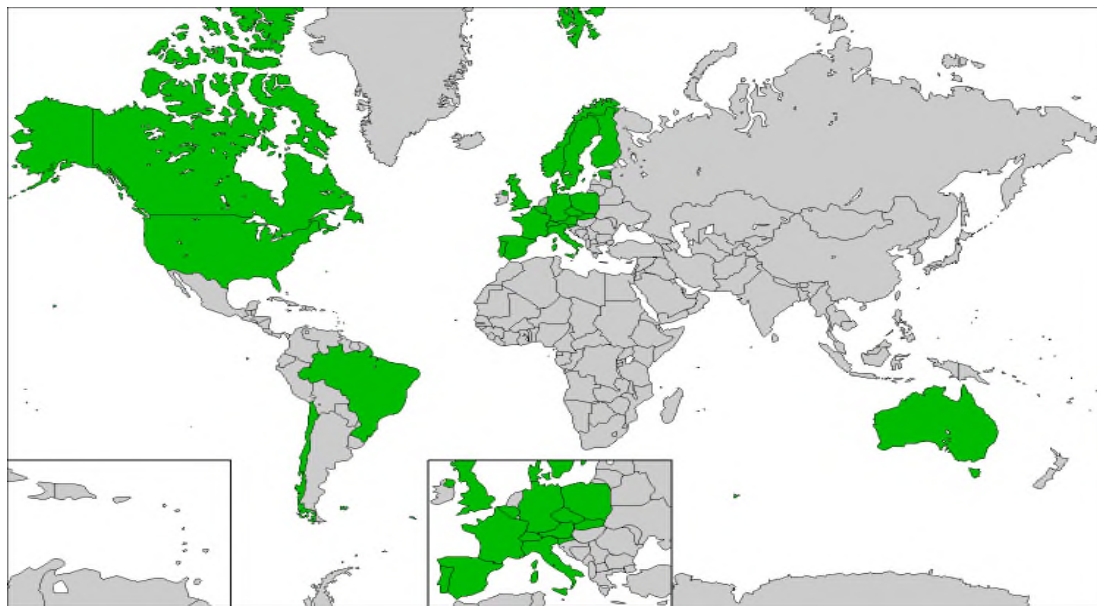
independent forest consulting firm to review and report on the proposed standard to ensure that it meets the PEFC requirements for content and the development process. The consultant's report is reviewed by an independent Panel of Experts and the PEFC Board; and if satisfactory the new standard is approved by the PEFC Members as a PEFC endorsed Standard.

The significant point of difference between the FSC and PEFC is that the PEFC will only recognize certifications to standards that have been fully reviewed and endorsed by the PEFC Board of Directors and PEFC members.

But the FSC recognizes certifications in countries where there are no FSC approved standards.

The PEFC has endorsed standards in 24 countries. Currently, 203.7 million *ha* have been certified in 19 of these countries. Map A shows the 24 countries with PEFC approved standards. 19 of these countries have registered certifications totalling 203.7 million *ha* with the PEFC office in Geneva.

**Map A – 24 Countries with PEFC Standards
19 with certified forests**

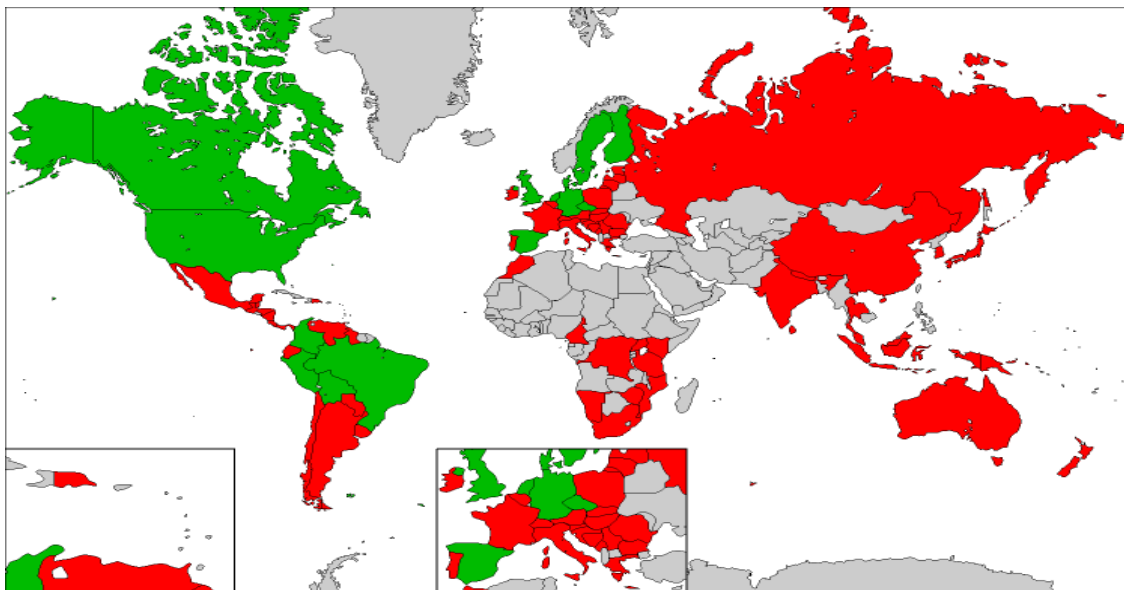


The FSC has approved standards in only 14 of the 79 countries where FSC certifications have been carried out (FSC Accredited Forest Stewardship Standards - 20 March 2008). All 103.5 million *ha* of FSC certified forest are recognized by FSC International in Bonn despite the fact that there are no approved FSC standards in 65 of the countries in which FSC lists certifications. The 14 countries with approved standards have 57.7 million *ha* certified (56%). The 65 countries without FSC approved standards have 45.8 million *ha* of

certified forest (44%). Map B shows all 79 countries where the FSC has registered standards and certifications. Countries with FSC standards are shown in green. Countries with FSC certifications, but no recognized FSC standards are shown in red.

Map B – 79 Countries with FSC certifications –

- 14 countries with approved standards
- 65 countries without approved standards



Certification to standards that have not received final approval is a significant departure from established international standards procedure. A table summarizing these differences is shown below.

Table 2 – Comparison of PEFC and FSC Forest Area with Standards

Program	Countries with approved standards	Forest certified in these countries (millions ha)	% of program	Countries with no approved standards	Forest certified in these countries (millions ha)	% of program
PEFC	24 (19 with certified forests)	203.7	100	X	X	X
FSC	14	57.7	56	65	45.8	44

It is interesting to note that most of the forest management standards used around the world have been developed by *ad hoc* working groups. There are

several notable exceptions. The CSA SFM standard, and the PEFC forest management standards in Australia, Chile and Brazil were developed by technical committees working through their national standards institutes. Working through national standards institutes provides an added measure of rigour to the development process and assists with resolution of dissenting opinion. *Ad hoc* groups have generally done a good job.

There are other certification programs in operation. The Malaysian Timber Council (MTCC) has a certification program for Malaysian forests. Several certifications have been issued.

All programs have the same objectives. Improve forest management, try to ensure that wood from illegal logging does not enter the supply chain, provide assurance to customers that wood bearing the PEFC, SFI, CSA, MTCC or FSC logos comes from well managed forests.