

WHAT IS THE CSA SFM STANDARD?

WITH OVER 60 MILLION HECTARES OF FOREST CERTIFIED, THE CSA SFM STANDARD IS THE LARGEST NATIONAL STANDARD IN THE WORLD.

The Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Sustainable Forest Management System (SFM) Standard is the leading certification standard in Canada. First released in 1996, it is Canada's official national standard for sustainable forest management.

Forests certified to CSA provide independent 3rd party assurance of meeting a comprehensive set of biological, environmental and social criteria.

What is the history of the Standard?

The Canadian Standards Association was chartered in 1919 and has developed over 3000 standards for various industries.

The CSA SFM Standard was developed in accordance with national and international initiatives to develop criteria and indicators for SFM. It uses local public advisory committees to assist in the development of indicators and targets for each element. This active and engaged public participation process differentiates CSA from other forest certification standards and reflects the Canadian forest situation where more than 93% of forests are publicly owned.

Development of the CSA SFM Standard is overseen by a Technical Committee comprised of forest producers, scientists, academics, representatives of government, Aboriginal people, labour unions, consumers and environmentalists. The CSA SFM Standard has been maintained in an open public process by the Technical Committee and was first reviewed and revised in 2002. A second review and revision to the Standard was completed in March, 2009.

How extensive is the use of the CSA Standard?

Over 60 million hectares of Canadian forests were third-party certified to CSA as of September 2011. That's more than any other national standard in the world. In fact, that's roughly a quarter of all the certified forests in the entire world.

How does it compare to other standards?

One of the most rigorous assessments of forest certification standards is done by the UK government, using a technical review panel of four experts selected for their certification expertise, independence and international input. Their assessment in December of 2010 confirmed that the CSA Standard, endorsed by the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC), continues to provide evidence of legal and sustainable wood supplies, and meets the UK government's wood products procurement requirements.

Is the registration of certifiers performed by those developing the Standard?

No. There are "firewalls" in place to prevent the mixing of these roles and potential conflicts of interest.

HOW HAS THE STANDARD EVOLVED?

A PRESCRIBED SET OF 35 CORE INDICATORS BRINGS A NEW LEVEL OF CONSISTENCY TO SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT PLANS DEVELOPED UNDER THE STANDARD ACROSS CANADA.

What changed with the 2008 version of the Standard?

Mandatory core indicators were added to bring a level of consistency to Sustainable Forest Management Plans developed under the Standard. These 35 mandatory indicators cover areas such as:

- Native species, species at risk, and sites of special significance (biological diversity)
- Carbon uptake and storage
- Forest land conversion, and
- Sustainable communities

Other indicators, as well as locally appropriate targets for all indicators, are identified through the local public participation process.

Specific forest management issues were added as topics to be discussed during public consultations. This is part of the two way education and exchange of information that occurs in each forest certified to CSA. As an example, topics to be discussed under Conservation of Biological Diversity must include but are not limited to:

- Forest fragmentation and forest loss
- Management in the context of natural disturbance regimes and the natural range of variation
- Maintenance of populations and communities over time
- Local and regional protected areas and integrated landscape management
- Practices to limit the spread of invasive alien species
- Gene pool of native seed stock (breeding program)
- Management of cultural values and resources

Aboriginal interests were further addressed. Requirements now include:

- Understanding and complying with the current legal requirements related to Aboriginal title and rights, and treaty rights
- Use of Aboriginal knowledge to identify and manage culturally important resources and values
- Respect for traditional Aboriginal forest values and uses identified through the Aboriginal input process
- Capacity development and meaningful participation of Aboriginal communities, including efforts to obtain acceptance of management plans based on a clear understanding of them
- Participation in the forest economy

HOW IS THE CANADIAN PUBLIC INVOLVED?

RECOGNIZING THAT 93% OF CANADA'S FORESTS ARE PUBLICLY OWNED, THE CSA SFM CERTIFICATION DEMANDS ACTIVE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT BY LOCAL RESIDENTS.

Why is the CSA Standard the best fit for Canada's forests and forest products?

93% of Canada's forests are publicly owned and CSA certification demands active public involvement by local residents. No other forest certification standard used in Canada engages the public like that required by CSA. From coast to coast, nearly 40 public advisory groups are involved in frequent discussion each and every year with forest managers to continuously improve forest management.

The CSA SFM Standard was built on top of, and is complementary to, Canada's strong legislative framework for forestry. It avoids repeating legal requirements that are already a "given", and focuses on issues specific to this country. It uses a definition of sustainable forest management developed for Canada by the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers (CCFM). This "definition" (made up of a numerous biophysical, social and economic criteria) was an outcome of Canada's involvement in intergovernmental processes for developing global criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management.

The CSA SFM Standard is accredited to Canada's National Standards System by the Standards Council of Canada (SCC) and operates in accordance with the disciplines established by the SCC.

Accordingly, it holds the honour of being Canada's official national standard for sustainable forest management.

How transparent is the Standard?

The following information is made publicly available – a benchmark in transparency and accountability:

- Sustainable Forest Management Plans developed under the CSA Standard,
- Annual Reports on progress against those plans,
- The results of independent certification and
- Annual Surveillance Audit Reports

HOW DO I MAKE INFORMED PURCHASES?

**BY SEARCHING FOR
FORESTS CERTIFIED TO
CSA AND PEFC CERTIFIED
PRODUCTS FROM CANADA
AT www.pefc.org.**

What is the connection between CSA and PEFC?

The CSA forest certification has been endorsed by PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification) the world's largest forest certification organization. Companies can utilize the PEFC chain of custody standard to verify that their forest products originated from forests certified to CSA.

How can customers source wood and paper products certified to CSA certified wood?

To search for forests certified to CSA or PEFC certified forest products from Canada go to the PEFC website at www.pefc.org/certification-services/find-certified.

Does the CSA program offer chain of custody verification?

Yes, forests certified to CSA can utilize the internationally recognized PEFC chain of custody requirements. The PEFC on-product mark is available for organizations that meet the PEFC Chain of Custody requirements. This mark is recognized internationally as a sign of sustainable forest management practices.

Can CSA certified wood be used to gain credits in green building rating systems?

Absolutely. Green building rating systems specifying wood certified to CSA and other credible certification standards include: Built Green, Green Globes, National Green Building Standard™ (NGBS), and farther afield, the Timber Trade Federation in the UK.

Where can we go for more information (about the Standard, about the CSA user group)?

Additional information can be obtained by contacting one of the CSA SFM User Group companies directly (list at www.csasfmforests.ca) or by sending us an email: info@csasfmforests.ca