



Forest Management Certification: Chain of Custody

THERE ARE TWO MAIN TYPES OF FOREST MANAGEMENT related certification that are widely used in British Columbia:

- Forest Management
- Chain of Custody

However, in addition to forest management and chain of custody certification standards, the International Organisation for Standardization (ISO) Environmental Management Standard (14001) is a popular certification system in Canada. Companies will often pursue ISO certification in addition to forest management certification, as forest management certification typically requires many management system components similar to the ISO requirements.

ISO 14001 requires corporate policies and procedures to be developed and implemented for various aspects. This includes but is not limited to: prevention of pollution, commitment to meet or exceed legal requirements, controls for activities that have the potential to have significant impacts to the environment, etc. An ISO system is often implemented as a foundation to the achieve forest management certification.

Forest Management Certification

Forest management certification includes voluntary commitment to successfully implement established standards that complement the existing legal framework for forest management in BC.

There are three types of internationally recognized sustainable forest management certification programs that are available in BC (and Canada):

- Canadian Standards Association (CSA – Z809)
- Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI®)
- Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®)

Michel de Bellefeuille, RPF, reviews these three standards and their differences in his article on page 20. So I will focus on the chain of custody certification.

Chain of Custody Certification

Chain of custody (CoC) certification tracks the forest products from a certified forest through the manufacturing process to the end consumer and provides assurance to the custom-



While this article focuses on Canadian Chain of Custody Certification, Zimmermann is involved in forest certification around the world. These trees were part of a certification audit in Brazil under the Forest Stewardship Council and Cerflor Standard (a standard used in Brazil and endorsed by PEFC).

ers that they are purchasing a product that was sourced from a responsibly managed forest.

There are three types of internationally recognized CoC certification programs that are available:

- Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC)
- Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI)
- Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)

All three types of the CoC certifications are based on similar fundamentals related to the tracking of forest products, ensuring non-certified fibre sources are from responsible and legal sources and providing rules and controls for purchasing, tracking of fibre and sales. Some of the similarities are as follows:

- Commitment to not be involved in the purchase fibre from illegal harvesting and related assessments of risk (i.e. probability) of sourcing illegally harvested wood,
- Commitment to use system procedures to control the purchasing, tracking and sales of certified products (e.g. confirming certified status of suppliers and product purchased as well as communication of certified status/claim of fibre through invoices and transport documents),
- Maintenance of records of purchases, inventory, sales, training, etc.,

- Commitment to use a control systems to permit physical separation of certified fibre through processing, mixing of two different sources of certified fibre into one product, and a credit system that allows for mixing of certified and non-controversial/controlled wood and sale of certified wood equal to the initial certified inputs,
- Provisions for outsourcing or subcontracting of manufacture/re-manufacture activities to outside facilities, provided they are CoC certified or adequate controls are in place such as contracts/agreements and training,
- Provisions for on-product and promotional use of labels/logos (e.g. websites, brochures),
- Required annual audits to be completed by independent, third-party accredited auditing firms, and
- May require a risk assessment be completed on sources of non-certified fibre should there be a need to mix certified and non-certified fibre together.

While there are many similarities between the CoC certification programs, there are also a few very distinct differences between them. Based on my experience with the three standards, I feel these general statements apply.

Continued on page 29: **Chain of Custody**

ABCFP Membership Statistics

Association of BC Forest Professionals – September 2011

NEW ENROLLED MEMBERS

Maximilian Dietmar Gerth, FIT; Molly Halliday Hudson, FIT; Jayme Lynn Goldie, TFT; Samantha Christina Griffore, TFT; Marie-Lou Lefrançois, FIT; Daniel Lewis Macmaster, FIT; Rurik Wilhelm Muentner, FIT; Richard Glenn Swift, TFT; Dimitri Alban Vaisius, FIT.

REINSTATEMENTS FROM LOA

Janie Katherine Kester, FIT.

REINSTATEMENTS

Robert Steven Jonasson, RFT

DECEASED

Merve Wilkinson, Honourary Member.

The Following People Are Not Entitled to Practise Professional Forestry In British Columbia:

Removals

Steve Robert Levitt #1819

RESIGNATIONS

Nicole Rivette, RFT

Chain of Custody, continued from page 13:

PEFC & SFI

These programs are very similar and have no significant differences in the standards. However, some recent changes to the PEFC standard now require commitment to health and safety of the workers which does differ from the SFI standard. In North America, both standards consider fibre certified under the CSA Z809, American Tree Farm Standard (USA), PEFC and SFI standards as eligible certified inputs.

FSC

In addition to the commitment to not source illegally harvested fibre, FSC requires additional corporate commitments to not be involved in sourcing any fibre from forest operations involved in the violation of traditional and human rights, destruction of high conservation values, significant conversion of forests to plantation or non-forestry use, the introduction of genetically modified

organisms and the violation of any of the ILO Core Conventions (as described in the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, 1998).

FSC also maintains a separate Controlled Wood Risk Assessment standard that companies can achieve in addition to the CoC certification. This standard allows the company to risk assess source areas in terms of the key FSC values and mix uncertified wood with certified wood.

FSC only allows for the inclusion of FSC certified fibre or controlled wood as 'certified' inputs. However, readers should note that 'FSC Controlled Wood' is not considered certified fibre. Ultimately, the choice for which to use is a

corporate decision based on goals and values as well as markets/customer demands. And it is quite common for organizations to obtain CoC certification to multiple standards. 🐾

Jason Zimmermann, RPF, is the owner/President of Zimmfor Management Services. He has worked in the forest industry for over 18 years and has been involved in many aspects of forestry including, logging, road construction, contract management, forest engineering and certification. Zimmfor supports clients all over the world. www.zimmfor.com

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