



## Press Briefing – August 2011

### **PEFC - Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification**

**PEFC is dedicated to promoting sustainable forest management. It is the world's largest forest certification system and the certification system of choice for small forest owners.**

PEFC is an international non-profit, non-governmental organization dedicated to promoting sustainable forest management through independent third-party certification. PEFC's mission is: "To give society confidence that people manage forests sustainably."

PEFC works throughout the forest supply chain to promote good practice in the forest and to ensure that timber and non-timber forest products are sourced with respect for the highest ecological, social and ethical standards. Thanks to its eco-label, customers and consumers are able to identify products from sustainably managed forests.

PEFC is an umbrella organization that endorses national forest certification systems developed collaboratively by all interested stakeholders and tailored to local priorities and conditions.

Each national forest certification system undergoes rigorous third party assessment against PEFC's unique Sustainability Benchmarks. These Benchmarks are based on broad consensus by society, expressed in globally respected international and intergovernmental processes and guidelines for the promotion of sustainable forest management.

The Benchmark criteria are regularly revised through multi-stakeholder processes involving participants drawn globally from civil society, business, governments, labour and research institutions to take account of new scientific knowledge, societal change, evolving expectations and to incorporate the latest best practices.

Today, PEFC has recognized certification systems in 29 countries. Together these account for about 240 million hectares of certified forests, making PEFC the world's largest forest certification system. It is the certification system of choice for hundreds of thousands of small forest owners including family and community-owned forests.

#### **Why PEFC?**

While all forests play a key role in providing ecosystem services, contributing to the global sustainable development objective and combating climate change, it is generally accepted that private forests provide proportionally more market commodities than their publicly-owned and managed counterparts. Some 25% of the world's forests are estimated to be managed by families and community members, and PEFC, through innovative mechanisms for group and regional certification, supports small land owners to gain recognition in the market place thereby making a lasting contribution to livelihoods and rural development.

To date, several hundred-thousand family- and community-owned forests have acquired PEFC certification, which is why it is the certification system of choice for small forest owners. PEFC certification is also favoured by numerous public and private timber procurement policies worldwide.

## Facts & Figures

The rapid growth of PEFC to become the world's largest certification system and its popularity among family and community forest owners are a testament to the solid foundation on which PEFC is built and its importance in promoting sustainable forest management globally. To this must be added more than 10.000 companies that have obtained PEFC Chain of Custody certification to demonstrate their commitment to responsible sourcing of certified products.

Strong growth in demand for PEFC has been seen in several countries, including the United Kingdom, where more than half of all wood imported in 2008 was PEFC-certified, a figure almost double that of 2005. PEFC's work is also made possible by the voluntary engagement of countless stakeholders at local and national level on four continents, who support its ongoing efforts to expand certification and sustainable forest management beyond the current 9% of global forest area.

- About 238 million hectares of forest area (or 588 million acres) are managed in compliance with PEFC's internationally accepted Sustainability Benchmark. This is an area equivalent to the size of the whole of Mexico; or France, Germany, Italy and the UK combined.
- Two-thirds of all certified forests globally are certified to PEFC.
- By the end of July 2011, more than 10.000 companies and organizations have achieved PEFC Chain of Custody certification.
- One-third of all Chains of Custody globally have been awarded by PEFC.
- 35 National Members (with 29 endorsed national certification systems) and 9 International Stakeholder Members have joined forces under the PEFC umbrella to collaboratively promote sustainable forest management.
- PEFC certification is a standard of choice for public timber procurement policies in e.g. the United Kingdom, Netherlands Germany, and Japan, in addition to numerous private timber .procurement policies.

## Further information

- PEFC website: [www.pefc.org](http://www.pefc.org)
- PEFC Annual Review 2010: <http://bit.ly/flnkl>

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