



Promoting sustainable forest management

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PEFC launches new mandatory guide for the avoidance of controversial timber

To help timber and paper companies prevent wood from controversial sources finding its way into their products, the PEFC Council has published a new mandatory guide for the Avoidance of Controversial Sources. The guide introduces safeguard mechanisms against procuring illegally logged wood and complements the international PEFC Chain of Custody wood tracking system.

“PEFC is the world’s largest resource of certified wood but there are cases where companies have to procure uncertified material in addition to certified material for their production”, explained Mr Ben Gunneberg, Secretary General of the PEFC Council. “In such cases, companies need to put in place safety checks such as risk analyses, external assessments and on-site inspections, to ensure the legality of the uncertified wood. The scope and the intensity of the checks depend on the risk of procuring timber from illegal harvesting. Certified material from other certification systems, such as FSC, is considered as not requiring further checks.”

“To ensure that a company has implemented all safeguard checks for uncertified wood correctly, including the external verification assessments, these are scrutinized by independent certifiers during the annual PEFC Chain of Custody audits. Thus PEFC provides companies with a ‘double safety net’ for their procurement”, Mr Gunneberg added and went on to explain: “Whenever you buy PEFC certified raw material containing less than 100% certified timber, you have the assurance that you are not procuring illegally logged wood as all the content has already been checked”, Mr Gunneberg said. “So the best way to avoid wood from controversial sources is to procure PEFC certified products”, Mr Gunneberg concluded.

The new guide was approved by the PEFC Council General Assembly in Portland and is available at www.pefc.org > Documentation > Technical Documentation > Annex 4.

ENDS

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press release



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Editors Notes

Forest Certification

Forest certification is a process, which provides an assurance mechanism to purchasers of wood and paper products that the wood used in the products comes from sustainably managed forests. Sustainably managed forests are those whose management implements performance standards based on internationally agreed environmental, social and economical requirements.

PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes)

PEFC is a framework for the mutual recognition of credible national or regional forest certification schemes that have been developed based on internationally recognised requirements for sustainable forest management. Since its launch in 1999, PEFC has become the largest forest certification umbrella organisation covering national schemes from all over the world, delivering hundreds of millions of tonnes of wood to the processing industry and then onto the market place from over 191 million hectares of certified forests. PEFC has strong grass roots support from many stakeholders including the forestry sector, governments, trade associations, trade unions and non-governmental organisations.

press release