



Promoting sustainable forest management

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Slovenia achieves PEFC endorsement

Nearly three years since the establishment of the *Institute for Forest Certification in Slovenia*, and following a thorough standards development process, detailed consultations with stakeholder groups of society and an independent assessment, the Slovenian Forest Certification System SFCS has now achieved PEFC endorsement.

“We are proud that the Slovenian system has gained international recognition through PEFC endorsement”, said Mr Cveto Zupančič, President of the Slovenian Institute. “We have registered a growing demand for certified forest products, both at home and in our neighbouring countries in south-eastern Europe and are well prepared to meet market needs.”

“The several-months long assessment prior to a scheme reaching endorsement status ensures that all systems meet the same high and stringent quality and performance level to provide assurances to the market”, said Mr Ben Gunneberg, Secretary General of the PEFC Council. “Together with the open and transparent development of the national systems, it is a lengthy and rigorous process that in the end results in wide support of the standards by the various and multiple users of certification.”

The *Institute for Forest Certification in Slovenia* is a forum of national organisations wishing to promote sustainable forestry, and represents the country in the PEFC Council. Members and supporters of the Institute include among others the *Society for the Protection of the Alps*, the *Forest Owners Association*, the *Chamber of Agriculture and Forestry of Slovenia*, the *Forestry Economic Interest Association*, the *Slovenian Forest Service* and scientific institutions.

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Editors Notes

PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes)

PEFC is a framework for the assessment and endorsement of national forest certification systems 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 systems from all over the world, delivering hundreds of millions of tonnes of wood to the processing industry and then onto the market place from currently more than 200 million hectares of certified forests. This is an area which is larger than the combined forest area of all European Union member states. PEFC has strong grass roots support from many stakeholders including the forestry sector, governments, trade associations, trade unions and non-governmental organisations.