



Promoting sustainable forest management

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A world in which people manage forests sustainably

The PEFC Council, the world's largest forestry certification organisation, launched its new strategy at its 11th General Assembly in Munich, Germany on 5th October 2007. The strategy is designed to deliver PEFC's mission, namely to give society confidence that people manage forests sustainably. In addition the strategy concentrates on growing the market for certified products; providing economic benefits for the sustainable forest management (SFM) community and promoting rural development.

"The new strategy marks a significant switch in the strategic direction from production to market access orientation", said Mr Ben Gunneberg, Secretary General of the PEFC Council. "PEFC expects that over the next ten years 45% of the world's industrial roundwood capacity will be certified as coming from sustainably managed forests (currently 25%) which will provide an increasing feedstock to the market place meeting the rapidly growing demand for certified forest products. As the world's leader PEFC expects to deliver over 60% of this market share", he added.

The strategy document states that PEFC will proactively develop its rules and standards to be more relevant to actual issues directly applicable to the needs of the supply chain, by making them easier to understand and operate, without diluting their rigour.

A joint marketing and communications plan is currently being prepared and PEFC's value to key stakeholders and international institutions will be increased by extending its SFM policy to include broader, but related issues. PEFC's leadership role will be strengthened through the development of proactive positions in policy areas such as climate change, illegal logging and social issues including rural development. PEFC will actively be seeking to develop dialogue, partnerships and beneficial policy developments with international institutions and key market actors.

To effectively deliver the new strategy (available at the PEFC Council website www.pefc.org) PEFC is undergoing a governance review to ensure it has the structures and procedures in place to meet the current and futures demands on the organisation.

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press release



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Editors Notes

PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes)

PEFC is a framework for the mutual recognition 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 over 193 million hectares of certified forests. This is an area which is larger than the combined forest area of the 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.

Sustainable Forest Management

Sustainable Forest Management is defined as “the stewardship and use of forests and forest lands in a way and at a rate that maintains their biodiversity, productivity, regeneration capacity, vitality and their potential to fulfil now and in the future, relevant ecological, economic and social functions at local, national and global levels, and that does not cause damage to other eco-systems”. Sustainably managed forests are those whose management implements performance standards based on internationally agreed environmental, social and economic requirements.

Forest Certification

Forest certification is a process which provides an assurance to purchasers of wood and paper products that the wood used in the products comes from sustainably managed forest. It involves the certification of forests (Sustainable Forest Management certification) and the certification of the wood flow via processing, manufacturing and trading enterprises (Chain of Custody certification) to the final consumer.

Chain of Custody

Chain of custody certification is a mechanism for tracing certified wood from the forest to the final product to provide certainty that the paper or timber product, about which a claim is being made, is linked to a certified forest. The Chain of Custody covers all successive stages of the manufacturing, processing, transformation and distribution.

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