



2nd August 2001

## The World's Biggest just got Bigger!

PEFC, the international scheme promoting sustainable management of forests through credible independent third party certification, has just become bigger. Two more schemes, namely those from France and Latvia have just completed the thorough assessment procedure to become endorsed by the PEFC Council.

Mr Gunneberg, Secretary General of PEFC Council, said, "There are now eight independent forest certification schemes endorsed by the PEFC Council. Soon forests certified under the French and Latvian schemes will be able to be counted towards the 36.42 Million hectares already certified. - an area equal in size to the total land mass of the United Kingdom, Ireland, Belgium and the Netherlands put together !"

Mr Genest, PEFC France Vice Chairman, said, "I'm delighted to see that the French scheme has been endorsed as meeting the stringent requirements of the PEFC Council. This is good news for the environment and the scheme is a good an example of how environmentalists, woodland owners, the forest industry and social interests can work constructively together to safeguard the future of our forests". Mr Genest, is also a Director of "France Nature Environnement", the umbrella body for environmental organisations in France, and a recently elected Director of the PEFC Council.

Dr Skaidrite Albertina, Chairwoman of PEFC Latvia and a former Vice Chairwoman of the Environmental Protection Commission of the Latvian Parliament, said, "I'm delighted that the Latvian scheme has been endorsed. This is the second scheme from a country in economic transition, which has successfully completed the endorsement procedure. We expect the first forests (2500 hectares) of a potential 1.4Million hectares, to be certified shortly." The other scheme was that of the Czech Republic, endorsed at the end of June 2001.

**ENDS**

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## *Notes to Editor*

The Pan European Forest Certification (PEFC) Council, an international, non-profit, non-governmental organisation, promotes the independent third party certification, of environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial and economically viable management of forests.

This is achieved through nationally or regionally multi stakeholder developed, independent third party forest certification schemes, based on the criteria, indicators and operational level guidelines developed by the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe, an ongoing process.

In addition PEFC provides a framework and umbrella for the mutual recognition of national, independent forest certification schemes so developed. PEFC is the world's largest certification system with more than 36 million hectares and this area is increasing rapidly. It provides a logo for timber products from such schemes, allowing customers and the general public to make a positive choice for sustainable forest management.

Schemes already endorsed:

<b><i>Schemes Endorsed by PEFC</i></b>	<b><i>Hectares Certified (millions)</i></b>
Austrian Forest Certification Scheme	0.55
Czech Forest Certification Scheme	0
Finnish Forest Certification Scheme	21.90
French Forest Certification Scheme	0
German Forest Certification Scheme	4.24
Latvian Forest Certification Scheme	0
Norwegian living Forest Standards and Certification Scheme	8.40
Swedish Forest Certification Scheme	1.33
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>36.42</b>

Schemes currently undergoing assessment process:

- Belgian Forest Certification Scheme
- Portuguese Forest Certification Scheme
- Spanish Certification System for SFM
- Swiss Q Label Holz Scheme
- UK Certification Scheme for SFM

Other PEFC Members, which have not yet submitted their schemes include:

CSA (Canada), PEFC Denmark, PEFC Italia, PEFC Ireland, Sustainable Forestry Initiative and American Tree Farm System (USA)

For more information, please see our WebPages: [www.pefc.org](http://www.pefc.org)