

# Why FSC and Not PEFC?

## **FSC and PEFC function very differently—the PEFC can't substitute for the FSC.**

- The FSC is the world's leading forest certification system. The FSC ensures that forests meet a set of globally applicable, independent, performance-based standards for ecologically, socially, and economically responsible forestry, i.e., the FSC Principles & Criteria. The FSC is designed to provide direct accountability, a guarantee that forests meet its standards on-the-ground, and a rigorous chain-of-custody system to verify that labeled products are connected to certified forests.
- The PEFC is more like a trade association for certification systems. The PEFC does not directly ensure that on-the-ground forest management meets a set of rigorous, comprehensive, and performance-based forestry and environmental protection standards.

## **The PEFC lacks crucial elements of a credible forest certification system (FSC).**

- The PEFC fails to adequately employ performance-based standards for specific outcomes in-the-forest. Management unit level assessments and field visits are also not consistently required.
- The PEFC fails to include crucial environmental protections, including: protection for old growth forests, wilderness, and other Endangered Forests; protection for imperiled species not protected by national laws; prohibitions on conversion of forests to ecologically impoverished tree plantations and urban/rural sprawl; and processes for determining where ecological reserves should be established.
- The PEFC also allows labeled products to contain non-certified content from most controversial sources.<sup>1</sup>
- The PEFC fails to require independent verification of wood products' origins, and may fail to require sufficient chain-of-custody information more generally.
- The PEFC lacks independence and balance in its governance. The PEFC's membership and governing bodies are comprised of the very certification systems it endorses. As with many PEFC endorsed systems, the PEFC also remains dominated by the forest industry and forest landowners.

## **The PEFC endorses systems that certify Endangered Forest logging and other unacceptable practices.**

- The PEFC has endorsed a number of weak and misleading certification systems, including the AF&PA Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI),<sup>2</sup> the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) system,<sup>3</sup> CertforChile,<sup>4</sup> CERFLOR (Brazil),<sup>5</sup> and the Finnish Forest Certification System (FFCS).<sup>6</sup>

## **Leading European Conservation Groups Find the PEFC Inadequate.**

- WWF International,<sup>7</sup> the Forests & European Union Resource Network (FERN),<sup>8</sup> and Greenpeace and the Finnish Nature League<sup>9</sup> found that the PEFC cannot guarantee well-managed forests, lacks independence, fails to protect peoples' rights, and endorses systems that certify logging of rare old growth forests and imperiled species habitats.

## Notes.

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<sup>1</sup> Controversial sources allowed by PEFC include wood/fiber from: most old growth forests, most endangered species' habitats, most other Endangered Forests, conversion of forests to plantations and sprawl, areas with contested tenure rights, violations of indigenous peoples' and workers' rights, and violations of most relevant laws

<sup>2</sup> Among other things, the SFI allows: widespread logging of old growth and other Endangered Forests; destruction of important imperiled species' habitats; logging that harms water quality; conversion of forests to tree plantations or sprawl; clearcutting and toxic spraying of entire landscapes; and use of genetically modified trees. The SFI also does not adequately: protect the rights of workers and indigenous peoples, require verification of legal compliance, or require stakeholder consultation. For more information, see [www.dontbuysfi.com](http://www.dontbuysfi.com).

<sup>3</sup> As of 2004, the CSA had: no meaningful old growth protections; very weak water quality standards; weak and inadequate protections for imperiled species; no meaningful limits on clearcutting or toxic chemicals; no protections against the conversion of forests to plantations or sprawl; little focus on "on-the-ground" performance; and inadequate protections for workers and indigenous peoples' rights.

<sup>4</sup> See [http://www.fern.org/media/documents/document\\_1890\\_1900.pdf](http://www.fern.org/media/documents/document_1890_1900.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> See [http://www.fern.org/media/documents/document\\_1890\\_1900.pdf](http://www.fern.org/media/documents/document_1890_1900.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> In 2001, Greenpeace and the Finnish Nature League found that the PEFC-endorsed Finnish Forest Certification System was industry-dominated and certified logging of rare old growth forests and imperiled species habitats. See [http://www.greenpeace.se/files/1200-1299/file\\_1208.pdf](http://www.greenpeace.se/files/1200-1299/file_1208.pdf) and <http://www.pefcwatch.org/frontpage.html>.

<sup>7</sup> In 2005, WWF International found the PEFC lacks transparency, consistency, and comprehensiveness, and "cannot guarantee well-managed forests," making it "impossible for WWF to recommend PEFC to forest managers, buyers, and consumers...." [http://panda.org/about\\_wwf/what\\_we\\_do/forests/our\\_solutions/responsible\\_forestry/news/index.cfm?uNewsID=22050](http://panda.org/about_wwf/what_we_do/forests/our_solutions/responsible_forestry/news/index.cfm?uNewsID=22050).

<sup>8</sup> In 2004, the Forests and the European Union Resource Network (FERN) found the PEFC lacks independence, fails to protect local peoples' land rights or require adequate consultation, and endorses systems that lack clear minimum performance standards and that do not require field visits. See [http://www.fern.org/media/documents/document\\_1890\\_1900.pdf](http://www.fern.org/media/documents/document_1890_1900.pdf).

<sup>9</sup> See note 6.