

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Forest Companies Rapidly Embracing Environmental Certification**

As the environment continues to become a larger concern among people around the world, consumers are choosing wood products from companies that are accredited by organizations like the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI), Pan European Forestry Certification (PEFC) or the Canadian Standards Association (CSA), to name a few. The number of organizations recognizing and adopting environmental certification supporting sound forestry management practices is rapidly increasing.

"Companies must take the initiative and go the environmental certification route lest they be seen as organizations that don't care about the environment," says Mark Angelini, president and CEO of the Structural Board Association (SBA), an industry association representing major [oriented strand board \(OSB\)](#) manufacturers.

There is a handful of major accreditation groups and foundations that recognize companies for good environmental and forestry management practices. The American Forest and Paper Association's Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) works to ensure long-term forest productivity with 135 forest product companies representing 56 million acres or 90 percent of U.S. industrial timberlands.

The SFI, by far, is the largest group of its kind in the United States. The FSC is the largest global certification and labeling company. It has certified hundreds of companies around the world for forest certification and chain-of-custody (COC) certification. COC certification tracks all the production and processing steps involving a wood product from the time it is cut from a forest to when it is a finished product.

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The Irish government recently endorsed a "Good Wood Policy Guide" that recommends certification of wood products by the FSC. The German government in October agreed that its federal forests be certified by FSC criteria. Tuff-Strand OSB, manufactured by the Martco Partnership of Louisiana, last year became the first FSC-certified oriented strand board in the United States. And in Canada, Longlac Wood Industries was awarded ISO 14001 certification, an international standard specifying management practices supporting the environment. Grant Forest Products, of Ontario is also working towards obtaining ISO 14001 certification for all its OSB operations. While not specific to forestry, Canadian companies are using this independent certification as a stepping stone to CSA, FSC or SFI certification by incorporating forestry criteria set out by the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers.

The big boxes, including Home Depot, have started to inventory wood products certified under the FSC or other approved criteria, which has further made it more important for manufacturers to marry production with environmental certification. Another development pushing certification has been the growing number of companies supporting certification that will sell or use only independently certified timber and timber products within three to five years, such as Lowe's, Centex Homes or Britain's B&Q. These companies will only accept timber products with environmental labels that are gaining wider currency in European countries, Brazil, Japan and the U.S.

As the SBA's Angelini puts it, "There's only upside for companies that recognize environmental certification as a great sales and marketing tool and participate in certification or similar programs."

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**For more information about OSB or to obtain an electronic version of the news release above, contact the Structural Board Association at (416) 730-9090 or fax (416) 730-9013. The SBA Web site ([www.osbguide.com](http://www.osbguide.com)) is another excellent resource.**