

Forest certification and FSC®1

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Ensuring forest products are sourced responsibly...

What is forest certification?

Forest certification is a way of verifying, through the inspection of forest management activities, and the tracking of timber, pulp and other forest products, to ensure they have been produced according to a strict set of environmental, social, and economic standards.

The key to forest certification is a system that combines auditing forest practices with tracing forest products. The certification process begins in the forest and continues through the entire Chain-of-Custody (CoC), so end-consumers can be certain they are buying an environmentally sound, responsibly produced, product.

Essentially, certification is a tool which helps environmentally and socially conscious consumers make the right choice when they buy paper products.

Which forest certification system does Sappi use?

In South Africa we use the Forest Stewardship Council®1 (FSC), an independently verified, internationally accepted, forest certification system. All our own and leased plantations are FSC-certified and, together with FSC-certified timber produced by farmers under the Sappi Group Scheme and other schemes, 82% of the wood supplied to us was FSC-certified (FY2016). The balance was procured from known and controlled sources.

What is the Forest Stewardship Council's® mission?

The FSC states: "Our mission is to promote environmentally sound, socially beneficial and economically prosperous management of the world's forests...so that we can meet our current needs for forest products without compromising the health of the world's forests for future generations".

Which of Sappi's South African mills are certified?

Our Ngodwana, Saiccor, Stanger, and Tugela Mills and Lomati Sawmill are all FSC CoC certified giving them the right to label their products as FSC Mixed Sources.

Are Sappi's third-party timber suppliers certified?

We have established a group scheme for small and medium-scale growers. There are currently more than 205 members in the scheme with plantations ranging from a few hundred hectares to well over 103,000ha. FSC-certification is not yet available to microgrowers, largely because of financial constraints. Through the auspices of Forestry South Africa, we are researching ways of overcoming these barriers. Currently timber from microgrowers is recognised as 'controlled wood' and can thus be used to produce FSC-certified products labelled as 'Mixed Sources'.

<p>FSC has 3 types of certification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest Management • Chain-of-Custody • Controlled Wood and Mixed Sources. 	<p>100% of our own and leased plantations are FSC-certified.</p>	<p>In 2016, 82% of the woodfibre supplied to our manufacturing operations in South Africa was FSC-certified, the balance was procured from known and controlled sources.</p>
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Which forest certification systems do Sappi use elsewhere?

Globally, FSC-certified wood supply is limited.

Therefore, in addition to pursuing FSC-certification in Europe and North America, we also pursue independent, third-party CoC certifications through the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification™ (PEFC™) in Europe and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI®) in North America.

By achieving and maintaining these certifications in addition to FSC-certification, we are increasing the likelihood that we will be able to offer our products as CoC certified by at least one independent, third-party, certifying body.

How does the FSC work?

The FSC oversees and accredits third-party certification bodies to assess and audit forest owners, who participate voluntarily, against FSC standards and criteria. Certification covers all types of situations, including communal and group certifications, natural and semi-natural forests, government-owned forests and plantations.

FSC-certification affirms that the forest or plantation has been independently inspected and evaluated for compliance with local laws, respect for indigenous and traditional people’s rights, the health, safety and rights of forest workers, and the provision of a wide range of social benefits.

What are the types of FSC-certification?

FSC Forest Management certification

Forest managers or owners who want to verify that their forest operations are socially beneficial and managed in an environmentally appropriate and economically viable manner can apply for Forest Management (FM)-certification. To achieve FM-certification, the forest and its management must comply with the Principles, Criteria and Indicators (Ps, Cs & Is) of FSC FM-certification.

FSC FM-certification means that the forest from which the trees were harvested has been managed in accordance with the FSC Forest Management Standard.

FSC Chain-of-Custody certification

FSC Chain-of-Custody (CoC) certification tracks the origin of a raw material at each stage of the production process, from beginning to end.

For forest-based industries, like ours, certifying the CoC means verifying that the wood used at each stage of the production process came from a forest certified as being sustainably managed. It is only valid if each link in the chain is checked. Once a link in the chain is broken, material loses its certified status.

FSC Controlled Wood and Mixed Sources

Despite continued and sustained growth of FSC market share, some shortages remain in the supply of FSC material. To allow manufacturers to provide FSC-labelled products, FSC has introduced the ‘mixed’ label. This allows manufacturing companies to mix FSC-certified material with non-certified material — a minimum of 70% certified content is required.

What standards does FSC prescribe?

The FSC standards are based on ten principles supported by **56 criteria**.

Principle 1	Compliance with all applicable laws, regulations and nationally-ratified international treaties, conventions and agreements.
Principle 2	Maintaining or enhancing the social and economic wellbeing of workers .
Principle 3	Identifying and upholding indigenous peoples’ legal and customary rights of ownership, use and management of land , territories and resources affected by management activities.
Principle 4	Contributing to maintaining or enhancing the social and economic wellbeing of local communities .
Principle 5	Efficiently managing the range of multiple products and services to maintain or enhance long term economic viability and the range of environmental and social benefits .
Principle 6	Reduction of environmental impact of logging activities and maintenance of the ecological functions and integrity of the forest.
Principle 7	Maintaining, conserving and/or restoring ecosystem services and environmental values and avoiding, repairing or mitigating negative environmental impacts.
Principle 8	Appropriate monitoring and assessment activities to assess the condition of the forest, management activities and their social and environmental impacts.
Principle 9	Maintenance of High Conservation Values through application of the precautionary approach .
Principle 10	Management activities should be consistent with an organisation’s economic, environmental and social policies and objectives and in compliance with the Principles and Criteria collectively.

What is covered by the 56 FSC criteria?

- Below are some of the provisions of the 56 FSC criteria:
- Prohibits conversion of natural forests or other habitats
 - Prohibits the use of highly hazardous pesticides
 - Prohibits the cultivation of genetically modified trees
 - Respects the right of indigenous peoples
 - Audits a sample of each certified operation at least once a year; if they are found not to comply, the certificate is withdrawn.

1 Our mills’ and forestry certification details, including FSC®, SFI® and PEFC™, are available online (<https://www.sappi.com/certifications>) and summarised in the Sustainability FAQs — Our certifications.