



International Council of Forest and Paper Associations

Forest Management

The International Council of Forest and Paper Associations (ICFPA) supports the principles of sustainable forest management (SFM) and its members are committed to managing forests accordingly. The United Nations General Assembly defines sustainable forest management (SFM) as a *“dynamic and evolving concept, which aims to maintain and enhance the economic, social and environmental values of all types of forests, for the benefit of present and future generations.”* SFM is critical to the global forest products industry. Without sustainable fiber supply, the industry will not be able to supply society with wood and paper products that can be further recycled, as well as with renewable energy, preserve and grow its economic contribution and add to the wellbeing of the communities in which it operates.

The SFM concept encompasses both natural and planted forests in all geographic regions, and all forest functions, managed for conservation, production or multiple purposes, to provide a range of forest goods and services at the local, national, regional and global levels. SFM can be implemented through measurement and monitoring of natural resources in order to understand the status of forests, improved forestry research and innovation tools, and application of new technologies to forest management practices. These approaches will help sustain, enhance, and restore forests and their many economic, social and environmental values.

The Statement of Forest Principles adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992 facilitated the development of multilateral forest agreements and treaties to measure and monitor forest sustainability through SFM Criteria and Indicators (C&I). After that, in 2013-2015 the United Nations developed the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with one goal focused on sustainable forests – SDG 15 “Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss”.

SFM can be used for monitoring the efficiency and effectiveness of national forest programs. Practicing SFM allows for strategic planning, goal setting, which can be verified and supported by forest certification systems. SFM is important because it monitors current behavioral habits that will affect future generations with the goal to provide long-term sustainability.

The ICFPA strongly supports the development of forest certification systems and other mechanisms to promote SFM and improve forest management on the ground. We support the extension of SFM certification systems to all nations, as one tool to demonstrate that forest products are being produced sustainably from forests managed according to the highest standards.