



# Canadian Forest Products: A Legal and Sustainable Choice

- Most of Canada's forest land (94%) is public land, which is largely owned and managed on behalf of Canadians by provincial and territorial governments. This responsibility has resulted in comprehensive legislation and regulations to protect and manage forests ([www.sfmcanada.org](http://www.sfmcanada.org)).
- All Canadian commercial forestry operations operating on public land are legally bound by federal, provincial, and territorial legislation.
- The comprehensive legislative and regulatory framework, which provides regular scrutiny and audits of forest companies, reduces the risk of illegal logging in Canada.
- Canada has an international reputation as a trusted source of forest products from legal and sustainable sources.
- Consumers of forest products harvested in Canada can be confident that the wood they are buying is harvested within an extensive system based on sustainable forest management.

## Third-party certification in Canada

- Third-party certification complements comprehensive forest management laws, regulations and policies in Canada by providing added assurance that a forest company is operating legally, sustainably, and in compliance with world-leading standards for sustainable forest management.
- In Canada, three internationally recognized sustainable forest management certification programs are used (<http://certificationcanada.org/en/home/>). The Canadian Standards Association (CSA) and Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) systems are endorsed by the international umbrella organization Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC). The Forest Stewardship Council Canada (FSC) has four regional standards. Three – the National Boreal, Maritimes and British Columbia – have been accredited by FSC International. The fourth one, the Great Lakes St. Lawrence, is currently in draft form.

- Canada has almost half of the world's PEFC-endorsed certifications and almost a third of the world's FSC certifications. As a result, Canada has the largest area of third-party independently certified forests (CSA, FSC, and SFI) in the world (<http://certificationcanada.org/en/statistics/canadian-statistics/>).

## What do others say about the legality of Canada's forest products?

- A third-party study by the Finnish research company Indufor Oy in 2009 compared forest legislation and forest certification schemes in 11 jurisdictions worldwide and found that "Canada (British Columbia and Ontario) and Australia (New South Wales) are the countries with the most demanding legislation on the studied elements." Further, the study found that "... the strength of the legislation contributes to the strictness of the standard more than does the type of the standard (FSC or PEFC)." (Indufor Oy 2009).

## Canada's forests

- Canada has nearly 348 million hectares of forest. This represents 38% of Canada's total land surface and 9% of the world's forest cover.
- About 68% of Canada's forests are coniferous, 16% are mixed wood, and the remaining 11% are broad-leaved.
- Less than 0.5% of Canada's forests are harvested annually.

(NRCan 2014)

*Disclaimer: Not intended as a proof of legality for a shipment of forest products*

## Tree species in Canada

- There are approximately 180 tree species in Canada's forests.
- About 35 species are of commercial importance to Canada's forest product industry.
- None of the commercial tree species harvested in Canada are listed under the Canadian *Species at Risk Act* or in the appendices of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).
- To view tree species in Canada, see <http://tidcf.nrcan.gc.ca/en/trees>.



Yellow birch logs stamped and tagged to ensure tracking of valuable logs throughout the process from woods to mill to product.

- A third-party study by Dr. Cashore of Yale University in 2004 compared forest policy and regulations across 38 jurisdictions worldwide and found that "... the regime of forest management and conservation in Canada, is, in the aggregate, one of the most advanced in the world." (Cashore and McDermott 2004).
- Canada consistently earns ratings as a jurisdiction with a very low incidence of corruption. (See indices maintained by Transparency International ([www.transparency.org](http://www.transparency.org)) and the World Bank [[www.govindicators.org](http://www.govindicators.org)]).
- Organizations in Canada's export markets also confirm this reputation for sustainable and legal forestry:
  - In 2012, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and the World Resources Institute reported that Canada has the lowest occurrence of suspicious log supply and corruption of any country ([www.sustainableforestproducts.org/Legality](http://www.sustainableforestproducts.org/Legality)).
  - In 2010, the UK Timber Trade Federation classified Canadian wood products as low risk with respect to illegality, and rated our documentation as highly reliable (Country Guidance: Canada, UK Timber Trade Federation).
  - In 2008, a report prepared by Indufor for the European Commission DG Environment found that in Canada, the risk of illegal logging was considered low ([http://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/pdf/ia\\_report.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/pdf/ia_report.pdf)).

## References

- Cashore, B.; McDermott, C. 2004. *Global environmental forest policies: Canada as a constant case comparison of select forest practice regulations*. 481 p. Summary online [www.fpac.ca/publications/2004\\_HowCanadaCompares.pdf](http://www.fpac.ca/publications/2004_HowCanadaCompares.pdf).
- Indufor Oy. 2009. *Comparison of selected forest certification standards. Final report*. Indufor Oy, Helsinki, Finland. 39 p. + appendices. Summary online [http://www.bcfii.ca/summary-uploads/Comparison%20of%20selected%20forest%20certification%20standards\\_summary.pdf](http://www.bcfii.ca/summary-uploads/Comparison%20of%20selected%20forest%20certification%20standards_summary.pdf).
- [NRCan] Natural Resources Canada. 2014. *The State of Canada's Forests: Annual Report 2014*. Canadian Forest Service, Ottawa, ON. 63 p. <http://cfs.nrcan.gc.ca/publications?id=35713>

**For information on how Canada prevents imports of illegally harvested forest products, see [www.cfs.nrcan.gc.ca/illegallogging](http://www.cfs.nrcan.gc.ca/illegallogging).**



Truck loaded with logs on a weigh scale. The volume of logs is calculated from the weight of the load on the truck.