SFI 2022 FOREST MANAGEMENT STANDARD

SECTION 2



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SFI 2022 FOREST MANAGEMENT STANDARD

1. GENERAL	2
1.1 SCOPE	2
1.2 ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS	2
1.3 REFERENCES	2
1.4 FOREST MANAGEMENT STANDARD PRINCIPLES	2
1.5 SFI 2022 FOREST MANAGEMENT STANDARD OBJECTIVES	4
1.6 SFI 2022 FOREST LAND MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS	5
OBJECTIVE 1. FOREST MANAGEMENT PLANNING	5
OBJECTIVE 2. FOREST HEALTH AND PRODUCTIVITY	7
OBJECTIVE 3. PROTECTION AND MAINTENANCE OF WATER RESOURCES	8
OBJECTIVE 4. CONSERVATION OF BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY	8
OBJECTIVE 5. MANAGEMENT OF VISUAL QUALITY AND RECREATIONAL BENEFITS	9
OBJECTIVE 6. PROTECTION OF SPECIAL SITES	10
OBJECTIVE 7. EFFICIENT USE OF FIBER RESOURCES	10
OBJECTIVE 8. RECOGNIZE AND RESPECT INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' RIGHTS	10
OBJECTIVE 9. CLIMATE SMART FORESTRY	11
OBJECTIVE 10. FIRE RESILIENCE AND AWARENESS	12
OBJECTIVE 11. LEGAL AND REGULATORY COMPLIANCE	12
OBJECTIVE 12. FORESTRY RESEARCH, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY	13
OBJECTIVE 13. TRAINING AND EDUCATION	13
OBJECTIVE 14. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND LANDOWNER OUTREACH	14
OBJECTIVE 15: PUBLIC LAND MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES	15
OBJECTIVE 16. COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC REPORTING	15
OBJECTIVE 17. MANAGEMENT REVIEW AND CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT	16



1. GENERAL

1.1 SCOPE

What the Forest Management Standard Does

The SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard promotes *sustainable forestry* based on 13 *Principles*, 17 *Objectives*, 41 *Performance Measures* and 114 *Indicators*. These requirements include measures to *protect* water quality, *biodiversity, wildlife habitat*, *threatened and endangered species* and *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value*.

What the Forest Management Standard Covers

The SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard applies to any *Certified Organization* that owns or has management authority for forestlands.

Geographic Application of the Forest Management Standard

The SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard applies to organizations in the United States and Canada.

1.2 ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Certified Organizations with *fiber sourcing programs* (acquisition of roundwood and field-manufactured or primary-mill residual chips, pulp, and veneer to support a forest products facility), must also conform to the *SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing Standard.*

Use of the *SFI On-Product* labels and claims shall follow Section 6 — Rules for Use of *SFI On-Product Labels* and *Off-Product Marks* as well as ISO 14020:2000.

1.3 REFERENCES

This standard incorporates, by dated or undated reference, provisions from other publications. These normative and informative references are cited at the appropriate places in the text and the publications are listed hereafter. For dated and undated references, the latest edition of the publication applies.

Normative References

From time to time, a formal process may be required to interpret the Standard, add new definitions, or incorporate new Board-level policies, such as SFI's Policy on No Deforestation, No Forest Degradation, and No Conversion of Natural Forests to Plantation Forests. These interpretations, definitions, and SFI Policies are effective immediately, and SFI certified organizations have one year to implement them. They are normative references to the SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard and constitute auditable requirements. Please refer to the SFI website for the most current Interpretations, Definitions, and SFI Policies.

i. ISO/IEC 17021:2015 — Conformity Assessment — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems
ii. ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004 Standardization and related activities — General vocabulary
iii. Section 8 — SFI Policies
iv. Section 10 — SFI 2022 Audit Procedures and Auditor Qualifications and Accreditation
v. Section 11 — Communications and Public Reporting
vi. Section 14 — SFI Definitions
vii. Interpretations for the Requirements of the SFI 2022 Standards and Rules

For the purposes of this standard, the relevant definitions given in ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004 apply, together with the definitions in the SFI Definitions (Section 14).

Informative References

i. ISO 14001:2015 Environmental Management Systems — Specification with guidance for use
ii. PEFC ST 1003:2018 Sustainable Forest Management Requirements, November 28, 2018
iii. PEFC ST 1002:2018 Group Forest Management Certification, November 28, 2018
iv. Section 7 — Guidance to SFI 2022 Standards
v. Section 9 — SFI Standards Development and Interpretations Process
vi. Section 12 — Public Inquiries and Official Complaints
vii. Section 13 — Optional Modules

1.4 FOREST MANAGEMENT STANDARD PRINCIPLES

Certified Organizations believe forest landowners have an important stewardship responsibility and a commitment to society, and they recognize the importance of maintaining viable commercial, family forest, and *conservation* forest land bases. They support *sustainable forestry* on forestland they manage and promote it on other lands. They support efforts to safeguard private property rights, and to help all private landowners manage their forestland sustainably. In keeping with this responsibility, *Certified Organizations* shall have a written *policy* (or *policies*) to implement and achieve the following *principles:*

1. *Sustainable Forestry*

To practice *sustainable forestry* means meeting the needs of the present while promoting the ability of future generations to meet their own needs by practicing a land stewardship ethic that integrates *reforestation* and the managing, growing, nurturing and harvesting of trees for useful products, and for the provision of *ecosystem services* such as the *conservation* of soil, air and water quality and quantity, *climate change adaptation and mitigation, biological diversity, wildlife* and *aquatic habitats,* recreation and aesthetics.

2. *Forest Productivity* and *Health*

To provide for regeneration after harvest, maintain the health and productive capacity of the forest land base, and to *protect* and maintain *long-term* soil health and *productivity.* In addition, to *protect* forests from economically, environmentally or socially undesirable impacts of wildfire, pests, diseases, *invasive species* and other damaging agents and thus maintain and improve *long-term forest health* and *productivity.*

3. *Protection* of Water Resources

To *protect* and maintain the water quality and quantity of water bodies and *riparian areas,* and to conform with forestry *best management practices* to *protect* water quality, to meet the needs of both human communities and ecological systems.

4. *Protection of Biological Diversity*

To manage forests in ways that *protect* and promote *biological diversity*, including animal and plant species, *wildlife habitats, ecologically and culturally important* species, *threatened and endangered* species (i.e., *Forest with Exceptional Conservation Values*) and native *forest cover types* at multiple scales.

5. Aesthetics and Recreation

To manage the visual impacts of forest operations, and to provide recreational opportunities for the public.

6. *Protection of Special Sites*

To manage lands that are geologically or *culturally important* in a manner that takes into account their unique qualities.

7. Legal Compliance

To comply with applicable federal, provincial, state, and *local forestry* and related environmental laws, statutes, and regulations.

8. Research

To support advances in sustainable forest management through research, science, and technology.

9. Training and Education

To improve the practice of *sustainable forestry* through training and education *programs.*

10. Community Involvement and Social Responsibility, and Respect for Indigenous Rights

To broaden the practice of *sustainable forestry* on all lands through community involvement, socially responsible practices, and through recognition and respect of *Indigenous Peoples'* rights and *traditional forest-related knowledge*.

11. Transparency

To broaden the understanding of forest certification to the *Forest Management Standard* by documenting certification audits and making the findings publicly available.

12. Continual Improvement

To continually improve the practice of forest management, and to monitor, measure and report performance in achieving the commitment to *sustainable forestry.*

13. Responsible *Fiber Sourcing*

To use and promote *sustainable forestry* across a diversity of ownership and management types in the United States and Canada that is both scientifically credible and socially, environmentally, and economically responsible and to avoid sourcing from *controversial sources* both domestically and internationally.

1.5 SFI 2022 FOREST MANAGEMENT STANDARD OBJECTIVES

A Summary of the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard Objectives* follows:

Objective 1. Forest Management Planning

To ensure forest management plans include *long-term* sustainable harvest levels and measures to avoid forest conversion or *afforestation* of *ecologically important* areas.

Why it Matters: Ensures that we grow more trees than we harvest, guaranteeing that forests will last for future generations.

Objective 2. *Forest Health* and *Productivity*

To ensure *long-term* forest *productivity* and *conservation* of forest resources through prompt *reforestation, afforestation,* deploying *integrated pest management* strategies, *minimized* chemical use, soil *conservation*, and protecting forests from damaging agents.

Why it Matters: Ensures that forests remain healthy and resilient which means better forest productivity including providing a reliable and renewable source of sustainably managed fiber for consumer products.

Objective 3. *Protection* and Maintenance of Water Resources

To *protect* the water quality and water quantity of rivers, streams, lakes, *wetlands*, and other water bodies.

Why it Matters: Protecting water quality and quantity helps provide safe and abundant drinking water for all.

Objective 4. *Conservation* of *Biological Diversity*

To maintain or advance the *conservation* of *biological diversity* at the *stand-* and *landscape*-level and across a diversity of forest and vegetation cover types and successional stages including the *conservation* of forest plants and animals, *aquatic species, threatened and endangered* species, *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value, old-growth forests* and *ecologically important* sites.

Why it Matters: Ensures that forests are managed to protect *wildlife habitat* and conserve *biological diversity*.

Objective 5. *Management* of *Visual Quality* and Recreational Benefits

To manage the visual impact of forest operations and provide recreational opportunities for the public.

Why it Matters: Ensures that the public can continue to enjoy the aesthetic values and recreation opportunities of forests.

Objective 6. *Protection* of *Special Sites*

To manage lands that are geologically or *culturally important* in a manner that takes into account their unique qualities.

Why it Matters: Protects *special sites* that have important geological or cultural values.

Objective 7. Efficient Use of Fiber Resources

To *minimize* waste and ensure the efficient use of fiber resources.

Why it Matters: Ensures the economic well-being of communities that live and work near forests.

Objective 8. Recognize and Respect *Indigenous Peoples'* Rights

To recognize and respect *Indigenous Peoples'* rights and traditional knowledge.

Why it Matters: Recognizing and respecting the *Indigenous Peoples'* rights supports relationship building and shared benefits from sustainably managed forests.

Objective 9: Climate Smart Forestry

To ensure forest management activities address *climate change adaptation* and *mitigation* measures.

Why it Matters: Ensures that SFI-certified forests make an important contribution to addressing the effects of *climate change*.



Objective 10. Fire Resilience and Awareness
To limit susceptibility of forests to undesirable impacts of wildfire and to raise community awareness of fire benefits, risks, and minimization measures.

Why it Matters: Ensures that forests are managed proactively relative to fire risk in the face of *climate change*, so that they can continue to store carbon, provide *habitat* for *wildlife*, and are a source of clean air and water while protecting public safety and human health.

Objective 11. Legal and Regulatory Compliance
To comply with all applicable laws and regulations including, international, federal, provincial, state, and *local.*

Why it Matters: Compliance with all laws ensures the *protection* of the environmental and social values of forests.

Objective 12. *Forestry* Research, Science and Technology
To invest in research, science and technology, upon which sustainable forest management decisions are based.

Why it Matters: Forest research means healthier, more productive forests.

Objective 13. Training and Education
To improve the implementation of *sustainable forestry* through appropriate training and education *programs.*

Why it Matters: Training and educating foresters means forest management plans are more accurately implemented, ensuring the well-being of our forests.

Objective 14. Community Involvement and Landowner Outreach
To broaden the practice of *sustainable forestry* through public outreach, education, and involvement, and to support the efforts of *SFI Implementation Committees.*

Why it Matters: Outreach and education improves the public's understanding of how important *sustainable forestry* is to local and global issues.

Objective 15. *Public Land* Management Responsibilities
To participate and implement sustainable forest management on *public lands.*

Why it Matters: Protects the environmental, social, and economic values of public forests.

Objective 16. Communications and Public Reporting
To increase transparency and to annually report progress on conformance with the *SFI Forest Management Standard.*

Why it Matters: Reporting the results of third-party audits increases the public's understanding of forest certification.

Objective 17. Management Review and Continual Improvement
To promote continual improvement in the practice of *sustainable forestry* by conducting a management review and monitoring performance.

Why it Matters: Encourages continual improvement of *sustainable forestry practices*, a cornerstone of *sustainable forestry*.

1.6 SFI 2022 FOREST LAND MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

Objective 1. Forest Management Planning
To ensure forest management plans include *long-term* sustainable harvest levels and measures to avoid forest conversion or *afforestation* of *ecologically important* areas.

Performance Measure 1.1. *Certified Organizations* shall ensure that forest management plans include *long-term* harvest levels that are sustainable and consistent with appropriate *growth-and-yield models*.

Indicators:

1. Forest management planning at a level appropriate to the size and scale of the operation, including:
    a. a *long-term* resources analysis;
    b. a periodic or ongoing *forest inventory*;
    c. a *land classification* system;
    d. *biodiversity* at *landscape* scales;
    e. soils inventory and maps, where available;
    f. access to and use of *growth-and-yield modeling* capabilities;
    g. up-to-date maps or a *geographic information system (GIS)*;
    h. recommended sustainable harvest levels for areas available for harvest; and
    i. consideration of non-timber issues such as recreation, tourism, pilot projects and economic incentive *programs* to promote water *protection*, carbon storage, *bioenergy feedstock* production, or *biological diversity conservation*, or to address climate-induced ecosystem change.

2. Documented current harvest trends fall within *long-term* sustainable levels identified in the forest management plan.
3. A *forest inventory* system and a method to calculate growth and yield is used to determine annual and/or periodic harvest levels.
4. Periodic updates of *forest inventory* and recalculation of planned harvests to account for changes in growth due to *productivity* increases or decreases, including but not limited to: improved data, *long-term* drought, fertilization, *climate change*, changes in forest land ownership and tenure, or *forest health.*
5. Documentation of forest management (such as: *planting,* fertilization and thinning) consistent with assumptions in harvest plans.
6. Assessment of the *local* or regional social, environmental, and economic effects of forest management operations contained in the forest management plan.

Performance Measure 1.2. *Certified Organizations* shall not convert one *forest cover type* to another *forest cover type* unless an assessment has been conducted to determine ecological impacts and provide appropriate justification.

Indicators:

1. *Certified Organizations* shall not convert one *forest cover type* to another *forest cover type*, unless the conversion:
    a. does not convert *native forest cover types* that are rare, *ecologically important*, or that put any *native forest cover types* at risk of becoming rare; and
    b. does not create significant adverse impacts on *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value, old growth forests,* forest critical to *threatened and endangered species*, or *special sites* or *ecologically important* non-forest eco-systems; and
    c. includes objectives for *long-term* outcomes that support maintaining *native forest cover types* and ecological function; and
    d. is in compliance with relevant national and regional policy and legislation related to land use and forest management.
2. A proposed conversion deemed appropriate per 1.2.1, and which has considered impacts relative to scale, may be implemented subject to a landscape assessment that considers:
    a. a response to address *forest health* issues such as pests or pathogens, or proactive consideration of anticipated impacts of fire or *climate change*, reforestation challenges, or riparian *protection* needs, provided that such justification is supported by the *best scientific information.*
    b. site *productivity*, economics, and/or stand quality.
    c. ecological impacts of the conversion at the site and *landscape* scale, as well as consideration for any appropriate *mitigation* measures; and
    d. appropriate consultation with *local* communities, *Indigenous Peoples*, and other *stakeholders* who could be affected by such activities.

Performance Measure 1.3. *Certified Organizations* shall not have within the scope of their certification to this *SFI Standard*, forest lands that have been converted to non-forest land use.

Indicator:

1. Forest lands converted to other land uses shall not be certified to this *SFI standard*. This does not apply to forest lands used for forest and *wildlife* management such as *wildlife* food plots or infrastructure such as forest roads, log processing areas, trails, etc.

Performance Measure 1.4. *Certified Organizations* shall not afforest in locations which negatively impact *ecologically important natural communities, threatened and endangered species, or native natural communities* which could be at risk of becoming rare.

Indicator:

1. Any *afforestation* activity must include an evaluation of the proposed site to determine the presence of:
    a. *ecologically important natural communities*, or
    b. *threatened and endangered species*, or
    c. *native natural communities* that could be at risk of becoming rare.
2. *Afforestation* shall not occur on that location if the evaluation determines a negative impact to:
    a. *ecologically important natural communities*, or
    b. *threatened and endangered species*, or
    c. *native natural communities* which could be at risk of becoming rare.

Objective 2. *Forest Health* and *Productivity*

To ensure *long-term* forest *productivity*, *forest health* and *conservation* of forest resources through prompt *reforestation, afforestation*, deploying *integrated pest management* strategies, *minimized* chemical use, soil *conservation*, and protecting forests from damaging agents.

Performance Measure 2.1. *Certified Organizations* shall promptly reforest after final harvest.

Indicators:

1. Documented *reforestation* plans, including designation of all harvest areas for either natural, planted, or direct seeded regeneration and prompt *reforestation*, unless delayed for site-specific environmental or *forest health* considerations or legal requirements, through *planting* within two years or two *planting* seasons, or by planned *natural regeneration* methods within five years.
2. Clear criteria to judge adequate regeneration and appropriate actions to correct understocked areas and achieve acceptable species composition and stocking rates for *planting, direct seeding,* and *natural regeneration*.
3. *Plantings* of *native* or non-*invasive* naturalized *tree species* are preferred. In exceptional circumstances where *exotic tree species* are being planted, they should not increase risk to *native* ecosystems.
4. *Protection* of desirable or planned advanced *natural regeneration* during harvest.

Performance Measure 2.2. *Certified Organizations* shall have a *program* to *minimize* chemical use required to achieve management *objectives* while protecting employees, neighbors, the public and the environment, including *wildlife* and *aquatic habitats*.

Indicators:

1. Pest management shall be implemented through the use of *integrated pest management*.
2. *Minimized* chemical use required to achieve management *objectives.*
3. Use of *least-toxic and narrowest-spectrum pesticides* necessary to achieve management *objectives.*
4. Use of pesticides registered for the intended use and applied in accordance with label requirements.
5. The World Health Organization (WHO) type 1A and 1B pesticides shall be prohibited, except where no other viable alternative is available.
6. Use of pesticides banned under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (2001) shall be prohibited.
7. Supervision of forest chemical applications by state- or provincially trained or certified applicators.
8. Use of management practices appropriate to the situation, such as:
    a. notification of adjoining landowners or nearby residents concerning applications and chemicals used;
    b. appropriate multilingual signs or oral warnings;
    c. control of public road access during and immediately after applications;
    d. designation of streamside and other needed buffer strips;
    e. use of positive shutoff and minimal-drift spray valves;
    f. aerial application of forest chemicals parallel to buffer zones to limit drift;
    g. monitoring of water quality or safeguards to ensure proper equipment use and *protection* of streams, lakes, and other water bodies;
    h. appropriate transportation and storage of chemicals;
    i. use of spill response plans and chemical spill kits;
    j. filing of required state or provincial reports; and/or
    k. use of methods to ensure *protection* of *threatened and endangered species*.

Performance Measure 2.3. *Certified Organizations* shall implement practices that *protect* and maintain forest and soil *productivity* and *soil health.*

Indicators:

1. Process to identify soils vulnerable to compaction, and use of appropriate methods, including the use of soil maps where available, to avoid excessive soil disturbance.

2. Use of erosion control measures to *minimize* the loss of soil and impacts to site *productivity.*
3. Post-harvest conditions conducive to maintaining site *productivity* (such as: retained down woody debris and *minimized skid trails*).
4. Retention of vigorous trees during partial harvesting, consistent with scientific silvicultural standards for the area.
5. *Practices* that address harvesting and site preparation to *protect* soil *productivity* and *soil health.*
6. Road construction, skidding layout, and harvest plans designed to *minimize* impacts to soil *productivity* and *soil health.*

Performance Measure 2.4. *Certified Organizations* shall manage to *protect forests* from damaging agents, such as environmentally or economically undesirable levels of wildfire, pests, diseases, and *invasive species*, to maintain and improve *long-term forest health, productivity,* and *economic viability.*

Indicators:
1. *Program* to *protect* forests from damaging agents.
2. Management to promote healthy and productive forest conditions to reduce susceptibility to damaging agents.
3. Participation in, and support of, fire and pest prevention and control *programs.*

Performance Measure 2.5. *Certified Organizations* that deploy *improved planting stock*, including *varietal seedlings,* shall use best scientific methods.

Indicator:
1. *Program* for appropriate research, testing, evaluation, and deployment of *improved planting stock,* including *varietal seedlings.*

Objective 3. *Protection* and Maintenance of Water Resources

To *protect* the water quality and water quantity of rivers, streams, lakes, *wetlands*, and other water bodies.

Performance Measure 3.1. *Certified Organizations* shall meet or exceed all applicable federal, provincial, state and *local* water quality laws and meet or exceed *best management practices.*

Indicators:
1. *Program* to implement federal, state, or provincial water quality *best management practices* during all phases of management activities.
2. Contract provisions that specify conformance to *best management practices.*
3. Monitoring of overall *best management practices* implementation.

Performance Measure 3.2. *Certified Organizations* shall implement water, *wetland*, and riparian *protection programs* based on climate, soil type, terrain, vegetation, ecological function, harvesting system, state *best management practices (BMPs)*, provincial guidelines and other applicable factors.

Indicators:
1. *Program* addressing management and *protection* of water quality of rivers, streams, lakes, *wetlands*, other water bodies and *riparian areas* during all phases of management.
2. *Program* to *protect* water quantity during all phases of management.
3. *Programs* that address wet-weather events in order to maintain water quality such as: *forest inventory* systems, identification of wet-weather tracts and definitions of acceptable operating conditions.

Objective 4. *Conservation* of *Biological Diversity*

To maintain or advance the *conservation* of *biological diversity* at the *stand-* and *landscape*-level and across a diversity of forest and vegetation cover types and successional stages including the *conservation* of forest plants and animals, *aquatic species, threatened and endangered species*, *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value, old-growth forests*, and *ecologically important* sites.

Performance Measure 4.1. *Certified Organizations* shall conserve *biological diversity*.

Indicators:
1. *Program* to incorporate the *conservation* of *biological diversity*, including *native* species, *wildlife habitats* and ecological community types at *stand* and *landscape* levels, through the use of *best scientific information* including the incorporation of research results.
2. Development of criteria and implementation of *practices*, as guided by regionally based *best scientific information*, to retain *stand*-level *wildlife habitat* elements such as snags, stumps, mast trees, down woody debris, den trees and nest trees.
3. *Program* to individually and/or through cooperative efforts such as *SFI Implementation Committees*, support diversity of *native forest cover types* and age or size classes that enhance *biological diversity*, by incorporating the results of analysis of documented diversity at *landscape* and ownership/tenure levels, to ensure the contribution of the managed area to the diversity of conditions that promote *biodiversity.*

4. *Certified Organizations* shall individually and/or through cooperative efforts such as *SFI Implementation Committees*, participate in or incorporate the results of credible, relevant state, provincial, or regional *conservation* planning and priority-setting efforts to conserve *biological diversity* and incorporate the results of these efforts in forest management planning. Credible priority-setting efforts include state and provincial *wildlife* action plans, state forest action plans, relevant habitat conservation plans, provincial *wildlife* recovery plans, Indigenous planning processes or ecoregional plans.
5. *Program* to address *conservation* of *ecologically important* species and *natural communities*.
6. Identification and *protection* of *non-forested wetlands*, including bogs, peatlands, fens and marshes, and *vernal pools* that are *ecologically important*.
7. Participation in *programs* and demonstration of activities as appropriate to limit the introduction, spread and impact of *invasive species* that directly threaten or are likely to threaten *native* plant and animal communities.
8. Consider the role of natural disturbances, including opening size, structural retention, the use of prescribed or natural fire where appropriate, and *forest health* threats in relation to *biological diversity* when developing forest management plans.

Performance Measure 4.2. *Certified Organizations* shall *protect threatened and endangered* species, *critically imperiled* and *imperiled* species (*Forests with Exceptional Conservation Values)*, and *natural communities*, and *old-growth forests*.

Indicators:
1. *Program* to *protect threatened and endangered* species.
2. *Program* to locate and *protect* known sites of flora and fauna associated with viable occurrences of *critically imperiled* and *imperiled* species and ecological communities, defined as *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value*. *Programs* for *protection* may be developed independently and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committees* and may include *Certified Organization* managers, cooperation with other *stakeholders*, or use of easements, *conservation* land sales, exchanges, or other *conservation* strategies.
3. Support of and participation in *programs* for the *conservation* of *old-growth forests* in the region of ownership or forest tenure.

Performance Measure 4.3. *Certified Organizations* shall manage to *protect ecologically important* sites in a manner that takes into account their unique qualities.

Indicators:
1. Use of information such as existing NatureServe or natural heritage data or expert advice in identifying or selecting *ecologically important* sites for *protection*.
2. Appropriate mapping, cataloging and management of identified *ecologically important* sites.

Performance Measure 4.4. *Certified Organizations* shall apply knowledge gained through research, science, technology, field experience and the results of monitoring of the effectiveness of conservation-related *programs* to manage *wildlife habitat* and contribute to the *conservation* of *biological diversity*.

Indicators:
1. Collection of information on *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value* and other *biodiversity*-related data through *forest inventory* processes, mapping, or participation in external *programs*, such as NatureServe, state or provincial heritage *programs*, or other reputable organizations. Such participation may include providing non-proprietary scientific information, time, and assistance by staff, or in-kind or direct financial support.
2. A *program* to incorporate data collected, research results and field applications of *biodiversity* and ecosystem research into forest management decisions.
3. Individually or collaboratively participate in or support research that demonstrates the *conservation* outcomes resulting from management strategies.

Objective 5. Management of Visual Quality and Recreational Benefits.

To manage the visual impact of forest operations and provide recreational opportunities for the public.

Performance Measure 5.1. *Certified Organizations* shall manage the impact of harvesting on *visual quality.*

Indicators:
1. *Program* to address *visual quality management.*
2. Incorporation of aesthetic considerations in harvesting, road, landing design and management, and other management activities where visual impacts are a concern.

Performance Measure 5.2. *Certified Organizations* shall manage the size, shape, and placement of clearcut harvests.

Indicators:

1. Average size of clearcut harvest areas does not exceed 120 acres (50 hectares), except when necessary to meet regulatory requirements, achieve ecological *objectives* or to respond to *forest health* emergencies or other natural catastrophes.
2. Documentation through internal records of clearcut size and the process for calculating average size.

Performance Measure 5.3. *Certified Organizations* shall adopt a *green-up requirement* or alternative methods that provide for *visual quality.*

Indicators:
1. *Program* implementing the *green-up requirement* or alternative methods.
2. Harvest area tracking system to demonstrate conformance with the *green-up requirement* or alternative methods.
3. Trees in clearcut harvest areas are at least three years old or five feet (1.5 meters) high at the desired level of stocking before adjacent areas are clearcut, or as appropriate to address operational and economic considerations, alternative methods to reach the *performance measure* are utilized by the *Certified Organization.*

Performance Measure 5.4. *Certified Organizations* shall support and promote recreational opportunities for the public.

Indicator:
1. Provide recreational opportunities for the public, where consistent with forest management *objectives.*

Objective 6. Protection of Special Sites.
To manage lands that are geologically or *culturally important* in a manner that takes into account their unique qualities.

Performance Measure 6.1. *Certified Organizations* shall have a *program* to identify *special sites* and manage and protect them in a manner appropriate for their unique features.

Indicators:
1. Use of information such as existing natural heritage data, expert advice or *stakeholder* consultation, or consultation with *Indigenous Peoples* in identifying or selecting *special sites* for *protection*.
2. Appropriate mapping, cataloging and management of identified *special sites.*

Objective 7. Efficient Use of Fiber Resources.
To *minimize* waste and ensure the efficient use of fiber resources.

Performance Measure 7.1. *Certified Organizations* shall employ appropriate forest harvesting technology and in-woods manufacturing processes to *minimize* waste and ensure efficient utilization of forest resources where consistent with other *SFI Standard objectives*.

Indicator:
1. *Program* or monitoring system to ensure efficient utilization, using provisions such as:
    a. management of harvest residue (such as slash, limbs, tops) considers economic, social and environmental factors (such as organic and nutrient value to future forests and the potential of increased fuels build-up) and other utilization needs;
    b. training or incentives to encourage loggers to enhance utilization;
    c. exploration of markets for underutilized species and low-grade wood and alternative markets (such as bioenergy markets); or
    d. periodic inspections and reports noting utilization and product separation.

Objective 8. Recognize and Respect Indigenous Peoples' Rights.
To recognize and respect *Indigenous Peoples*' rights and traditional knowledge.

Performance Measure 8.1. *Certified Organizations* shall recognize and respect *Indigenous Peoples*' rights.

Indicators:
1. *Certified Organizations* shall develop and implement a written *policy* acknowledging a commitment to recognize and respect the rights of *Indigenous Peoples.* This *policy* shall provide reference to a *program* that includes:
    a. use of available resources and information to identify the *Indigenous Peoples* whose rights may be affected by the *Certified Organization's* forest management activities.
    b. recognition of the established framework of legal, customary, and traditional rights such as outlined in:

i. the UN Declaration on the Rights of *Indigenous Peoples*;
ii. federal, provincial, and state laws and regulations;
iii. treaties, agreements or other constructive arrangements among governments and *Indigenous Peoples.*

c. appropriate training of personnel and contractors so that the *Certified Organization* is competent to fulfill their responsibilities under Objective 8 of the Forest Management Standard.

2. The written *policy* shall be publicly available.

Performance Measure 8.2. *Certified Organizations* with forest *management responsibilities on public lands* shall confer with *Indigenous Peoples* whose rights may be affected by the *Certified Organization's* forest management *practices*.

Indicator:

1. *Program* that includes communicating with affected *Indigenous Peoples* to enable *Certified Organizations* to:
   a. understand and respect *traditional forest-related knowledge*;
   b. identify and *protect* spiritually, historically, or *culturally important* sites;
   c. address the use of *non-timber forest products* of value;
   d. communicate through processes that respect their representative institutions, using appropriate protocols;
   e. provide opportunities to review forest management plans and forest management *practices*; and
   f. respond to inquiries and concerns received.

Performance Measure 8.3. *Certified Organizations* are encouraged to communicate with and shall respond to *Indigenous Peoples* whose rights may be affected by forest management *practices* on the *Certified Organization's* private lands.

Indicators:

1. *Certified Organizations* are aware of *traditional forest-related knowledge*, such as known cultural heritage sites, the use of wood in traditional buildings and crafts, and flora that may be used in cultural practices for food, ceremonies, or medicine.
2. Respond to *Indigenous Peoples'* inquiries and concerns received.

Objective 9. Climate Smart Forestry.

To ensure forest management activities address *climate change adaptation* and *mitigation* measures.

Performance Measure 9.1 *Certified Organizations* shall individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committees* or other partners identify and address the *climate change* risks to forests and forest operations and develop appropriate *adaptation objectives* and strategies. Strategies are based on *best scientific information*.

Indicators:

1. Based on *best scientific information, Certified Organizations* shall identify *climate change* risks and prioritize them based on the likelihood, nature, severity of their expected impact to their forest lands or forest tenures.
2. *Certified Organizations* shall develop an *adaptation* plan to address priority *climate change* risks, via effective implementation of the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* requirements for potential adaptive management including:
   a. periodic updates of *forest inventory* and recalculation of planned harvests as appropriate to account for changes in growth due to *productivity* increases or decreases, including improved data, *long-term* drought, fertilization, *climate change*, or *forest health*;
   b. access to *growth and yield modeling* capabilities;
   c. documented harvest trends within *long-term* sustainable levels identified in the forest management plan, and
   d. appropriate research, testing, evaluation, and deployment of *improved planting stock*, including v*arietal seedlings.*
3. *Certified Organizations* shall document how their *adaptation* plan objectives and strategies fit within broader regional climate *adaptation* strategies and plans, where they exist.
4. *Certified Organizations* shall report annually to SFI Inc. their progress towards achieving *climate change adaptation* strategies and plans.

Performance Measure 9.2 *Certified Organizations* shall individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committees* or other partners identify and address opportunities to mitigate the effects associated with its forest operations on *climate change*.

Indicators:

1. Based on *best scientific information, Certified Organizations* shall identify and address opportunities to enhance the climate benefits associated with forest management operations on the forests they own or manage via effective implementation of the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*

requirements such as:
   a. Objective 2 – Forest Health and Productivity; Objective 10 – Fire Resilience and Awareness; and/or other silvicultural or operational *practices* to enhance the climate benefits associated with their forest operations.
2. Based on *best scientific information, Certified Organizations* shall identify and address opportunities to enhance ecosystem resilience for the forests they own or manage via effective implementation of the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* requirements including:
   a. prompt *reforestation* or planned *natural reforestation* as per Indicator 2.1.1;
   b. adequate regeneration and appropriate actions to correct understocked areas, and
   c. evaluation for *afforestation* of areas that are not *ecologically important*, and
   d. *protection* of desirable or planned advanced regeneration during harvest and the retention of vigorous trees during partial harvest.
3. Based on *best scientific information, Certified Organizations* shall develop a *program* to identify and address greenhouse gas emissions within their operational control.
4. *Certified Organizations* shall report annually to SFI Inc. their measures to mitigate *climate change* associated with forest operations.

Objective 10. Fire Resilience and Awareness.
To limit susceptibility of forests to undesirable impacts of wildfire and to raise community awareness of fire benefits, risks, and minimization measures.

Performance Measure 10.1 On the forests they own or manage, *Certified Organizations* shall limit susceptibility to undesirable impacts of wildfire, promote healthy and resilient forest conditions through management techniques, actions and/or *policies*, and support restoration of forests following wildfire damage.

Indicators:
1. *Program* to evaluate the risk of undesirable impacts of wildfire and the role of fire on the forests they own or manage.
2. Use of *stand* and *landscape* level management techniques, actions and/or *policies* to promote *forest health* and resilience, and to mitigate the likelihood of undesirable impacts of wildfire, such as, prescribed fire, cultural burning, thinning, or hazardous fuel reduction where appropriate based on risk.
3. Use of management techniques to address wildfire damage, mitigate negative impacts to water and soils, and to promote forest restoration and future forest resilience.

Performance Measure 10.2 *Certified Organizations* shall individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving government agencies, *SFI Implementation Committees*, Project Learning Tree, or other partners, engage in efforts to raise awareness of and take action towards benefits of fire management and minimization of undesirable impacts of wildfire.

Indicators:
1. Participation in, or support of, *local*, state, provincial, federal, or Indigenous fire management and prevention programs.
2. Participation in, or support of, programs to promote benefits of fire management, and raise awareness about the environmental, economic, and social risks of undesirable impacts of wildfire to values such as carbon emissions, water quality and quantity, air quality, species *habitat*, public safety, and human health.

Objective 11. Legal and Regulatory Compliance.
To comply with all applicable laws and regulations including, international, federal, provincial, state, and *local.*

Performance Measure 11.1. *Certified Organizations* shall comply with applicable federal, provincial, state, and *local forestry* and environmental laws and regulations.

Indicators:
1. Access to relevant laws and regulations.
2. System to achieve compliance with applicable federal, provincial, state, or *local* laws, and regulations.
3. Demonstration of commitment to legal compliance through *available regulatory action information*.

Performance Measure 11.2. *Certified Organizations* shall comply with all applicable social laws at the federal, provincial, state, and *local* levels in the country in which the *Certified Organization* operates.
Indicators:
1. Written *policy* demonstrating commitment to comply with social laws, such as those covering civil rights, equal employment opportunities, gender equality, diversity inclusion, anti-discrimination and anti-harassment measures, workers' compensation, *Indigenous Peoples*' rights, workers' and communities' right to know, prevailing wages, workers' right to organize, and occupational health and safety.

2. *Forestry enterprises* will respect the rights of workers and labor representatives in a manner that encompasses the intent of the International Labor Organization (ILO) core conventions.

Objective 12. *Forestry* Research, Science and Technology.

To invest in research, science and technology, upon which sustainable forest management decisions are based.

Performance Measure 12.1. *Certified Organizations* shall individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committees*, associations or other partners provide in-kind support or funding for forest research to improve sustainable management of forest resources, and the environmental benefits and performance of forest products.

Indicators:

1. Financial or in-kind support of research, collaboratives, or knowledge transfer to address key themes of relevance in the region of operations as identified by *Certified Organizations*, local *stakeholders*, communities and/or *Indigenous Peoples*. Examples could include, but are not limited to, the following topics:
    a. *climate change adaptation* and *mitigation*;
    b. water quality and quantity;
    c. *biodiversity*, *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value*, and species maintenance and recovery;
    d. *landscape* ecology;
    e. Indigenous *traditional forest-related knowledge*;
    f. *ecosystem services* or *non-timber forest products*;
    g. community engagement;
    h. *forest health* and *productivity*;
    i. support for Forest Inventory Analysis (FIA);
    j. SFI sponsored conservation research;
    k. the role of forests in the bioeconomy, and
    l. or similar themes which build broader understanding of the benefits and effects of sustainable forest management or sustainable supply chains.
2. Ensure that knowledge gained through research is shared, to the extent possible, to positively influence sustainable forest management.

Performance Measure 12.2. *Certified Organizations* shall individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committees*, associations or other partners develop, contribute to, or use national, state, provincial or regional analyses in support of their *sustainable forestry programs.*

Indicator:

1. Participation, individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committees* and/or associations at the national, state, provincial or regional level, in the development of information such as:
    a. regeneration assessments;
    b. *growth and drain* assessments;
    c. *best management practices* implementation and conformance;
    d. *biodiversity conservation* information for family forest owners;
    e. social, cultural, or economic benefit assessments; and
    f. *landscape*-scale *biodiversity* assessments which clarify the contributory role of sustainable forest management.

Objective 13. Training and Education.

To improve the implementation of *sustainable forestry* through appropriate training and education *programs.*

Performance Measure 13.1. *Certified Organizations* shall require appropriate training of personnel and contractors so that they are competent to fulfill their responsibilities under the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*.

Indicators:

1. Written statement of commitment to the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* communicated throughout the organization, particularly to facility and woodland managers, and field foresters.
2. Assignment and understanding of roles and responsibilities for achieving *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard objectives*.

3. Staff education and training sufficient to their roles and responsibilities.
4. Contractor education and training sufficient to their roles and responsibilities.
5. *Certified Organizations* shall have written agreements for the use of *qualified logging professionals*, or *wood producers* that have completed training *programs* and are recognized as *qualified logging professionals* and/or *certified logging companies.*

Performance Measure 13.2. *Certified Organizations* shall work individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committees,* logging or *forestry* associations, or appropriate agencies or others in the *forestry* community to foster improvement in the professionalism of *wood producers* specific to *qualified logging professionals.*

Indicators:

1. Participation in or support of *SFI Implementation Committees* to establish criteria and identify delivery mechanisms for *wood producer* core training courses that allow individuals to attain *qualified logging professional status*. These criteria shall address at least the following:
    a. awareness of *sustainable forestry principles* and SFI's work across four pillars: standards, conservation, community, and education;
    b. *best management practices,* including streamside management and road construction, maintenance, and retirement;
    c. awareness of responsibilities under the U.S. Endangered Species Act, the Canadian Species at Risk Act, *Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value* (*critically imperiled* and *imperiled* species and ecological communities), and other measures to *protect biodiversity and wildlife habitat*;
    d. logging safety;
    e. U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) regulations, wage and hour rules, and other provincial, state, and *local* employment laws, and
    f. other topics identified by *Certified Organizations* and/or *SFI Implementation Committees* that improve their responsibilities in meeting the SFI 2022 standards.
2. Participation in or support of *SFI Implementation Committees* to establish criteria and identify delivery mechanisms for *wood producer* continuing education training courses that shall be taken by *qualified logging professionals* at least once every two years to maintain their status. The continuing education training course(s) shall address one or more of the following topics:
    a. awareness of *sustainable forestry principles* and SFI's work across four pillars: standards, conservation, community, and education;
    b. *best management practices*, including streamside management and road construction, maintenance, and retirement;
    c. *reforestation, invasive species* management, forest resource *conservation*, aesthetics and *special sites*;
    d. awareness of rare forested *natural communities* as identified by provincial or state agencies, or by credible organizations such as NatureServe and The Nature Conservancy;
    e. transportation issues;
    f. business management;
    g. public policy and outreach;
    h. awareness of emerging technologies;
    i. logging safety; or
    j. other topics identified by *Certified Organization* and/or *SFI Implementation Committees* that improve their responsibilities in meeting the SFI 2022 Standards.

Objective 14. Community Involvement and Landowner Outreach.

To broaden the practice of *sustainable forestry* through public outreach, education, and involvement, and to support the efforts of *SFI Implementation Committees.*

Performance Measure 14.1. *Certified Organizations* shall support and promote efforts by consulting foresters, state, provincial and federal agencies, state or local groups, professional societies, *conservation* organizations, *Indigenous Peoples* and governments, community groups, sporting organizations, labor, universities, extension agencies, the *American Tree Farm System®* and/or other landowner cooperative *programs* to apply *principles* of sustainable forest management.

Indicators:

1. Support, including financial, for efforts of *SFI Implementation Committees.*
2. Support, individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committees,* education and outreach to forest landowners describing the importance and providing implementation guidance on:
    a. *best management practices*;
    b. *reforestation* and *afforestation*;
    c. *visual quality management*;
    d. *conservation objectives*, such as critical *wildlife habitat* elements, *biodiversity*, *threatened and endangered* species, and *Forests with Exceptional*

Conservation Value;
   e. management of harvest residue (e.g., slash, limbs, tops) considers economic, social, environmental factors (e.g., organic, and nutrient value to future forests) and other utilization needs;
   f. control of *invasive species*;
   g. characteristics of *special sites*; and
   h. reduction of wildfire risk;
   i. use of *qualified logging professionals*, *qualified resource professionals* and/or *certified logging companies*;
   j. awareness of SFI, and
   k. reporting of inconsistent practices.
3. Participation in efforts to support or promote *conservation* of managed forests through voluntary market-based incentive programs such as current-use taxation programs, *Forest Legacy Program, conservation* easements federal, state, or provincial cost share programs, or SFI Conservation Grants.

Performance Measure 14.2. *Certified Organizations* shall individually and/or through cooperative efforts involving *SFI Implementation Committees* support and promote, at the state, provincial or other appropriate levels, mechanisms for public outreach, education and involvement related to sustainable forest management.

Indicator:
1. Periodic educational opportunities for the public promoting *sustainable forestry*, such as
   a. field tours, seminars, websites, webinars or workshops;
   b. educational trips;
   c. self-guided forest management trails;
   d. publication of articles, educational pamphlets, or newsletters; or
   e. support for national, state, provincial, and local *forestry* organizations and soil and water *conservation* districts.
   f. engagement and support of teachers and/or students though programs such as Project Learning Tree.

Performance Measure 14.3. *Certified Organizations* shall, individually and/or through cooperative efforts including *SFI Implementation Committees*, establish, at the state, provincial, or other appropriate levels, procedures to address concerns raised by loggers, consulting foresters, employees, unions, *stakeholders*, the public or other *Certified Organizations* regarding management that appears inconsistent with the SFI standards *principles* and *objectives*.

Indicators:
1. Support for *SFI Implementation Committees* (e.g., toll-free numbers and other efforts) to address concerns about apparent nonconformance.
2. Process to receive and respond to public inquiries. *SFI Implementation Committees* shall submit data annually to *SFI Inc.* regarding concerns received and responses.

Objective 15: *Public Land* Management Responsibilities.

To participate and implement sustainable forest management on *public lands.*

Performance Measure 15.1. *Certified Organizations* with forest *management responsibilities on public lands* shall participate in the development of *public land* planning and management processes.

Indicators:
1. Involvement in *public land* planning and management activities with appropriate governmental entities and the public.
2. Appropriate contact with *local stakeholders* over forest management issues through state, provincial, federal, or independent collaboration.

Objective 16. Communications and Public Reporting.

To increase transparency and to annually report progress on conformance with the *SFI Forest Management Standard*.

Performance Measure 16.1. A *Certified Organization* shall provide a summary audit report, prepared by the *certification body*, to *SFI Inc*. after the successful completion of a certification, recertification, or surveillance audit to the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*.

Indicator:
1. The summary audit report submitted by the *Certified Organizations* (one copy must be in English), shall include, at a minimum,
   a. a description of the audit process, *objectives* and scope;
   b. a description of substitute *indicators*, if any, used in the audit and a rationale for each;

c. the name of *Certified Organization* that was audited, including its SFI representative;
d. a general description of the *Certified Organization's* forestland included in the audit;
e. the name of the *certification body* and *lead auditor* (names of the *audit team* members, including *technical experts* may be included at the discretion of the *audit team* and *Certified Organization*);
f. the dates the audit was conducted and completed;
g. a summary of the findings, including general descriptions of evidence of conformity and any nonconformities and corrective action plans to address them, opportunities for improvement, and exceptional management; and
h. the certification decision.

The summary audit report will be posted on the *SFI Inc.* website (www.forests.org) for public review.

Performance Measure 16.2. *Certified Organizations* shall report annually to *SFI Inc.* on their conformance with the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard.*

Indicators:
1. Prompt response to the SFI annual progress report survey.
2. Record keeping for all the categories of information needed for SFI annual progress report surveys.
3. Maintenance of copies of past survey reports to document progress and improvements to demonstrate conformance to the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard.*

Objective 17. Management Review and Continual Improvement.

To promote continual improvement in the practice of *sustainable forestry* by conducting a management review and monitoring performance.

Performance Measure 17.1. *Certified Organizations* shall establish a management review system to examine findings and progress in implementing the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*, to make appropriate improvements in *programs*, and to inform their employees of changes.

Indicators:
1. System to review commitments, *programs*, and procedures to evaluate effectiveness.
2. System for collecting, reviewing, and reporting information to management regarding progress in achieving *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard objectives* and *performance measures*, including measures to reduce the negative impacts from forest management operations.
3. Annual review of progress by management and determination of changes and improvements necessary to continually improve conformance to the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard.*