

# SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples, Families and Communities

## 1. GENERAL

### Scope

The *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples, Families and Communities* (the module) applies to individual small-scale forests and to groups of small-scale forests co-operating for the purposes of obtaining sustainable forest management certification.

The module offers the owners and managers of these forests the opportunity to participate in a group *certification organization* and benefit from the economies of scale afforded by working with a group of forest owners and managers of forest licenses.

Forestland converted to other land uses shall not be certified to this *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples, Families and Communities*. This does not apply to forestlands used for forest management infrastructure such as forest roads, log processing areas, recreation trails or hunting. Land used for purposes other than forest management are not within the scope of this module.

### 1.2 Eligibility for certification under the *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples, Families and Communities*

Any small-scale forest owned or managed by Indigenous peoples, families, or communities where the area in timber production does not exceed 20,000 hectares is eligible for certification to the module. The total area certified to the module may exceed 20,000 hectares when the non-timber producing areas and areas managed for conservation or recreation purposes are included.

Small-scale forest properties and forest licenses between 5,000 and 20,000 hectares must be under the management of a forestry professional.

Small-scale forests include but are not limited to:

- Small forest properties or woodlots;
- British Columbia Woodlot Licences;
- Forestlands owned or managed by municipalities/counties or First Nations or Metis communities (e.g., First Nations Woodland Licenses — British Columbia; County Forests — Ontario); and
- Crown forest licensed to communities (e.g., Community Forest Agreement — British Columbia; Lots Intramunicipaux — Quebec; Community Forests - Nova Scotia).

Forests with more than 20,000 hectares of land managed for timber production shall certify to the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*.

### 1.3 What the *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples, Families and Communities* does

The module offers a pathway to certification for individual forests or for a group of forests operating as a *certification organization* under a single certificate. The module allows *members* to sell fiber as *certified forest content* and satisfies the requirements for the use of *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard* labels.

The *certification organization* as defined in this module can provide the management structure to implement a carbon-offset protocol.

**1.4** What the *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples, Families and Communities* covers:

- requirements of the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* applicable to small-scale managed forests and includes measures to broaden *practices* to address the conservation of *biodiversity*, the use of forestry *best management practices* to protect water quality and quantity, *soil health* and productivity, reforestation and the use of forest management and harvesting professionals;
- additional requirements for sustainable forest management that are applicable to small-scale managed forests; and
- requirements relating to the management of the *group certification organization*<sup>1</sup>.

**1.5** Geographic Application of the *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples, Families and Communities*

The module applies to individual managed forests and *certification organizations* in Canada.

## REFERENCES

This module 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 application applies.

**2.1** Normative references

- i. ISO/IEC 17021-1 — 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. *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules*:
  - Section 2 — *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*
  - Section 8 — SFI Policies
  - Section 10 — SFI 2022 Audit Procedures and Auditor Qualification and Accreditation

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<sup>1</sup> The requirements for the management of the group certification organization are based on Appendix 2 of Section 10 of the SFI 2022 Standards and Rules.

- Section 11 — Communication and Public Reporting
  - Section 13 — Optional Modules
  - Section 14 — SFI Definitions
- iv. Interpretations for the Requirements for the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules*
- For the purposes of this module, the relevant definitions given in ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004 apply together with the definitions in the SFI Definitions (Section 14).

## 2.2 Informative References

- i. PEFC ST 1002:2018 — Group Forest Management Certification
- ii. PEFC ST 1003:2018 — Sustainable Forest Management – Requirements
- iii. Section 4 — *SFI 2022 Chain-of-Custody Standard*
- iv. Section 6 — Rules for Use of *SFI On-Product Labels and Off-Product Marks*
- v. Section 7 — Guidance to SFI 2022 Standards and Rules
- vi. Section 9 — SFI Standards Development and Interpretations Process
- vii. Section 12 — Public Inquiries and Official Complaints

## Definitions

For the purposes of this *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples, Families and Communities*, the relevant definitions given in ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004 apply together with the definitions in the SFI Section 14 — Definitions, together with the following definitions.

- **certified area**

The area covered by a valid *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples, Families and Communities* certificate.

- **commercial harvesting operations**

Wood harvested for sale or trade.

- **certification organization**

An organization established to coordinate and manage a certification program for a group of small-scale forests in order to obtain economies of scale and efficiency and gaining eligibility for a sampling approach to certification audits (see Appendix 1 to Section 10 — Audit Procedures and Auditor Qualifications and Accreditation).

- **forest certificate**

A document confirming that an individual small-scale forest or *members of a certification organization* conform to the requirements for certification to the *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management for Indigenous Peoples, Families and Communities*.

- **manager**

The *manager* may be a forest owners' association, a forest management consultant or an individual who undertakes the organization and management of the *certification organization*.

- **member**

A landowner, or a *land manager* duly authorized by the *member*, who has agreed to join the *certification organization* and conform with the requirements of the SFI *Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples, Families and Communities*.

- **land manager**

An individual or organization authorized by the *member*/license holder to manage their forestland within the *certified area* and has the ability and management authority to implement the certification requirements of the SFI *Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples, Families and Communities*.

- **personal use**

Firewood or logs cut for personal use, not for sale or trade, limited to 50 cubic metres per year.

- **special sites**

Sites that include geologically unique or culturally important features.

- **species at risk**

*Threatened and Endangered Species* as identified by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada or by a provincial committee on Species at Risk or are listed in provincial endangered species or species at risk legislation.

- **sustainable forest management**

The management of forests and forestland in a way and at a rate that maintains their *biodiversity*, productivity, regeneration capacity, vitality, and potential to fulfil ecological, economic, and social functions.

- **Small-scale forest property or forest license**

A forest on fee-simple, private land, owned by an individual, group of investors or a municipality or county. British Columbia Woodlot Licensees and public forests licensed to Indigenous peoples and Metis communities and Community Forests (public forestland licensed to a community) that meet the size requirements in clause 1.1.2 are eligible to participate in an *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples, Families and Communities* certification program.

## 2. PRINCIPLES

The SFI principles for this module are based on a belief that forest landowners and *managers* have an important stewardship responsibility and a commitment to society, and that they recognize the importance of maintaining viable commercial, family and community forest and conservation forestlands.

Private forest ownership in Canada consists of more than 450,000 forestland owners. In addition, there are many parcels of land under forest management, held by communities and Indigenous peoples. The limited revenues from forest management operations on these properties, their periodic management activities, and revenues, as well as a limited financial ability to demonstrate their conformity to the requirements of a forest management certification system, present significant barriers to certification.

Group certification is designed to capture economies of scale and management efficiency by grouping numbers of forest properties together under one group *certification organization* to improve management and facilitate auditing and certification to the requirements of the module.

*Certification organizations* certified to the module shall have written procedures to implement and achieve the requirements included in the module together with the following principles:

### 3.1 Voluntary Participation

The module is based on a respect for property rights and on the voluntary commitment and participation of *members* and *land managers*. Participation in the *certification organization* shall not require or bind *members* to harvest and sell timber. SFI and *Certified Organizations* are committed to compliance with the competition laws of Canada, and the module shall not be used to conflict with those laws.

### 3.2 Shared Responsibility

The *manager* and the *member* have shared responsibility for and commitment to *sustainable forestry practices* on the land they own and /or manage. The *manager* has additional responsibility for setting up the policies, and procedures that ensure conformance with the requirements detailed in section 4.1.

### 3.3 Efficiency

The module uses a group certification approach to *sustainable forest management* (e.g., planning or monitoring of forest resource management) where this approach is more suitable and efficient due to the limited property size and resources of individual forest *members* or *managers*.

### 3.4 Certified Forest Content

The module uses a combination of i) one or more forest management objectives covering the health and productivity of the *certified area* and ii) management plans for individual forestlands consistent with the size of the forest, the management objectives of the forest landowners, *members* and/or *land managers* and the scale of management activities.

### 3.5 Continual improvement

The module fosters a continual improvement approach where individual forest landowners certified to the module or *members* of the group certification improve their overall performance to meet the requirements of the module over the life of the certification.

The *manager* is required under 4.1 to monitor *members'* conformance to the forest management *practices* listed under part 6 of the module. The agreement between the *manager* and *members* shall define the conditions under which fiber from the *certified area* shall be sold as SFI *certified forest content*.

### 3. REQUIREMENTS FOR MANAGEMENT OF THE GROUP

#### 4.1 Responsibilities of the group *manager*<sup>2</sup>:

- 4.1.1 Provide a commitment<sup>3</sup> on behalf of the *certification organization* to establish and maintain *practices* and procedures in accordance with the requirements of this module.
- 4.1.2 Represent the *certification organization* in the certification process, including communications and relationships with the certification body, submission of an application for a certification audit and the contractual relationship with the certification body.
- 4.1.3 Establish a formal relationship with each *member* based on a written agreement that shall include the *member's* commitment to participate in the group and comply with the conditions of membership, the requirements of the module and have their lands included in the *forest certificate*. The written agreement shall:
  - i. cover general information on the size and location of the property, the owner's management objectives,
  - ii. give the *manager* access to the *member's* management plan and
  - iii. give the *manager* the authority to identify and require any corrective or preventive measures and to initiate the suspension of any *member* from the *forest certificate* in the event of continuing nonconformity with the requirements of the module.
- 4.1.4 Establish procedures for inclusion of new *members* within the *certification organization* including an internal assessment of conformity with the module as well as identification and implementation of corrective and preventive measures. The procedures will include receiving and reviewing applications from new participants, management plans and a field inspection of the managed forest to identify conditions that may require corrective action.
- 4.1.5 Maintain and achieve conformance with all requirements of the module.
- 4.1.6 Establish written procedures for the management of the *certification organization* and clearly define and assign responsibilities for sustainable forest management and conformance with the requirements for certification.

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<sup>2</sup> The requirements for the management of the group are based on eligibility criteria in Appendix 2 to Section 10. In cases where the requirements of this document differ from Appendix 2 to Section 10, the requirements of this document are definitive.

<sup>3</sup> The requirement for *member* commitment is consistent with a requirement for a policy (or policies) to maintain and achieve principles of the *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples, Families and Communities* and the principles of the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard*.

- 4.1.7 Provide all *members* with information and guidance needed for effective implementation and maintenance of *practices* and procedures in accordance with the requirements of this module. This includes:
- i. information sessions on various aspects of *sustainable forest management* and *best management practices*.
  - ii. information on *Species at Risk* found in the region - their habitat and requirements for protection.
  - iii. information on provincial and local regulations applicable to forest management.
- 4.1.8 Keep records on:
- i. all *members*, including their contact details, identification of their property and the *certified area*;
  - ii. the total area covered by the group *forest certificate*;
  - iii. *commercial harvesting operations* carried out on the forests owned/managed by the group *members*;
  - iv. the internal monitoring program and audits;
  - v. the *members'* conformity with the certification requirements and
  - vi. forest management objectives as defined in part 6.
- 4.1.9 Maintain an annual monitoring program sufficient to ensure conformance with the requirements of the module by the *certification organization* and individual *members*. The monitoring program shall be based on *members'* reports of commercial harvesting operations and a sampling of *members'* properties provided:
- i. it is based on an appropriate risk management methodology considering:
    - a. the scale and type of *members'* activities (*commercial harvesting operations*, road/trail construction, pesticide use or reforestation);
    - b. geographic distribution of *members* within the area covered by the *certification organization*;
    - c. categories of forestland ownership and size and
    - d. previous non-conformities;
  - ii. the number of sites sampled equals at least the square root of the total number of participating *members* who have reported management activities in accordance with Part 6 during the interval between the annual monitoring programs.
- 4.1.10 Establish and maintain a system to monitor the conformity of *members* based on results of the monitoring data sufficient to assess performance of the *certification organization*. This shall include a system for collecting, reviewing, and reporting information to the *manager* regarding progress in achieving conformity with the module.

- 4.1.11 Establish corrective and preventive measures as required and evaluate the effectiveness of corrective actions taken by *members* of the *certification organization*.
- 4.1.12 Based on the results of the monitoring program communicate to the relevant *certification body* those *members* with serious and continuing non-conformities that have not been resolved and that resulted in the *member's* removal from the *certification organization*.
- 4.1.13 Prepare an annual summary report detailing:
- i. evaluation of achievement of the forest management objectives as defined in part 6;
  - ii. the *members* in the *certification organization*;
  - iii. the total *certified forest area*;
  - iv. the area covered by forest management activities;
  - v. the types of forest management activities used by *members* (*commercial harvesting operations*, road/trail construction and maintenance, *silviculture*);
  - vi. a list of known *special sites* ;
  - vii. the volumes of products harvested; and
  - viii. the progress of conformance with the module including the implementation of an internal monitoring program and measures to address preventative and/or corrective actions.
- 4.1.14 Establish a *program(s)* to:
- i. support and promote mechanisms for public outreach, including other forest owners and managers and
  - ii. engage at the local or provincial level on issues related to sustainable forest management.
- 4.1.15 Establish a program to respond annually to the SFI annual progress report surveys.

## **5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE *MEMBERS***

- 5.1 To commit, through a written agreement with the *manager*, to implement and maintain the relevant requirements of the module as listed in part 6.
- 5.2 To present a management plan appropriate to the size of the forest property or license, the *member's* management objectives, the scale and intensity of management that conforms to the forest size and management plan structure, components and detail.
- 5.3 To respond effectively to all requests from the *manager* or a *certification body* for relevant data, documentation, or other information whether in connection with third-



party audits, internal monitoring, annual reports on management operations, reviews, or other requirements.

5.4 To implement relevant corrective and preventive actions required by the *manager*.

## 6. REQUIREMENTS FOR SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT

The *Manager* shall ensure conformance of the *certification organization* with the requirements outlined in the module<sup>4</sup> and the following additional requirements outlined in forest management objectives and forest management *practices* on the *certified area*. Individual forest landowners seeking certification to the module must conform to all the requirements of Objectives 1 to 9 applicable to *members*. Where the term *member* is used, the individual forest landowner shall understand these requirements to apply to him/her.

Examples of forest management objectives are:

- i. improve age class distribution;
- ii. promote long-term sustainable harvest levels;
- iii. increase hardwood component;
- iv. increase amount of saw-timber;
- v. promotion of non-timber forest products (e.g., maple syrup);
- vi. encourage afforestation of marginal/sub-marginal lands no longer suitable for agriculture;
- vii. support of programs for conservation of *old growth forests*, *biological diversity* and water quality;
- viii. promotion of *integrated pest management practices*; and
- ix. promotion of opportunities for recreation.

(Note: Guidance text appears throughout this section inside boxes. This guidance is meant to inform the forest landowner, *member*, and the *manager* about the intent of the *SFI Small-Scale Forest Management Module for Indigenous Peoples, Families and Communities* and how it may be applied on-the-ground. Guidance text is not considered normative language. Where the term *member* is used, the individual forest landowner may consider this guidance as being appropriate to him/her.)

**Objective 1 — Forest Management Planning:** To ensure forest management plans include *long-term* sustainable harvest levels and measures to avoid forest conversion.

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<sup>4</sup> This list and guidance also includes Interpretations for the Requirements for the *SFI 2022 Standards and Rules* relevant to the *SFI 2022 Forest Management Standard* or to additional requirements as specified by SFI Inc.

(Note: *Members* may consider adopting some of the forest management objectives in the Guidance box above to improve forest health and productivity, promote *biodiversity* and protect water quality and quantity on the *certified area*.)

Using *members* and/or *land managers* information sessions, a *verifiable monitoring system*, and individual outreach to *members*, the *manager* shall ensure that the following aspects of forest management are implemented in conformance with the requirements of the module.

The management plan shall:

- i. be appropriate to the size of the managed forest, the *member's* or *land manager's* management objectives, the scale and intensity of management.
- ii. describe present forest conditions and forest conditions to be achieved;
- iii. make all practical efforts to promote forest health, including prevention, control or response to disturbances such as wildfire, *invasive species* and other pests, pathogens or unwanted vegetation, to achieve specific management objectives;
- iv. address species at risk and their habitat requirements as well as measures to conserve these species and their habitats within the area of management;
- v. include measures to address known *special sites* and
- vi. provide information on other local, provincial, and federal regulations applicable to forest management and species at risk.

Forests from 10 hectares to 20,000 hectares in area are eligible for certification under the Module. The management plans will reflect the management objectives, size of the forest and the scale of management operations. Larger forests will require an inventory upon which to base an assessment of the long-term sustainable harvest level and to permit planning and scheduling of harvest operations. Smaller forests require a simpler management plan.

The management plan is based on sound forest management science and embodies the *members* or *manager's* current management objectives. It describes the present forest conditions and provides a practical schedule of silvicultural treatments to achieve the management objectives. It includes a map showing significant features of the forest and includes considerations of *forest health*, conservation of soil productivity and water quality, timber production, protection of *species at risk* and sites, *special sites* and sites of special ecological significance. Forest management operations such as road construction, *commercial harvesting operations* and reforestation should be covered by an operating plan or comply with *best management practices*.

**Objective 2 — Forest Health and Productivity:** To ensure *long-term* forest *productivity*, carbon storage and *conservation* of forest resources through prompt *reforestation*, *afforestation*, *minimized* chemical use, soil *conservation*, and protecting forests from damaging agents.

- i. An operating plan shall be prepared for each harvest activity (other than cutting volumes for *personal use or cultural use*) to document appropriate *silviculture* and regeneration methods and other forest management *practices*;
- ii. All harvested areas shall be promptly regenerated through planting within two years or two planting seasons, or by planned natural regeneration methods within five years. Desirable advanced natural regeneration shall be protected during harvest;
- iii. Plantings of native or non-*invasive* naturalized tree species are preferred. In exceptional circumstances where *exotic tree species* are planted, they should not increase the risk to *native* ecosystems;
- iv. The use of fire is only allowed as a silvicultural or forest management technique for achievement of defined forest management goals (e.g., enhancing the growth of *non-timber forest products*, hazard abatement near communities, etc.);
- v. The use of *integrated pest management* is preferred. When pesticides are used, they shall be the least-toxic and narrowest-spectrum pesticides necessary to achieve management objectives. The use of pesticides shall be controlled and minimized with preference for the use of *integrated pest management* methods;
- vi. Use of pesticides registered for the intended use and applied in accordance with label requirements; and
- vii. The use of WHO Type 1A and 1B pesticides<sup>5</sup>, chlorinated hydrocarbons and any pesticides banned by the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants is prohibited.

The *member* ensures adequate stocking with desirable and site-adapted species throughout the harvested area by prompt tree planting or natural regeneration within five years of harvesting. Tending of young trees may be required to achieve free-to-grow status. Use of prescribed burning complies with all local regulations.

Afforestation, where it is practiced, should consider potential ecological impacts of the selection and planting of tree species in non-forested landscapes. It is best suited to soils that are marginal or sub-marginal for agricultural use (stony soils, steep topography, etc.). Afforestation can increase habitat for forest-dependent wildlife, moderate stream flow and contribute to the rural economy.

Although pesticides are a valuable silvicultural tool, *members* should first consider *integrated pest management* techniques. Pesticides are to be used by trained and licensed applicators.

**Objective 3 — Protection and Maintenance of Water Resources:** To protect the water quality and quantity of rivers, streams, lakes, *wetlands*, and other water bodies through meeting or exceeding *best management practices*.

<sup>5</sup> Exemptions are allowed where no other viable alternative exists.

- i. *Members* shall implement federal and provincial water quality *best management practices* and *practices* to protect water quantity during all phases of management activities.
- ii. Contract provisions shall specify conformance to *best management practices*.
- iii. Harvest and road building activities shall be conducted during weather conditions that *minimize* impacts on residual trees, *biodiversity*, water quality and quantity and soil resources.
- iv. *Member* or *land manager* shall have measures for the protection of rivers, streams, lakes, wetlands, other water bodies and *riparian areas* during all phases of management, including the layout and construction of roads and skid trails to maintain water quality and quantity.
- v. Use *qualified logging or qualified resource professionals* where they are available if the *member* is not conducting the work him/herself.
- vi. Harvesting and log transportation operations shall be conducted in conformity with the requirements of this module.

Carry out forest management and road construction operations during weather conditions that minimize site disturbance. The *member* applies provincial regulations and *best management practices* to mitigate impacts of forestry operations on water resources. *Members* should have written agreements with contractors that have completed training *programs* and are recognized as *qualified logging or resource professionals* where they are available. *Members* should keep records of harvests and ensure the efficient utilization of all felled trees.

Road construction and other operations likely to cause soil disturbance are *minimized* in riparian zones and near *wetlands*. Drainage structures of sufficient size are installed to maintain natural drainage patterns and do not impede the passage of fish.

**Objective 4 — Conservation of *Biological Diversity*:** To manage the quality and distribution of *wildlife habitats* and contribute to the *conservation* of *biological diversity* by developing and implementing *stand-* and *landscape-*level measures that promote a diversity of types of *habitat* and successional stages, and the *conservation* of forest plants and animals, including *aquatic species, as well as threatened and endangered species, Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value, old-growth forests* and *ecologically important* sites.

- i. Implementation of *practices*, as guided by regionally based *best scientific information*, to retain *stand-level wildlife habitat* elements such as snags (where safe to do so), stumps, mast trees, down woody debris, den trees and nest trees.
- ii. Identification and *protection* of *non-forested wetlands*, including bogs, fens and marshes, and *vernal pools* of ecological significance.
- iii. Maintain *habitat* for *species at risk* by providing age class diversity wherever feasible and appropriate considering other *conservation* and ecological factors.

- iv. The *manager* shall provide information on the occurrence, *habitat* and requirements for *protection of species at risk* found in the area covered by the *forest certificate*.

The *member* is aware of the presence and location of sites of ecological significance such as *vernal pools*, *riparian areas*, *wetlands*, stick nests and den trees. The *member* or *land manager* has received and has used information on local occurrence of *Species at Risk* and requirements for habitat protection. Use of *qualified logging* or *resource professionals* where available should be considered for planning and conducting forest management activities.

**Objective 5 — Management of Visual Quality and Recreational Benefits:** To manage the visual impact of forest operations and provide recreational opportunities for the public.

- i. When considering harvest opening size the *member* shall take into account:
  - a. municipal regulations applicable to tree harvesting;
  - b. management plan objectives and current stand conditions;
  - c. topography and viewpoints; and
  - d. local values and *practices* regarding harvest opening size.
- ii. Average size of clearcut harvest areas does not exceed 50 hectares (120 acres), except when necessary to meet regulatory requirements, achieve ecological objectives or to respond to forest health emergencies or other natural catastrophes.
- iii. Trees in clearcut harvest areas are at least 3 years old or 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 *member*.
- iv. On public forests, provide recreational opportunities for the public, where consistent with forest management objectives.

The *member* or *manager* applies the appropriate management *practices* to determine the cut block size and shape in order to mitigate impacts on aesthetics. *Note that "asset liquidation" is not in keeping with the Principles of this Module.*

**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.

- i. Using information such as existing natural heritage data or expert advice, *members* shall be aware of heritage and cultural sites on their properties and will consider local values when conducting operations to *minimize* impacts on these sites.

Heritage sites such as stone walls, old foundations, or other sites of geological or *cultural importance* are identified before a forest management operation takes place. The *member* or *land manager* uses good judgement based on local values to decide on protection.

**Objective 7 — Recognize and Respect *Indigenous Peoples’ Rights*:** To recognize and respect *Indigenous Peoples’* rights and traditional knowledge.

- i. *Members* managing forestland that is wholly or partially on Crown lands shall recognize and respect Indigenous Peoples rights. This requires a program for conferring with affected Indigenous Peoples to enable *members* 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 to *Indigenous Peoples* in areas where *Certified Organizations* have management responsibilities on public lands; and
  - d. respond to *Indigenous Peoples’* inquiries and concerns received.
- ii. Where there are government agencies responsible for consultation with affected *Indigenous Peoples* regarding forest management operations on forestland that is wholly or partially on Crown lands, this government agency shall be the primary means of communicating with *Indigenous Peoples* whose rights may be affected by the member’s management *practices*.

Consultation is required only when the forestland under management is Crown Land.

**Objective 8 — Legal and Regulatory Compliance:** To comply with applicable federal, provincial and *local* laws and regulations.

- i. The *member* shall hold legal title to the property and shall ensure that property boundaries are clearly defined. Entities managing small-scale publicly owned forests will demonstrate legal tenure and that property boundaries are clearly defined;
- ii. There is a program to ensure legal and regulatory compliance. The program shall ensure that *members*:
  - a. are aware of applicable federal, provincial and *local* environmental laws and regulations;
  - b. have a system to achieve compliance with applicable federal, provincial or *local* laws and regulations; and
  - c. have access to information on *Species at Risk* in the *certified area*.

The *manager* should provide the *member* a copy of all applicable environmental and water quality and quantity regulations. *Members* should use this information to ensure compliance. Use of *qualified logging* or *resource professionals* where available should be considered for conducting forest-management activities.

**Objective 9 — 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*.

- i. *Managers* shall engage with their provincial or regional *SFI Implementation Committee*.
- ii. *Managers* and *members* promote certification among the forest owners community.
- iii. When requested by the *members* the *manager* shall organize an annual meeting to review the activities, accomplishments and problems encountered during the year, as well as future plans for the *certification organization*.

Having the *manager* represent their *members* on the *SFI Implementation Committee* will assist with representing *members* within the provincial or regional SFI community. This will allow *managers* and *members* to stay informed about developments at SFI.

Annual meetings of the *certification organization* are an effective means of sharing group accomplishments, discussing developments in forest management and learning of updates to provincial programs supporting small-scale private forest *members* or small-scale public tenures.

## Appendix 1. Forest Management Plan (informative)

The forest management plan should document the following information:

- a. names and contact information of the registered landowners or tenure holders (the *members*)
- b. forest location (e.g., lot, concession, township, county) or tenure document
- c. the size of the managed forest
- d. a map (or aerial photo) showing:
  - i. property boundaries
  - ii. existing infrastructure (roads, trails, etc.)
  - iii. location of watercourses and wetlands
  - iv. area under management for timber production
  - v. area managed for conservation/recreation purposes
  - vi. known forest values (e.g., *special sites*), etc.
- e. description of forest *stands*
- f. prioritization of the management objectives for the next 10-year period (e.g., timber production, recreation, conservation, maple syrup production, etc.)
- g. professional recommendations to achieve the management objectives
- h. schedule of management operations including the timing of the next harvest, *silvicultural* activity or construction of access roads/trails
- i. a brief history of the property (length of ownership, past management activities, etc.)
- j. a basic inventory of the forest under the plan. At a minimum, this inventory should consist of the species composition, basal area and level of stocking

Where the *manager* or *member* has access to some or all of the above information in digital format, it may be possible to represent the location and schedule of forest management operations using GIS or similar tools.

A list of legislation and policies (federal, provincial, *local*) that may affect forest management activities on the forest will be available to all *certification organization members*.

A forest operations prescription/operating plan should be required for all road construction, silvicultural treatments and commercial harvest operations. A municipal permit may also be required.



## Example Table of Contents for a Forest Management Plan

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