

THE CHALLENGE

More than six billion people rely on trees to filter drinking water, build homes, make paper and furniture, cook, and stay warm. And wood remains one of the primary ingredients in building our cities.

As the global population pushes towards 7 billion, the pressures on the world's forests continue to mount, even as their total acreage steadily shrinks. Loss of our forests both contributes to and is compounded by global warming. In short, our forests are in jeopardy, and with them our climate, soil fertility, water quality and habitat within our watersheds.

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The building community has a major role to play with ensuring the future of our forests. We have a choice. We can build with certified sustainable forest products that address the triple bottom line of people, planet and prosperity. Or we can build with greenwashed and unabashedly unsustainable wood.

FORESTRY CALL TO ACTION

“Don't buy the greenwash.
Specify FSC or better.”



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THE INVITATION

Cascadia Green Building Council invites the building community—owners, A/E firms, developers, and builders—to choose only sustainable forest products. Together, our billions of dollars of collective wood product buying and specification power will change the face of the timber industry.

Cascadia also extends an open invitation to Big Timber to abandon its efforts to greenwash industrial forestry, abandon the industry dilution tactic represented by Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI), and commit US and Canadian operations to sustainable “ecoforestry” under the Forest Stewardship Council’s certification process.

Finally, Cascadia invites the community and Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) to work with us, scientists, and other green building leaders to improve upon and strengthen the FSC standard to create a “living forestry standard” that moves beyond sustainability towards the restoration of our degraded forestlands.

THE PATH FORWARD

Cascadia has been pushing for more sustainable forestry since our founding in 2001. We’ve vociferously supported FSC via our work with the US and Canada Green Building Councils. We’ve also committed to FSC in the Living Building Challenge and its Responsible Industry imperative.

Cascadia rejects the Big Timber-sponsored “Sustainable Forestry Initiative” claims that the current version of it’s certification program is a “credible option” alongside third-party FSC certification as a source of sustainable forest products. Big Timber is desperate to open LEED and other green projects to its lower standards by playing on fears that rejecting SFI and the American Tree Farm System (ATFS) will hurt communities that are home to forests certified to these standards. What they won’t say is that they’ve been invited to participate as part of FSC and have refused to improve their standards to levels that ultimately will better serve tree-growing communities and the forests they rely upon.

FSC has room to grow and improve. Currently, it’s the best option. As Jason Grant from EcoTimber writes in the Winter 2010 issue of *Trim Tab*, “It is up to leaders in the green building movement to educate their clients and hold the line when it comes to specifying and procuring the products of ecoforestry.”



Iisaak Cutblock, an FSC certified forest in Clayoquot Sound, Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada. Image courtesy of Ecotrust Canada

Cascadia envisions a living future when working forests and mills are operated in a way that creates and sustains good jobs, produces highest quality products, and helps restore the damage done over the past 100+years to the natural systems forests support. The building community can make this vision of “living forestry” a reality.

Don’t buy Big Timber’s fear tactics. Don’t buy the greenwash. Specify FSC or better.

