Certification

The International Wood Products Association (IWPA) acknowledges the interest in certified timber products and verification of good forest management. A number of certification and verification systems are in operation or in development today, and IWPA makes no judgment against or endorsement of any single plan.

Certification can serve as an audit of work already being done toward improved forest management. An absence of certification, however, does not mean there is a lack of quality forest management.

IWPA wishes to recognize the efforts that many countries and companies are making with regard to improved forest management practices. Further, the Association strongly endorses the right of individual countries and companies which become involved with certification or the verification of forest management to pursue the development of their own internal auditing system or the selection of one that is already established.

Global consensus has not been reached regarding the scope and viability for any single system of certification to be appropriate for all locations and all conditions. Efforts are being made to develop an international framework of mutual recognition between credible and market-oriented sustainable forest management standards and certification systems.

The development of a mutual recognition process or system should ensure that these various certification or verification systems (1) do not discriminate against different forest types, (2) should be regularly reviewed and updated, (3) should be transparent, and (4) should be cost-effective, recognizing that there is no clear indication that the cost of certification can be incorporated into the pricing of the wood products being produced.

The International Wood Products Association and its member companies strongly endorse the development of a mutual recognition system and support any and all efforts that will further enhance management of the world's forests and the growth of global and sustainable trade in wood products.