
The process then moves to domestic initiatives and programs.

USGBC (U.S. Green Building Council) and **LEED** (Leadership in Environmental Design)

Programs like the USGBC and LEED provide financial incentives in the form of tax relief for designing buildings which meet minimum environmental criteria in support of sustainability efforts.

The process then moves to NGO's (Non Government Organizations).

FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) The FSC developed Principles and Criteria for sustainable forest management. The adoption of which and participation in by forest products producers and distributors is completely **voluntary**. These Principles and Criteria have been created for both temperate and tropical, domestic and foreign forest management and if adopted should not be adopted selectively in favor of any country or species over any other.

The FSC and Its approved certification bodies such as the **Nepcon** (formerly Rainforest Alliance SmartWood) and **Scientific Certification Systems** are third party NGO certification systems. These initiatives were developed in response to political pressures and these programs exist under the assumption that the general public will support additional cost of goods in exchange for NGO third party oversight of the forest products industry. As an example the FSC is currently the only third party certification body recognized by the USGBC. The use of FSC certified materials in LEED certified buildings is not mandatory however. LEED credits can be achieved through alternative material applications in a building construction.

Tropical Forest Products is an FSC Chain of Custody certified company. That means we can trade in FSC certified forest products subject to their availability and market demand. FSC certified availability and demand has been inconsistent, making it a challenge to predict market demand. Willingness to pay any premium for third party NGO oversight has been and continues to be very low and has in fact fallen off even further since the enactment of the U.S. Lacey Act in 2008.

As such FSC certified wood products are only sourced on a Special Order basis subject to availability.

So what do you do if FSC certified products are unavailable or cost prohibitive?

This is exactly why the U.S. Lacey Act is so important. If you are not looking for LEED points, the U.S. Lacey act and programs like LEGAL LUMBER™ stand as the compliance benchmark for trading and specifying wood products.

We hope that this document assists in clarifying your responsibilities as a specifier, consumer, contractor, dealer, wholesaler, wholesaler, importer, wood processor, or concession holder.

TROPICAL

