

# UNDERSTANDING FSC<sup>®</sup>-CERTIFIED WOOD IN CONSTRUCTION - FOR BUILDERS AND GENERAL CONTRACTORS

Forest Stewardship Council 2025 |

FSC<sup>®</sup> F000232

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# FSC provides proven tools that help protect forests, verifying products from forest to consumer



## Forests

### Forest Management Certification

The world's most rigorous and credible standard for sustainable forestry.

**FOR FOREST OPERATORS**

## Manufacturing

### Chain of Custody (CoC) Certification

Securing a responsible and unbroken supply chain for forest material.

**FOR COMPANIES**

## Retailer

### Promotional License

Leverage FSC logo to promote FSC-certified products.

**FOR NON-CERTIFIED RETAILERS AND BRANDS**



# Forest Management Certification

**The FSC Forest Management standard has more proof points to ensure sustainable forestry than any other forestry certification system, worldwide.**

- FSC Forest Management certification confirms that industrial or privately-owned forests are being managed in a way that preserves biological diversity, sustains economic viability, and benefits the lives of local people and workers.
- FSC-certified forests are the foundation of the FSC Chain of Custody (CoC) system as they provide the feedstock into the supply chain.
- Annual third-party audits verify continued compliance with FSC certification requirements.

# Chain of Custody Certification (CoC)

Chain of Custody certification can be carried by companies that process certified logs into lumber, and manufacturers that transform wood into usable products.

- These include entities such as sawmills, lumber yards, building material manufacturers, millwork shops, woodworkers, and furniture manufacturers, as a few examples.
- Independent certification bodies conduct annual audits of CoC-certified companies to ensure the control of FSC-certified inventory and the validity of FSC-certified product claims.
- FSC requires CoC certification for all companies in the supply chain that take legal ownership of FSC-certified products, and wish to make FSC invoice claims or use FSC trademarks in sales and promotions.
- **It's important to note that if a single link in the supply chain between the forest and the end of the chain is not CoC certified, then the chain is broken and further FSC claims of certification are not permitted.**

# Chain of Custody Certification (CoC), continued

Construction project teams buying FSC-certified products should confirm that their direct suppliers are CoC certified by asking for their CoC certification number, or by searching for the company on the FSC Certificate Database:

<https://search.fsc.org/en/advanced-search/?tab=certificates-list&page=1>

- It's important to note that just because a company is Chain of Custody certified, **it DOES NOT mean that all of the products they sell are CoC certified.**
- A CoC certificate is a bit like a driver's license. It shows that the bearer knows how to drive, and has the right to drive, but it doesn't necessarily mean they are driving at any given point in time.
- **In this same way, a company that is CoC-certified may - or may not - have CoC-certified products for sale at any given point in time.**

# Three labels. One mission.

You'll find these on millions of products worldwide. Here's what they mean:



**The world's strongest sustainability label for forest products**

All the forest-based materials used in a product were sourced from FSC-certified forests.



**A trusted label to reduce pressure on the world's forests**

All forest-based materials used to make the product are recycled.



**Making responsible sourcing more accessible while upholding FSC rigour**

The product is made with a mixture of materials from:

- FSC-certified forests
- Recycled sources
- FSC Controlled Wood

**Example:**



**FSC Mix Certified Redwood**

**FSC Mix must contain 70% minimum from FSC-certified forests.**

[FSC LABELS EXPLAINED VIDEO LINK](#)

# FSC Mix Credit

**FSC Mix products can also be produced under the ‘credit system’, which allows a proportion of outputs to be sold with a credit claim corresponding to the quantity of claim-contributing inputs and the applicable product group conversion factor(s). In this case, products are sold with a claim of ‘FSC Mix Credit’ on the invoice.**

For a simple example, say a mill purchases 1000 tons of controlled, risk-assessed, (non-certified) Douglas Fir logs and 750 tons of FSC-certified Douglas Fir logs. The mill plans to cut the logs into dimensional lumber, such as 2x4’s, 2x6’s, and the like.

Due to the fact that the mill is going to cut all of the Douglas Fir in the same run for efficiency, the lumber ends up mixed together when it comes out of the processing plant.

Through the Mix Credit system, they can then sell 1000 tons of the mixed lumber as non-certified and 750 tons as FSC-certified, minus offcut and sawdust.





# WHAT BENEFITS ARE REALIZED BY USING FSC WOOD FOR A BUILDING PROJECT?



LEED v4 and v4.1 and  
The Living Building Challenge  
have ways  
that FSC can contribute to  
the earning of points.



**LIVING  
BUILDING  
CHALLENGE**

One of the two available points in the Building Product Disclosure & Optimization (BPDO): Sourcing of Raw Materials credit may be earned by using products that meet “leadership extraction practices” for at least 25%, by cost, of the total value of permanently installed building products in the project.

- Under this option, FSC-certified wood is an option that counts toward the 25% threshold.

Local is preferred: Products whose eligible raw material components originated within 100 miles of the building project are valued at 200% of their cost.

# LEED v4.1



Credits for v4.1 listed below can be applied to any and all of the v4.1 rating systems.

## V4.1 Sourcing of Raw Materials:

Products (including wood) sourced from at least three different manufacturers that meet at least one of the responsible sourcing and extraction criteria in the V4.1 Standard, obtainable from USGBC, for at **least 15%, by cost, of the total value of permanently installed building products in the project receive 1 point.**

- OR -

Products sourced from at least five different manufacturers that meet at least one of the responsible sourcing and extraction criteria for **at least 30%, by cost, of the total value of permanently installed building products in the project receive 2 points.**

Local is preferred: Products whose eligible raw material components originated within 100 miles of the building project are valued at 200% of their cost.



# International Living Future Institute (ILFI) - Living Building Challenge

Living Building Challenge compliance is based on actual, rather than modeled or anticipated performance. Projects must be operational for at least 12 consecutive months prior to audit to verify Imperative compliance.

**FSC is the only certification system for wood products accepted by ILFI.**

**There are three certification levels that incorporate FSC wood:**

- Living Certification
- Petal Certification
- Core Green Building Certification

# Living Building Challenge Criteria for Wood

## Living Certification

**All projects must either source 80% or more of all wood, by cost or volume, as FSC certified, or as salvaged, or from the intentional harvest of on-site timber for the purpose of clearing the area for construction. Remaining 20% must come from low-risk sources.**

## Petal Certification

**All projects must either source 80% or more of all wood, by cost or volume, as FSC certified, or as salvaged, or from the intentional harvest of on-site timber for the purpose of clearing the area for construction. Remaining 20% must come from low-risk sources.**

## Core Certification

**Lays the holistic foundation for building performance that can be considered sustainable.**  
Projects must either source 50% or more of all wood, by cost or volume, as FSC certified, or as salvaged, or from the intentional harvest of on-site timber for the purpose of clearing the area for construction.  
Remaining 50% must come from low-risk sources.

**For Living and Petal Certification, as an alternate, the project may achieve FSC Project Certification.**

# FSC Project Certification

**Verifies that the wood in a building comes from FSC certified sources.**

- Can be used independently or as a complement to green building and other related certifications (LBC for example).
- **Three levels:**
  - **Full certification**
  - **FSC Claims on Components (i.e. windows or floors)**
  - **Percentage Claims**
- Audits are conducted by an FSC-accredited third-party certifier.
- Provides direct recognition of commitment to forest conservation.



# Documenting FSC Material Use

- Ensure that eligible material purchases are from FSC-certified vendors.
- Look for the FSC label on products:

The FSC label offers one way to indicate to buyers that a product is FSC certified, but FSC does not require labeling of FSC certified wood products.



## FSC 100%

Products manufactured with 100 percent FSC-certified virgin fiber from FSC-certified forests



## FSC Recycled

Products manufactured with only recycled materials (both post-consumer and/or pre-consumer reclaimed materials)



## FSC MIX

Products manufactured with FSC-certified virgin fiber (from FSC-certified forests), **controlled sources** and/or recycled wood or fiber

!

...And the presence of an on-product FSC label is not sufficient to gain credit, so...

# Compile Invoices for FSC Products Purchased

## Each invoice must conform to the following requirements:

- Each wood product must be identified by line item.
- FSC-certified products must be identified as such with their FSC claim by line item.
- The company's FSC certificate code must be included on any invoice that includes FSC-certified products.

Wood products that are identified on invoices as FSC 100% and FSC Mix Credit are valued at 100 percent of cost. Wood products identified as FSC Mix [NN]% are valued at the indicated percentage of their cost (e.g. a product identified as FSC Mix 75% is valued at 75 percent of the total cost)


# Invoice Example

Company's FSC  
Certificate Code

ABC Building Supply  
INVOICE  
HF--COC--001388  
House Street  
Chicago, IL  
USA  
  
CONSIGNEE:  
WOOD CONSTRUCTION, LTD. GREGOR MENDEL  
ELM STREET MINNEAPOLIS, MN  
USA

INVOICE #INV014 DATE: MAY1, 2023

NO.	DESCRIPTION	QTY	UNIT PRICE (USD)	TOTAL AMOUNT (USD)
876--5T	FSC 100% W6.1 DIMENSIONAL LUMBER, ACER RUBRUM	25	73.60	1840
677--99	FSC MIX 70% W8.1 PLYWOOD, BETULA SPP	19	2165 MSF	1316.32
100--9U	VENEER STRIPS	2000	0.80	1600

  
Authorized Signature

THANK YOU FOR YOUR BUSINESS!

Dollar  
Value



## FSC Chain of Custody clarification for both LEED and Living Building Challenge material handlers:

General contractors and subcontractors, and companies that do not manufacture products offsite and ONLY install FSC-certified materials onsite (such as flooring and furniture installers) do not need FSC Chain of Custody certification. Essentially these entities are providing a service.

Contractors, subcontractors, and companies involved in a given project that TAKE OWNERSHIP of the certified products, or DO manufacture or modify FSC products, AND SELL THEM ON, need FSC CoC certification for the certification chain to be unbroken in the finished product or project, and for the finished project or product to retain FSC certification.

# Accuracy in the Submittal Process

- Identify FSC-certified material requirements in the bidding documents from the design team
- Preconstruction and estimating teams should highlight the FSC requirements in their RFP's
- When going to suppliers or subcontractors for pricing, make sure to communicate the FSC requirements and that the suppliers understand them
- Make sure the suppliers note the FSC materials in their proposal, with the suppliers CoC certificate code and the FSC claim by individual line item
- When a project contract is awarded, follow up with the suppliers/subs chosen and reiterate the FSC requirements for the materials AND documentation in purchase orders and subcontracts
- Ensure that suppliers and subcontractors follow the general conditions and requirements of the project in their submittals

## Accuracy in the Submittal Process, cont.

- Project engineers and managers should review the submittals to make sure they include applicable FSC documentation
- When transmitting the submittal to the design team, note that the design team's review does not necessarily release the GC or subcontractor from responsibility for the FSC materials – the onus of responsibility typically lies with the GC
- On site, make sure that when materials arrive, they have the required documentation and meet the submittal
- **In all payment applications from suppliers, make sure they adhere to the invoicing requirements by including the suppliers CoC code and FSC claim by line item**
- When work is complete, the final billing and warranty from suppliers/subs should again include FSC documentation for project close-out

## Some Final Advice

- Communicate early and often in the bidding process that you need FSC CoC certified wood products and explain what this means
- Be clear with wood product suppliers that you want FSC-Chain of Custody certified wood
- Communicate with the design team on what FSC products are available in case you need to look for alternatives
- Share lists of suppliers to subcontractors
- Encourage suppliers to get certified

**Looking for FSC-certified wood? Contact us and we will help!**





# Resources to Specify FSC Wood Products

A wide range of products are available today, and nearly all of these products can be made from wood grown in the US. See a sample of top suppliers below:

## Eastern US

- Baillie Lumber Co. | [baillie.com](http://baillie.com) | 800-950-2850
- Hancock Lumber [hancocklumber.com](http://hancocklumber.com) 207-627-4201
- Hood Distribution [hooddistribution.com](http://hooddistribution.com) 601-296-4816
- Interstate Plywood & Lumber, Inc.  
[interstateplywood.com](http://interstateplywood.com) 516-352-0966
- Lewis Lumber Products [lewislp.com](http://lewislp.com) 800-233-8450 Eastern
- PotlatchDeltic [potlatchdeltic.com](http://potlatchdeltic.com)  
[wood@potatchdeltic.com](mailto:wood@potatchdeltic.com)

## Midwest US

- Boehm-Madisen Lumber Company [boehm-madisen.com](http://boehm-madisen.com) 800 242-2069
- Certified Wood Products, Inc.  
[certifiedwoodproducts.net](http://certifiedwoodproducts.net) 320-963-1500

## Western US

- Forest Plywood Sales [forestplywood.com](http://forestplywood.com) 800-936-7378
- Sustainable Northwest Wood [snwwood.com](http://snwwood.com) 503-239-9663

## National

- Collins [collinsco.com](http://collinsco.com) 800-329-1219
- Columbia Forest Products  
[columbiaforestproducts.com](http://columbiaforestproducts.com) 800-237-2428
- Humboldt Sawmill Company  
[getredwood.com/professionals](http://getredwood.com/professionals) 707-764-4472
- Murphy Company [murphyplywood.com](http://murphyplywood.com) 541-461-4545
- Roseburg Forest Products [roseburg.com](http://roseburg.com) 541-679-3311
- RoyOMartin [royomartin.com](http://royomartin.com) 800-299-5174
- Westervelt Lumber [westerveltlumber.com](http://westerveltlumber.com) 800-633-5963

Looking for FSC-certified wood? Contact us and we will help!

# Thank you!

For questions or to schedule a live presentation for your team, please contact:

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