

Certification

Why is this important?

Certification requires operators to adopt practices that support sustainable forest management.



- Certification is a voluntary, market-based instrument that gives buyers of forest products assurance that the products come from well-managed forests. Third-party verification is used to increase the credibility of certification. Meeting the requirements of some certification standards is intended to be a guarantee of sustainable forest management.
- British Columbia is a world leader in forest certification.
- Three-quarters of B.C.'s forest operations are certified.

STATE  good

TREND  improving

INFORMATION  adequate

Questions about forest certification

- 24-1 What is the area of B.C.'s certified forest operations?
- 24-2 How much area is certified under each standard?
- 24-3 How much of the timber harvest is certified under each standard?
- 24-4 How much of each tenure type's harvest is certified?

➔ Ministry of Forests and Range's assessment

Related indicators

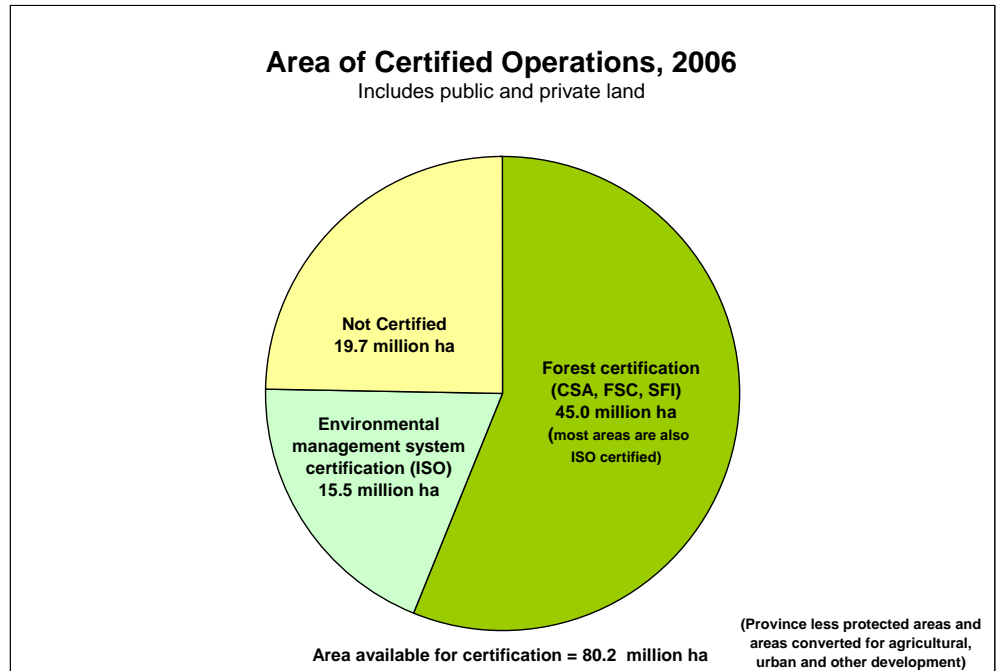
- Some major customers of the B.C. forest industry (see [Forest products](#)) have purchasing policies that favour certified products. This puts pressure on industry to become certified to maintain market access.
- Certification may require changes in forest practices (see [Silviculture](#)) and stakeholder involvement (see [Public involvement](#)).
- Government and industry may respond to overlap between legal requirements and certification requirements for forest management and auditing by streamlining procedures and sharing costs (see [Law](#)).

For data tables, see:
www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/sof/

What is the area of B.C.'s certified forest operations?

Why is this important?

Certified forest operations have been assessed as supporting sustainability.



State and Trend

- Forest certification standards address environmental, economic and social aspects of sustainable forest management, so they are often referred to as sustainable forest management standards. To earn forest certification, a forest operation obtains independent, third-party verification that the operation meets the requirements for a standard.
- Three forest certification standards are used in B.C.: The national sustainable forest management standard of the [Canadian Standards Association](#)³⁵ (CSA), the [Forest Stewardship Council](#)³⁶ (FSC) standard and the [Sustainable Forestry Initiative](#)³⁷ (SFI) standard.
- In early 1999, no forest operation in B.C. was certified. By the end of 2006, the area certified under the forest certification standards increased to 45 million ha (56% of the province, excluding protected areas and areas converted for agricultural, urban or other development).
- [ISO 14001](#)³⁸ is the International Organization for Standardization standard for certification of environmental management systems. With third-party verification, it provides a framework for better forest management, and is often used as a first step towards forest certification. Including ISO 14001, the total area certified by late 2006 increased to 60 million ha (75% of the applicable area of the province).
- **Maps:** (none)

Information

- Certified areas generally include lakes, alpine areas and other non-forest land within certified forest management units.
- Data on areas certified are publicly available, but not always accurate.
- **References:** [CSFCC](#); MFR's [Forest Certification](#)

Related international and national indicators:

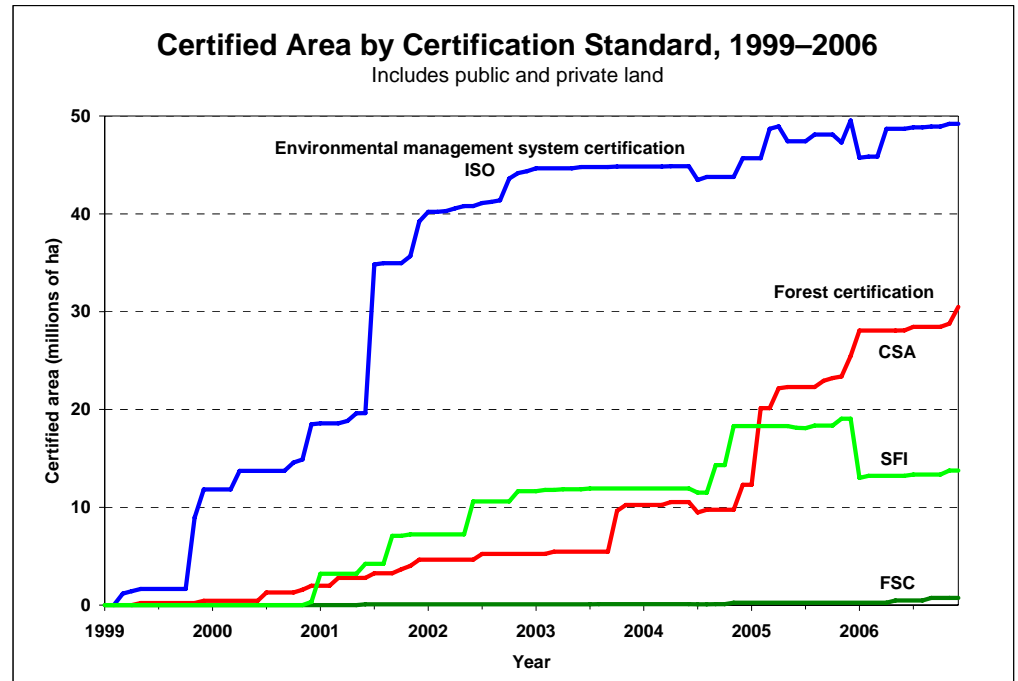
MP (none)

CCFM (none)

How much area is certified under each standard?

Why is this important?

The area certified shows the extent of each standard's influence on forest management in B.C.



State and Trend

- B.C.'s first forest certification was under the CSA's CAN/CSA-Z809-96 standard. By late 2006, about 30 million ha were CSA certified. The CSA standard has process requirements consistent with those of ISO 14001, and on-the-ground performance requirements related to national forest values and local objectives established with public participation.
- Next was the FSC standard that is widely supported by environmental NGOs and First Nations. The FSC's B.C. standard and national boreal standard, both applicable in B.C., have detailed process and performance requirements. About 0.7 million ha were FSC certified.
- The SFI standard followed. SFI also has process and performance requirements. About 14 million ha were SFI certified in late 2006.
- About 49 million ha were managed under an environmental management system certified to the ISO 14001 standard. This certifies that operators meet or exceed requirements of law and other objectives set by government. It also requires a process of continual improvement. The standard itself does not set on-the-ground performance requirements.
- Most operators certified under CSA or SFI are also ISO certified.
- Further increases in area certified are anticipated under all standards.
- **Maps:** (none)

Information

- Certified areas generally include lakes, alpine areas and other non-forest land within certified forest management units.
- Data on areas certified are publicly available, but not always accurate.
- **References:** [CSFCC](#); MFR's [Forest Certification](#)

Related international and national indicators:

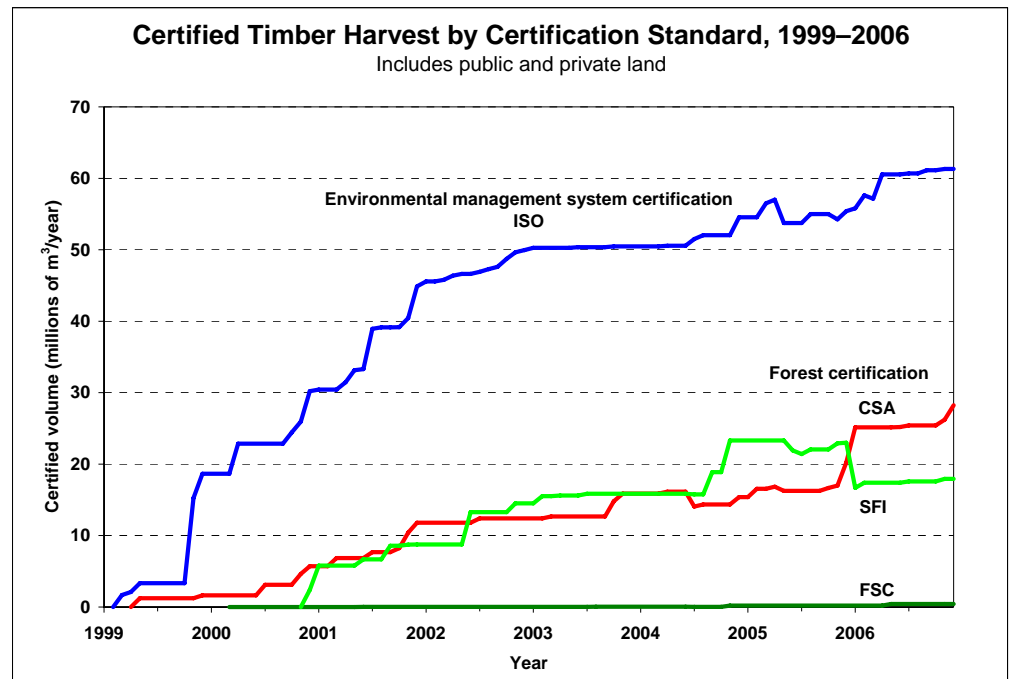
MP (none)

CCFM (none)

How much of the timber harvest is certified under each standard?

Why is this important?

Each standard's acceptance by the forest industry and its customers is most clearly shown by the volume of timber certified.



State and Trend

- By late 2006, operators with forest certification accounted for over 47 million m³/year, or 49% of government-set [allowable annual cuts](#) (AACs) plus the average harvest from private land not subject to AACs.
- The CSA certified volume was about 28 million m³/year by late 2006. In March 2005, the CSA certification was endorsed by the [Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification](#)³⁹ (PEFC), thereby improving access to European customers.
- The FSC certified volume was 0.4 million m³/year. Only one major operator in B.C. has obtained FSC certification.
- The SFI certified volume was about 18 million m³/year. Certification under this standard is widely recognized and sought in the U.S.A., B.C.'s main market. The SFI standard was endorsed by the PEFC in December 2005.
- Including the ISO 14001 standard, the total volume certified by late 2006 was 69 million m³/year, or 73% of the sum of AACs and private land harvests.
- Further increases in certification are anticipated under all standards.
- **Maps:** (none)

Information

- Volumes are based on government-set AACs of forest management units or portions of them, and on certified harvests from private land.
- Data on volumes certified are publicly available, but not always accurate.
- **References:** [CSFCC](#); MFR's [Forest Certification](#)

Related international and national indicators:

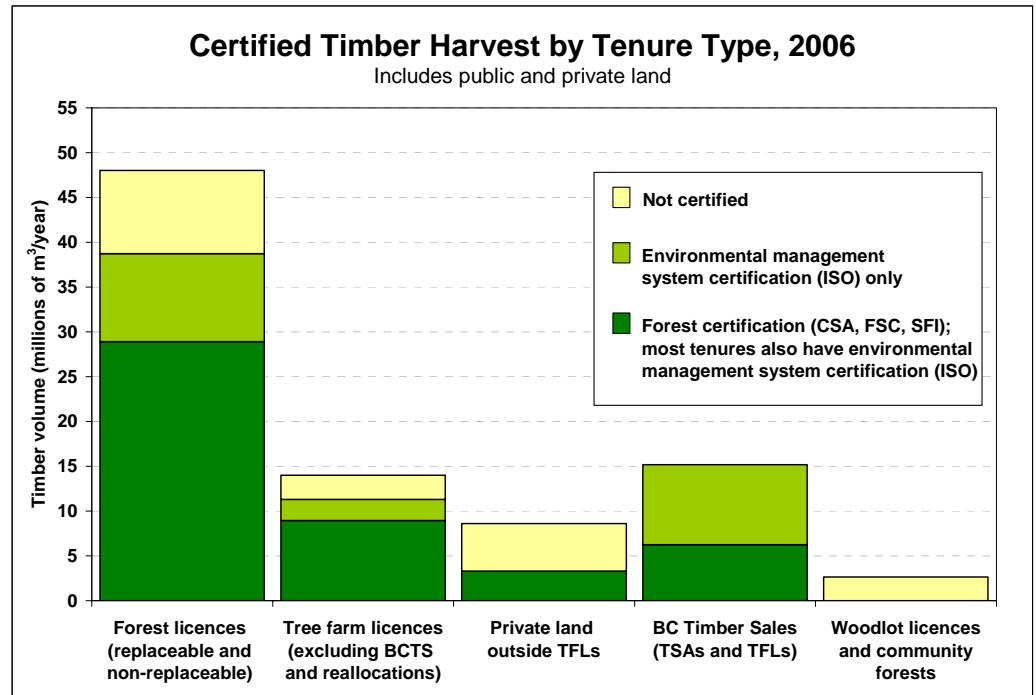
MP (none)

CCFM (none)

How much of each tenure type's harvest is certified?

Why is this important?

The various tenure types are subject to different market incentives and costs of certification.



State and Trend

- Large, long-term tenures have the highest rates of forest certification. They include volume-based forest licences (60%), area-based [tree farm licences](#) (TFLs; 64%) and private land outside TFLs (38%).
- These tenure types account for almost 80% of the provincial harvest, and are mostly held by large operators. These operators seek certification to satisfy customer demand for certified products. Many are members of the Forest Products Association of Canada, which required forest certification of member operations by the end of 2006.
- BC Timber Sales (BCTS), a division of MFR formed in 2003, primarily sells timber sale licences, which are small, short-term tenures on public land. By the end of 2006, BCTS had obtained forest certification for 41% of its allocated volume, with more under way in response to customer demand and BCTS forestry objectives.
- The cost of certification is prohibitive for most holders of small woodlot licences and community forests, but for some it is a matter of principle. The rate of forest certification for these tenures is 0.2%.
- Including the ISO 14001 standard, the 2006 rate of certification for each tenure type was 81% for forest licences, 81% for TFLs, 38% for private land outside TFLs, 100% for BCTS, and 0.3% for woodlots and community forests.
- **Maps:** [Forest Management Units](#)

Related international and national indicators:

MP (none)

CCFM (none)

Information

- Volumes by tenure type can be derived from publicly available data.
- **References:** [CSFCC](#); MFR's [Forest Certification, Apportionment](#)

Certification

Ministry of Forests and Range's assessment

State



good

Forest certification is a voluntary, market-based instrument that provides buyers with assurance that a forest is well managed and meets the requirements of a certification standard. Some markets now favour forest products from certified forest operations.

Forest certification under the CSA, FSC and SFI standards is evidence of rigorous, systematic efforts to manage forests well, and is intended to be a guarantee of sustainable forest management. Opinions differ about the merits of these standards, but all operators certified under them are clearly supporting and working towards sustainable forest management.

In terms of area certified, B.C. is a world leader in forest certification. About 56% of the relevant public and private land base and 49% of the total provincial harvest are certified under a sustainable forest management standard. Including the ISO standard for environmental management systems, 75% of the relevant land base and 73% of the harvest are certified.

Trend



improving

Since 1999, about half of the province's relevant public and private land base and timber harvest have been certified under the CSA and SFI forest certification standards. Only relatively small areas and volumes have been certified under the FSC standard. BC Timber Sales has CSA certification for 41% of its volume and more forest certification is under way.

Including the ISO 14001 certification, three quarters of the land base and timber harvest have been certified under one or more systems since 1999. BC Timber Sales accounts for a large part of the increase in ISO 14001 and CSA certification since 2004.

Information



adequate

The Canadian Sustainable Forestry Certification Coalition monitors certified areas and volumes for all of Canada and publishes its data, but the data are not always accurate. The MFR also monitors certified areas and volumes. Certified areas and volumes by tenure types are not tracked explicitly, but can be derived from publicly available data.