



## **SFI IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE (SIC) GOVERNANCE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI) Implementation Committees (SICs) are an integral part of SFI® and play a vital role in promoting logger training, landowner outreach, youth and adult education, community engagement, the integrity of the SFI program, and responsible forestry at local levels. SICs operate at a state, provincial, or regional level and facilitate or manage the programs and alliances which support the SFI strategic direction.

SFI is a sustainability leader through our work in standards, conservation, community, and education. SFI collaborates with our diverse network to provide solutions to local and global sustainability challenges. SFI's [2020-2024 Strategic Direction](#) outlines SFI's vision and mission:

VISION: A world that values and benefits from sustainably managed forests.

MISSION: To advance sustainability through forest-focused collaboration.

SICs were established in 1995. Support (including financial) for efforts of SICs is a requirement of SFI certification as outlined in SFI 2022 FM 14.1.1 and SFI 2022 Fiber Sourcing 7.1.1. SICs provide a strong foundation for SFI and make important contributions in assuring SFI Standard conformance and advancing SFI's diverse work.

State, provincial and regional SICs are financially autonomous committees reflecting significant geographic and organizational diversity. They involve a wide range of local community stakeholders, such as forest products companies, forest landowners and/or forest managers, federal/state/provincial government natural resource agencies, Indigenous Peoples, colleges and universities, professional loggers, and conservation and community organizations. This flexible, grassroots infrastructure is a fundamental strength of SFI and supports our mission to advance sustainability across the U.S. and Canada.

The SIC Governance document was updated to reflect SFI Standard revisions and SFI strategic priorities. The SIC Governance document is the principal governing document for SICs and should be utilized by SIC Chairs and Coordinators. SIC Chairs should also refer to the SIC Memorandum of Understanding and the SIC Service Mark Licensing agreement. Current versions of these documents can be found on the SIC members site at <https://www.forests.org/memberssic>.

### **ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE**

This section is intended to clarify expectations and provide guidance to ensure consistency, while still maintaining SIC flexibility. This section highlights the way SICs should organize, operate, and involve members and supporters.

1. SICs should focus time and spending on activities that support or promote the SFI Standards and broader SFI strategic direction. SIC activities should focus on SFI-related projects that are more effectively executed through group efforts.
2. Each SIC should have bylaws or a charter that formalizes the SFI-specific focus of the committee and the leadership role of SFI-certified organizations.

3. SICs should strive for consensus on decision-making process pertaining to projects and activities while involving all SIC participants. Where consensus cannot be reached, the decision-making process should be clearly articulated in the SIC bylaws.
4. SICs are encouraged to engage with partners or supporters, including students and young people, who share SFI's mission of advancing sustainability through forest-focused collaboration.
5. SIC supporters eligible for certification (i.e., Forest Managers, Landowners, manufacturers/facilities or other organizations who qualify) should be encouraged to seek certification to the SFI Standard.
6. SICs should be vigilant in avoiding the appearance that organizations not currently certified to the SFI Standard are in conformance with the SFI Standard.
7. SICs may operate as independent legal entities or may be supported by organizations such as state or provincial associations or universities. Regardless of structure, SICs should have autonomy in decision making and spending authority. SICs should have a total accounting of the fees given to the SIC by SFI-certified organizations and applicants, so that they can transparently know the total budget, including any deductions for service fees by the organization where they are hosted.
8. SICs shall submit the *SIC Annual Progress Report* to SFI every year.
9. Per SFI 2022 Standards Guidance, SFI-certified organizations owning and/or operating forest product facilities, owning and/or managing forestland, or procuring fiber within the state or province are expected to participate in the SICs; SFI-certified organizations are required to participate in the SIC where significant operations exist.

## **FUNDING**

This section outlines best practices for decision making, dues collection, budgeting and expenditures.

1. Local SFI-certified organizations (with supporters as determined by the SIC) should determine SIC dues, budgets, and funding consistent with national SFI program priorities and trends. SICs should develop program budgets annually.
2. Local SFI-certified organizations should define expectations for SIC supporters. "Support" may not necessarily be financial and can include in-kind support.
3. Local SFI-certified organizations should establish an equitable means of self-assessment to generate needed funding.
4. SICs should consider multi-state/province credits/discounts, non-dues revenue opportunities, including grants, and other options providing dues paying members flexibility on funding requirements, particularly in the cases of financial hardship.
5. SIC related activities should be self-funded wherever possible. SICs should seek grants from non-industry sources and incorporate financial goals based on anticipated revenue from grants, registration fees, or other sources. If funds are sought from national organizations, SICs should consult with SFI Inc. to avoid overlap of fundraising from multiple entities.
6. SICs should maintain their own independent financials used only for SIC activities consistent with SFI Inc. objectives.
7. Projects supported by an SIC should recognize SIC support.

## **SFI STANDARD REQUIREMENTS PRIORITIES**

This section highlights the requirements in the 2022 SFI Forest Management Standard and the 2022 SFI Fiber Sourcing Standard where potential SIC involvement is specifically identified. SICs may identify other areas where coordination at the state/provincial/regional level would be beneficial. SICs may coordinate regionally where appropriate to increase efficiency and reach.

The below list of standard requirements are those that highlight potential collaborative approaches to meeting these requirements with the language of "*Program to individually and/or through cooperative efforts such as SFI Implementation Committees...*". Refer to the [SFI 2022 Standard](#) requirements for the full Standard language of Objectives, Performance Measures and Indicators.

### **Biological Diversity:**

SFI FM Objective 4. Conservation of Biological Diversity

4.1.3 ... support diversity of native forest cover types and age or size classes that enhance biological diversity, by incorporating the results of analysis of documented diversity at landscape and ownership/tenure levels, to ensure the contribution of the managed area to the diversity of conditions that promote biodiversity.

4.1.4 ... participate in or incorporate the results of credible, relevant state, provincial, or regional conservation planning and priority-setting efforts to conserve biological diversity and incorporate the results of these efforts in forest management planning. Credible priority-setting efforts include state and provincial wildlife action plans, state forest action plans, relevant habitat conservation plans, provincial wildlife recovery plans, Indigenous planning processes or ecoregional plans.

4.4.3 ... participate in or support research that demonstrates the conservation outcomes resulting from management strategies.

SFI FS Objective 1. Biodiversity in Fiber Sourcing

1.1.1 SFI-certified organizations shall address conservation of biodiversity, ...

1.2.1 SFI-certified organizations shall conduct an assessment, ... of Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value, defined as critically imperiled and imperiled species and ecological communities, within their wood and fiber supply area(s) and make the summary of the assessment available to wood producers.

1.2.2 Program to address Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value (critically imperiled and imperiled species and ecological communities) for all harvest operations through fiber sourcing activities such as: a. use of qualified logging professionals, certified logging companies (where available), and qualified resource professionals; or b. training program for qualified logging professionals on how to recognize and protect Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value; or c. through in-the-forest verification by certified logging companies; or d. forest landowner outreach; or e. SFI Implementation Committee involvement in the assessment of Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value, and development of recommendations for conservation.

### **Climate Change:**

SFI FM Objective 9. Climate Smart Forestry

9.1 ... identify and address the climate change risks to forests and forest operations and develop appropriate adaptation objectives and strategies. Strategies are based on best scientific information.

1.2 ... identify and address opportunities to mitigate the effects associated with its forest operations on climate change.

**Fire:**

SFI FM Objective 10. Fire Resilience and Awareness

10.2 ... engage in efforts to raise awareness of and take action towards benefits of fire management and minimization of undesirable impacts of wildfire.

**Research:**

SFI FM Objective 12 and FS Objective 5. Forestry Research, Science and Technology

12.1 & 5.1 ... provide in-kind support or funding for forest research to improve sustainable management of forest resources, and the environmental benefits and performance of forest products.

12.2 and 5.2 ... develop, contribute to, or use national, state, provincial or regional analyses in support of their sustainable forestry programs.

5.3 ... broaden the awareness of climate change impacts on forests, wildlife, and biological diversity.

**Training and Education:**

SFI FM Objective 13 and FS Objective 6. Training and Education

13.2 and 6.2 ... foster improvement in the professionalism of wood producers specific to qualified logging professionals.

13.2.1, 13.2.2 and 6.2.1, 6.2.2 ... establish criteria and identify delivery mechanisms for wood producer core training and continuing education courses that allow individuals to attain and maintain qualified logging professional status.

**Community Involvement and Landowner Outreach:**

SFI FM Objective 14 and FS Objective 7. Community Involvement and Landowner Outreach

14.1.2 and 7.1.2 Support, ... education and outreach to forest landowners describing the importance and providing implementation guidance

14.2 and 7.2 ... support and promote, at the state, provincial or other appropriate levels, mechanisms for public outreach, education and involvement related to sustainable forest management.

**Inconsistent Practices:**

14.3 and 7.3 ... procedures to address concerns raised by loggers, consulting foresters, employees, unions, stakeholders, the public or other Certified Organizations regarding management that appears inconsistent with the SFI standards principles and objectives.

**OTHER SIC PRIORITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

In addition to collaborating on SFI standard requirements, SICs are encouraged to engage in the following activities that advance SFI's strategic priorities. SICs should seek to involve partners that can help accomplish objectives. SICs may coordinate regionally where appropriate to increase efficiency and reach.

*SFI Program Integrity*

SICs should protect the integrity of SFI by (a) ensuring proper usage of the SIC service mark; and (b) alerting SFI Inc. when improper communications or misleading claims are observed, including the appearance of certification by non-certified organizations.

### *Youth and Adult Education*

SICs should consider supporting, promoting, and using Project Learning Tree (PLT/PLT Canada) to advance environmental literacy, stewardship and career pathways using trees and forests as windows on the world in their state/province or region.

### *Public and Landowner Outreach*

SICs should utilize SIC websites, social media, landowner manuals, and other forms of outreach to increase understanding of the values and benefits provided by responsible forest management and sustainably sourced forest products.

### *Community Engagement*

SICs should consider partnering with community organizations, such as Habitat for Humanity, Make a Wish Foundation, or others, to benefit their local communities.

### *Recruitment*

SICs should encourage forest landowners/managers and forest products facilities to pursue certification to the SFI standards, as appropriate.