

Suggested timber purchasing policy for Local Authorities

Forest management can be environmentally appropriate and socially beneficial, but it can also be environmentally and socially damaging. This policy recognises the responsibility of this Local Authority as a consumer of forest products to ensure that it has a neutral if not positive effect on the world's forests.

This Council will give preference to timber and timber products that have been independently certified by a credible, globally applicable forest certification scheme and can demonstrate that the products are derived from well managed sources. This certification scheme is the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) or an equivalent certification scheme that meets all the requirements mentioned below.

A sound forest certification system should:

- be independent, and be based on independent third party audits;
- be participatory and acceptable to a large range of involved parties, including to consumers, social and environmental NGOs;
- be fully transparent to the parties involved and to the public;
- be built on consensus, to avoid unilateral measures and/or discriminatory trade impacts;
- provide objective and measurable criteria and performance standards;
- have transparent procedures including clear appeal mechanisms;
- ensure an active commitment of the managers/owners of a certified unit;
- have clear mechanisms that make reports and decisions available to the public;
- encourage transparent use of eco-labelling i.e. declarations that are precise and verifiable
- be operational at an international level and not discriminating against certain forest types, groups of forest owners, countries or regions.
- be institutionally and politically adapted to local conditions

Documentation must be provided to prove that every attempt has been made to obtain certified sources before exploring alternatives. Flexibility in terms of species specification should be pursued.

All officers with responsibility for specifying timber will be required to inform contractors of the council's wood purchasing policy.