



Forest Certification

Prelims: Forest Certification, Deforestation, Climate Change, Forest Stewardship Council.

Mains: Forest Certification and standards.

Why in News?

With [climate change](#), [Deforestation](#) has become a **critically sensitive issue globally** in recent years, making imperative for **Forest Certification** to regulate the entry and sale of forest-based products.

- At the [Glasgow climate meeting in 2021](#), more than 100 countries made a pledge to stop, and start reversing, deforestation by 2030.

What is Forest Certification?

- **Need:**

- Forests **absorb large amounts of carbon dioxide that is emitted in various economic activities**, keeping a check on global warming.
- Many Countries are trying to **avoid consumption of any product that might be the result of deforestation** or illegal logging.
- And therefore, Europe and the United States have passed laws that **regulate the entry and sale of forest-based products** in their markets, creating the need for Forest Certification.

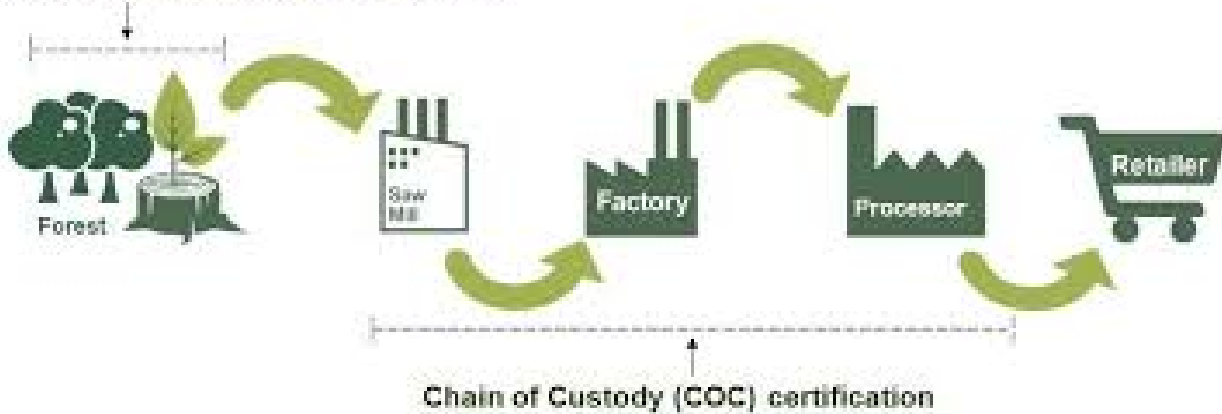
- **Forest Certification:**

- It is a mechanism **for forest monitoring, tracing and labelling** timber, wood and pulp products and non-timber forest products.
- It is a process through which quality of management from environmental, social and economic perspectives is judged **against a series of agreed standards**.
- There are **two major international standards for sustainable management** of forests and forest-based products,
 - One has been developed by Forest Stewardship Council (FSC);
 - The other by Programme for Endorsement of Forest Certifications (PEFC).
- FSC certification is **more popular and in demand**, and also more expensive.

- **Two Types of Certifications:**

- Forest management (FM) and Chain of Custody (CoC).
 - CoC certification is meant to guarantee the traceability of a forest product like timber throughout the supply chain from origin to market.

Forest Management (FM) certification



▪ Forest Certification in India:

- The forest certification industry has been operating in India for the last 15 years.
- Currently, **forests in only Uttar Pradesh are certified.**
 - Forty-one divisions of the UP-Forest Corporation (UPFC) are PEFC-certified, meaning they are being managed according to standards endorsed by PEFC.
 - Some other states **too obtained certifications**, but subsequently dropped out.
- Forest certification in India is **still at an early stage and therefore the nation has not been able to make use of the benefits** of forest certification.

What are India Specific Standards?

- India **allows the export of only processed wood, not timber.** In fact, the timber harvested from Indian forests is not enough to meet the domestic demand for housing, furniture, and other products.
- India's forests contribute just **about five million cubic metres of wood every year.** Almost 85% of the demand for wood and wood products is met by trees **outside forests (ToF).** **About 10 % is imported.**
- India's **wood import bill is Rs 50,000-60,000 crore per year.**
- Since ToF are so important, new certification standards are being developed for their sustainable management.
- PEFC already has certification for TOF and in 2022, **FSC came up with India-specific standards that included certification for ToF.**

Source: IE

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