

PEFC forest management certification for woodland owners



PEFC Ireland made significant progress during 2015. The number of companies awarded PEFC Chain of Custody certificates passed the 40 mark for the first time and with Coillte Forest PEFC certified since 2014, Coillte Panel Products has been moving towards applying for dual FSC / PEFC Chain of Custody certification. This in turn will impact on the major sawmills need to do likewise.

2015 has also seen a number of initiatives to set up private group forest management schemes, some of which are likely to be ready to apply for PEFC certification in 2016. Reducing costs remains a constant challenge and to this end we have been working on a joint project with PEFC UK to develop an online registration system designed to reduce paperwork and possibly the number of site visits required to be made by a group manager. This system has now been launched in the UK and is undergoing pilot testing in Ireland.

Concerns surrounding possibly the two greatest challenges currently facing mankind, climate change and the energy crisis, continue to highlight the importance attached to managing the world's forests responsibly.

Sustainable forest management has a vital role to play in combating global warming, and wood is an important component in the hunt for alternatives to fossil fuels. PEFC initiatives remain at the forefront in tackling these issues. In that regard it is notable that in 2015 India became the fortieth member of PEFC International, emphasising PEFC's growth in SE Asia, a crucially important region where sustainable forest management can make a significant difference. In addition the first 5 million hectares in China and 500,000 hectares in Indonesia have been certified to PEFC endorsed standards.



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For further details, visit the PEFC Ireland website www.pefc.ie, or contact the National Secretary William Merivale at william@pefc.ie