



International
Olympic
Committee

SUSTAINABLE SOURCING FACT SHEET – WOOD & WOOD-BASED PRODUCTS

NOVEMBER 2025

In collaboration with



WOOD AND WOOD-BASED PRODUCTS

Background

This Sustainable Sourcing Fact Sheet has been developed to provide core and recommended criteria and guidance to sport organisations on what should be considered in sourcing and procurement decisions related to key categories of products and services.

Individuals responsible for sourcing/ procuring decisions and activities should review this Sustainable Sourcing Fact Sheet alongside the ‘Sustainability Essentials’ guide: [‘Sustainable Sourcing in Sport’](#).

Scope

This Sustainable Sourcing Fact Sheet covers wood and materials/products derived from wood, including recycled fibres.

Product types include but are not limited to:

- Furniture
- Construction products (e.g., window frames, wall panels, flooring, engineer wood/composite materials, etc.)
- Hoardings/fencing
- Platforms, podiums and temporary/permanent flooring
- Packaging
- Consumable items (stirrers, cutlery, toilet rolls etc)
- Cellulose fibres (e.g., viscose textiles, wipes, feminine hygiene products, etc.)
- Paper and card (office supplies, brochures, reports, stationery etc)
- Signage and branding

It applies even if wood or paper is a small part of the overall product e.g., legs of a table, wooden frame behind a mirror.

It does not cover other non-timber forest derived products and forest-related materials (e.g., cork, grasses such as bamboo and cane, rattan and live trees). However, key principles and core criteria set out in this document are likely to be relevant. Such items must also be legal and comply with applicable legislation (e.g., deforestation legislation in place in some markets such as the EU to prove they are from a legal source).

Sustainability fundamentals

The world’s forests perform several key functions both globally and locally. They are fundamental to regulating the earth’s climate, preserving rich sources of biodiversity and providing prosperity for many indigenous peoples and local communities. Driven by increasing global demand for low-cost products, one of the biggest threats comes from unsustainable forest management practices and illegal logging.



Deforestation is the second largest source of human caused greenhouse gas emissions on the planet. Protecting forests is not only part of the solution to stop rising greenhouse gas emissions, it is also key to reducing emissions in line with a 1.5 degrees Celsius world.

Sourcing of wood and paper items can impact the rights of indigenous people and local communities through loss of land and timber rights and reduction of access to resources.

Production of wood and wood-based products can use a significant amount of water and energy as well as, in some instances, chemicals which are potentially harmful to human health and the environment.

Addressing the environmental and social issues associated with wood and paper products requires cooperation among companies at different stages of the supply chain. So-called chain-of-custody (or paper trails) and other data-sharing systems and initiatives can help improve transparency about where items are being sourced and how they are produced.

As actions on single-use plastics continue, this is likely to lead to an increase in demand for wood and wood-based products. Swapping one single-use material for another is not a solution to the overall problem of unsustainable consumption.

Wood and wood-based products originating from independently verifiable 'legal' and 'sustainable' sources are key factors in demonstrating such items have been sustainably sourced. For the purposes of this document this means ensuring wood or wood derived materials sourced for items have not contributed to:

- Illegal harvesting or exploitation of workers, indigenous peoples and local communities
- Deforestation or human-induced forest degradation
- Loss of other natural ecosystems such as [Intact Forest Landscapes](#) and areas with a [high conservation value \(HCV\)](#) and [high carbon stock \(HCS\)](#) forests



Global policy context

There have been a range of national and regional policies and legislation introduced to protect forests, encourage reforestation and afforestation, promote sustainable forestry management and develop markets for more sustainably sourced forest products, such as the [EU Regulation on Deforestation-free Products](#).

On a global scale, these are generally insufficient to prevent forest loss which is why action by industry and civil society is crucial. While the extent of illegal logging for timber has reduced over the last decade or so, the illegal clearance of forests for agriculture is a major problem.

Many organisations have sought to exclude illegal and unsustainable wood and paper items from their supply chains and a growing number have adopted targets for achieving zero deforestation. Many of these approaches rely on a combination of due-diligence and use of forest certification schemes to differentiate between legal and sustainable and illegal and unsustainable products.

Certification

Sustainable forest management certification schemes aim to provide independent, third-party verification that wood comes from 'legal' and 'sustainable' sources. These schemes include mechanisms for tracing items from the forest of origin through the supply chain to the end consumer. The end-to-end certification of the supply chain is called chain of custody certification. This seeks to confirm that these items have not been mixed with items from uncertified forests at any point in the supply chain (except where controlled mixing takes place under prescribed rules).

There are two major international schemes:

- Forest Stewardship Council (FSC®) – www.fsc.org
- Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC™) – www.pefc.org

Both schemes seek to demonstrate that wood has been legally and sustainably sourced.

At no point can the chain be broken – if a company takes legal ownership or physical possession, then it must have its own independently certified chain of custody system to allow it to pass on the sustainable credentials of the product.

Intermediate suppliers must have their own chain of custody certificate for the product to be counted as certified. A supplier must not pass off copies of their supplier's chain of custody

certificate as evidence of the supply of certified items. Chain of custody must be complete to the end of the chain. If it does not, this is known as a 'broken chain of custody'.

Dual certification is common in several countries, often in response to different market demands for certified material. This means items can be supplied with both FSC® and PEFC™ certification.

PEFC™ differs from FSC® in that it is an umbrella organisation which endorses national forest certification systems. These national certification systems are tailored to local priorities and conditions.

PEFC™ is the world's largest forest certification scheme. Of the proportion of forests globally that are certified, nearly three-quarters of it are certified to PEFC™. However, FSC® is still the only global forest certification system which is supported by all major and critical NGOs. It is also often the preferred standard of many organisations.

Despite the continued increase of global forest area under certification, only around 10% of global forests are certified under either or both certification schemes.

Use of reused or recycled wood or wood-based products can also reduce the pressure on forests. Both FSC® and PEFC™ offer certification routes to verify that wood or paper in a product has been verified as genuinely recycled.

Marketing and labelling

Use of third-party logos (e.g., FSC® and PEFC™) are strictly controlled so the necessary licenses or permissions must be obtained from the corresponding certification or licensing body prior to their use for communications or promotional purposes.

For example, organisations wishing to use FSC® trademarks for 'off-product', promotional use may require an [FSC promotional trademark licence](#).

Further guidance on claims and declarations is provided on p.54-55 of the 'Sustainability Essentials' guide: [Sustainable Sourcing in Sport](#).



Sustainable Sourcing Criteria and Sustainable Supplier Questionnaire

The core and recommended criteria for Wood and Wood-Based Products are set out below. There are two levels of sustainability performance:

- **Core criteria** – refers to minimum sustainability requirements that are advised to be met
- **Recommended criteria** – refers to criteria that goes beyond minimum sustainability requirements to promote higher levels of environmental and social responsibility and advance sports' sustainability vision and goals

Criteria is intended to be jurisdictionally neutral and therefore should be able to be applied in any country or region. In the unlikely event of a conflict with national or regional legislation, the law shall always be complied with and prevail. Individuals tasked with sourcing/procurement should seek to meet the most demanding requirements wherever possible.

Sustainable Supplier Questionnaire

In addition to the Sustainable Sourcing Criteria, a Sustainable Supplier Questionnaire & Scorecard has been developed to be sent to suppliers during the RFP process. [Refer to these within the IOC sustainability library.](#)

This supplementary questionnaire is designed to be launched during tender processes, providing deeper insights into suppliers' sustainability objectives, priorities, and performance. The questions related to the criteria are outlined in the table below. Detailed guidance for each criterion is available to assist in assessing the responses, as part of the evaluation scorecard.

Sustainability Categories

Key: Climate Nature People Pollution

Core Criteria	Additional Guidance	RFP Question Reference
	<p>Suppliers must have and be able to demonstrate that they have appropriate due diligence systems in place to ensure there is no deforestation within their supply chain.</p>	<p>Due diligence systems may include access to key information to determine supply risks, risk assessment and risk mitigation procedures to minimise risk of placing products linked to deforestation on the market. This approach is in line with due diligence regulatory requirements in several markets including the UK Timber Regulation (UKTR) and the EU Regulation on Deforestation-Free Products.).</p> <p>NOTE: It may be appropriate to periodically undertake your own due diligence to supplement what is expected of suppliers.</p>

II. Wood based products:
Question 1

	Suppliers of wood and wood-based products must take all reasonable steps to ensure that items are produced in accordance with all International Labour Organisation (ILO) conventions (e.g., labour standards, working conditions and the use of child labour) and internationally recognised human rights standards as defined by the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.	The ‘Sustainability Essentials’ guide: ‘Sustainable Sourcing in Sport’ provides further guidance on this topic (e.g., template Sustainable Sourcing Code and how compliance might be assessed)	I. Standard Questionnaire: Question 11
	Direct suppliers of wood and wood products are required to have appropriate independently certified management systems in place which meet internationally recognised standards (e.g., ISO 9001 and ISO 14001) which covers the scope of their service provision.	Independently certified systems are preferred – if suppliers do not have this they need to demonstrate how they meet the standards. Acceptable standards include ISO 9001 and ISO 14001. Other environmental schemes may also be acceptable such as EMAS or industry specific schemes.	I. Standard Questionnaire: Question 10
	No endangered, vulnerable or protected species must be used in any wood or wood products as defined in CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) Appendices I, II and III or IUCN Red List of Threatened Species	As a rule, no wood from endangered, vulnerable or protected tree species should be sourced. However, if unavoidable species classed as ‘endangered’ or ‘vulnerable’ under the IUCN Red List or ‘protected’ by listing on CITES Appendix III must have FSC certification with full chain of custody throughout the supply chain. A CITES Appendix III listed species must also carry a CITES export permit or certificate of origin as well.	II. Wood based products: Question 2

	Recommended Criteria	Additional Guidance	RFP Question Reference
	Suppliers are expected to have measured their full scope Carbon Footprint in accordance with an internationally recognised methodology and provide evidence of this calculation to upon request.	As a minimum a Carbon Footprint is expected to have been completed. However, a Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) which meets ISO 14040 is advised.	I. Standard Questionnaire: Question 33
	Suppliers are expected to disclose all sites of relevance to the production and supply of wood and wood-based products together with an appropriate level of evidence that such sites meet relevant International Labour Organisation (ILO) conventions (e.g., labour standards, working conditions and the use of child labour) and internationally recognised human rights standards as defined by the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.	The ‘Sustainability Essentials’ guide: ‘Sustainable Sourcing in Sport’ provides further guidance on this topic (e.g., template Sustainable Sourcing Code and how compliance might be assessed). For example, it might be appropriate to require suppliers to register on the Supplier Ethical Data Exchange (Sedex) and ensure that at least the final finishing and assembly locations are disclosed, all Self-Assessment Questionnaire modules are completed and made accessible/visible. Self-Assessment Questionnaire modules cover the following topics: Labour Standards, Business Integrity, Health and Safety and the Environment.	I. Standard Questionnaire: Question 11

	<p>Preference should be given to suppliers that have or are committed to get carbon reduction targets approved by the Science Based Targets Initiative (SBTi) as being in line with the level of reduction needed to limit global warming to 1.5oC within a realistic timescale and provide evidence of carbon reductions upon request.</p>	<p>Further information on approved Science-based Targets (i.e. a reduction target to cut emissions in line with climate science covering Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions) is here: https://sciencebasedtargets.org/. There is a streamlined process for smaller businesses.</p>	<p>I. Standard Questionnaire: Question 16</p>
	<p>Suppliers should demonstrate how they have considered the principles of the circular economy in the production, supply and use of wood and wood-based products.</p>	<p>This might include, for example, ensuring products made of multiple components are easily separable by end users for ease of reuse and recycling or offering a take-back service when items are no longer required are taken back by the supplier for verified reuse, remanufacturing or recycling.</p>	
	<p>Suppliers are encouraged to demonstrate their broader commitment to sustainability and the steps they are taking to become more purposeful.</p>	<p>This can be demonstrated in several ways – from being a signatory to the UN Global Compact through to either holding or working towards becoming a certified B Corporation.</p>	<p>I. Standard Questionnaire: Question 5</p>

Wood Products (Excluding Paper Based and Cellulosic Items)

Core Criteria	Additional Guidance	RFP Question Reference
<div data-bbox="143 376 192 501"> </div> <p>Wood in products and packaging must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Come from forests and plantations which meet all the following: • Wood is legally harvested; • Wood is not harvested in forests where globally, nationally or locally significant High Conservation Values (HCV) or considered to be high carbon stock (HCS) are threatened by management activities; • Wood is not harvested in violation of traditional and civil rights; and • Wood is not sourced from land that has been subject to deforestation or conversion. 	<p>Except for reused or recycled sources, due diligence must be carried out to minimise the risk of placing illegally harvested wood or wood-derived products containing illegally harvested species. Adoption/specification of certified schemes such as FSC® or PEFC™ is no defence against undertaking due diligence.</p> <p>Illegal wood means wood harvested in contravention of legislation in the country of harvest or where access to such resources or trade in related products is authorised through corrupt practices. Corruption and illegal logging tend to be related, Indicatively all countries with a Corruption Perception Index (CPI) - according to Transparency International - below 50 should be considered potentially high risk for legality. Notwithstanding General Requirements (see section above), ALL wood species must be verified as legal and must also not be CITES or IUCN listed.</p> <p>HCV forests have biological, ecological, social or cultural values which are considered significant or critically important at a global, national or regional level (www.HCVnetwork.org). HCS forests is a methodology that distinguishes forest areas for protection from degraded lands with low carbon and biodiversity values that may be developed (highcarbonstock.org).</p> <p>For example, land rights have not been violated and Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) has been obtained. December 31, 2019 is the cut-off date after which forest conversion is prohibited and is aligned with global norms as specified in the New York Declaration on Forests and in Target 15.2 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.</p> <p>NOTE: some brands and certification schemes operate earlier cut-off dates.</p>	<p>II. Wood based products: Question 3</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet at least one of the following (in order of preference): • Reuse/Recycled: Come from verified/certified reused or recycled sources (at least 50% post-consumer content); or • Sustainably managed sources (shown below in order of preference): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FSC® (Forest Stewardship Council) with FULL chain of custody throughout the supply chain and eligible to carry the appropriate label. (NOTE: This is the only certification scheme accepted for wood harvested from tropical countries); or - PEFC™ (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification) with FULL chain of custody throughout the supply chain and eligible to carry the appropriate label 	<p>Independently verified means suitably qualified third party or through a recognised scheme. The only exceptions are where technical constraints limit the % content.</p> <p>Pre-consumer material is material diverted from the waste stream during the manufacturing process. Excluded is the reutilisation of materials such as rework, regrind or scrap generated in a process and capable of being reclaimed within the same process that generated it.</p> <p>Post-consumer material is material generated by households or by commercial facilities in their role as end users of the product that can no longer be used for its intended purpose. This includes returns of materials from the distribution chain.</p> <p>NOTE: Certified FSC® and PEFC™ Recycled sources exist.</p> <p>This applies to FSC® 100% or FSC® Mix certified sources. FSC® chain of custody complete to final manufacturer or supplier. Information supplied must include country of origin (where harvest took place) and species information. This may be the certificate or invoices to demonstrate supply of certified product (see Appendix).</p> <p>PEFC™ chain of custody complete to final manufacturer or supplier. Information supplied must include country of origin (where harvest took place) and species information. This may be the certificate or invoices to demonstrate supply of certified product.</p>	<p>II. Wood based products: Question 4, 5</p>
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Recommended Criteria		Additional Guidance	RFP Question Reference
	Avoid tropical species, even if they have appropriate certification.	If unavoidable, only FSC® certification with FULL chain of custody is accepted for wood sourced from tropical countries.	
	Preference should be given to solid wood rather than processed wood (e.g., chipboard).	Solid wood is likely to be easier to manage in terms of finding reuse or recycling routes at end of life and may also contain substances which pose less risk to human health and the environment.	
	Use of plantation by-products and by-products from agricultural production (i.e. cotton wood, rubber wood, olive wood, palm wood, and mango wood) is encouraged.	<p>General Requirements apply in full. With regards this section, it is recognised the complex and informal harvesting of these raw materials can make compliance with Core Criteria difficult. All species and country of origin must be verified and evidence of legal procurement must be provided. Use of certified materials should be specified where available (e.g., FSC® certified mango wood).</p> <p>NOTE: This Sourcing Sheet does not cover non-timber forest derived products and forest-related materials (e.g., cork, grasses such as bamboo and cane, rattan and live trees). However, the key principles and criteria are likely to apply.</p>	

Note: Full chain of custody throughout the supply chain is strongly recommended. Where a supply chain has a ‘broken’ chain of custody (i.e. a link in the chain cannot be verified) and insufficient documentation is available then at the discretion individuals responsible for sourcing/ procuring decisions and activities it may be necessary to arrange an on-site visit to assess the situation. Suppliers must cooperate in this process.

Paper Based Items

Core Criteria		Additional Guidance	RFP Question Reference
	All paper-based materials must be produced without bleaching or non-chlorine bleaching methods.	Materials must be Total Chlorine Free and Elemental Chlorine Free	II. Wood based products: Question 6
	Paper for normal for normal office use must be no more than 75 or 80 g/m2 and made from 100% recovered fibres, with a minimum of 75% post-consumer recycled fibres	<p>Certified FSC® Recycled paper with full chain of custody to final manufacturer or supplier is preferred. Other environmental labels (e.g., EU Ecolabel) are acceptable if it can be demonstrated that it is not possible to supply 100% FSC® Recycled paper.</p> <p>Post-consumer material is material generated by households or by commercial facilities in their role as end users of the product that can no longer be used for its intended purpose. This includes returns of materials from the distribution chain.</p>	
	Paper-based materials for professional purposes must either be made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> From at least 75% recovered paper fibres, with a minimum of 80% post-consumer recycled fibres; or From legal and certified FSC® sources with full chain of custody throughout the supply chain and eligible to carry the appropriate label 	<p>FSC® Recycled paper with full chain of custody to final manufacturer or supplier is preferred. Other schemes such as Type 1 Ecolabels (e.g., Blue Angel or Nordic Swan) or PEFC™ certified are also acceptable if it can be demonstrated that it is not possible to supply 100% FSC® Recycled paper.</p> <p>FSC® (FSC® 100% / Mix) is the recommended standard. Where this is not possible, PEFC™ Certified sources are acceptable.</p> <p>NOTE: Except for reused or recycled sources, due diligence must be carried out to minimise risk of placing illegally harvested wood or wood-based products containing illegally harvested species. Criteria is set out in the section above.</p>	All paper-based materials must be produced without bleaching or non-chlorine bleaching methods.
	Tissue paper (for example kitchen and toilet tissue and hand towels) must have 100% recycled content, to include only genuine recovered fibre		
	Notwithstanding the criteria set out in the 'General Requirements' section above with regards printing services the printer must demonstrate how they intend to minimise the environmental impacts of producing printed material without compromising product quality.	<p>For example, in the case of inks preference should be given water-based or vegetable oil-based inks. Avoid specifying the use of any inks, varnishes or other finishes that may impede future recycling. Seek confirmation that no substances that pose a significant risk to human health and the environment are used.</p> <p>Any claims or declarations must be able to be substantiated by the supplier with independent evidence where appropriate.</p>	

Recommended Criteria		Additional Guidance	RFP Question Reference
	Colour paper should not have pigments or dyes containing heavy metals (e.g., lead, cadmium, hexavalent chromium)		
	Use of varnishes, laminates and metallisation should be avoided wherever possible	Use of laminates, varnishes and metallisation is likely to impede recycling	
	Preference should be given to products which use water-based glues and adhesives which are free of halogenated solvents, glycol ethers, phthalates and formaldehyde		
  	Use of newer technologies which reduce like waterless printing, UV-LED or computer-to-plate (CTP) technologies should be encouraged.		

Cellulosic Items (Including Textile Materials)

Core Criteria		Additional Guidance	RFP Question Reference
 	Cellulosic fibres must only be sourced from producers who have undertaken CanopyStyle Audit with an independent accredited third-party auditor and achieved a low risk ranking in the Canopy Hot Button Report	This indicates that there is a low risk of sourcing from ancient or endangered forests and controversial sources, investment in innovative alternative fibres (e.g., recycled fibres or agricultural residues), traceability and transparency and preference to FSC® fibre sources. Read more about CanopyStyle rankings here – a score of 20+ is considered low risk.	

Recommended Criteria		Additional Guidance	RFP Question Reference
	Preference should be given to sourcing from producers can demonstrate that facilities they use meet minimum environmental and chemical standards and have made a commitment to transition to a more circular manufacturing system or solutions within a 2025-2030 timeframe.	In the case of environmental and chemical compliance evidence may be demonstrated through completion of a MMCF Brand Roundtable Self-Assessment Questionnaire at facility level.	II. Wood based products: Question 8
 	Preference is given to cellulosic products that are made of greater than 50% next generation fibre sources such as recycled textiles, agricultural residues (depending on how they are harvested may include flax, soy, bagasse, and hemp) or microbial cellulose	FSC® certification is required for any alternative feedstocks to timber such as bamboo.	II. Wood based products: Question 7

Note: Wood-based cellulose fibres are a small but growing proportion of the global market share of all fibres and is expected to rise substantially. Recent NGO and media coverage highlight serious environmental and social risks involved in the production of such materials as well as the lack of supply chain transparency.

Appendix: Checking the validity of FSC® and PEFC™ certification of wood and paper products

- Suppliers must be listed as the certificate holder – if they don't have a chain of custody (CoC) certificate, but their supplier does, this is what is known as 'broken chain of custody' which is not compliant with the criteria set out in this Sourcing Fact Sheet.
- The CoC certificate must be valid for the period of supply (NOTE: Generally, CoC certificates are issued for five years).
- Products supplied must be within scope of the CoC certificate and clearly stated on it.

All certified suppliers have a unique certification/code number which can be found on a PDF or hard copy of their certificate or on delivery notes and invoices. The direct supplier must be able to provide the following information:

- Link to their FSC® and/or PEFC™ certificate on the FSC® or PEFC™ database (<https://info.fsc.org/> or <https://www.pefc.org/find-certified>).
- CoC licence number (e.g., FSC-C123456 or PEFC/12-34-56)
- CoC certificate number

