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Southern Center for Sustainable Forests has agreed to coordinate a study of Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) forest certification on its member organization lands in 2001.

This certification project involves the forests managed by the state of North Carolina, DENR Division of Forest Resources, the College of Natural Resources forests at NC State University, and the School of Environment forests at Duke University.

Each Southern Center member institution is undergoing a side-by-side comparison of SFI and FSC certification to assess their application to most of their forests. This project will serve as a means to examine the extension of certification to nonindustrial private forest lands. The project will also include a reverse certification component, which will examine the standards that certifying bodies use. It also will include continuing education for foresters and landowners about forest certification.

***THE SOUTHERN CENTER
FOR SUSTAINABLE
FORESTS***

**North Carolina State University
Duke University
North Carolina
Division of Forest Resources**

The Southern Center for Sustainable Forests was established in 1997 by a Memorandum of Understanding among North Carolina State University, Duke University, and the North Carolina Division of Forest Resources.

The Center was established to provide leadership for research, education, and extension to promote economically and ecologically sustainable management of forests in the South. Leadership for the Center is shared among the three co-directors from each organizing institution.

The Center sponsors and performs projects that involve research, teaching, and outreach regarding the practice of sustainable forest management in the South.

The Southern Center for Sustainable Forests will:

- C Foster research regarding the productivity and sustainability of forest practices on private forests and evaluate the effects of intensive and extensive forestry at the landscape scale.
- C Improve state, regional, and interdisciplinary cooperation in education and technology transfer of existing and new research efforts to students, forestry professionals, and private landowners.
- C Promote open and balanced discussion among interest groups in achieving sustainable forest management.
- C Assist in the development and use of appropriate guidelines for sustainable forestry that incorporate economic and ecological principles.

The Southern Center for Sustainable Forests has sponsored three well attended conferences on enhancing southern forests.

- C An organizing conference was held on July 17, 1997 in High Point, North Carolina. Individuals representing government, nongovernment, academic, and private organizations attended that meeting.
- C A follow-up conference on “Perspectives on Sustainable Forestry for the South” was held on November 12-13, 1998 in Charlotte. Proceedings from that conference are available on the Internet at the Web address of <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/nreos/forest/feop/sustain.html>.
- C On February 4, 2000, The Southern Center sponsored a conference in Raleigh on forest certification, including presentations from the leaders of all four major U.S. certification systems, Forest Stewardship Council, American Forest and Paper Association, American Tree Farm System, and National Forestry Association. Certified forest owners and mill users spoke as well.

The Southern Center for Sustainable Forests served as the unifying organization that performed a major study on the “Economic and Ecologic Effects Associated with Wood Chip Production in North Carolina.” The study was completed in August 2000. The current versions of the wood chip mill study reports are available at the above Southern Center web address of: <http://scsf.env.duke.edu>

The wood chip mill study involved researchers and experts at each of the Southern Center founding organizations, and received advice from a formal advisory board. Results from the wood chip study can foster more informed scientific discussion about the issues associated with wood chip production, environmental protection, and forest management in the South.

The Southern Center also serves as an integrating role for interdisciplinary research conducted by faculty at NC State and Duke Universities. For example, NC State University recently received a federal special grant to enhance productivity and health in hardwood forests through biotechnology, and Duke University is pursuing various projects on enhanced forest soils protection and productivity through the auspices of the Southern Center.