***MENU OF OPTIONS FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF CLIMATE-SMART WOOD***

There are many possible definitions of and classifications for climate-smart wood products. The challenge is magnified by the fact that there is no universally accepted definition of climate-smart forestry. The options for ‘virgin’ wood in this menu are founded on the following core principles:

1. There is not a binary choice between “climate-smart” and “climate-dumb” forestry; rather, there is a spectrum from more to less climate smart.
2. Climate-smart forestry reaches above Business As Usual (BAU) forestry that meets the minimum requirements of law. Because the regulatory baseline is uneven – the forest practice rules of some states/provinces are more stringent and climate smarter than others – this means that what is climate smart in one jurisdiction may be less so in another.
3. Climate-smart forestry improves over BAU on three key dimensions:
   1. Reducing emissions and increasing stores of forest carbon (carbon stored in live and dead vegetation and in soils). The latter is known as “additionality.”
   2. Maintaining or building ecological integrity and diversity that are the bases for resistance and resilience as the climate changes.

Forest practices that result in improvements in one dimension generally produce improvements in the other, but this is not always the case.

1. Recognizing that there is no set definition, the following practices are commonly associated with climate-smart forestry:
   1. Using extended harvest rotations;
   2. Logging selectively under uneven-age management regimes;
   3. When employing even-age management, limiting average harvest sizes and increasing live-tree retention to increase carbon storage and to ensure a diversity of sizes, ages, and native species that make up multiple forest conditions and habitats;
   4. Protecting water quality and aquatic habitatswith wider buffers along streams and around wetlands than are required at the regulatory floor;
   5. Restricting the use of chemicalsand prohibiting those that are particularly hazardous;
   6. Protecting high conservation value forests including but not limited to old growth, and protecting and restoring habitat for imperiled, threatened and endangered species;
   7. Restoration forestry that manages forests toward a more natural and healthy condition.
2. There are additional important factors to consider in procuring wood responsibly that are not reflected above, including but not limited to proximity of the source to the project, choice of species and grades, the efficiency of manufacturing processes, workers’ health and rights, community benefit, and the rights and well-being of Indigenous peoples.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **MENU OPTION** | **NOTES** | **REFERENCES** |
| **Recycled/reclaimed/salvaged wood** | Includes products with pre- or post-consumer recycled content; wood reclaimed from old buildings and other structures; as well as wood salvaged from street trees, lake/river bottoms, or similar sources. Salvage logging after fires, insect infestation, and other natural disturbances is controversial and should not automatically be considered “climate smart.” |  |
| **Certified wood** | Includes products whose contents are 100% from certified forests as well as products where certified and non-certified is mixed in manufacturing. The former may be considered a higher performance standard than the latter.  Also, all forest certification systems are not all equivalent, and none of them incorporate all aspects of climate-smart forestry. Currently, however, FSC is considered by most environmental groups and leaders in the green building movement to be the most rigorous system. |  |
| **Sourcing directly or indirectly from non-certified forest operations that the customer deems climate smart** | While this option lacks the validation provided by third-party certification, those responsible for procurement decisions may identify specific forestry operations that they wish to support. Procuring directly from these operations may be possible under some circumstances but may be difficult or impossible in others depending on the product due to the complexity of wood supply chains. Another option could be to support these operations indirectly by seeking evidence that primary manufacturers (e.g. sawmills) are procuring logs from these operations in sufficient quantities to produce the products in question and within a reasonable timeframe (e.g. 12 months prior to purchase). This strategy could be strengthened by employing an independent auditor to gather this evidence. |  |
| **Supporting climate-smart forestry directly or directly by purchasing carbon offsets credits from registered forest carbon projects** | Wood buyers can support climate-smart forestry operations without procuring wood from them by buying high-quality credits from forest carbon projects practicing improved forest management and/or from brokers who could pool credits in dedicated portfolios. The quantity of credits could be tied to the volume or price of the conventional wood procured for a project. |  |