



## Overview

As consumers become increasingly concerned about environmental issues it is important that the corrugated packaging industry can demonstrate that it sources its raw material in a sustainable manner.

In practice, pulp comes from many sources but industry continues to work to the highest standards of sustainability in both the virgin and recycled sectors.

The Corrugated industry has the opportunity to gain certification for its packaging through the process of 'Chain of Custody', which gives independent verification of the sources of our raw material and the practices employed.

## Chain of Custody

The purpose of a Chain of Custody (COC) system is essentially to demonstrate to your customers that the product you supply comes from a legal and sustainable source

Having COC means:

- Demonstrating where you bought your paper from
- What happened to the paper when you owned it
- To whom did you sell the finished product
- How you record and document the above

## Schemes

Probably the simplest way to do this reliably is to implement a COC process which is recognised by:

## Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)

This scheme appears to be more widely recognised in the UK

- Offices in 46 Countries
- Ca. 118 million hectares of forest in 81 countries are certified as FSC
- Ca. 16,000 companies have FSC Chain of Custody certification

*'FSC – Because Forests and People Matter'*  
[www.fsc.org](http://www.fsc.org)

## Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC)

- 25 national schemes
- >200 million hectares of forest are PEFC certified
- Ca. 6,000 PEFC COC companies

*'Through the endorsement of national certification systems, PEFC motivates and enables people to sustainably manage their forests and works to provide a market for the products of those forests'*  
[www.pefc.org](http://www.pefc.org)

## Conclusion

Both schemes offer the same service and you will need to carry out the same activities to gain both, they are competitive and you cannot print both logos on the same box. However, one box plant can be dual certified and able to offer both products.



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### Obtaining the Standards

For each organisation, there is a standard written for the implementation of COC :

FSC-STD-40-004 v2	Standard for Chain of Custody Certification
PEFC Annex 4	Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products

These can be downloaded from the respective website and there are consultants available who can provide support for any business in obtaining the certifications

### In Practice

In the schemes papers have differing status:

- Certified – can be Kraft or recycled
- Controlled
- Segregated – cannot be included in any FSC or PEFC claimed box

It is important to survey your supply base to ensure that you have sufficient quantities of certified and controlled material available to make the schemes viable for you. Once you know the percentages of papers then you can select which way you want to progress with the project, as there are three ways open to you to obtain certification

- Transfer
- Percentage
- Credit

The schemes operate in a similar way to an ISO scheme with the critical factors being:

- Purchasing
- Goods Receipt, Segregation & Storage
- Data Collection
- Sales Inputs
- Invoicing and delivery paperwork
- Training
- Record Keeping

Once you have everything in place you will be audited by an accredited body and if successful you will be able to print these logos on your packaging:

