

# Defining globally sustainable forest management principles and applying them in practice at the national level

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## **Executive summary of the project**

The project created and officially registered a new organisation, The Association for Ecological Forestry Certification ry (AEFC, see website at <https://aeforest.org>), which has published the world's first international forest management standard principles based on ecological science. The global management principles were then applied to creating national level standards for Estonia, Finland and Sweden. The main component of the new standard is replacing rotation (clearcut) forestry with continuous cover management.

The AEFC forest management standard is unique in recognising and applying scientifically established limits to the level of forest extraction, beyond which we cannot go if we wish to preserve biodiversity, forests as a carbon sink, and numerous non-timber values of natural forests as aside from plantations. The AEFC's management standard is therefore a guarantee of high-level sustainability to forest owners, to the timber industry and to consumers. It has scientific credibility and backing which other systems lack.

As well as global and national level forest management standards the project created a fully independent system of auditing and auditor training, a system of income management based on use of its registered timber trademark EverCover, and held numerous public consultations with forest owners, forestry companies, and the timber industry, some of which are already signed on to the new certification scheme. In November 2025 the AEFC ry opened its first global office in Tampere with a full time CEO and Certification Officer.