

FSC and PEFC Certificates for Wood, Paper and Furniture From India

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FSC and PEFC certify forests and the chain of companies that handle their wood. On Indian goods the certificate that matters is the maker's chain of custody, plus the claim printed on each invoice. This guide shows importers how to check both in a minute and walks an Indian exporter through getting chain-of-custody certified, including the Indian PEFC route for trees outside forests.

The Short Version

- A chain-of-custody certificate covers a company, not a product. The FSC or PEFC claim has to be on the invoice for your order.
- Check the licence code (FSC-C plus six digits) on FSC's public search. No result means the certificate isn't valid today.
- Much Indian furniture wood grows on farms and roadsides, which is why India's PEFC scheme has a trees-outside-forests standard.
- FSC or PEFC is good evidence for EUDR, Lacey, UKTR and Australian due diligence. It doesn't replace any of them.
- Every certified component counts. A certified mango top on an uncertified plywood carcass isn't an FSC table.

When a retail buyer in Europe asks an Indian furniture maker for "FSC", it's usually asking for something the maker doesn't quite have. The maker may well buy from a certified supplier, or have a certificate on the office wall. What the buyer needs is narrower – this table, on this invoice, made by a company whose chain-of-custody certificate is valid today, with the claim printed on the paper. Most disputes we see around FSC from India come from that gap between "we are FSC" and "this order is FSC".



This guide closes it from both ends. Importers get a one-minute check. Exporters get the steps to certify. What FSC and PEFC don't do for timber law (EUDR, Lacey, UKTR and Australia's rules) is in our [timber-legality guide](#), and we won't repeat it here. For other certificates, see [certifications](#).

1. What FSC and PEFC Certify

Both are voluntary schemes. Each runs two kinds of certificate.

Forest management certifies a forest or plantation against the scheme's standard. In India these are few, because most commercial wood comes from farms, roadsides, canal banks and old orchards, not managed forests.

Chain of custody (CoC) certifies a company that buys, processes or sells certified material – a sawmill, a plywood mill, a furniture maker, a paper mill, a trader. It proves the company keeps certified wood separate (or controls

the mix under the scheme's rules) and only sells as certified what it bought as certified. That's the certificate your Indian supplier needs. FSC also runs **Controlled Wood**, a category for uncertified material that may be mixed in, checked against a set of unacceptable sources.

FSC is a single international scheme. PEFC is an umbrella that endorses national schemes. India's is run by the Network for Certification and Conservation of Forests (NCCF). PEFC endorsed the NCCF forest certification system in 2019 and NCCF's separate trees-outside-forests standard in July 2022. NCCF revised its forest standard (national approval 25 March 2025), PEFC ran a public consultation that closed on 12 July 2025, and PEFC's page says the revised system is under assessment for re-endorsement ([PEFC, NCCF](#)). The trees-outside-forests standard is the one that fits Indian reality, because that's where sheesham, mango, acacia and rubberwood grow.

2. Where the Claim Lives

A certificate covers the company. The claim covers the goods. Under both schemes, a certified seller puts the claim and its certificate code on the invoice for the certified goods, for example "FSC Mix 70%" or "FSC 100%", or the PEFC claim. If the invoice doesn't carry the claim, the goods aren't certified as far as the scheme is concerned, whatever the label says.

And every wood part counts. A dining table with an FSC mango top and an uncertified plywood under-frame can't be sold as an FSC table unless the maker's CoC system covers the mix. Plywood and MDF are the parts most often missed, and they're often bought from a third country (see [timber-legality](#)).

3. What an Importer Should Check

Four checks, in this order.

1. **Look up the licence code.** An FSC licence code is "FSC-C" followed by six digits, and it's on the supplier's invoices and labels. Enter it on FSC's public search ([FSC public search](#)). If the search returns nothing, the certificate isn't valid - expired, suspended or terminated - once you've ruled out a typo. FSC's newer tool, [search.fsc.org](#), was in beta in 2026 with the older search still running. For PEFC, use PEFC's own certificate search with the certificate number.
2. **Check the name and the site.** The legal name and address on the certificate should be the factory you're buying from, not a trading company or a sister unit in another town. Many Indian exporters run more than one unit, which is normal. Make sure the certified one is the one making your order.
3. **Check the scope.** The certificate lists product groups and species. "Wooden furniture" in scope doesn't cover paper packaging, and a scope listing only mango doesn't cover acacia.
4. **Check the claim on the invoice.** Claim type, percentage where relevant, and the certificate code. Then pass it on unchanged in your own paper if you're certified, because you're the next link in the chain.

Red flags. A certificate number that leads to a different company. A trader quoting a manufacturer's certificate. A scope that lists species the factory doesn't use and none it does. FSC trademark use on a product label from a company with no trademark licence. "FSC available on request" late in the order. Some of these are paperwork lapses, not fraud. Indian makers often take the certificate in the name of the parent company and forget to add the new unit. But each one means your goods aren't certified until it's fixed.



Species names are a separate trap. Indian line sheets use trade names loosely, and "teak" can be imported West African plantation teak (our forum signals FS-CAT-054 and FS-CAT-055). A certificate doesn't fix a wrong species on the PO. Put the Latin name of every wood part in writing.

4. What to Ask the Supplier For and When

- **Before the sample:** the CoC certificate and licence code, so you can check it before you invest in sampling.
- **At the PO:** the claim you need on the invoice (for example "FSC Mix 70%" or "PEFC 70% certified"), the species of every wood part, and that all wood parts are covered.
- **Before shipping:** the invoice with the claim and code, and the supplier's purchase invoices for the certified wood if your customer asks.
- **Every year:** a fresh check of the certificate, because certificates lapse.

If you're running a range across several Indian workshops and need someone to check each unit's certificate, scope and wood stores on the ground, [SourcingSync](#) does that work at origin.

5. Who Certifies in India

FSC and PEFC don't certify companies themselves. Accredited certification bodies do. For FSC, bodies are accredited by Assurance Services International (ASI), and the FSC search shows which body certified each company. For PEFC in India, certification bodies are accredited to certify against the NCCF scheme and PEFC's chain-of-custody standard. Check the current list on NCCF's and PEFC's sites. We don't recommend any certifier.

6. How an Indian Exporter Gets Chain-of-Custody Certified

Step 1 – Decide FSC, PEFC or both. Ask your buyers which they accept. Many European and UK retailers accept both. For wood bought from farms and roadsides in India, PEFC through NCCF's trees-outside-forests standard can make certified supply easier to find. Time: a conversation with your buyers.

Step 2 – Find certified supply. You can only sell as certified what you buy as certified. Use the FSC and PEFC searches to find certified sawmills, depots, plywood mills or plantations in your species. This is the slowest step for most Indian makers, because certified mango or sheesham supply is thin. Start here, not with the auditor.

Step 3 – Set up your system. Write down how you buy, receive, store, process and invoice certified wood. Name a person responsible. Train the staff in the store and on the shop floor. Choose a control method (transfer,

percentage or credit under FSC, physical separation or percentage under PEFC). Time: one to three months for a single workshop.

Step 4 – Choose a certification body and apply. Pick an accredited body and get a quote (check the current fee with the body). Send your documents, list of sites and product groups.

Step 5 – The audit. The auditor visits, checks your procedures, records, stores and invoicing, and interviews staff. FSC also checks the core labour requirements.

Step 6 – Close the gaps and get certified. Fix the non-conformities within the time the body sets. You get a certificate with your licence code and scope.

Step 7 – Keep it. Expect yearly surveillance audits. Check the validity and renewal terms on your certificate with your body. Add each new unit to the scope before you ship from it. Apply for a trademark licence if you want to put the FSC or PEFC logo on products.

What to send the buyer: the certificate, the licence code, the scope, and for every order an invoice that carries the claim and the code. Keep purchase records for your certified wood ready, because buyers doing EUDR, Lacey or UKTR checks will ask for them.

Common reasons for trouble: buying uncertified wood and selling as certified, invoices with no claim, a new unit not in scope, species on the PO that the scope doesn't list, and logo use without a trademark licence.

7. A Worked Example With Acacia Garden Furniture for Leeds

This example is an illustration built from the rules above, not a real firm.

Say a UK garden retailer wants FSC acacia folding chairs from a maker in Saharanpur. The maker has an FSC CoC certificate from three years ago.



The buyer enters the licence code on FSC's search. The certificate is valid, but the address is the maker's old workshop, and the order would be made at a newer unit five kilometres away. Scope lists acacia and mango, and product group "garden furniture". The maker adds the new unit to the scope with its certification body before production. That's a few weeks, and it's a routine change.

At the PO, the buyer asks for "FSC 100%" on the invoice and for the hardware-mounting blocks, which were in rubberwood, to be certified as well or swapped. The invoice arrives with the claim and the code. The buyer's UKTR due diligence uses the FSC paper as part of its evidence, alongside species and harvest information. The UK rules are in [timber-legality](#), and the full UK checklist is on the [UK page](#).

FAQ

Does FSC mean the wood is legal under EUDR? 

It's evidence for your file. It isn't the due diligence statement. See [EUDR due diligence](#).

Is PEFC from India as good as FSC? 

Can a trader give me FSC? 

What about paper and card packaging? 

Does FSC cover the pallets? 

8. Next Steps

- Timber law by market: [timber-legality rules](#).
- EU deforestation rules on wood and other goods: [EUDR due diligence](#).
- Wooden furniture from India: [the wooden furniture page](#).
- Checking the factory behind the certificate: [how to check an Indian supplier](#).
- All certificates: [certifications](#).