

Glossary of Terms

Biodiversity: The variety of life on earth, different species, genetic variability within species and the variety of ecosystems in which they live.

Boreal forest: One of three main forest zones in the world (see also tropical forest, temperate forest); it is located in northern regions and is characterized by the predominance of conifers.

Certification (forest): Forest certification is a market-based instrument aimed at promoting sustainable forest management that takes into account environmental, economic and social issues. It involves the independent assessment of forest management according to internationally (or nationally) accepted standards, and the tracking and monitoring of the supply of forest products to the marketplace. If the forest management is in compliance with a set of specified standards, and the timber from this forest has been tracked and accounted for through all stages of the production process, then it can be given a label which is recognized in the marketplace.

Coniferous: Refers to a forest stand or category of trees or bush that is popularly called “evergreen.” Cone-bearing trees with needles or scale-like leaves. The wood of conifers is commercially known as “softwood.”

Deciduous: Perennial plants which are normally leafless for some time during the year.

Deforestation: Clearing an area of forest for another long-term use.

Ecosystem: An interdependent system of living organisms and their physical and geographic environment.

Forest fire: Any wildfire or prescribed burn that is burning in forest, grass, alpine or tundra vegetation types.

Forester: A person trained in forest management usually with a university degree in forestry science.

Habitat: The arrangement of food, water, shelter and space suitable for species survival.

Hardwood(s): Trees with leaves and that are found primarily in a deciduous forest. Trees that lose their leaves in autumn; broad leafed species such as oak, alder or maple.

Harvesting: The practice of felling and removing trees or the removal of dead or damaged trees from an area.

Prescribed burning: The knowledgeable application of fire to a specific unit of land to meet predetermined resource management objectives.

Reforestation: The reestablishment of trees on denuded forest land by natural or artificial means, such as planting and seeding.

Regeneration: The continuous renewal of a forest stand. Natural regeneration occurs gradually with seeds from adjacent stands or with seeds brought in by wind, birds, or animals. Artificial regeneration involves direct seeding or planting.

Renewable: Something that can be used again or replaced. Trees are a renewable resource because they can be easily regrown.

Riparian Zone: An area of land adjacent to a stream, river, lake or wetland that contains vegetation that, due to the presence of water, is distinctly different from the vegetation of adjacent upland areas.

Second growth: A forest or stand that has grown up naturally after removal of a previous stand by fire, harvesting, insect attack or other cause.

Silviculture: The science and art of the cultivation of forests; the growing and tending of trees. (e.g. planting and seeding) and intensive silviculture (e.g. site rehabilitation, spacing, and fertilization).

Softwood(s): Cone-bearing trees with needle or scale-like leaves such as Douglas-fir, western red cedar and Ponderosa pine. Softwoods are the predominant tree type in coniferous forests.

Stand: A community of trees possessing sufficient uniformity in composition, age, arrangement, or condition to be distinguishable from the forest or other growth on adjoining areas, thus forming a silvicultural or management entity.

Sustainable forest management: Management that maintains and enhances the long-term health of forest ecosystems for the benefit of all living things while providing environmental, economic, social and cultural opportunities for present and future generations.

Traditional ecological knowledge: Ecological information and knowledge, handed down from generation to generation through beliefs, legends and stories, particularly among Aboriginal peoples.

Urban forestry: The cultivation and management of trees and forests for their present and potential contributions to the physiological, sociological and economic well-being of urban society.

Wetland: A swamp, marsh or other similar area that supports natural vegetation that is distinct from adjacent upland areas.