



# STRATEGIES TO REDUCE DEFORESTATION GUIDE



# INTRODUCTION

Businesses are a significant consumer of wood and paper products. Globally, over 40% of wood pulp is used to produce paper, with 300 million tonnes of paper produced annually. The average office worker uses dozens of sheets daily, and up to 70% of office waste is paper, much of which is discarded unused. The pulp and paper industry alone consumes millions of tonnes of wood each year, and demand is projected to rise.

This extensive use of forest resources highlights the vital importance of reducing deforestation and forest degradation (the decline in a forest's health), not only in direct operations but throughout supply chains. Forest loss drives climate change, biodiversity loss, and social disruption, making it imperative for businesses to act decisively to eliminate deforestation from their operations and sourcing.

## ASSESSING CURRENT IMPACT

Begin by understanding and assessing your organisation's potential role in deforestation and forest degradation by mapping any paper or wood products used, produced, or procured by your business. This may include items such as:

- **Paper and card** (including office paper, business cards, brochures and other printed materials)
- **Packaging** (boxes, cartons, protective inserts etc.)
- **Wooden crates, barrels, pallets or boxes**
- **Office furniture** (desks, shelving, chairs, kitchen cabinets etc.)
- **Wooden products** such as timber, plywood, flooring, decking, musical instruments, award plaques, sports equipment, small household items, etc.

### Additional points to consider:

- Think about products used by your **suppliers** (e.g., packaging for raw materials, promotional items, or retail displays) as well as those you purchase directly.
- Some **agricultural products**, including soy, palm oil, cocoa, coffee, and beef, are also heavily linked to deforestation. Assess whether these are part of your product lines, ingredients, or supply chain.
- Products such as **rubber, resins**, or certain **oils** are harvested from forests and may contribute to degradation if not sustainably sourced.



# WHERE TO START

## DEFORESTATION POLICY

Develop and implement a robust, company-wide policy on deforestation, approved by the board and embedded into management systems. This could form part of an environmental policy, a sustainable procurement policy, or be stand-alone.

A clear, measurable commitment is vital. Align your deforestation goals with recognised global standards, such as:

- **Zero Deforestation:** Committing to a target of zero deforestation in direct operations and supply chain.
- **Forest Conservation:** Promoting sustainable land-use practices, like reforestation, agroforestry, and forest restoration.
- **Sustainable Sourcing:** Committing to sourcing raw materials from certified sustainable and deforestation-free sources (e.g., FSC-certified timber, RSPO-certified palm oil).

Your policy should include details of any assessments carried out to identify deforestation risks or hot spots, defining clear action plans with timelines, and establishing procedures for non-compliance by suppliers.

## SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

Set up transparent systems to monitor supply chains, including independent reviews and chain-of-custody tracking for high-risk commodities.

Tracing materials back through complex supply chains can be highly challenging due to factors such as limited transparency, lack of documentation, and multi-tier, fragmented supply chains. These challenges highlight the importance of building systems that support incremental improvements in traceability while maintaining accountability.

Ensure that suppliers understand and commit to responsible sourcing practices by introducing a Supplier Code of Conduct that clearly sets out your expectations and goals.

💡 If you'd like to find out more about our Supply Chain Audit tool, *FutureConnect*, get in touch with the team: [info@future-plus.co.uk](mailto:info@future-plus.co.uk). Or contact your FuturePlus Advisor for more information.



# STRATEGIES FOR POSITIVE IMPACT

## LOW IMPACT

For businesses with minimal direct impact on deforestation, e.g. IT firms, service providers, consultancies, retail businesses not selling wood/paper products, etc.:

- **Reduce office paper use:** Digitise your processes, encourage double-sided printing, and use recycled or FSC-certified paper.
- **Sustainable procurement:** Choose office supplies and packaging from certified sustainable sources (e.g., FSC-certified).
- **Waste reduction:** Implement recycling programs and educate employees on responsible paper and packaging use.
- **Supplier engagement:** Audit suppliers on their sourcing practices and support those who have adopted deforestation-free standards.
- **Support Reforestation:** Invest in or support well-researched and/or local reforestation projects and environmental NGOs.

## HIGHER IMPACT

For businesses with a larger, direct impact, e.g. agriculture (soy, palm oil, beef), construction, pulp and paper, timber, packaging, food manufacturing, large-scale retailers, etc.:

- **Sustainable sourcing policies:** Prioritise suppliers with deforestation-free certifications and set strict guidelines for procurement.
- **Traceability and monitoring:** Use technology (e.g., blockchain, geospatial monitoring etc.) to track raw materials, chain of custody, and to verify compliance.
- **Supplier accountability:** Conduct regular audits, require supplier compliance with sustainability standards, and enforce penalties for violations.
- **Carry out risk assessments:** Map supply chains, identify deforestation hotspots, and implement targeted interventions.
- **Public reporting:** Transparently disclose progress on deforestation reduction to stakeholders, including supply chain transparency and corrective actions.



# PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY

## FSC CERTIFICATION

FSC - the [Forest Stewardship Council](#) - is a non-profit organisation providing solutions to help protect the world's forests and tackle deforestation, climate change, and biodiversity challenges. Over 150 million hectares of forest worldwide is certified according to FSC standards, designed to address a broad range of environmental, social, and economic factors.

The FSC offers a range of sustainable sourcing solutions and certifications for businesses that support responsible forestry, including manufacturers, retailers, architects, builders, artists, project developers and forest managers. Find out more [here](#).

## RAINFOREST ALLIANCE

The [Rainforest Alliance](#) is an international NGO working in 62 countries to promote more sustainable land management practices while cultivating thriving rural economies.

Founded in 1987, the Rainforest Alliance works at the intersection of business, agriculture, and forests to drive systemic change by certifying sustainable agricultural practices, promoting supply chain transparency, supporting forest and community conservation projects. Find out more [here](#).

## UN SDG 15, LIFE ON LAND

United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 15 (UN SDG 15), [Life on Land](#), encourages businesses to develop a holistic strategy that reflects a commitment to protecting biodiversity, terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems.

## NEED MORE HELP?

For further assistance please contact: [info@future-plus.co.uk](mailto:info@future-plus.co.uk)

