

# Advocacy in Action

## CHAMBER ADVOCACY EFFORTS ENSURE GOVERNMENT PAPER PURCHASING POLICY FAIRER FOR ALL

The Province of Ontario has amended its paper purchasing policy to provide a fairer policy for forestry companies. The Timmins Chamber of Commerce advocated for these changes and the Ontario government has addressed our concerns. The amended procurement policy requires 100% of all virgin bulk paper purchased by Ontario government ministries and select agencies be sourced from companies certified by *any one* of three internationally recognized *certification standards*: Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) or the Canadian Standards Association (CSA), with at least 30% of all virgin bulk paper acquired being FSC certified. In its original form, the paper purchasing policy gave exclusive preference to FSC-certified companies.

### Background

In 2004, David Ramsay, then Minister of Natural Resources (MNR), announced that by the end of 2007, all Ontario forest companies operating under sustainable forest licenses would require third party certification, verifying that the company uses sustainable forest management processes. Under these new rules, certification could be completed by any one of any of three internationally recognized certification processes: FSC, SFI or CSA.

In 2007, nearing the time by which companies were required to have completed certification, the Ministry of Government Services (the ministry responsible for purchasing goods used by the Ontario government) announced a paper procurement policy that would give preference to one certification standard (FSC) over the other two. The policy stated that 30% of all paper purchased by the Ontario government must come from FSC-certified companies only, increasing to 50% by 2012. Not only was this policy a direct contradiction to the policy of the Ministry of Natural Resources, it also insinuated that the SFI or CSA certification processes were somehow inferior, or did not result in sustainable forestry practices.

The Timmins Chamber of Commerce, supported by the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, called on the Ontario government to amend the contradictory procurement policy, recommending instead that the government adopt a policy requiring paper be supplied from forests certified by any one of the three standards previously endorsed by the MNR.

To view the original policy, visit [www.timminschamber.on.ca/policies.htm](http://www.timminschamber.on.ca/policies.htm).

### TIMELINE

**2004** – David Ramsay, then Minister of Natural Resources, announces that by 2007, all companies operating under sustainable forest licenses require third party sustainability certification through one of SFI, CSA or FSC standards.

**2007** – Ministry of Government Services (MGS) announces a paper procurement policy requiring 30% of all paper purchased by the Ontario government come from FSC-certified companies. Government announces plans to increase this proportion from 30% to 50% by 2012.

**OCTOBER 22, 2007** – Timmins Chamber takes position that the MGS procurement policy implies that the other two certification processes already approved by the Ontario MNR are somehow inferior to FSC. Letter sent to Minister of Government Services Gerry Phillips, Ministry of Natural Resources and other ministries asking for clarification of their rationale and recommending amendments to the paper procurement policy.

**NOVEMBER 16, 2007** – Issue raised during meeting with Minister of Natural Resources, Donna Cansfield.

**NOVEMBER 7, 2007** – Issue presented to MGS and Small Business Agency of Ontario.

**NOVEMBER 22, 2007** – Formal policy statement developed asking provincial government to amend paper procurement policy.

**FEBRUARY 5, 2008** – Issue raised in meeting with Michael Gravelle, Minister of Northern Development and Mines.

**FEBRUARY 22, 2008** – Letter outlining issue sent to former MNR Minister David Ramsay and new Minister of Government and Consumer Services, Ted McMeekin.

**MAY 3, 2008** – Timmins Chamber submitted paper procurement policy to the Ontario Chamber of Commerce who agreed to support it and lobby government with us.

**JUNE 12, 2008** – Issue raised at a meeting with Deputy Ministers by then Chamber President Marilyn Wood.

**AUGUST 2008** - Government of Ontario announces amended policy: MGS will implement new procurement policy, requiring 100% of all virgin bulk paper purchased by Ontario government ministries to be certified by one of FSC, the SFI or the CSA standards, with at least 30% of all virgin bulk paper acquired being FSC certified.

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