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## **LONG DESERVED RECOGNITION OF AN AUSTRALIAN STANDARD IN SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT BY GBCA**

The Green Building Council today has finalised the highly controversial issue that has been in debate for over three years. The recognition of the Australian Forest Certification Scheme that is underpinned by two Australian Standards for forestry and chain of custody of wood and wood products, AS 4708 and AS 4707..

The AFSL greatly appreciates the initiative taken by the Primary Industries Ministerial Council and the Minister of Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Tony Burke, following the demands from industry stakeholders and the CFMEU to review the release of the first draft of the GBCA MAT-8 Timber criteria assessment framework, that was restrictive and prescriptive and help bring on this positive outcome.

Ninety percent of the Australian production forests are certified under the Australian Standard, this recognition will provide the construction industry with abundant certified supply of locally produced and processed timber for Green Star projects.

### **Australian Forestry Standard Limited (AFSL) is an accredited Standards Development Organisation (SDO).**

AFSL is accredited by the Accreditation Board for Standards Development Organisations (ABSDO) to produce internationally aligned Australian Standards®. Accreditation ensures Australian Standards retain the quality inherent in the rigorous, transparent and internationally aligned development process.

The company owns the standards development functions and manages the elements of the **Australian Forest Certification Scheme (AFCS).**

Mr Geoff Gorrie, AFSL Chairperson, said, The supply of Australian wood products certified under the AFCS is plentiful and high quality and its greater use in the Green Star program provides a direct stimulus for the Australian economy.

There is no stricter process for the development of a forestry certification scheme than one that is based on an Australian Standard says Kayt Watts, CEO AFSL. It is not only credible it fully meets the criteria of chain of custody; governance; standards development and revision; auditing and certification decisions; and verification of legality.

The next step is to work closely with the GBCA to ensure that the process for assessment adheres to the high levels of Governance that the AFSL, public and industry stakeholders expect.

## NOTES

**Australian Forestry Standard** Limited is a Standards Development Organisation and a not-for-profit public company registered in July 2003. The company owns the standard development functions and manages the elements of the **Australian Forest Certification Scheme**. The Australian Forest Certification Scheme (AFCS) will:

- provide Australian and overseas consumers with an independent, internationally recognised third-party certification scheme for forest management in Australia
- promote a culture of 'continuous improvement' of the sustainable forest management practices in Australia
- support a market for forest products that are a result of sustainable forest management practices and value adding processes that maintain the integrity of the source forest certification and promote the broader environmental benefits of using wood-based
- products.

**PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes)** PEFC is a framework for the mutual recognition of credible national or regional forest certification schemes that have been developed based on internationally recognised requirements for sustainable forest management. Since its launch in 1999, PEFC has become the largest forest certification umbrella organisation covering national schemes from all over the world, delivering hundreds of millions of tonnes of wood to the processing industry and then on to the market place from over 200 million hectares of certified forests. PEFC has strong grass roots support from many stakeholders including the forestry sector, governments, trade associations, trade unions and non-governmental organisations.

**Forest Certification** Forest certification is a process, which provides an assurance mechanism to purchasers of wood and paper products that the wood used in the products comes from sustainably managed forests. Sustainably managed forests are those whose management implements performance standards based on internationally agreed environmental, social and economic requirements.

## MEDIA CONTACTS

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