

New CEO for Australian Forestry Standard Limited

The new Chief Executive Officer of Australian Forestry Standard Limited is on a mission to help consumers and industry better understand what forestry management and chain of custody certification means and provides assurance that the forest and wood products they are buying come from forests managed to the highest possible standards.

‘Without standards the rape and pillaging of our forests will continue,’ says CEO Kayt Watts, who brings to her new role a wealth of experience that positions her to educate individuals and organisations about the importance of the forest industry certification schemes.

‘It’s not lack of commitment, but awareness that partly enables illegal logging and suspect trading of wood and wood products to continue. We must all get on board to protect this valuable resource. It’s a global responsibility, but one that starts here at home,’ says Ms Watts.

The robust Australian Forestry Standard is the only standard recognised by Standards Australia. It is the leading management standard of the Australian Forestry Certification Scheme, which certifies extensive areas of native forests and plantations and the traceability of this raw source.

‘Developing the standard was no mean feat,’ says Ms Watts, ‘but essential for aligning Australia with international consensus that forestry certification is the pre-eminent way to manage forests and the trace of all wood and wood products. Now that the Standard is set it’s time to ensure Australia benefits from this progress and remains true to its commitment to best practice forestry management. This country also needs confidence that wood products when exported or imported are recognised under the world’s largest certification system—PEFC, which stands for the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes.’

As a member, the Australian Forestry Standard Limited last month hosted PEFC’s International Council. ‘PEFC is the umbrella scheme for 25 countries that have their own standards and certification schemes—countries that believe in forest certification as an international priority,’ says Ms Watts. ‘With traceability through chain of custody certification we can identify products, where they come from and where they go. This is a mammoth step in stopping illegal logging and suspect trading of wood and wood products.’

Wood and wood products produced by an Australian Forestry Standard-certified organisation, and recognised by PEFC, are major advocates for sustainable forest management worldwide. ‘In these time of Climate Control and Carbon deposits every organisation and every individual should be contributing to the proper management of our environment and protecting our future by counteracting today’s problems. Every little bit counts,’ says Ms Watts.

MEDIA CONTACTS

Geoff Gorrie – Chair, Australian Forestry Standard Limited – 0419 628 873

Kayt Watts – CEO, Australian Forestry Standard Limited – 0400 140 303

Email: media@forestrystandard.org.au

Bio information—Kayt Watts

Kayt Watts was born in Melbourne, Australia, and has extensive expertise in management systems, information frameworks and communications. She left the IT professional services industry to join Australian Forestry Standard.

From 2002 to 2005, in her role as Executive Director of the Australian Institute of Building (AIB), Ms Watts gained respect for the valuable role industry not-for-profit organisations play, particularly in influencing national positions. During this time, she was closely involved with the Australian Building Codes Board through its Industry Liaison Committee, (Building Regulations Reform), the Australian Construction Industry Forum (ACIF) and as a Member on the National Building and Surveying Alliance and the Built Environment. Ms Watts was also Chairperson for the Year of the Built Environment 2004 Exemplars Program—for its inaugural Exemplar awards in the Built Environment—and was a committee member on the *Australasian Journal of Construction Economics and Building Committee*, an international recognised industry collaborative publication.

Following her time at AIB, Ms Watts became an independent consultant working as a Senior Business Analysts and Project Manager on major complex IT projects for the federal government for three years; including consulting for three months on a major Defence project

Ms Watts is completing her Masters in Management (Information Technology), Charles Sturt University, having already achieved her Graduate Diploma in Management and her Diploma in Project Management. She is a certified practitioner in ITIL Service Management, PMBoK and Prince2 project management frameworks.

In 1997 Ms Watts was a finalist in the Telstra and ACT Government Small Business Awards for Entrepreneur of the Year and in 1998 a finalist in the Telstra ACT Business Women of the Year. She has studied overseas and travelled widely.