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## AUSTRALIAN FOREST MANAGEMENT AND CHAIN OF CUSTODY STANDARD GLOBAL RECOGNITION CONTINUES.

### PEFC International announces re-endorsement of Australian Forest Certification Scheme (AFCS)

With the re-endorsement of Australian Forest Certification Scheme (AFCS), nearly half of all national certification standards have successfully completed the revision of their criteria and continue to meet the organisation's strict international Sustainability Benchmark requirements.

PEFC International requires all national schemes to revise their standard every five years to allow for the adaption of the most recent scientific information and to encourage continuous dialogue with national and regional stakeholders.

"We congratulate AFCS for successfully completing the rigorous third-party assessment by FORM International and for achieving re-endorsement by PEFC ", said Ben Gunneberg, PEFC Secretary General. "With almost 9 million hectares of forest certified to AFCS, we are glad to see that the scheme continues to be aligned with the world's largest best practice standard for forest certification."

"Compliance with PEFC is of utmost importance to us as it confirms the high quality of our forest management practices", commented Kayt Watts, CEO of AFS Limited, the organization that manages the Australian standard. "It is the contributions and engagement by stakeholders and the work of AFSL staff that made this re-endorsement possible. We will continue to proactively seek dialogue with and involvement from all interested parties to ensure that the standard meets the expectations of all Australians and positively contributes to sustainable development globally."

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## 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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