



PEFC - Promoting Sustainable Forest Management

PEFC Council

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PEFC invites comments on Australian forest certification scheme assessment

The PEFC Council is currently assessing the Australian Forest Certification Scheme (AFCS) for re-endorsement and invites all stakeholders to comment on the scheme.

“Public consultation is an essential element in our governance structure, ensuring transparency and stakeholder participation”, says Ben Gunneberg, Secretary General of the PEFC Council. “It is part of our third-party assessment process, which provides us with an objective assurance that all PEFC requirements are met.”

“It is very reassuring to AFS Limited and to the organisations utilising the Australian Forest Certification Scheme that PEFC’s verification of the scheme is undertaken by an independent, third party assessor. AFS Limited believes it has sound systems that are well based in procedural integrity and credibility for demonstrating compliance with the PEFC’s requirements”, says Geoff Gorrie, Chair of AFS Limited.

The global consultation, which lasts for 60 days, follows a series of public consultation on national levels. All comments received will be taken into account by the assessor and included in his report. The next step in the process is a review by an independent Panel of Experts before PEFC decides on the re-endorsement of the scheme.

The final assessment report will be made available on the PEFC website.

The AFCS was initially endorsed by PEFC in 2004, and all endorsed national schemes need to be re-endorsed every five years. The re-endorsement is required to ensure that latest scientific research, new PEFC requirements and practical experience from the field are systematically implemented at national, regional and local level.

Please submit your comments directly to the assessor latest by 23 September 2008.

press release

ASSESSOR

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Editors Notes

PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes)

PEFC is a framework for the assessment and endorsement of national forest certification systems 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 systems from all over the world, delivering hundreds of millions of tonnes of wood to the processing industry and then onto the market place from currently more than 200 million hectares of certified forests. This is an area which is larger than the combined forest area of all European Union member states. 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 to purchasers of wood and paper products that the wood used in the products comes from sustainably managed forest. It involves the certification of forests (Sustainable Forest Management certification) and the certification of the wood flow via processing, manufacturing and trading enterprises (Chain of Custody certification) to the final consumer.