

Australian Standard[®]

The Australian Forestry Standard



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 - Australian Council of Trade Unions
 - Australian Forest Contractors Association Limited
 - Australian Forest Growers
 - Australian Plantation Products and Paper Industry Council
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 - Furnishing Industry Association of Australia (WA) Inc
 - Independent Environmental Scientist
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 - Institute of Foresters of Australia Inc
 - National Association of Forest Industries
 - Natural Resource Policies and Programs Committee (of the Natural Resource Management Standing Committee)
 - The Ecological Society of Australia Inc
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Standards Australia wishes to acknowledge the participation of the expert individuals that contributed to the development of this Standard through their representation on the Committee.

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Australian Standard[®]

**Forest management—Economic, social,
environmental and cultural criteria and
requirements for wood production**

(known as The Australian Forestry Standard)

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PREFACE

This Standard was prepared by the Australian Forestry Standard Technical Reference Committee. This committee is a technical committee under the accredited Standards Development Organisation—Australian Forestry Standard Limited.

The objective of the Australian Forestry Standard is to provide forest managers and owners with economic, social, environmental and cultural criteria and requirements that support the sustainable management of forests for wood production.

It is intended for voluntary application to any forests in Australia being managed for wood production, whether native or planted forests. It will be utilised by forest owners and managers who are seeking independent, third-party certification of their forest management in response to market demands from the purchasers of their wood. Its application will assist in both protecting traditional domestic markets, and promoting access to international markets and expansion of exports for Australian timber and timber products from certified forests. It will also support and strengthen the framework of policy and regulation that delivers improved economic, social, environmental and cultural outcomes from well-managed forests.

Independent, third-party certification against the Australian Forestry Standard provides a clear and unambiguous statement that wood production in a particular defined forest area was managed in accordance with a set of predetermined and clearly defined environmental, economic, social and cultural performance requirements that support sustainable management of forests.

The Australian Forestry Standard may be used either by itself or in conjunction with AS/NZS ISO 14001:2004 *Environmental Management Systems - Requirements with guidance for use*.

The Australian Forestry Standard also draws upon the Montreal Process Implementation Group framework for regional criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management in Australia.

The supplements 1, 2 and 3 to the Australian Forestry Standard, available separately, have been prepared to give guidance for—

1. Medium and large native forest ownerships.
2. Medium and large plantation ownerships.
3. Small native forest and plantation ownerships.

The term *informative* has been used in this Standard to define the application of the appendices and supplements to which they apply. An *informative* appendix or supplement is for information and guidance only.

In this Standard, unless the contrary intention appears the singular includes the plural and vice versa.

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STANDARDS AUSTRALIA

AUSTRALIAN STANDARD

Forest management—Economic, social, environmental and cultural criteria and requirements for wood production

(known as The Australian Forestry Standard)

Introduction

Buyers of timber, in common with buyers of other goods such as food and clothing, are becoming more interested in where the product they buy comes from, and how it has been produced. In order to satisfy this interest, timber producers have begun to investigate various forms of labelling and the use of systems of independent certification of forest management.

All those approaches for the provision of useful and reassuring information to consumers pre-suppose that there be a set of criteria that the producers and/or the forest product are required to meet in order to qualify for a label or a certificate.

In the case of timber, these criteria relate to the forest management practices employed in the growing and harvesting of the trees from which the wood products are sourced. Sometimes the processes that the timber has subsequently undergone will also be examined.

The principal reassurance that consumers (or retailers) are seeking is that the forests supplying particular wood products are being well-managed. The quality of forest management is sometimes summarised by saying that a forest is (or is not) being **sustainably** managed.

The Australian Forestry Standard seeks to distil from community values and the science of forest management those economic, social, environmental and indigenous criteria that are considered to be most important for ensuring that a forest is well-managed. It is intended that the AFS be used by accredited and independent third-party certification bodies and that it embodies forest management performance criteria that support continual improvement toward sustainable wood production in Australia. The Standard is based on internationally agreed criteria and reflects broad multi-stakeholder support. It is intended for voluntary application and will assist to promote access to both domestic and international markets for timber from certified forests. It is applicable to all forests managed for wood production, regardless of type and scale of ownership, or forest type, whether natural or planted forest.

What is a Standard

Standards are accepted specifications that define materials, methods, processes and practices that, when effectively implemented, ensure consistent and acceptable levels of quality, performance, safety and reliability are achieved. Certification of forest management provides an assurance that the quality of the forest management practised conforms to a specified standard. Standards are voluntary compliance documents that only become mandatory if called up through legislation or contractual obligation.

The Australian Forestry Standard (AFS) is a nationally endorsed Australian Standard developed within the recognised international frameworks of the Montreal Process Criteria and Indicators (1995) and the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) 14000 series of international, voluntary environmental management Standards, but which takes account of local operating conditions.