MEDIA RELEASE

FSC Australia response to Forestry Tasmania audit result

Encourages forest manager to continue certification pursuit

Australia 1 March 2016: An independent audit of Forestry Tasmania against the FSC’s Forest Management standards by SCS Global services has been publicly released. The report’s release follows more than twelve months of additional evidence collection and evaluation by the independent auditor and Forestry Tasmania.

The audit identified major areas for improvement in forest management practices in order to achieve the FSC’s top-flight certification.

The FSC’s green tree ‘tick’ logo has become the most highly sought after seal of approval for manufacturers and forest managers in Australia. The logo can’t be bought and must be earned through independent auditing against FSC standards.

Forestry Tasmania’s desire to achieve certification reflects supply chain demands that are driving non-FSC certified natural and plantation forest managers to gain certification in order to access the growing environmentally conscious markets both locally and internationally. Forestry Tasmania’s commitment to continue also demonstrates that FSC certification is not only rigorous, but achievable.

While Forestry Tasmania has not achieved certification in its first attempt, FSC Australia CEO Adam Beaumont said the state-owned forest manager had now been provided with a detailed roadmap for improvement.

“It’s rare that forest managers the size and complexity of Forestry Tasmania achieve full forest management certification on their first attempt. This is reflected in the length of the process to date” Beaumont said. “But by putting their operations under the microscope of independent auditors they now know what’s required to meet the standard. This is really a great example of the FSC system at work.”

“Forestry Tasmania should be commended for their commitment to improving their forestry practices in line with the FSC’s rigorous standards, while other natural and plantation forest managers around Australia are yet to even begin their FSC journey.”

In Australia, 14 forest managers have successfully achieved voluntary full FSC certification. Vic Forests and the WA Forest Products Commission are the only other state-owned forest managers that have publicly committed to pursue FSC certification.

Beaumont said despite Forestry Tasmania already holding Australian Forestry Standard (AFS) and Program for Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes (PEFC) approval, the audit result highlighted FSC’s member-driven standards remained the most stringent in the industry.

FSC certification is carried out by independent auditors that are internationally monitored and accredited by Accreditation Services International (ASI). FSC Australia is not involved in decisions about who receives FSC certification or in the appointment of auditors.
MEDIA RELEASE

FSC Australia response to Forestry Tasmania audit result

Encourages forest manager to continue certification pursuit

Stakeholder feedback vital to the FSC system

Every FSC certified forest around the world is audited yearly to check it meets the FSC’s rigorous standards and stakeholder feedback is being actioned appropriately. However, between these periods it is vital that stakeholders continue to report their feedback.

The ability for stakeholders to have a real impact on how forests are managed is what sets the FSC apart from other standards and the key reason why it has been successful in driving change in forest management both in Australia but also around the world.

"Meaningful stakeholder engagement is core to FSC’s approach to certification" Beaumont said. “We actively encourage forest managers and community members to talk to and respect each other.”

For the system to work effectively, it is critical that the stakeholders with eyes and ears on the ground continue to provide detailed information to forest managers and independent auditors.

-ENDS-

Media enquiries:

Adam Beaumont – 0435 072 672 / a.beaumont@au.fsc.org

Notes to producers/editors

- For information regarding the auditor’s findings and the 10 major non-conformances please contact Forestry Tasmania or download a copy of the certification reports from their website.

- For information regarding the auditor’s process and assessment, please contact Robert Hrubes at SCS Global Services – www.scsglobalservices.com

- Forestry Tasmania sought full forest management certification.

- A ‘non-conformance’ is where an independent auditor identifies that a forest manager hasn’t met FSC’s standard. A major non-conformance is where the issue is systematic, repeated or is likely to result in one of FSC’s Criteria not being met. A minor non-conformance is where the issue is temporary, unusual or doesn’t result in a FSC Criteria not being met.

- There are two different levels of assessment in the FSC System: (a) Full Forest Management and (b) Controlled Wood

- Full Forest Management certification is based on FSC’s 10 Principles and Criteria that sets the rules
MEDIA RELEASE
FSC Australia response to Forestry Tasmania audit result
Encourages forest manager to continue certification pursuit

of environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial and economically viable forest management.

- **Controlled Wood** ensures the avoidance of wood in FSC Certified products that come from unacceptable sources such as:
  - Illegally harvested wood
  - Wood harvested in violation of traditional and civil rights
  - Wood harvested from forests where High Conservation Values are threatened
  - Wood harvested from forests being converted to plantations or non-forest uses
  - Wood from forests in which genetically modified trees are planted

- No claims of ‘FSC Controlled Wood’ are allowed for promotional purposes and no labelling is allowed for products sold as ‘FSC Controlled Wood’. FSC certified processors and manufacturers can only mix ‘FSC Controlled Wood’ into products containing FSC certified or recycled sources under specified conditions. These products can be labelled ‘FSC Mix’.

**About FSC Australia:**

- **FSC Australia** is a registered charity and national office of an international non-government, non-profit organisation that promotes responsible forest management practices through multi-stakeholder standard setting and an internationally-recognised certification labelling program.
- FSC certification assessments are carried out by accredited certification bodies, such as SCS, SGS, Soil Association, that are internationally qualified and managed by Accreditation Services International (ASI).
- FSC Australia is not involved in decisions about who receives FSC certification or which independent auditor undertakes the certification – we are the guardian of the scheme and organise the membership to set the standards.
- In Australia 1.25 m hectares of forests have been certified to full FSC Forest Management standards.
- Globally the FSC has certified more than 187 million hectares of natural and plantation forests in more than 80 countries with just over 1,350 certified forest managers. See FSC International's website ([fsc.org](http://fsc.org)) for more facts and figures.
- Natural forest dominates the FSC-certified forest area at 65 percent, while plantations make up just 8.2 percent of the global FSC certified area.
- FSC Australia has tasked nine representatives from economic, environmental and social backgrounds with developing the first unique set of Australian owned forestry standards. The second rounds of stakeholder consultation and expert input is currently underway. More [info](#) here.