Introduction - The Rainforest Alliance is conducting the FSC forest management and chain of custody Annual Audit of Australian Blue Gum Plantations Pty Ltd. (ABP) in June 2014. The forest area under the scope of this certificate (RA-FM/CoC – 001327) is located across the border between Victoria and South Australia (Green Triangle) and in the southwest of Western Australia, with a total area of 134,168 hectares.

At this Annual Audit 2014, the audit team will visit a sample of sites in Victoria, Western Australia and South Australia from the 10 to the 12 of June of 2014 inclusive.

Scope of the Annual Audit 2014 – The forest management certification audit will assess the environmental, silvicultural and socioeconomic aspects of the forests and plantations managed by Australian Blue Gum Plantations, using the Rainforest Alliance Interim Standard for Assessing Forest Management in Australia (version June 2008) and FM-35 Rainforest Alliance Chain-of-Custody Standard for Forest Management Enterprises (FMEs) February 2009. To obtain a copy of the applicable guidelines or to make comments about these standards, please contact Rainforest Alliance by telephone, email or website listed below. Please note that the standard may be modified to take account of stakeholder comments. Rainforest Alliance is accredited by the Forest Stewardship Council™ (FSC®) and this assessment process must follow procedures which have been approved by the FSC.

The forest under evaluation contains areas either identified as High Conservation Value Forests or where high conservation values, as defined by the FSC, are likely found. In particular, belonging to the Forest areas that are in or contain rare, threatened or endangered ecosystems (HCV3), and forest areas critical to local communities’ traditional cultural identity (areas of cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance identified in cooperation with such local communities) (HCV6). Rainforest Alliance evaluates the identification, management and protection of these High Conservation Values and solicits related comments from stakeholders.

Audit Team Composition - The audit team will be led by Addis Tsehaye, and include Chisato Tomimura, Dave Harrison and Tuesday Phelan.
**Audit Steps and Schedule** – Following is a short description of the certification process and a tentative agenda:

♦ **Audit organisation** – The audit team will be split into two teams of two, with one team focusing on Victoria & South Australia and the second team focusing on Western Australia. The two teams will assemble at the Australian Blue Gum Plantations office in Mt Gambier, SA; and Albany, WA on the 10th of June, 2014.

♦ **Field visits** – The team will visit sites managed by Australian Blue Gum Plantations during 11th and 12th of June, 2014.

♦ **Stakeholder consultation** – Throughout the fieldwork, the team will contact local stakeholders regarding Australian Blue Gum Plantations forest management in towns surrounding the forest area. This may include private interviews and discussions, and public stakeholder meetings.

♦ **Final audit briefing** – Prior to departure the team will meet with Australian Blue Gum Plantations managers and other parties to finalise their data collection and present preliminary findings.

♦ **Draft report production** – The audit team will produce a confidential draft report that will be submitted for comment to Australian Blue Gum Plantations as well as internal Rainforest Alliance reviewers.

♦ **Certification decision** – Upon receipt of comments on the draft report from Australian Bluegum Plantations forest managers and reviewers, and other general stakeholder comments, Rainforest Alliance will reach a certification decision. Barring unforeseen obstacles, this should occur by the end of August 2014.

**Your Input Sought** – As a part of the forest certification process we invite stakeholders to offer comment and feedback on Australian Blue Gum Plantations forest management in relation to compliance with the requirements of the forest management standard referenced above as well as comments on the management and protection of High conservation Values within the forest under evaluation. We welcome input, either public or confidential, in whatever form is easiest and most secure for you. Your input will be valuable at any stage of the process, but we would prefer to receive your comments either prior to the Audit, during the Audit, or prior to 12th of June so that we can take them into consideration in reaching a certification decision. Your options for communicating your observations to us are as follows:

1. Meet with a Rainforest Alliance audit team member during or shortly after the fieldwork. Please, contact Lead Auditor Mr Addis Tsehaye for arrangements.

2. Call and give comments to Anita Neville, Representative of the Rainforest Alliance in Australia. If this person is not in the office, please contact Task Manager, Amber Peperkamp.

3. Submit written comments by mail or email to Anita Neville. Unless you request otherwise, these comments will be kept confidential and are solely for the purposes of assessing Australian Blue Gum Plantations.

The source of any information provided will be kept confidential available to only the FSC and Rainforest Alliance staff.

Stakeholders who may wish to dispute any aspect of the forest certification process or decision can access Rainforest Alliance’s Complaints, Appeals and Dispute resolution procedures at [www.rainforest-alliance.org](http://www.rainforest-alliance.org).
Contacting Rainforest Alliance

♦ Email: aneville.consultant@ra.org for Rainforest Alliance Representative in Australia

♦ Email: addis.tsehaye@asurequality.com for Lead Auditor Addis Tsehaye

♦ Email: ap.ecocurean@gmail.com for Australia FM Task Manager, Amber Peperkamp

♦ Telephone: Anita Neville: +61 (0) 431 913 214
              Addis Tsehaye: +64 21798 704
              Amber Peperkamp: +61 (0) 415 299 687

♦ Website: www.rainforest-alliance.org.

♦ Mail address:

    Anita Neville
    Rainforest Alliance
    Newport West LPO
    PO Box 3174
    Newport VIC 3015
    Australia

You are receiving this communication because you have previously been identified to the Rainforest Alliance as a stakeholder interested in the forestry operation or company listed on this notification, or as someone with an interest in the work of the Rainforest Alliance or the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Standard. If you do not wish to receive communications of this kind please reply with the words UNSUBSCRIBE in the Subject via EMAIL to ap.ecocurean@gmail.com.