Public Briefing Paper for

Forest Management FSC Annual Audit 2012 of Elders Forestry Limited in Australia.

January 20, 2012

Introduction - The SmartWood Program of the Rainforest Alliance is conducting the forest management Annual Audit 2012 of Elders Forestry Limited. The forest area under the scope of Elders Forestry Ltd Certificate (SW-FM/COC-001217) is located in Green Triangle, Albany, Esperance and Kununurra with a total area of approximately 166,000 ha.

At this Annual Audit 2012, the audit team will visit the Forest Management Units located in Albany and Esperance, in Western Australia, from the 21st to the 23rd of February of 2012.

Scope of the Annual Audit 2012 - The forest management certification audit will assess the environmental, silvicultural and socioeconomic aspects of the forests and plantations managed by Elders Forestry Ltd, using the Rainforest Alliance/SmartWood Interim Standard for Assessing Forest Management in Australia (version June 2008) and FM-35 SmartWood 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 SmartWood by telephone, fax, email or website listed below. Please note that the standard may be modified to take account of stakeholder comments. SmartWood is accredited by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and this audit process must follow procedures which have been approved by the FSC.

Audit Team Composition - The audit team will be led by Mr. Addis Tsehaye, (PhD & MSc Forestry) and will also include Mr Shane McCarthy (BSc Zoology, MSc Forestry).

Audit Steps and Schedule - Following is a short description of the certification process and a tentative agenda:

♦ Audit organization – The SmartWood team will assemble in Albany Regional Office on the 21st of February, 2012.
♦ Field visits – The team will visit sites managed by Elders Forestry belonging to the Albany and Esperance FMUs, from 21st to 23rd of February, 2012
♦ Stakeholder consultation – Throughout the fieldwork, the team will contact local stakeholders regarding Elders Forestry forest management in villages 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 Elders Forestry managers and other parties to finalize their data collection and present preliminary findings.
Draft report production – The audit team will produce a confidential draft report that will be circulated for comment to Elders Forestry Ltd and a minimum of two SW reviewers.

Certification decision – Upon receipt of comments on the draft report from Elders Forestry forest managers and reviewers, and other general stakeholder comments through February, SmartWood will reach a certification decision. Barring unforeseen obstacles, this should occur by March 2012.

Your Input Sought - As a part of the forest certification process we invite stakeholders to offer comment and feedback on Elders Forestry forest management in relation to compliance with the requirements of the forest management standard referenced above. 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 1st of March 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 SmartWood audit team member during or shortly after the fieldwork. Please, contact SmartWood Task Manager Maria R Gismero, the SmartWood person responsible for coordinating this audit from Asia Pacific Regional Office, for arrangements.

2. Call and give comments to Anita Neville, Representative and Communications Advisor for the Rainforest Alliance in Australia. If this person is not in the office, please contact SW Task Manager, Maria R Gismero.

3. Submit written comments by mail, FAX or email to Anita Neville. Unless you request otherwise, these comments will be kept confidential and are solely for the purposes of assessing Elders Forestry Ltd.

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

Stakeholders who may wish to dispute any aspect of the forest certification process or decision can access SmartWood’s Complaints, Appeals and Dispute resolution procedures at www.rainforest-alliance.org.

Contacting SmartWood

Email: aneville.consultant@ra.org for Representative and Communications Advisor for the Rainforest Alliance in Australia

Email: mgismero.consultant@ra.org for Australia FM Task Manager

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