

## The Facts: Forest Certification Schemes

*Certification schemes are voluntary and involve independent assessment against criteria that ensure legal and sustainable forest management.*

They have specific provisions that generally address:

- A commitment to planning and monitoring
- Adherence to laws and rights to the land
- Consideration of indigenous, community and worker rights, values and benefits
- Protection of environmental and ecological values
- Assurance of ongoing forest yields

Forest certification schemes certify management systems in the forests. The associated Chain of Custody Certification (CoC) is the formal process of tracking wood and timber products from a certified forest to consumers (see *TQ Fact Sheet: Chain of Custody Certification*).

Although there are numerous certification schemes internationally, this table summarises the features of the two most likely to be encountered in Australia. A key feature of the schemes is that neither formally recognises certified material from the other.

<b>Parameters</b>	<b>Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)</b>	<b>Australian Forestry Standard AS4708 (AFS)</b>
<b>Background</b>	Private company governed by members. Board of Directors represent forest and wood products industry sector, environmental groups, community groups.	Non-profit public company. Board of Directors comprising government forest agencies, forest and wood product products industry sector, unions, community and environmental groups.
<b>Certification Products</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forest Management Certification</li> <li>• Chain of Custody Certificate</li> </ul> <p>FSC uses interim forest management standards in Australia, but is committed to developing a national FSC standard for Australia.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australian Forest Management Certification (AS 4708)</li> <li>• Chain of Custody Certification (AS 4707)</li> </ul> <p>AFS uses forestry standards that were developed specifically for Australian conditions by a Technical Reference Committee.</p>
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://au.fsc.org/en-au">https://au.fsc.org/en-au</a>	<a href="http://www.forestrystandard.org.au/">http://www.forestrystandard.org.au/</a>
<b>International linkages</b>	FSC is an international certification scheme.	There is mutual recognition between AFS and PEFC (Programme for Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes), which internationally recognises over 40 national schemes.

**For more information see Timber Queensland Fact Sheet “Chain of Custody Certification”.**

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