



Chain of Custody of Forest and Tree-based Products - Requirements



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- Association of Accredited Certification Bodies
- Australian Forest Products Association
- Australian Institute of Packaging
- Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union
- Independent Environmental Expert
- Tasmanian Forest Products Association
- University of Melbourne
- Victorian Forest Products Association
- Women in Forest and Timber Network

Additional Interests:

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Responsible Wood 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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Preface

Australian Standard AS 4707 sets requirements for the chain of custody of forest and tree-based products marketed with claims about certification under AS/NZS 4708, the Australian/New Zealand Standard® for Sustainable Forest Management. AS/NZS 4708 is referred to in AS 4707 as the Australian/New Zealand Forestry Standard. Products originating from forests certified to AS/NZS 4708 or a PEFC recognised Standard through third party verification audits are eligible for recognition under the Responsible Wood Certification Scheme (RWCS). Products with the Responsible Wood certification claim and/ or label deliver confidence to customers and consumers that the raw material originates in sustainably managed forests, recycled material, and controlled sources. Forest and Chain of Custody certifications include requirements for health, safety and labour. “Controlled Sources” addresses the risk of using products from controversial sources, including legality aspects. Purchasers and potential purchasers can use this information to choose the product based on sustainability and other considerations. The aim of communicating the raw material’s origin is to encourage demand for and supply of products originating in sustainably managed forests, thereby stimulating market-driven continuous improvement of management of Australia’s forests.

The RWCS is endorsed by the international Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC). Products eligible for RWCS claims are therefore also eligible for PEFC claims.

This standard has been developed in an open, transparent, consultative and consensus-based process covering a broad range of stakeholders. It replaces AS 4707:2014.

Certification bodies are accredited, independent third-party organisations that assess and verify the tracking system for the origin of wood or forest products in each link of the certification chain. The tasks of certification bodies include:

- verifying the whole chain of custody system and the proportion of certified forest product in each link of the certification chain.
- issuing, monitoring and withdrawing chain of custody certificates.
- providing advice on issuing and withdrawing chain of custody certificates to Responsible Wood; and
- monitoring and controlling the use or misuse of chain of custody certificates including the certificate holder’s statements and any market claims.

Accreditation bodies recognised by the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) accredit certification bodies to audit and certify to particular standards to ensure the transparency and credibility of the certification process. Accreditation bodies also ensure third-party competence, impartiality and independence in relation to certification activities and facilitate mutual recognition. Certification bodies undertaking chain of custody certification to this standard must be accredited by JAS-ANZ or an IAF-recognised accreditation body.

Contents

Preface	4
Foreword	6
Section 1 Scope and general	7
1.1 Scope	7
1.2 Normative references	7
1.3 Terms and definitions.....	8
Section 2 Management system requirements	17
2.1 General requirements.....	17
2.2 Documented procedures	17
2.3 Responsibilities and authorities	17
2.4 Record keeping	18
2.5 Resource management.....	18
2.6 Internal audit and review	19
2.7 Complaints.....	19
2.8 Nonconformity and corrective action.....	19
2.9 Outsourcing.....	20
2.10 Social, health and safety requirements in chain of custody.....	20
Section 3 Identification of inputs and declaration of outputs	21
3.1 Identification of input material	21
3.2 Declaration of outputs	21
3.3 Trademark use.....	22
3.4 Content of recycled material	22
Section 4 Chain of custody methods	23
4.1 General	23
4.2 Physical separation method.....	23
4.3 Percentage method	23
4.4 Credit method	24
Section 5 Due Diligence System (DDS) requirements	27
5.1 General	27
Appendix A: Due Diligence System (DDS) for the avoidance of material from controversial sources	28
A.1 General requirements.....	28
A.2 Access to information	28
A.3 Risk assessment	29
A.4 Substantiated concerns.....	33
A.5 Management of significant risk supplies.....	33
A.6 No placement on the market	35
Appendix B: Implementation of Chain of Custody by Multisite Organisations	36
B.1 Introduction.....	36
B.2 Eligibility criteria for the multi-site organisation	36
B.3 Requirements for multi-site organisations.....	37
Appendix C: Material Typology for Chain of Custody	40
C.1 Introduction.....	40
Bibliography	41

Foreword

The objective of this standard is to allow organisations to provide accurate and verifiable information that forest and tree-based products originate from forests managed in accordance with the Australia/New Zealand Forestry Standard (ANZFS) and other sustainably managed forests recognised through PEFC mutual recognition, recycled material and/or controlled sources.

Practical application and certification against this standard allow organisations to demonstrate their contribution in sustainable resource management and a strong commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The aim of communicating the origin of forest and tree-based products is to encourage demand for and supply of those products originating in sustainably managed forests and thereby stimulating the potential for market-driven continuous improvement of the management of the world's forests.

Note: For further information on the UN SDGs see online at <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/>

Section 1 Scope and general

1.1 Scope

This standard covers the requirements that need to be met by an organisation to successfully implement a chain of custody management system for forest and tree-based products, and to make claims to customers on the origin of forest and tree-based products from sustainably managed forests, recycled material and/or controlled sources.

These chain of custody requirements describe a process of how to classify forest and tree-based products according to specified material categories and to transfer information about the source of procured raw material to an organisation's output products. This standard specifies three approaches for chain of custody, namely the physical separation method, percentage method and credit method.

This standard also specifies management system requirements for the implementation and management of the chain of custody process, including requirements on health, safety and labour issues.

This Chain of Custody standard shall be used in connection with Responsible Wood and PEFC claims.

Appendix B of this standard specifies the implementation of this standard by organisations with multiple sites.

The usage of claims and relating labels, as a result of implementation of this Chain of Custody standard, is based on ISO 14020. Consideration of recycled material within the chain of custody is based on the requirements of ISO/IEC 14021.

The labelling of products is considered as an optional communication tool, which may be incorporated into an organisation's chain of custody processes. Where the organisation applies the Responsible Wood and/or PEFC trademarks for on-product or off-product labelling, the requirements for trademark use become an integral part of the chain of custody requirements.

This standard shall be implemented for the purposes of third-party conformity assessment based on requirements defined by Responsible Wood, the PEFC Council or PEFC endorsed forest certification systems. The conformity assessment is considered as product certification and shall follow ISO/IEC 17065.

Note: The term "shall" is used throughout this standard to indicate those provisions that are mandatory. The term "should" is used to indicate those provisions that, although not mandatory, are expected to be adopted and implemented. The term "may" used throughout this standard indicates permission expressed by this standard whereas "can" refers to the ability of a user of this standard or to a possibility open to the user.

1.2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this standard. For both dated and undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

AS/NZS 4708, Sustainable Forest management requirements.

PEFC GD 2001, Chain of Custody of Forest-Based Products – Guidance for Use

PEFC ST 2001, PEFC Trademarks Rules – Requirements