

**PROJECT PROPOSAL REVISION OF
AUSTRALIAN STANDARD AS 4708 and NEW ZEALAND
STANDARD NZ AS 4708 as**

**JOINT AUSTRALIA/NEW ZEALAND STANDARD
AS/NZS 4708-SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT**

Section 1: Scope of Revision

1A: Provide details of the proposed documents				
#	Title	Project Type	Designation	Product type
1	Sustainable Forest Management	Revision	AS/NZS 4708	Joint Australia/NZ Standard

1B: Write a clear and concise statement of the nature of the issue to be addressed by your proposal.

Describe who is affected e.g. businesses, community organisations or individuals affected by the problem. What are the consequences of no action?

The global trade in timber and timber products increasingly relies upon voluntary sustainable forest management certification for market access. In Australian and New Zealand, the National Standards AS 4708 and NZ AS 4708-Sustainable Forest Management, are recognised and endorsed under the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) Scheme. PEFC endorsement allows for the International recognition of forest products originating from forests managed in accordance with AS 4708 and NZ AS4708, as meeting International sustainability benchmarks and best practice.

The loss of PEFC endorsement means loss of market access and opportunity for Australian and New Zealand forest growers and wood processors. To maintain endorsement and recognition under the PEFC system, PEFC endorsed National Standards must undertake a 5 yearly review and revision process. Both AS4708 and NZS AS 4708 are due for their 5 yearly revision. In addition, PEFC is to release updated requirements for the recognition and endorsement of National Standards in late 2018. The updated requirements include changes to sustainability benchmarks that must be complied with. All PEFC endorsed National Standards will be given a relatively short period to be revised and comply with the new provisions.

The release of the new PEFC requirements aligns well with the required 5 yearly revision period. Failure to align the National Standards with new PEFC endorsement provisions, will result in loss of endorsement of the schemes operating in both Australia and New Zealand.

In addition to the review to meet PEFC endorsement requirements, the following updates are required.

Update the Standards to ensure they are consistent and compatible with the most current technology, and the Standards do not inhibit innovation or efficiency gains.

Review performance requirements to ensure they align with any community expectations.

Review timber legality requirements to ensure they are transparent, easily understood and auditable. This is especially relevant for New Zealand producers. PEFC certification is a recognised *Timber Legality framework* under the *Australian and New Zealand Illegal Logging Act*. Ensuring that New Zealand grown timber is recognised as legally sourced under a PEFC endorsed system ensures continued and unhindered access to the Australian market.

The structure of the Standards are to be reviewed and reformatted into "ISO High Level Format" to ensure consistency with other ISO Management System Standards such as Quality, Environmental Management and Safety. This will provide for more effective and efficient management systems and reduced audit costs.

1C: Write a clear and concise proposed scope that will outline how to address the identified issue(s). Unless this is a proposal for a new document, this should not be a scope of the document, but a scope of the work which you propose to undertake.

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The scope of the revision will entail the following.

1. A gap analysis against new PEFC requirements and appropriate changes made to AS/NZS 4708 to ensure the continued PEFC endorsement of Sustainable Forest Management Schemes in Australia and New Zealand.
2. The Standard will be revised as a joint Australia/New Zealand Standard ensuring that performance requirements are applicable and suitable for both Countries. To ensure appropriate representation, the Committee Structure will include proportional representation of Nominating Organisations from both Australia and New Zealand.
3. Performance requirements will be reviewed to ensure they are measurable and consistent with the use of current and new technology. Where necessary and prudent, updates and changes will be made to allow for innovation and improved efficiency.
4. The revision provides opportunity for community input to ensure that the Australia/New Zealand Standard for Sustainable Forest Management represents community values for environment, economic and social impacts.

5. Legality

The revised Standard shall set clearly defined auditable requirements which verify the legal origin of forest products. These requirements shall be consistent with the *Australian Illegal Logging Act*, *US Logging Act*, the *EU Timber Regulation* and any other recognised National Laws for Timber legality. The performance requirements shall be suitable for both Australia and New Zealand, but if necessary Country specific requirements will be developed.

6. ISO High Level Format

Currently, AS 4708 and NZ AS 4708 use a different structure and format that other ISO Management System Standards such as ISO 9001, ISO 14000 etc. The structure and format of the new joint Standard will be aligned with the ISO High Level Format to enable for more effective and efficient integration of Sustainable Forest Management into existing ISO based Management Systems

1D: Are you proposing an adoption of an International Standard (i.e. ISO or IEC)?	
If so answer the following: ⁵	
Is it a Modified or Identical Adoption? Note: if Identical use the Proposal Form – Identical Adoption	There is no International Standard (ISO) for Sustainable Forest Management.

1E: Is the existing document referenced in Australian State, Territory or Commonwealth legislation or regulatory framework?	
For joint documents, also consider New Zealand legislation. ⁶	
Yes (List all legislation or regulation that refer to the existing document. ⁷) <i>Note: For National Construction Code (NCC) and WaterMark proposals, the Australian Building Codes Board (ABCB) needs to be consulted prior to submission.</i>	The Standard is indirectly reference in Australian Commonwealth Legislation. The PEFC Certification System is referenced under the <i>Australian Illegal Logging Act Regulation</i> as a Timber Legality Framework. The PEFC system is Australia in underpinned by AS 4708 and NZ AS 4708 and is the basis for PEFC recognition and endorsement in New Zealand
No (Go to 1F)	

1F: Is there an ISO/IEC document that also covers the issues in question?	
No (Go to 1G)	No

1G: Will the proposed document include any conformity assessment requirements?⁸	
Yes. The Standard provides performance requirements that are the subject of audit by accredited Certification Bodies	

Section 2: Net benefit

2A: What will be the impact of the proposed project in the below categories? Explain this in terms of a positive or negative impact on the following “Net Benefit” criteria.⁹

Public health and safety (max 200 words)

The Standard provides management system requirements for Workplace Health and Safety in a Forest environment. Certified Forest Managers are required by the Standard to have a Management System to manage and minimise risks associated with Workplace Health and Safety.

The implementation and effectiveness of this Management System is audited and verified by JAS-ANZ accredited Certification Bodies. Failure to effectively manage Workplace Health & Safety may result in loss of certification, and a resulting loss of market access.

Social and community impact (max 200 words)

The Standard provides system requirements for community engagement. This includes direct engagement with affected Stakeholders and the wider community in general and provides a framework where community expectations are captured, measured, considered and actioned. The aim is to provide positive and constructive engagement leading to positive community opinion and support.

The Community/Stakeholder engagement and management processes are subject to audit by Certification Bodies.

In addition to audit requirements for community engagement, the impact of the Standard has significant social impact. Certification to the Standard provides significantly greater market access allowing for increased sales, greater investment and increased employment opportunities, especially in rural areas.

Environmental impact (max 200 words)

The environmental impact of the Standard is significant as it provides performance requirements for the sustainable management of forest ecosystems. These include the assessment and management of biodiversity and management practices related to water, soils, flora, fauna, indigenous and cultural values. It provides requirements for the protection and management of areas of local and national significant biodiversity

Competition (max 200 words)

Certification to the Standard allows Australia and New Zealand forest products access to, and the ability to compete in domestic and International markets. In many International markets, certification is a requirement for entry and without the existence of AS/NZS 4708, access would be restricted.

The update of AS/NZS 4708 provides for expanded and continued market access for both Australia and New Zealand Forest Growers and Wood Processors

Economic impact (max 200 words)

As stated above, certification to AS/NZS 4708 provides greater domestic and International market access. In some cases, it can also provide premium pricing.

PEFC certification underpinned by AS 4708 or NZS AS 4708 is an increasing important market requirement and failure to have certification has the potential to exclude forest growers and procedures for key markets. As a result AS 4708 and NZS AS 4708 make a direct and significant positive financial contribution to the Australian and New Zealand forestry and forest products sectors.

⁹ Add specific facts and examples if possible. Refer to the [Guide to Net Benefit](#). Not all categories may be affected, in which case, leave these blank.

Section 3: Evidence of support — Stakeholder support

3A: Describe the process taken to gain stakeholder support for your proposal (max 100 words)

Stakeholders have been approached directly in person and by correspondence and provided with the details of the joint Standards proposal.

All organisations listed below have confirmed their support for this project in writing.

Australia

Organisation	Category (SA Proposal Form)	Contact	Support Revision and AS/NZS	Participation in SRC
CSIRO	Research and Academic	Phillip Smethurst	Yes	Yes
Small Business Ombudsman	Employer/ Industry assoc.	Kate Carnell	Yes	No
TABMA	User and Purchasing Assoc.	Colin Fitzpatrick	Yes	No
University of Melbourne	Research and academic	Rodney Keenan	Yes	Maybe
EWPA	Certification/Industry Assoc/ Certification Body	Dave Gover	Yes	No
AFPA	Supplier/Manufacturing/User and Purchasing	Natalie Hazelwood	Yes	Yes
IFA	Research and Academic	BoB Gordon	Yes	Yes
Gary Fetherston	Independent Expert		Yes	Yes
University of Sunshine Coast	Research and Academic Supplier/Manufacturing/User and Purchasing Assoc.	Mark Brown	Yes	Yes
Timber Queensland	Certification Body	Mick Stephens	Yes	Maybe
BSI	State Regulator/Forest Grower	Ross Garsden	Yes	Yes
QDAF	Employee Organisation	Barry Underhill	Yes	Yes
CFMEU	Industry Assoc.	Crag Smith	Yes	Maybe
AFG	User Assoc.	Kevin Harding	Yes	Yes
FIAA	Community/Environment	Dean Brakall	Yes	No
planet Ark	Govt. Regulator	Sean O'Malley	Yes	Maybe
Dept of Agriculture and Water Resources		Andrew Wilson	Yes	No

New Zealand

The Nature Conservatory	Consumer and Community	Carl McGuinness	Yes	No
SCION	Research and Academic	Doug Gaunt	Yes	Yes
Telarc	Certification Body	Tony Bennett	Yes	No
NZ plywood manufactures	Industry Assoc.	Cameron Roger	Yes	No

Assoc.				
NZFCA	Industry Assoc.	Jon Tanner	Yes	Yes
WPMA	Industry/ User Assoc.	Jon Tanner	Yes	Yes
JAS-ANZ	Accreditation/ Certification	Simon Bannock	Yes	Yes
Timber Industry Federation	User Assoc.	Jeff Ilot	Yes	Yes
NZ Institute of Foresters	Research and academic	David Evison	Yes	Yes
Ministry of Primary Industries	Govt. Regulator	Anna Tyler	No objections- but will consult more widely	Yes

Section 4: Declaration

This declaration is a mandatory requirement and proposals will not be considered without it.

I consent to Responsible Wood making information relating to Standards development projects public, including information contained within a proposal form I have submitted in part or in full. In the event that Responsible wood publishes proposals on its website, proponent details at page 1 and stakeholder contact details provided at Section 3 will not be included. However, with prior agreement, my contact details may be provided to interested parties wishing to contribute or comment on the proposal or the proposed project.

The information provided in this application is complete, true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I believe the proposed document will result in Net Benefit¹⁰ to Australia. I have consulted with, and have the support of, national organisations with a relevant interest in this project.

Name of proponent	Simon Dorries
Date of declaration	19 th September, 2018

¹⁰ As defined in the [Guide to Net Benefit](#)

Section 5: Instructions and notices

To submit this proposal for Standards Australia consideration:

1. You must complete every section of this form and then submit your initial proposal draft to a [National Sector Manager](#). Use simple, non-technical and concise language and do not use jargon of any kind. For additional information, visit the “[Proposing a Project](#)” page on our website.
2. The National Sector Manager will conduct the preliminary review of this form and then guide you as to the next steps.
3. Final submissions, along with evidence of stakeholder support, have to be provided electronically to Standards Australia (mail@standards.org.au) before the closing date of each [Prioritisation Round](#). Please note: you should allow sufficient time to circulate your proposal to stakeholders and collect evidence of support before the Prioritisation Round deadline.

If you have any trouble with the form, you can contact us on (02) 9237 6170, 1800 035 822, or email us at mail@standards.org.au.

For identical adoptions of International Standards please complete the [Proposal Form – Identical Adoptions](#).

Privacy notice: Standards Australia reserves the right to make information relating to Standards development projects public, including information contained within submitted proposal forms in part or in full. In the event that Standards Australia publishes proposals on its website, proponent details at page 1 and stakeholder contact details provided at Section 3 will not be included. However, with prior agreement, your contact details may be provided to interested parties wishing to contribute or comment on the proposal or the proposed project.