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VicForests' Accreditation Highlights Commitment to sustainable forestry

VicForests has successfully achieved re-certification to the Australian Forestry Standard.

The Australian Forest Certification Scheme is recognised internationally by the [Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Scheme \(PEFC\)](#) – the world's largest forest certification organisation.

Dr David Pollard, VicForests' CEO, said: "We are delighted to receive this re-certification as it highlights VicForests commitment to the sustainable management of forests in Victoria.

"The Australian Forestry Standard (AFS) guarantees the community that timber harvested in Victoria is sourced in an environmentally responsible way.

"Certification underlines VicForests' dedication to continually improve the sustainable management of Victoria's forests, and demonstrates that economic, social, environmental and cultural criteria are being met.

"The report by independent auditors commented that there had been exceptional improvement in VicForests' forest management system in the past three years.

"In particular, the report praised VicForests' document management, the appointment of specialised personnel such as resource analysts and forest scientists, as well as additional training for staff to address areas of potential weakness.

"This includes an education program for contractors and staff working on salvage harvesting projects following the Black Saturday bushfires," Dr Pollard said.

The Australian Forestry Standard was specifically developed for Australian forests by community, industry, scientific and government representatives, and in line with Australian legislation and community expectations.

"The certification process thoroughly assessed VicForests' practices from the planning of harvest activities, right through to the regeneration of harvested areas and the handing back of land to the Department of Sustainability and Environment," Dr Pollard said.

"It included audits of both corporate management planning and the practical implementation of these processes by staff working directly in harvesting areas.

"VicForests was also required to demonstrate how it engages with the community, including those living in areas close to harvesting operations," he said.

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