
[National Forest Summit condemns "Australian forestry standard"](#)

Meeting in Moruya over the weekend the National Forest Summit, Australia's major body representing forest campaign groups, has roundly condemned the federal Government's push for an Australian Forestry Standard in the face of growing calls for "certified" wood.

Internationally, consumers are demanding wood products that can be certified as having been sourced from forests that have been managed sustainably. The most well known of these management standards is that developed by the Forest Stewardship Council, which has now certified over 18 million hectares worldwide.

"This so-called standard is clearly a desperate attempt by the Australian government to respond to the large number of contracts that have recently been cancelled by international timber importers unhappy with Australia's appalling forest management practices."

"Real certification includes the participation of environment groups, Aboriginal people and other important stakeholders in the development of management standards. So far all discussions have taken place behind closed doors with no one but the logging industry and everyone else has been locked out. Forestry Minister Tuckey unsuccessfully tried peddling this embarrassing mickey mouse scheme to the rest of the world at a meeting in New York in November which not one single foreign government minister agreed to attend."

"The key to consumer confidence in such schemes is independence from government, and assessment by a third party certifier. This standard will be based on processes endorsed by government for industry and is about as arm's length as the proverbial fox certifying the chook house. In fact, it's a major consumer confidence trick and we will be warning international retailers not to be conned by it. Any standard that fails to stamp out logging of old growth forests, clearfelling and rampant chemical abuse is not worth the paper it's written on."

The National Forest Summit was attended by: Native Forest Network Australia, Australian Conservation Foundation - Forest Campaign Group, Coastwatchers Assoc, Boral Green Shareholders, Tambo Environment Awareness Group, Wombat Forest Society, CHIPSTOP, Conservation Council of South East Region And Canberra, North East Forest Alliance, North Coast Environment Council, National Parks Australia Council, The Wilderness Society, Canopy Native Forest Committee, Friends of the Earth, National Parks Association, Rainforest Info Centre, Forest Activist Network, Environment Victoria, Con Council West Australia, West Australia Forest Alliance and, the Nature Conservation Council of NSW.

Source: National Forest Summit media release, 8 May 2000, sent by Native Forest Network Southern Hemisphere.

