

The Australian Forestry Standard Technical Reference Committee

The Australian Forestry Standard Technical Reference Committee (AFS TRC) is a broad-based national stakeholder group. The AFS TRC provides for participation of a wide range of interests and expertise at a national level that are likely to be affected by or use an Australian Standard throughout the Australian Forestry Standard's development and review process. It has been constituted to ensure a balance of views at each stage of the development and review process of the Australian Forestry Standard.

Role

The AFS TRC plays the primary role in the development of the Australian Forestry Standard, as it:

- provides stakeholder views throughout the development, drafting and review of the Standard;
- considers comments received through public consultation periods, including in response to Public Comment drafts of the Standard;
- works towards consensus on the performance elements to be embodied in the Standard; and
- determines through ballot an Australian Forestry Standard that reflects a consensus among the stakeholder groups.

Membership

The criteria for the AFS Technical Reference Committee are:

- Be representative of the major stakeholder groups directly using or influenced by the Standard.
- Be of a reasonable size to allow effective meetings and discussion to be held (Max. 15-20).
- Provide a reasonable balance that gives:
 - adequate representation of major stakeholder groups
 - no individual stakeholder group can dominate, and major influences are tempered.
- Include two independent scientists, (a forest scientist, and an environmental scientist), nominated by a nationally recognised research body.

The criteria for AFS Technical Reference Committee members are:

- With exception of members under dot point 4 above, be drawn from organisations or stakeholder groups with a national mandate; able to commit to continuous representation, and with mechanisms to establish the collective views of their stakeholder group.
- Be committed to sustainable production of timber from forests and able to encourage the use of the Standard they have helped to prepare.

The broad categories of interests that are represented are:

- forest owners and processors;
- independent professional and scientific bodies;
- community and consumer interests; and
- regulatory or controlling bodies.

Achieving Consensus

The AFS TRC operates under principles of consensus as promulgated by Standards Australia, and defined as:

General agreement, characterised by the absence of sustained opposition to substantial issues by any important part of the concerned interests and by a process that involves seeking to take into account the views of all parties concerned and to reconcile any conflicting arguments. Note: consensus need not imply unanimity.

Consensus is formalised achieving a postal ballot system as prescribed by Standards Australia, and requires that no major interest maintains a negative vote. If a negative vote is registered it must be supported with a reason for rejection of the Standard so that processes of resolution can be instigated. Every effort must be made to resolve differences before the draft proceeds to publication. The majority vote is only accepted with the condition that no major interest maintains a negative vote. A major interest may be within one stakeholder grouping or a combination of votes that have a similar reason, whether environmental, social or economic, for registering a negative vote.

Current Membership

The AFS TRC has twenty [20] seats plus secretariat support from AFS Limited and is comprised of nominated representatives from the following organisations or areas of expertise:

PISC's Forestry and Forest Products Committee

The PISC's [Forestry and Forest Products Committee](#) has three representatives comprising the Chair of the AFS TRC, a Commonwealth and State representative;

The Forestry and Forest Products Committee (FFPC) is one of the Committees that report to the Primary Industries Standing Committee (PISC) of the Primary Industries Ministerial Council (PIMC). Previously, it was the Standing Committee on Forestry that reported to the Ministerial Council on Forestry, Fisheries and Aquaculture. The FFPC is comprised of the Heads of the Commonwealth, State, Territory and New Zealand forestry agencies. The Papua New Guinea Forest Authority is an observer.

The agreed objective of the PIMC is: "to develop and promote sustainable, innovative and profitable agriculture, fisheries/aquaculture, and food and forestry industries".

NRMNC's Natural Resources Management Standing Committee

The NRMNC's [Natural Resources Management Standing Committee](#) has one representative;

The Natural Resources Management Standing Committee (NRMSC) is the Standing Committee that reports to the Natural Resources Management Ministerial Council (NRMNC). Previously, it was the Standing Committee on Conservation that reported to the Australian and New Zealand Environment Conservation Council. The NRMSC comprises senior officials nominated by the Ministers from the Commonwealth, State, Territory, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea agencies responsible for conservation and natural resource management.

The agreed objective of the NRMNC is: "to promote the conservation and sustainable use of Australia's natural resources".

The representative comes from the Natural Resource Policies and Programs Committee which was created in early 2004 through an amalgamation of the previous Programs Committee and Land, Water and Biodiversity Committee. Its high priority issues are:

- NRM decision-making;
- biodiversity decline;
- soil and water quality decline;
- water policy – developing a complementary role to several multi-jurisdictional issues;
- climate change and adaptation;
- effectiveness of regional NRM delivery; and
- invasive species.

National Association of Forest Industries

The [National Association of Forest Industries](#) has one representative;

NAFI presents the forest industry's views to the people of Australia, governments and public authorities on matters relating to the national development and use of forests and forest products, including plantations. It also promotes community awareness of the forest industries by providing information and education material.

Australian Plantation Products and Paper Industry Council (A3P)

The [Australian Plantation Products and Paper Industry Council](#) has one representative;

A3P resulted from the merger of the functions of the Plantation Timber Association of Australia and the Australian Paper Industry Council, unifying representation for two of Australia's most important sustainable regional industries. The members of A3P include virtually all the major plantation growers, processors and paper manufacturers in Australia. The diversity of membership and representation from the three sectors allows A3P to develop innovative and constructive positions that reflect the interest of all parties along the production chain. A3P's activities are broadly divided into four streams: Plantation Resources; Economic and Industry; Environment and Energy; and Timber Market Development.

Australian Forest Growers

[Australian Forest Growers](#) has one representative;

Australian Forest Growers (AFG) is a national association representing and promoting the interests of private commercial forestry and farm tree growers. The AFG is run by a voluntary national council of growers. AFG members include farm foresters and plantation growers, native forest managers, city based forestry investors, investment companies, forestry consultants, tree and equipment suppliers and industrial forestry companies. AFG membership covers about 80 per cent of plantations in Australia and a significant area of privately owned native forests.

Australian Council of Trade Unions

The [Australian Council of Trade Unions](#) has one representative;

The Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) is the only peak council and national centre representing the national interest of the Australian union movement.

The ACTU is made up of 52 affiliated unions representing around 2.0 million workers.

The ACTU is able to speak on behalf of all workers including those in manufacturing, finance, government and the service sector generally. It includes trades, sales, clerical, technical and professional workers amongst its affiliated union membership.

Institute of Foresters of Australia

The [Institute of Foresters of Australia](#) has one representative;

The Institute of Foresters of Australia is a professional body with 1240 members engaged in all branches of forest management and conservation in Australia. The Institute is strongly committed to the principles of sustainable forest management and the processes and practices which translate these principles into outcomes.

The membership represents all segments of the forestry profession, including public and private practitioners engaged in many aspects of forestry, nature conservation, resource and land

management, research, administration and education. Membership is not restricted to professional Foresters. Other forestry professionals are welcome to join IFA.

The main 'Objects' for which the Institute is established are:

- To advance and protect the cause of forestry
- To maintain a high standard of qualification in persons engaged in the practice of forestry
- To promote professional standards and ethical practice among those engaged in forestry
- To promote social intercourse between persons engaged in forestry
- To publish and make educational, marketing and other materials available to those engaged in forestry
- To provide the services of the Institute to forestry organisations inside Australia and in overseas countries as the Board may deem appropriate.

Furnishing Industry Association of Australia

The [Furnishing Industry Association](#) of Australia has one representative;

The Furnishing Industry Association of Australia (FIAA) is an industry association representing businesses in all the sectors of the furnishing industry. The FIAA exists exclusively for the furnishing industry. It is recognised as the voice of the furnishing industry by Federal and State Governments, media and the general public.

The Australian scientific community

The Australian scientific community has two independent professionals as its representatives and is represented by both an environmental scientist and a forestry scientist.

The Ecological Society of Australia Inc.

The [Ecological Society of Australia Inc.](http://www.ecolsoc.org.au/) (<http://www.ecolsoc.org.au/>) has one representative;

The Ecological Society of Australia Incorporated (ESA) is the peak group of ecologists in Australia, with over 1500 members from all states and territories. We aim to create a community of knowledge and understanding amongst ecologists, and reach out to those working in related fields. We invite you to join us in our efforts to promote the scientific study of all organisms in relation to their environment, and encourage the application of ecological principles in the development, use and conservation of Australia's natural resources.

Indigenous Peoples

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community has one representative, who was previously an elected member of the Board of Commissioners for The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) which was Australia's democratically elected national Indigenous representative body.

It was the key policymaking and service delivery agency for Indigenous people. ATSIC was an independent statutory authority established by the Commonwealth Government twelve years ago under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act 1989. ATSIC was a unique decentralised organisation with democratically elected Regional Councils all over Australia that advocates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues and provides principal advice to Governments nationally and internationally. ATSIC embodied the principle of Indigenous self-determination and was the principal agency in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs portfolio.

Australian Forest Contractors Association

The Australian Forest Contractors Association has one representative;

The Australian Forest Contractors Association is the national organisation representing timber harvesting and haulage contractors and operators in both the hardwood and softwood forest industries.

The Bush Users Group of Victoria

The Bush Users Group has one representative;

The Bush Users Group of Victoria is a voluntary organisation formed by groups and individuals with an interest in access to and use of public land throughout Victoria for recreational and commercial purposes.

Our mission is to ensure the preservation of and continued access to public land in Victoria for sustainable recreational and commercial activities for current and future generations.

Our mission is also to ensure that all groups using public land for recreational and commercial purposes respect and, where possible, enhance the environmental, historical, traditional and cultural significance of the public lands that they are enjoying.

The Tourism Industry Council Tasmania

The [Tourism Industry Council Tasmania](http://tict.com.au/) (<http://tict.com.au/>) has one representative;

The Tourism Industry Council Tasmania mission is to provide a strategic direction and united voice for the sustainable development and growth of the Tasmania tourism industry.

Its core roles are to:

- * Be the peak body that represents and acts for the Tasmanian tourism industry;
- * Lobby all levels of government as the united voice of the industry;
- * Provide strategic direction, policies and leadership on key issues facing the tourism industry and advocate these policies to the Government and other relevant stakeholders;
- * monitor the performance of the industry and be a watchdog on the role of Government, Tourism Tasmania and other public bodies in tourism; and
- * continue to develop and implement the Tourism Accreditation Program.

Environmental Non-Government Organisations

The AFS TRC maintains two [2] dedicated seats for Environmental Non-Government Organisations which are currently vacant. AFS Limited would welcome the experience and viewpoints of ENGOS for the AFS TRC based on the criteria for members of the AFS TRC.