

UPDATE OF THE GREEN BUILDING COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

Mat 8- Sustainable Timber Material Specification



The Problem

The GBCA Mat-8 timber specification only recognises FSC certified wood and recycled wood as sustainable.

Available volumes.

Forest Stewardship Council – 2.5%

Australian Forest Standard - 92%

EWPPAA members in the last 2 years have lost 3 million in sales on Green Star rated projects

The GBCA cannot understand why the Australian Wood Products Industry are upset with them!!!

97% of Australian made products are excluded from Green Star Rated Projects

There appears now to be a reluctant recognition that AFS must be given some form of acceptance



RECENT EVENTS

- June 2009. GBCA released their system for review and recognition of timber certification schemes
- 23rd July 2009- Andrew Aitkin Qld GBCA state manager announces publicly that the GBCA revised Mat-8 to be released 1st August 2009 will recognise AFS (at least in the interim).
- 1st August 2009- Nothing happened! (AFS and FSC opposition to review of their schemes?)

Political Pressure on the GBCA

Victoria - Timber Strategy Document

A common theme is a preference for timber products certified to the Forest Stewardship Council scheme. Other trends have been to apply additional criteria over and above third-party forest certification to assess environmental sustainability, or place sustainable forest products at an unfair disadvantage as compared to alternative products.

This behaviour is anti-competitive and will be rectified. No Victorian Government department or agency will endorse any approach, including in procurement and sustainability guides and tools, that does not recognise that third-party certification unambiguously demonstrates sustainable forest management. We also will not provide funding or endorsement to non-government organisations who administer sustainability or procurement guides that discriminate against Victorian timber that meets third-party certification.

Queensland

October 2009.

The Queensland Department of Public Works has dropped the Timber Credit from all their Green Star rated projects.

Strong suggestion that the GBCA will no longer be used once some flagship projects are completed.



Primary Industries Ministerial Council Meeting

6th November 2009- Communiqué

“Council supported Victoria’s policy principle that government procurement policies, guides and tools, and recognition of third party forest certification, should align with and be consistent with each governments forest management policies. **Governments should not adopt, endorse or fund policies and guides that are inconsistent with their own forest management policies.**

It has called on the GBCA to accept AFS.

Where to from here?

- GBCA will probably have no alternative but to accept AFS. Timing is the issue
- GBCA are very concerned about losing support of and credibility with green groups over this issue
- Proposal to have 1 point each for AFS and FSC while schemes under go assessment. Levels the playing field.
- Concerns over lack of CoC at a merchant level
- The EWPAAs has been asked to join a working group to develop a workable system which.
 - Supports good forest management
 - is non-discriminatory
 - acceptable to environmental groups and the wood products industry
 - Protects “high conservation value forests”