

Chapter B1 – STANDARD FOR DESCRIPTION OF LAND

Purpose

The purpose of this standard is to ensure that the forest description adequately documents the land on which the forest is located in terms of:

- legal ownership and tenure;
- location;
- access;
- physical attributes and characteristics;
- limitations on use imposed by law and regulatory authorities;
- status of the land in carbon accounting schemes;
- other salient features (e.g. social and/or environmental constraints impacting on the land use).

Disclosure

Forest assets vary widely in scale. As such, components of land description that are significant to one forest valuation may be immaterial in another. For example, an unformed legal road may be significant in the valuation of a 10 hectare estate but is immaterial in an estate of 100 000 hectares.

In addition, within a forest valuation process, the responsibility for describing land may fall to a party other than the forest valuer, such as a registered land valuer or lawyer, or may be declared out of scope by the client.

When considering the requirements of each standard within this chapter the valuer may exercise judgement as to applicability. However, **the valuer shall:**

- **disclose whether (or not) the valuer has carried out the requirements;**
- **justify not meeting any of the requirements (e.g. lack of materiality or applicability); and**
- **declare what (if any) reliance has been placed on information provided by third parties.**



STANDARD B1.1
Ownership and tenure

For land and tree crop ownership and tenure, the forest description shall:

- declare the ownership of trees, land and other rights and arrangements (e.g. carbon lease) pertaining to the trees and/or land to the extent necessary to support the use for which the forest description has been prepared;
- note the existence of other tenures of land included within the apparent forest boundary (e.g. unformed legal roads, give-and-take boundaries);
- review all contracts and other documents affecting rights to or ownership of the land and/or trees and search all titles and other instruments, noting any encumbrances or limitations that could have a material impact on the value of the tree crop;
- in the case where, for New Zealand, post-1989 forest land has been registered in the NZ ETS pursuant to the Climate Change Response Act (CCRA) 2002, or for Australia, under a climate change program where the tree crop is owned by way of a registered forestry right or registered lease, declare the participant for the purposes of the NZ ETS or the Australian Carbon Credit Unit (ACCU) scheme;

STANDARD B1.2
Location

For defining the location of the land and forest, the forest description shall:

- provide the cadastral reference of the land;
- describe the position of the forest with sufficient precision for its location to be unambiguous to all intended users of the forest description;
- include a map(s) of scale and quality to show the location(s) of the forest to permit a user of the forest description to get to the forest to verify that it exists; and
- verify that the position of the forest and cadastral reference are not materially different.



STANDARD B1.3
Access

For defining the access to the land and forest, the forest description shall:

- state whether the land is connected to the public roading network by legal access (including right of ways, easements or other arrangements);
- state whether the legal access (if present) is or could be practically formed to a standard suitable for use for log extraction by a logging truck to provide access to the entire property;
- in the case where the landowner is not the same entity as the tree crop owner, state any conditions or restrictions on access imposed on the tree crop owner by the landowner (e.g. conditions for use of right of way); and
- state any assumptions made about access to the land and forest for the management and extraction of forest produce.

Note: Ensure any costs associated with legalising access or forming practical access are included in the forest valuation cashflow.



STANDARD B1.4

Physical site attributes and characteristics of the land

For describing the physical attributes of the land, the forest description shall:

- **contain a narrative describing the physical features salient to the purpose for which the forest description is prepared. Any narrative shall be complete and not misleading;**
- **describe the relevant aspects of:**
 - **archaeological features or historic sites**
 - **climate**
 - **drainage and catchment, including erosion or flooding limitations**
 - **geomorphology**
 - **highest and best use**
 - **infrastructure (current roading system, bridges)**
 - **land classification**
 - **microclimate (e.g. frost hollows, swamp)**
 - **minerals and steam**
 - **rainfall**
 - **rocks (roading material)**
 - **site productivity**
 - **soils**
 - **topography**
 - **vegetation (non-forest, e.g. weeds, previous vegetation)**
 - **past land use (e.g. farm, native cutover)**
 - **planned future land uses (e.g. wind turbines, powerlines) in as much as they would affect the perceived value of the tree crop**
 - **other features (e.g. altitude, aspect);**
- **provide the basis for the impact of physical features on yields, costs and prices. ensure that any statements asserted as being factual are capable of verification (to authoritative source, if they exist).**



STANDARD B1.5
Regulatory
considerations

For regulatory considerations, the forest description shall:

- declare all management covenants, rights etc, pertaining to the land, its use, occupation or access that are pertinent to its use for the establishment, management, harvesting and removal of trees now or in the future. Any non-regulatory obligations and constraints arising from customary and 'community' interest and native title are to be declared (e.g. customary hunting rights, customary access rights);
- declare any requirement to re-establish planted forests or regenerate or re-seed natural forests following harvest;
- provide details of the operative district/local government authority and associated regional plans as they relate to the use of the land for forestry, which will describe:
 - New Zealand NES-CF (National Environmental Standards for Commercial Forestry), or relevant Australian state Codes of Practice, risk assessment: erosion susceptibility classification, fish spawning indicator, wilding tree risk.
 - forestry-related activities (afforestation, pruning and thinning to waste, earthworks, river crossings, forest quarrying, harvesting, mechanical land preparation, replanting) that are permitted activities and do not require consent
 - consents required
 - consents obtained
 - consents to be obtained and likely conditions
 - any known violations/actions;
- declare any known and non-confidential archaeological or historic sites and whether any authorities have been granted by Heritage New Zealand or by relevant state authorities / Codes of Practice requirements for Australia;
- declare any known non-complying uses (e.g. sawmill dump, residential/industrial dump or quarry or chemical storage on forest land without a permit); and
- declare any known requirement for action or works under statutes and regulations, that will have a material impact on tree crop value.



STANDARD B1.6
Status of the land in
carbon accounting
schemes

For the NZ Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) pursuant to the Climate Change Response Act 2002 (CCRA), the forest description shall:

- declare the status or eligibility of the land in the ETS (pre-1990, post-1989, pre-1990 offsetting or exempt forest land as defined in the CCRA and its registration status);
- declare the dates (month and year) of harvesting for areas awaiting replanting that are subject to deforestation liabilities;
- for registered post-1989 forest land, declare the details of any emissions returns filed with the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI); and
- state whether the post-1989 forest land tree crop is subject to Field Measurement Approach (FMA) participant-specific tables of carbon stock.

If applicable, provide details of obligations, liabilities and entitlements under the Permanent Forest Sink Initiative (PFSI) or Afforestation Grant Scheme (AGS).

For the appropriate Australian scheme(s), including the Australian Carbon Credit Unit (ACCU) scheme administered by the Clean Energy Regulator (CER), where ACCUs have been issued against the forest the forest description shall:

- declare the land area registered in the scheme(s)
- state whether the [insert appropriate year] forest land tree crop relied on the Australian Government's FullCAM program or direct measurement to assign mass of carbon.

STANDARD B1.7
Other features

In addition, the forest description shall:

- contain narrative describing features, not covered elsewhere, likely to be salient to the purpose for which the forest description is prepared. The narrative may cover:
 - existence of reserves and specific features of flora and fauna; and
 - customary use, native title and public access arrangements;
 - hunting rights.



Revision History

Original Standard

NZIF. Released in May 1999

Revision in August 2020

NZIF. Main changes:

- including (in Standards B1.1 and B1.6) the status of the land in the NZ Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) pursuant to the Climate Change Response Act (CCRA) 2002, the Permanent Forest Sink Initiative (PFSI) and the Afforestation Grant Scheme (AGS);
- requiring (Standard B1.2) the forest description to verify that the position of the forest and cadastral reference are not materially different;
- specifying (Standard B1.3, point 2) whether legal access could provide access to the entire property;
- including (Standard B1.4) archaeological features or historic sites;
- including (Standard B1.5 point 2) forestry-related activities that are permitted activities and do not require consent; and
- requiring (Standard B1.5, point 3) the forest description to declare any known archaeological or historic sites and whether any authorities have been granted by Heritage New Zealand.

Revision in September 2020

FA. Main changes:

- including Australian climate change programs;
- including reference to future planned infrastructure developments;
- declaration of requirements to regenerate or re-seed natural forests;
- inclusion of native title references.

Revision in December 2025

FA/NZIF. Main change was to add opening paragraph on disclosure which states that the valuer should:

- disclose whether (or not) the valuer has carried out the requirements and;
- declare what (if any) reliance has been placed on information provided by third parties.

Released as part of Australia New Zealand Forest Valuation Standard.

