



## Media release

### Foresters show the way on China/Australia investment

While the mainstream media focuses on the China-Australia Free Trade Agreement, there are already a number of other well-established links to exchange ideas and skills in a clear show of cooperation between our two countries.

The 4<sup>th</sup> meeting between the Institute of Foresters of Australia (IFA) and the Chinese Society of Forestry is underway in Beijing, China under the auspices of the China Australia Forestry Exchange Program. In three key meetings the Chinese have shown they are very keen to investigate ways to work together and increase trade and investment.

David Wettenhall (Past IFA President) and Rob de Fégely (current IFA National President) met with Professor Chen Xingliang Vice President and Secretary General from the Chinese Society of Forestry which has 90 000 members, as well as the Chinese Academy of Forestry which is similar to the old CSIRO Division of Forest and Forest Products, and State Forestry Administration.

Rob de Fégely said, 'This is a genuine exchange of ideas with Australia sharing skills and experience in natural forest management and learning from Chinese experience in agro-forestry where forestry and wood production China has for some time been integrated with food production to generate symbiotic relationships between crops and trees.

'We have discussed the opportunities to expand trade and investment between our two countries in particular Chinese investment in wood product processing in Australia with positive economic outcomes for both countries.

'Interestingly, the Eucalypt is an important plantation species in China and they are keen to see more examples of how it is managed across a range of landscape and rainfall zones in Australia.

'Other issues on the agenda included improving an understanding of how trade and investment between Australia and China can be improved and the implications of Australia's *Illegal Logging Prohibition Act 2014* to Australian importers and Chinese exporters,' said Rob.

Discussion will continue with the IFA planning to host the Chinese Society of Forestry on a visit to Australia in 2016.

**Media contact: Rob de Fégely 0415 486 201**

#### **Supporting Notes:**

The Chinese Society of Forestry was founded in 1917 and is one of the oldest academic societies in China.

The Australian Institute of Foresters is not a lot younger, celebrating its 80<sup>th</sup> birthday this year.

**The IFA is Australia's professional body for foresters and other forestry professionals**