



IFA Media release

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Institute welcomes industry management for koalas in blue gum plantations

The Institute of Foresters of Australia has welcomed the release of a new management policy for koalas in blue gum plantations by the Victorian plantation industry, President Rob de Fégely said today.

‘The koala migration into blue gum plantations, particularly in south west Victoria, is both a happy and challenging problem’ Mr de Fégely said.

‘As we continue to move to create production systems that more closely mimic natural systems these instances of native fauna and flora interacting with production will only increase.

‘Industry, and in particular professional forest managers who oversee these operations, are to be commended for the steps they have taken to date to balance the environmental and ecological needs of the koala with the social requirements of the people employed in the industry and the economic requirements of the companies to maintain supply to export markets.

‘However more work needs to be done to develop new operating practices that are designed to at minimise and aim for zero harm to these koalas.’

Mr de Fégely said a whole-of-landscape approach was needed to manage koala populations, as they did not recognise whether trees were on public or private land.

‘Any solution to the challenges requires the involvement of reserve managers, landowners, local government and the community at large,’ he said. ‘This is a big challenge, and one that everyone close to the industry wants to get right.’

‘We all need to support research and development to assist in designing operating procedures that are sympathetic to the koalas feeding and perching requirements while ensuring the timber industry can operate.’

The Institute of Foresters of Australia is a professional institute for forest managers that is apolitical and unaligned and their members work in conservation and production forests, plantations, water catchments and agro-forestry.

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