



IFA Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Institute welcomes Queensland Government response to Forest and Timber Industry Plan

The Institute of Foresters of Australia has welcomed the release of the Queensland Government response to the Queensland Forest and Timber Industry Plan, President Rob de Fégely said today,

‘The Queensland Government’s commitment to support 27 immediate actions detailed in the plan sends a strong message of support to the forest and timber industries in Queensland, and lays a solid foundation for expansion in the sector over the next 30 years’ Mr de Fégely said.

‘The Institute’s aim is to ensure that Australia’s forests and woodlands are professionally managed to ensure all values are sustained in perpetuity, including timber production and other commercial activities as well as recreation and conservation. Reducing the areas of forest we can harvest in Australia will only increase the demand for imports from forests overseas where they may not be as well managed as ours, and will increase Australia’s use of energy-intensive materials as substitutes.

‘The Institute is therefore particularly pleased that the Queensland Government has committed to increase the security of access to native forest resources and to support the on-going production of log timber from both state-owned and private native forests and plantation areas.

‘Queensland has a land area of 173 million hectares including around 52 million hectares of native forest cover. It is estimated that around 5 million hectares of this native forest area in Queensland is currently available for selective harvesting, with around half that area again being privately owned. The Institute maintains that the productivity of these private native forests could be significantly increased, further enhancing their capacity to produce sought after hardwood timbers such as Spotted gum which are yet to be grown commercially in industrial-scale plantations.

‘The Institute looks forward to working closely with the proposed industry-based Forest and Timber Industry R&D Advisory Committee to identify innovative and cost-effective ways of improving the productivity of the private forest estate available for native forest production, and to explore all avenues available to enhance the commercial performance of hardwood plantations.

‘There are over 1,200 members of the Institute across Australia with 130 members in Queensland, including many foresters that have played a pivotal role in researching, developing and managing the world-class forest resources we enjoy in Queensland today – resources which underpin an industry estimated to contribute \$3.8 billion to Queensland’s economy and employing over 19,000 people.

‘The Institute and its members would also welcome the opportunity to work with the Queensland Government and Industry on a number of the other immediate actions committed to under the plan, including the proposed review of the hardwood plantation program, the investigation of opportunities to attract investment in timber residue use in Queensland, and developing and implementing agreed programs to address priority needs with respect to environmental management and workplace safety as expressed in approved codes of practice for forest management.’

The Institute of Foresters of Australia (IFA) is a professional institute for forest managers with its members working Australia-wide and internationally in conservation and production native forests, plantations, water catchments, agro-forestry and the provision of environmental services.

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For more information contact IFA Queensland Division Chair Stephen Walker, email stwalker@bigpond.net.au, phone 0417 073 942