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Forestry carbon left on the shelf again in the 3rd ERF auction

The third Emissions Reduction Fund (ERF) auction beginning tomorrow highlights the missed opportunity from the failure so far to include commercial plantations in the list of eligible activities.

Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA), Mr Ross Hampton said, "Following the much publicised signing of the Paris climate change agreement, Australia's forestry enterprises stand ready to add their weight to the efforts to battle dangerous climate change.¹ However forestry projects will be missing yet again from the reverse auction process, as there are still no agreed methodologies for contracting payments to farmers and landowners who would like to plant rotational trees.

The process of producing a methodology deserves full Government support to enable it to be concluded as soon as possible.

AFPA modelling suggests that an additional 300,000 hectares of plantings would amount to a 450 million tree program and deliver some 50 million tonnes of sequestered carbon.²

"This is a win, win, win opportunity. A win for the environment. A win for the government's emissions reduction targets. A win for forestry towns and communities crying out for more resource to grow regional jobs." Mr Hampton said.

¹ . The current commercial plantation estate contributes an emission offset of around 4.5% of Australia's total emissions of 552 million tonnes (or almost 25 million tonnes of CO₂-e per year). This is sourced mainly from the approximately 800,000 ha of plantations established on cleared agricultural land since 1990 (i.e. Kyoto compliant plantations). Given these are not new plantations they are not eligible to participate in the ERF auction process.

² AFPA 20015 *Plantations ... the missing piece of the puzzle*. <http://ausfpa.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/AFPA-Plantations-Policy-Proposal.pdf>

AFPA represents forest growers, harvesters, and manufacturers of timber and paper products.

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