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## TAS Government commits \$2m for forest products innovation

The Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) congratulates the Tasmanian Government for committing \$2 million in today's State Budget to establish a National Institute for Forest Products Innovation node in Launceston, Tasmania.

This welcome investment adds to the existing funding by the Federal Government, providing the initial two nodes of the Institute a total of \$6 million to date. The other Institute node will be located in Mt Gambier, South Australia. These initial two nodes will provide the Institute with a broad coverage of both sustainable natural forest and plantation sectors.

"The Institute will focus on key areas of competitive strength and accelerate the emergence of innovative, higher-value focused sectors of the forest products industry. In a carbon constrained global economy in which renewable resources are at a premium, the Tasmanian Government's pledge is a vote of confidence in Tasmania and recognition that the forest products industry can play a key role in Australia's innovation future," Mr Hampton said.

The major pathways for our industries to contribute to Australia's innovation agenda and the emerging bioeconomy include:

- the carbon sequestered in growing forests;
- the carbon stored in harvested wood and paper products;
- the substitution of high emissions materials (e.g. steel, concrete) with wood and other fibre based products that have low embodied energy, including new innovative bioproducts; and
- the use of woody biomass for renewable and baseload energy generation (including for renewable heat and biofuels), thereby displacing fossil fuels.

"The Institute has the potential to become the focal point of a strategic network of research 'nodes' across Australia that reflect industry priorities, and support the ongoing good work being done in other industry-led R&D efforts," Mr Hampton said.

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

**Media Contact:** Bernadette Cording  
AFPA Communications Manager  
(m) 0409 962 250 (e) [bernadette.cording@ausfpa.com.au](mailto:bernadette.cording@ausfpa.com.au)