Media Release

AUSTRALIAN FOREST PRODUCTS ASSOCIATION
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'Australia can do more' is the message on International Day of Forests

The 21st of March is the *United Nations' International Day of Forests*, described as a celebration of forests designed to raise awareness of the importance of all types of forests and trees.

Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) Mr Ross Hampton said, "International Day of Forests is a timely reminder of the growing importance of forest product industries in this country. The UN forecasts a global population of 9.5 billion people by 2050. Many commentators note that the demands for fundamentals such as food, shelter and clothing driven by such growth will mean that the world will have to turn ever more to the most renewable of resources."

"Forest products are the green and sustainable resource par excellence, but only if they come from the places which renew, regenerate and replant after they harvest. Every year some 60 million trees are replanted and resown in Australia. The environmental benefits continue as the wood waste and biomass, which are produced as a normal by-product of sustainable forest management practices, can be used for renewable energy."

Mr Hampton said, "Contributing $21 billion to the national economy and with around 120,000 direct jobs across the full value chain, Australian forest, wood and paper industries are a vital part of the rural and regional communities they underpin right across the country."

"Sustainably harvested and replanted forests and plantations are a natural way of managing carbon, and Australia's industry is managed to world class standards. With increasing international demand for sustainably sourced fibre and related forest products, Australia is well placed to become a global leader. AFPA will be looking to all sides of politics in this federal election year for the comprehensive suite of policy settings which will help secure this future."

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

Media Contact: Elizabeth Goodfellow
AFPA Communications and New Media Officer
(m) 0409 962 250 (e) elizabeth.goodfellow@ausfpa.com.au