

10 June 2016

Storm damage to crucial Eden wharf demands a speedy resolution to the Regional Forest Agreements

The recent storm damage to the Australian Natural Wood Exports (ANWE) woodchip loading facility at Eden in NSW has increased the urgency to finalise the Eden and East Gippsland Regional Forest Agreements (RFA) and bring stability to the forest industry, particularly in the southeast of the state.

Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) Mr Ross Hampton said, "The RFAs provide a framework for the sustainable management of Australia's forests that ensures best practice environmental standards flourish, while providing a level of supply certainty to industry that underpins investment, supports innovation and creates jobs."

"RFAs provide a science-based framework that represents world's best practice in the sustainable management of our native forests. It is important that the RFAs continue to ensure forest management practices are not just sustainable, but also achieve high environmental outcomes for our forests."

"With the East Gippsland RFA and the Eden RFA nominally expiring in 2017 and 2019 respectively, there is increasing uncertainty around the future of the native forest industry in the southeast of the state," Mr Hampton said.

It is essential that the two RFA reviews get back on track and are finalised, so that the renewal process can begin.

"While the disruption to the ANWE woodchip loading facility at Eden provides significant short-term challenges to the forest industry in the southeast of NSW, it is important that the RFA reviews are finalised and rolled over for another 20 years to provide certainty for the industry to allow them to invest and grow this sustainable industry into the future," Mr Hampton said.

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

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