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## Report reveals the true value of the sustainable native forest industry

A study has revealed that the sustainable native forest industry in the Central Highlands region of Victoria generates over \$573 million of economic activity and directly employs over 2,100 full-time equivalent workers.

The Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) welcomes the findings of the recently released Deloitte Access Economics (DAE) study, which provides a comprehensive economic analysis of the significant benefits provided by the sustainable native forest industry in the Central Highlands Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) region, northeast of Melbourne.

Chief Executive Officer of AFPA Mr Ross Hampton said, "This report confirms what is already well known to those living in the Central Highlands of Victoria and many other regions of Australia, that the native forest industry is the backbone of the regional economy and an important local employer."

Unlike previous reports that only consider the value of the trees standing in the forest or the logs on the landing, the DAE study rightly extended to the primary processing sector based in the region that directly relies on the timber resource from the Central Highlands forests.

"Without the continued supply of the timber resource from the Central Highlands region, the local sawmills, pulp and paper mills, and other regional timber processing industries could not continue to operate. This would be a massive blow to the regional economy and force thousands of those living in the region to leave to find alternative employment," Mr Hampton said.

The DAE study looked only at the economic benefits and jobs associated with the primary processing sector. Other studies indicate there is much more economic activity and thousands of jobs in secondary processing and further downstream manufacturing that rely on timber from this region. However, this was outside the scope of this analysis, indicating still far greater economic benefits and employment generated by the sustainable native forest industry. In addition to the economic benefits provided by sustainably managed native forests, they also provide multiple social and environmental benefits.

"Nationally, the direct benefits of the sustainable native forest industry are likely to be ten-fold that shown in the DAE study. The Central Highlands region is just one of 10 RFA regions in Australia. The native forestry operations in the other nine RFA regions are equally important for the local economic activity and employment," Mr Hampton said.

A copy of the Deloitte Access Economics Study can be found [here](#).

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

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