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\$20 million for forest industries a welcome Budget injection

The Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) welcomes the \$20 million funding commitment earmarked in last night's Federal Budget to underpin the initial implementation of a National Forest Industries Plan, Chief Executive Officer of AFPA, Mr Ross Hampton said today.

"Later this year the Federal Government has said it will deliver a new national blueprint for Australia's forest industries, something well overdue, given the last major plans were in 1997 and 1992. The funding package committed to last night primes the pump to underpin the implementation of a solid National Forest Industries Plan," Mr Hampton said.

The 2018 Turnbull Government Budget contains [this](#) spending measure (Pg. 73 BP2):

The Government will provide \$20.0 million over four years from 2018-19 to support growth in Australia's renewable timber and wood-fibre industry. The National Forestry Industry Plan includes funding to:

- *transform farm forestry as a commercial enterprise supplying timber to Australia's forestry sector;*
- *enable the identification, improvement and use of existing forest resources on Indigenous owned and managed land, and privately-owned land;*
- *drive further innovation, research and development of new products and value adding in the forestry industry; and*
- *determine opportunities and gaps in key regional forestry hubs.*

"Earlier this year, AFPA released a document ["Towards a National Forest Industries Plan: Key Industry Asks"](#) which outlined the significant needs that forest industries require to remain a strong part of Australia's economic and social future," Mr Hampton said.

"Last night's Federal Budget made a great start to what Australia's forest industries will require as part of the new National Forest Industries Plan. AFPA and industry will continue to work with the Federal Government to ensure the elements needed to turbocharge local timber products manufacturing in this country are delivered.

"120,000 people are employed across the full value chain of forest industries and their contribution to rural communities across the country is essential. Furthermore, we need to work to reduce Australia's \$2 billion annual trade deficit and produce more value-added forest products locally," Mr Hampton concluded.

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

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