

Media Release



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PREMIER ANDREWS RIGHT TO SUPPORT FORESTRY INNOVATION CENTRE BUT WRONG TO CLAIM THE RESEARCH WILL NOT SUPPORT NATIVE TIMBER INDUSTRY

The Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) has applauded the announcement of a joint Commonwealth/Victorian Centre for Forest Products Innovation but criticised the Andrew's Government for pretending the Centre will support the closure of the renewable native forest sector in Victoria.

AFPA Chief Executive Officer Ross Hampton said, "It is extremely disappointing that the Andrew's Government has chosen to mar a very important announcement with more media spin claiming this new Centre in some way supports its plan to close sustainably managed native forestry in Victoria."

"As the Federal Government has made clear the Centres are initiatives of the Commonwealth "Growing a Better Australia" plan released in 2018, which supports both plantation-based forestry and sustainably managed native forestry."

Additionally, the Assistant Minister for Forestry Senator Jonathon Duniam has made it clear today the new Centre will be undertaking research in both native timber and plantation timber management and processing.

"We continue to call on the Andrew's Government to overturn their devastating unilateral decision to shut down the native forestry industry in Victoria by 2030 and back the industry, the workers and the regional communities the industry supports."

Assistant Minister Duniam, Media Release, 15 July 2020

Mr Hampton said, "Plantation forestry is a vital part of our industry providing the softwood timber framing for our homes and woodchips for making paper and packaging. Native forestry is equally important however. We use just 4 trees out of 10,000 from our vast native forest estate in Victoria and every tree is regenerated to make the process completely sustainable."

"From these trees we get the appearance grade timbers we need for things like floors, doors, stairs and indeed the lining of the new State Parliament annex in Melbourne. We can and should do both sorts of forestry in Victoria. The Andrew's plan is not for a transition to plantations but rather a transition to imports," Mr Hampton concluded.

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