

Media Release

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Federal Court decision a win for Australia's sustainable native timber industries

The full bench of the Federal Court has today delivered a strong endorsement of Australia's sustainable native timber industry by rejecting the Bob Brown Foundation's legal challenge to the Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement, the Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) said today.

AFPA CEO Mr Ross Hampton welcomed the Federal Court's affirmation of the Tasmanian RFA, which underpins the state's robust environmental laws that regulate forestry operations.

"Today's decision is further proof that Australians can have confidence that our sustainably managed native forestry operations are regulated to the highest environmental standards," Mr Hampton said.

The Bob Brown Foundation had billed the challenge as "The Great Forest Case", and claimed it would use it to mount similar legal challenges to the Victorian, NSW and WA RFAs, with a view to shutting down Australia's native timber industries.

"Instead, the activists have been dealt a resounding defeat. It is time the anti-forestry activists ended the lawfare against a sustainable, carbon-positive industry that supports tens of thousands of regional jobs and is the lifeblood of so many communities."

"Closing down Australia's sustainably managed native timber industry won't stop the demand for quality appearance-grade hardwood timber for floorboards, staircases and furniture. It will just increase imports from countries with weaker regulations, including those where rainforests are logged unsustainably and illegally," Mr Hampton concluded.

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Quick facts

RFAs are required by law to be independently reviewed, and all the reviews have found that RFAs are meeting or exceeding environmental objectives while providing a level of certainty to industry.

Nationally, because of the RFAs and public land use decisions, over 13.6 million hectares have been added to Australia's forest conservation reserve system.

Timber harvesting operations occur on only a tiny fraction of Australia's native forest estate, using the equivalent of just 6 trees out of every 10,000 annually, and every tree is replaced as the areas are regenerated and regrown by law.

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