

## Media Release

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### **Federal Government commits to unlocking forest industries' carbon storing potential to tackle climate change**

Federal Assistant Minister for Forestry Jonathon Duniam has signalled the Federal Government will ramp up efforts to unlock the carbon storing potential of Australia's forest industries, drive growth in the plantation estate and boost future timber supply.

Speaking at the Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) Members' Forum in Canberra on Wednesday, Assistant Minister Duniam said the forest industries' significant contribution to climate change mitigation is not well recognised, and he will work with the Energy and Emissions Reduction Minister Angus Taylor to unlock forestry's potential.

*One of the things I've been focusing on most importantly is carbon abatement and the role forestry has to play in that.*

*The story around carbon abatement is critical to redefining what we as an industry do...we are actually part of the answer to the carbon problem that our country faces.*

Assistant Minister Duniam also told the forum the Federal Government is prioritising the urgent need to grow the plantation estate.

*The main aim for us is to grow the resource to make sure we have an expanded plantation estate so that we can start finding a pathway to meet the demand...so any policy setting that we can come up with to support industry to reach that goal is something that we are going to put all of our efforts into.*

*Assistant Minister Jonathon Duniam – AFPA Members Forum, 24/03/21.*

AFPA Chief Executive Officer Ross Hampton welcomed Assistant Minister Duniam's commitment to put forestry at the centre of Australia's climate change strategy and to put the policies in place to grow the plantation estate.

"The biggest challenge facing our industry is ensuring that Australia has the plantation resource we need to meet our future timber needs," Mr Hampton said.

"The timber shortages we are seeing right now reflect the failure of decision makers 30-odd years ago to plan for our country's future timber needs. We urgently need governments to work with industry to make this a national priority.

"Growing the plantation estate will have the added benefit of significantly boosting carbon storage in our forests and contributing to Australia's emissions reduction goals.

"Key to achieving this will be fast-tracking the removal of existing barriers to plantations participating in the Emissions Reduction Fund, and developing a carbon accounting method to incentivise timber construction, as recommended by the Federal Parliament's Standing Committee on Agriculture and Water Resources in its report published this week, *Aussie logs for Aussie jobs*," Mr Hampton concluded.

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