

## Media Release

8 September 2021

### **WA Labor abandons sustainable, science based, forestry policy with a smoke and mirrors ‘pivot to plantations’**

The West Australian Government’s announcement that from 2024 it will cease utilising hardwoods from its own forests has been condemned by the Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) as a decision driven by politics not science.

Chief Executive Officer of AFPA Ross Hampton said, “WA was using less than 1 tree in 1000 for forest products in a completely sustainable way, ensuring any tree used was replaced by careful regeneration. Internationally the world is increasingly turning to sustainably sourced tree-fibre to replace plastics and to construct carbon storing timber buildings. The world needs more certified, environmentally careful forestry - such as occurs in WA - not less. Well managed forests are one of the best ways we can help the planet; a fact recognised by the global experts at the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) who said:

***A sustainable forest management strategy aimed at maintaining or increasing forest carbon stocks, while producing an annual sustained yield of timber, fibre or energy from the forest, will generate the largest sustained mitigation benefit.” IPCC 4<sup>th</sup> Assessment***

“The WA Government has cynically attempted to cloak the devastating impact this decision will have on timber supply for WA by also announcing at the same time a \$350 million fund to expand plantations,” Mr Hampton said.

“AFPA has been pleading for plantation growth for years, repeatedly pointing to the shortage in softwood for house framing and roof trusses.

“This announcement of a renewed investment in more softwood trees is therefore very welcome, however the State Government must be honest with West Australians. The trees planted in plantations do not provide the hardwood timber which is used for floors, stairs, and windows. That timber will have to be imported into WA in future years. There is no surplus in Eastern states so it will mostly come from overseas where often the same high levels of environmental control are not operating. Furthermore – the Government says the industry will close in 2024, barely three years from now ignoring the fact that trees take decades to grow. The Government must also answer serious questions about the future livelihoods of all those who rely on WA native hardwood industries for employment and who were participating in good faith in a review of the industry commenced only months ago. They will be feeling betrayed today.”

**Media Contact:**

Joe Prevedello - AFPA Communications Director  
(m) 0491 205 633 (e) [joe.prevedello@ausfpa.com.au](mailto:joe.prevedello@ausfpa.com.au)

