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Forestry aiming for 200 million extra trees

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THE South-East forestry sector is aiming to plant an extra 200 million trees by 2030.

In Mount Gambier yesterday, the Green Triangle Forest Industries Hub – a group of nine forestry companies including OneFortyOne – launched a \$1 billion sustainable growth plan.

The hub aims to increase economic output by more than 65 per cent, making forestry a \$2.5 billion sector for the Green Triangle region, which covers the South-East and Western Victoria.

Hub chairwoman Linda Sewell said an extra 200 million trees was an ambitious plan, but a key component would be ensuring the right trees were grown at the right scale, with no waste.

One of the main drivers would be research and development, allowing for improved species selection. “Demand for the product is growing, so we need supply to grow at the same rate,” she said.

Hub deputy chairman Ian McDonnell said the forestry industry offered strong job opportunities in the regions, particularly for school leavers.

“There’s a commitment by industry to provide training programs, to attract the right people into the industry,” he said.

Barker MP Tony Pasin said the Federal Government was providing \$1.1 million to support the work of the hub, which made a “significant” contribution to forestry.