

## Media Release

16 December 2021

### **Federal Government investment in forest industries R&D will drive innovation and create new clean, green jobs**

The Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) has welcomed the Federal Government's announcement of more than \$7 million in forest industries research and development, as momentum builds for a Launceston-based National Institute for Forest Products Innovation (NIFPI) that will turbocharge advanced manufacturing opportunities for Australia's renewable timber and wood products sector.

Assistant Minister for Forestry and Fisheries, Senator Jonno Duniam, made the announcement last night at the launch of the AFPA and University of Tasmania's proposal for a Launceston-based centre for forest industries innovation.

Senator Duniam announced:

- \$3.1 million over two years to extend the regional National Institute for Forest Products Innovation (NIFPI) Centres in Launceston, Mount Gambier, and Gippsland.
- \$3.8 million over 3 years from 2022 for matching funding for R&D under the Growers Levy.
- \$900,000 over two years to deliver a series of studies to assess our exposure to illegally logged timber.

"Global demand for wood fibre is forecast to triple over the next 30 years as Australia and the world commit to achieving net zero emissions, and Australia is uniquely placed to be at the forefront of this global shift to renewable, low-emission products," AFPA CEO Ross Hampton said.

"This investment in forest industries R&D highlights the Federal Government's recognition of the potential of Australia's sustainable forest industries to drive innovation and job creation in Australia."

Assistant Minister Duniam made the announcement at the AFPA and University of Tasmania's launch last night of their joint proposal for a Launceston-based National Institute for Forest Products Innovation – an ambitious vision for forest products innovation, that will position Australia as a leader in sustainable, low-emission industries and support a world scale forest industries research and development powerhouse.

The launch was well attended by local, State and Federal Government representatives in a strong show of bipartisan support for the proposal. Member for Bass Bridget Archer and

**Media Contact:**

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



Tasmanian Minister for Resources Guy Barnett also spoke in support of a Launceston-based NIFPI.

Under the proposal, the industry co-funded NIFPI would be headquartered at the University's Newnham campus in Launceston and work with existing research networks around Australia to spearhead the development of clean, green, and renewable wood-based products of the future. To establish the world-scale NIFPI Australia needs, AFPA and the University of Tasmania are calling for Federal Government investment of \$100 million over four years, unlocking a further \$100 million in industry contributions.

Ross Hampton said momentum for the NIFPI had grown considerably since the proposal was first unveiled in June this year.

"The move to more sustainable, renewable building materials, paper and packaging solutions, and bioproducts will require technology-driven solutions that will open up new opportunities for our renewable forest industries, which will create exciting new clean, green jobs in Australia.

"Last night's announcement of almost \$7 million in new Government funding for forest industries R&D is a vital down payment on our sector that will ensure that we do not lose the momentum of our successful 'pilot' NIFPI sites in Launceston, Mt Gambier, and Gippsland, which have proven our sector's willingness and capacity to co-invest in its future and to collaborate with universities and the research sector.

"We commend Assistant Minister Duniam for backing our industry and we look forward to the outcome of the recent feasibility study into a national NIFPI," Ross Hampton concluded.

**ENDS**