

Media Release

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Forest industries welcome Commonwealth boost for forest growers levy

Australia's forest industries have welcomed the Federal Government's \$3.8 million commitment from next year for matching research and development funding under the Growers Levy, Chair of the Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) Growers Chamber, Dr Andrew Jacobs said today.

"Forest growers have been working hard to extend the Government's commitment for much needed matching funding supporting the Growers Levy. Forest industries R&D is now more critical than ever as the sector transforms to a technology driven industry that strives to cater for the increasingly fibre hungry world," Dr Jacobs said.

"This increase in the levy over three years from 2022 recognises that innovation through research and development is critical to increasing productivity and developing new products whilst addressing current market challenges. Furthermore, this investment is desperately needed to rebuild essential research capacity.

"The additional funding will allow the industry to further investigate technologies such as remote sensing, genetics and advanced tree breeding, machine learning and technologies which improve safety, timber processing, enable new product development and optimise supply chains," Dr Jacobs said.

AFPA CEO Ross Hampton said the R&D funding was absolutely critical, "Over the past two decades research funding has unfortunately declined in Australia, which is why this announcement is so welcomed.

"The commitment also builds the case for the need for a new National Institute for Forest Products Innovation (NIFPI) in Launceston to drive the industry's R&D priorities into the exciting future.

"Forest industries have and always will be eager participants in R&D to improve their practices. It's excellent the Commonwealth is recognising this too through this additional commitment," Ross Hampton concluded.

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