

Media Release

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Forest growers levy boost welcomed by forest industries

Australia's forest industries welcome the Federal Government's announcement allowing forest growers to spend almost \$1 million extra into biosecurity research and development each year.

Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) Growers Chamber Chair, Dr Andrew Jacobs, said forest growers welcomed the finalisation of the process to strengthen forestry biosecurity.

"Research and development in forestry is more important than ever as government and industry seek to manage timber shortages and harness the power of timber and fibre for new carbon friendly products," Dr Jacobs said.

"The worldwide COVID induced building boom has been further exacerbated by the tragic war in Ukraine driving acute and sustained international timber shortages. At the same time, Australian borders are under pressure from pests and diseases which threaten forest industries and consequently future timber supply."

Forest growers across Australia requested an increase in their biosecurity levy and the Commonwealth has facilitated the expected additional \$900,000 annual investment.

"We are pleased the Federal Government recognises the serious threat biosecurity presents to forest industries and we welcome the support to deliver this annual investment."

AFPA CEO Ross Hampton said the additional funding is critical for R&D and builds the case for a new National Institute for Forest Products Innovation (NIFPI).

"We welcome the levy boost, but over the past two decades research funding has declined in Australia and we need to see that turned around. We need the new NIFPI in Launceston to be fully funded, so Australia can realise its potential in R&D and forest products innovation," Ross Hampton concluded.

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