

## Media Release

6 July 2022

### Urgent Progress Needed on Billion Trees Plan

Urgent progress on the Billion Trees Plan is required if Australia is to have sufficient fibre to meet its future needs, CEO of the Australian Forest Products Association Ross Hampton said today.

“Getting more trees in the ground now is an absolute must,” Ross Hampton said. “Trees are the most economically efficient and effective way to take carbon from the atmosphere and turn it into a form that is useful and valuable, whether that is sawn timber for use in housing construction, or fibre used to make life’s essentials in paper, packaging or tissues.

“Only forestry industries offer such an array of climate-positive solutions that are available right now, including long-term, stable carbon sequestration, decarbonisation of energy systems and substitution for single-use and problematic plastics.

“However, we won’t achieve anything near what we need to unless we can get more trees in the ground starting today.

“It is also vital we maintain strong processing and manufacturing capacity to create the products that we need from fibre grown in Australia. The pandemic revealed how perilous it is to be too dependent on global supply chains. We have welcomed the Labor Government’s strong support for local manufacturing through its Made in Australia policy and its Buy Australian Plans. It is important too that the Federal Government deliver policy consistency.

“This week the government has announced financial support for some local and regional newspaper publishers to assist them absorb price rises associated with newsprint. Whilst keeping the presses turning everywhere in Australia is to be applauded, it needs to be noted that the price rises were only being faced by those publishers who had not chosen to lock in contracts with domestic newsprint suppliers and instead taken their chances with the global spot price market. It would be a poor policy outcome if publishers which backed local production and jobs – in line with Labor policy - find themselves at a disadvantage against publishers who did not.

“Australia’s forest industries, including pulp, paper, fibre packaging and tissue, are sustainable, renewable and climate smart. Growing more trees, to produce more timber for housing and more fibre for paper and other products, is an absolutely must. It is crucial that the government urgently progresses the Billion Trees Plan.”

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