

## Media Release

30 November 2022

### **Forest industries welcome new National Forest Pest Surveillance Program to enhance biosecurity**

Forest stakeholders have combined to establish a new *National Forest Pest Surveillance Program* to help protect Australia's forests from biosecurity threats that could unleash major damage. We welcome this new program that will improve and streamline processes to deal with exotic pests and disease introductions, Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) Ross Hampton said.

A Collaboration Agreement to establish the *National Forest Pest Surveillance Program* has been signed by the Commonwealth, States and Territories, AFPA, Plant Health Australia, Forest and Wood Products Australia, the Invasive Species Council and NRM Regions Australia.

"This new national surveillance partnership aims to improve biosecurity measures including, better collaboration between government and industry, so if pests arrive in Australia they can be dealt with quickly and more effectively. Time is a critical commodity when dealing with biosecurity matters and this agreement prioritises that necessity," Ross Hampton said.

"Furthermore, biosecurity risks are on the rise with movements across Australia's borders expected to increase over coming decades, increasing the risk of an accidental pest introduction, while climate change can also make trees more susceptible to pests and diseases. Continually improving biosecurity and surveillance measures are essential to protect Australia's forests, urban amenity trees and our forest industries.

"I commend all of the stakeholders and the Federal Government for bringing this new agreement partnership forward, so Australia's trees and forests can be as best protected as possible from biosecurity risks," Ross Hampton concluded.

More information on the Program can be found here: [National Forest Pest Surveillance Program](#).

**ENDS**