

Media Release

18 July 2023

Sustainable Forestry the Net in Net Zero

Getting more timber trees in the ground will be a key priority for Australia's Net Zero 2050 Plan as a practical solution that supports sovereign capability, jobs in regional areas and materials to build future houses, CEO of the Australian Forest Products Association Joel Fitzgibbon said today.

Welcoming the Government's announcement about the development of sectoral decarbonisation plans for six priority areas of the Australian economy, Joel Fitzgibbon said the pathway for every sector will feature a mix of direct emissions reduction as well as capturing more carbon.

"In so many cases, growing more trees for production will be a big part of meeting our ambitions.

"As confirmed by former Chief Scientist Professor Ian Chubb AC through the independent review of Australian Carbon Credit Units, photosynthesis is the only pathway known to science that has immediate capacity to remove carbon from the atmosphere at scale.

"Trees that are growing capture and store more carbon over time than do mature trees.

"When we harvest, that stored carbon continues to be locked up in the timber and creates space in the landscape for more carbon to be captured. There's an entire second forest of carbon stored across the built environment which can also be grown.

"By using trees to their full extent in housing and construction, plastic replacements, paper and fibre packaging, and as biofuels and bioenergies, we shift the balance in terms of relying on fossil fuels and fossil carbon.

"We know that global demand for timber and wood fibre products is going to increase by as much as four times over the next 30 years. If we don't grow trees here and utilise our own resources, we will simply shift emissions, jobs and poor environmental outcomes offshore.

"Harnessing the power of forestry, timber and wood fibre will help Australia meet our net zero targets, help keep us supplied with essential everyday products and provide long-term secure jobs for Australians. Sustainable forestry truly is a win-win," Joel Fitzgibbon concluded.

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