

Media Release

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Sovereign capability and climate can also win through Social Housing Accelerator Fund

The Albanese Government's \$2 billion Social Housing Accelerator Fund announced over the weekend can also be a winner for sovereign capability and climate if the use of Australian timber is prioritised in the construction of these new homes, Acting CEO of the Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) Natasa Sikman said today.

“Through this fund the Government can address the social housing supply crisis, make progress against its climate goals, align to their own Buy Australian Plan and support Australia's sovereign capability in production, manufacture and construction sectors simply by using Australian timber,” Natasa Sikman said.

“Australia's forest products sector welcomes this fund at a time when leading indicators for the housing construction industry are showing significant declines.”

AFPA analysis shows building one million houses using timber could deliver a 14 million tonne CO2 mitigation towards the Government's legislated target of reducing emissions by 43 per cent by 2030. That's the equivalent of taking six million cars off the road for a whole year!

The construction, operation and maintenance of buildings accounts for almost a quarter of greenhouse gas emissions in Australia. Choosing timber in new home builds means starting with a healthy CO2 credit, as opposed to potential deficits in new dwellings built with other materials.

“Of course, to build new homes with timber we must grow supply by planting more timber production trees. We need one billion new production trees planted, otherwise Australia will be 250,000 timber house-frames short of demand by 2035. That's the equivalent of cities the size of Newcastle and Geelong combined,” Natasa Sikman said.

“I encourage the Government to include timber into housing policies to ensure Australia drives down emissions in the construction sector – while also achieving multiple positive outcomes by helping to address housing shortages, mitigating climate change and helping the many communities, regional and metropolitan, that grow and process the timber and wood fibre we use every day in our lives,” Natasa Sikman concluded.

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