



MEDIA RELEASE

Climate for Foresters to meet (02/09/2009)

The Institute of Foresters of Australia will be holding its 2009 National Conference at the Events Centre Caloundra Qld Australia from 6-10 September 2009.

The theme of the Conference is '*Forestry: A climate of change*'.

Her Excellency Penelope Ms Wensley, AO, Governor of Queensland will open the Conference on Monday 7 September at 10.30am.

Keynote speakers on the opening morning include Professor Roger Stone (University of Southern Queensland) who will outline future climate change scenarios for forest and forest based industries, Professor John Innes (University of British Columbia) who will talk on climate change impacts and adaptation challenges and Penny Baalman (GHG Offset Services) who will focus on climate change mitigation opportunities for forestry. All three will also participate on a Climate Change Panel discussion to be held at 1.30pm.

In his pre-Conference advice to prospective Conference registrants members the Institute President Dr Peter Volker said that "while the conference sub-themes seek to cover the broad and complex spectrum of challenges facing the forestry profession and forest-based industries in the current 'climate of change', the strong focus on climate change at this conference appropriately recognises the widely held belief that it is the main issue facing the sustainability of life on earth".

"Australian governments at all levels are increasingly focused on achieving large reductions in greenhouse emissions and, as a developed country of the Pacific Region, Australia is committed to assisting developing countries with the impacts of climate change" Dr Volker said.

The aftermath of the recent bushfires in Victoria and flooding in Queensland has brought these issues into sharp focus in Australia. Foresters are advocating that we should not ignore lessons from the past and that the time for action has come. These disasters have demonstrated that active forest management cannot prevent such disasters but it can mitigate damage. Forest management is vital to rural and regional economic recovery by providing employment and vital infrastructure such as roads, and an experienced workforce experienced in reforestation and forest restoration. These skills, especially in native forest management, are under threat of being lost.

As IFA President, Dr Volker has expounded that "in an international political environment that is moving rapidly to address previous inaction, the need for rigorous policy development informed by foresters is critical to shaping public and government perception and action. We must provide for sustainable livelihoods from forests, and a rational inclusion of trees and forest products in carbon accounting and emissions trading schemes. We must also recognise how best to adapt forests to climate change and seize the opportunities that forestry can provide locally, nationally and internationally to mitigate the effects of global warming. To do otherwise will mean that forestry, and forest industries, will be but a minor player in determining their future, in this climate of change".

The Conference has attracted over 200 professional foresters from around Australia and other professionals associated with forest industries, climate change, carbon trading and conservation.

Further information on the conference can be obtained by visiting the website at <http://www.forestry.org.au/conference/> For further information contact Dr Peter Volker, President of the Institute of Foresters of Australia, Ph: 0418 125 319. **Media are welcome to attend. Please contact Adrian O'Loughlin, IFA Executive Director, if you wish to attend Ph: 0418 433 485**



Dr Peter Volker