



## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Borers and rots affecting valuable eucalyptus forests and timbers (06/12/07)**

Despite significant borer and rot impacts on eucalyptus species in Australia and internationally there is very little awareness among business, government or the community. The Institute of Foresters of Australia convened a conference in Perth to raise the awareness and find solutions to the impacts on forest and the forest industry.

Phil Shedley, IFA conference convener, said the conference was to bring together national and international experts to seek commercial management solutions by pooling widespread experience, thereby adding value to the commercial eucalypt resources.

The conference identified a number of key issues including the low profile of borers and rots, high economic losses of timber values, insufficient investment in research and development and management of timber rots and an inadequacy of understanding of their taxonomy.

Mr Shedley said, "It is a multi-faceted and complex issue, with many interactions, and research needs to be multi-disciplinary. In particular there are intricate inter-relations between rot and borer damage and forest management or plantation practices. There needs to be a coordinated approach to addressing this very important issue."

The impact is international and only lessened when affected wood is converted into low value charcoal or reconstituted products.

The impacts of climate change, drought and having poor nutrition make trees more susceptible to borer and rot attack. Even delays in log delivery to a water spray storage area can have a detrimental impact. The relationship between these factors and timber degrade is yet to be properly quantified.

After a number of field trips to view damage to jarrah and karri trees the 40 national and international delegates exchanged papers and presentations prior to resolving to increase the awareness of the economic impact of borers and rot and called for long term studies into wood-rotting fungi and the effects on timber grades.

Integrated studies into rot and borer development under different forest management and fire regimes must also be established along with developing control measures that will cope with an increase in damage, especially in solid wood products.

The delegates said that governments must recognize that the decreasing land area available for wood production increases the importance of sound forest practices and bushfire management to improve timber quality, specifically to prevent timber degrade through borers and rots.

For a listing of papers delivered at the conference visit [www.forestry.org.au](http://www.forestry.org.au)

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