



MEDIA RELEASE

Australia's lost research potential

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The Institute of Foresters of Australia (IFA) cannot understand why the Commonwealth Government would not support the Cooperative Research Centre for Forestry application for extended funding.

On learning of the outcome of the CRC Forestry application for a further \$23M to extend the life for five years, IFA President Dr Peter Volker said, "Our profession is suffering the death of a thousand cuts at the hands of the Commonwealth and some State Governments. This is yet another blow with up to 50 full time scientists to lose their jobs and loss of sponsorship of at least 35 post-graduate students."

Dr Volker said that there has been a gradual decline in support for forest research over the past decade. "Firstly, most State Government forest services were restructured and their research branches were cut up and destroyed, then CSIRO abandoned its forestry and forest products research division, now the CRC, which had widespread industry and government support has been given notice."

"Australia has and could continue to produce some of the world's best forest scientists," he said. "Unfortunately most of them will now have to look for employment in other countries or outside the forestry sector. Australia's qualification standards are highly regarded overseas and let's hope there are opportunities in the developing world, so that they can help to lift the standard of forest management in those areas, from where we import a tremendous amount of wood products, to the excellent standards of Australia."

The IFA strongly urges the Commonwealth Government to reconsider its decision.

Further enquiries to:

Dr Peter Volker RPF FIFMA MAICD
President
Mobile: 0418 125 319
Institute of Foresters of Australia