

The Institute of Foresters of Australia

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IFA hopes report will deliver better outcomes for Australia's forests

The Institute of Foresters of Australia (IFA) today announced its support of the findings of the House of Representatives Standing Committee inquiry into the Australian forest industry.

The Committee which is chaired by Dick Adams MP released its report yesterday. 'Forestry has the potential to supply more building materials to the construction industry, to contribute more renewable energy to the Australian economy, and to improve land management practices across the agricultural sector'. Dick Adams said.

The IFA notes that the report is at odds with a number of recent government actions.

In particular, the inquiry and the IFA support the Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) process and in fact, the IFA supports extension to broader landscapes through the National Reserve System. However, the IFA is concerned that the Tasmanian Inter-Governmental Agreement and subsequent Independent Assessment cuts directly across the comprehensive science based and consultative approach of the RFAs.

The IFA supports the inquiry recommendations that:

- bioenergy sourced from sustainably managed native forest biomass should continue to qualify as renewable energy; and
- the Carbon Farming Initiative consider provisions to include sustainable harvesting and replanting of plantations and farm forestry.

IFA President David Wettenhall noted that these are common sense and important amendments for Australia to develop the best outcomes for reducing atmospheric carbon pollution.

'The inquiry saw great prospects for investment and innovation in the forest industries. Now is the time for the Government to give voice to the benefits of a vital forest industry. Australia has secure and well managed native forests and needs to expand planted forests.' David said.

The Adams inquiry is the latest of a string of inquiries which, when they examine forestry in earnest, come to the conclusion that it is a sector worthy of government encouragement. The real test will be in having the recommendations adopted and implemented by the government.

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The IFA is the body that represents professional foresters and forestry experts across Australia. Its membership includes persons with extensive experience in plantation management, native forest management, catchment management, policy development and sustainable natural resource management. The Institute is strongly committed to the principles of sustainable forest management, sustainable use of biodiversity, conservation

For enquires about the Institute of Foresters of Australia contact Cassandra Spencer, IFA Chief Executive Officer on 02-6281 3992