

The Institute of Foresters of Australia

ABN 48 083 197 586



23 July 2009

The Hon. Tony Burke
Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister

XIII World Forestry Congress, Buenos Aires, Argentina 18-23 October 2009

I am concerned that there will be no official Australian Government representation from your Department at the XIII World Forestry Congress (WFC 2009) to be held in Buenos Aires in October this year. The conference is being organised by FAO.

This is an important congress as a precursor to the COP15 Copenhagen UN Conference on Climate Change in December. Forests will be an important part of these negotiations. As Australia is taking a leading role in COP15 negotiations, I think it is important that our nation has a clear position on the role of forests in climate change mitigation and carbon sequestration. The WFC 2009 is an important forum to learn about the issues that will rise to the surface in Copenhagen.

WFC 2009 also presents an opportunity for Australia to showcase considerable achievements in sustainable forest management to the rest of the world and demonstrate Australian forest investment opportunities to industrial representatives who will be attending. In fact there are two forums to be held including a Business Networking Day and an Investment and Financing Forum.

I am aware, from the conference web site, that the Australian Embassy is a co-sponsor for the World Forestry Congress. Are you able to inform me if they will be taking an active role in the Congress?

Given the availability of very cheap airfares and reasonably priced accommodation in Buenos Aires, I would urge your Department to send at least one representative to the Congress. I secured a Qantas return flight, Hobart to Buenos Aires for less than \$1800.

I will be representing the IFA at the conference and will be hosting a "side event" for a meeting of Professional Forestry Associations.

If there is Australian Government representation at the World Forestry Congress from other Australian Government Departments I would be pleased to make contact with them.

Your sincerely,

Dr Peter Volker FIFA RPF
President