**2021 National Conference *Draft* Resolutions**

13 October 2021

1. **Forestry Australia**

We, the members of Forestry Australia attending the National Conference held from 11 – 14 October 2021:

* Welcome the change of name of the Institute of Foresters of Australia and Australian Forest Growers to *Forestry Australia*.
* Note that the name Forestry Australia embodies the commitment of foresters and the forestry profession to manage and care for all forests on all tenures for all values.
* Encourage members of Forestry Australia to redouble efforts to provide nature-based solutions to help address some of the significant challenges facing society, including catastrophic bushfires, biodiversity decline and climate change.

1. **Calling for a new vision for Australia’s forests**

We, the members of Forestry Australia attending the National Conference held from 11 – 14 October 2021:

* Recognise the need to reduce the potential for severe wildfires across all types of forest and increase the resilience of forests to climate change.
* Call for a new shared national vision for forests that recognises all forest values and the need to restore and maintain the health of forests.
* Acknowledge the benefits of establishing new, shared forest governance models that bring together government agencies with Indigenous Australians, the private sector and civil society.
* Encourage forest managers to prioritise and promote active and adaptive management across forest landscapes to build resilience in our forests, local communities and economy.
* Support the integration of traditional knowledge with Western scientific evidence and innovative technologies to enhance forest management for improved resilience and other outcomes.
* Call on all Australians to develop a new shared national vison for Australia’s forests.

1. **Measurable outcomes and key performance indicators for fire management**

We, the members of Forestry Australia attending the National Conference held from 11 – 14 October 2021:

* Recognise and support the National Bushfire Management Policy Statement for Forests and Rangelands that was endorsed by all members of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2014.
* Acknowledge the rights of Traditional Owners to connect to country and practice their knowledge, including through the use of fire.
* Recognize the need for more coordinated, adaptive and active management of forests and fires to mitigate the risks of severe wildfires.
* Acknowledge and value the efforts of State and National fire and land management agencies to develop and adopt guiding principles and measurable outcomes for the evaluation of fire management programs that augment the national vision of having fire regimes effectively managed to maintain and enhance the protection of human life and property, and the health, biodiversity, tourism, recreation and production benefits derived from Australia’s forests and rangelands.
* Note that effective fire regimes include:
  + Appropriate use of prescribed fire to protect communities and their assets, and to protect and conserve natural and cultural values;
  + Managing the land with fire in an ecologically, socially and economically sustainable way;
  + Increasing the level of shared responsibility for fire and land management with indigenous and non-indigenous communities through the development of working partnerships;
  + Supporting the ongoing development of fire management capacity and capability through partnerships with public agencies, educational institutions, research bodies, and other forest and fire stakeholders;
  + Using adaptive fire and land management as the most effective approach to managing complex and changing landscapes.
* Urge State and National fire and land management agencies and other relevant parties to develop a strong set of measurable outcomes and key performance indicators so that progress towards meeting fire management goals can be assessed, reviewed and reported on.

1. **Traditional Owners and forests**

We, the members of Forestry Australia attending the National Conference held from 11 – 14 October 2021:

* Note that the 2019 ANZIF Conference (Christchurch) agreed the following resolution in support of Indigenous Forest Management:
  + Recognize traditional rights of Indigenous People to access and care for their indigenous forests
  + Understand potential contributions that these indigenous forests can make to Indigenous Peoples’ environmental, social & economic development
  + Recognize substantial number of individual initiatives and projects and strongly endorse the scientific expertise within the ANZIF network that can enable these communities and their forests to achieve their potential
* Further, note that the Institute of Foresters 2017 Conference in Cairns supported the following resolution on indigenous forestry:
* That Forestry Australia acknowledges current processes for Australia’s Indigenous people to take a rightful place in their country and supports Indigenous Forest owners in their desire to manage their forests for cultural, economic, conservation and social values.
* Forestry Australia offers to partner, learn from and assist Indigenous people in jointly developing our capacity for sustainable forest management. Forestry Australia will form a national Committee to work together with Indigenous communities to achieve sustainable forest management.
* And the following resolution on fire management
  + Forestry Australia acknowledges current processes for Australia’s Indigenous people to take a rightful place in their country and supports Indigenous Forest owners in their desire to manage their forests for cultural, economic, conservation and social values.
  + Forestry Australia recognises the fire management skills of the traditional indigenous owners of the land. Forestry Australia notes and supports the use of fire in northern Australia for sustainable forest management including carbon emission reduction, forest health, ecological values and encourages the extension of this approach to other regions of Australia.
  + Forestry Australia notes the development of the National Burning Project and supports the implementation of its principles and philosophies in all jurisdictions of Australia
* Recognise and support Australia's first people and Traditional Owners to manage and maintain their traditional lands reflecting the way their ancestors looked after country for millennia before the arrival and settlement of European colonisers on this continent.
* Acknowledge the rights of Traditional Owners to connect to country and practice their knowledge to care for country.
* Reiterate the need to form a working group to advise the Forestry Australia Board on developing productive partnerships with Traditional Owner organisations to better coordinate the adaptive and active management of forests.
* Call on the Commonwealth Government to revitalize the 2005 National Indigenous Forestry Strategy and in particular to foster greater opportunities for Traditional Owners to manage the healing of Country and implement cultural burning practices.

1. **Diversity**

We, the members of Forestry Australia attending the National Conference held from 11 – 14 October 2021:

* Value the innovative solutions that are generated through diverse perspectives.
* We commit to encouraging diversity encompassing gender, sexual orientation and race at all levels within Forestry Australia and the broader forest industry in Australia.

1. **Forest and trees on farms**

We, the members of Forestry Australia attending the National Conference held from 11 – 14 October 2021:

* Recognise and support the integration of tree plantings into rural landscapes and farms for multiple values and uses that meet landowner priorities whilst producing positive benefits to improve the health and extent of Australia's forested landscapes.
* Note that there is a wide range of both native and introduced trees that can be grown for timber products in ways that support agricultural production, control land degradation and enhance biodiversity. This includes the provision of naturally durable timbers and high-quality hardwoods that have conventionally been sourced from native forests, and new innovative timber products and extractives.
* Acknowledge the desire of governments and industry to dramatically increase the area of plantations to meet our future domestic timber needs.
* Note that the focus has been on supplying the existing demand for softwood structural timber from conventional industrial plantations located in identified hubs
* Recognise the need to remove barriers to unleash the currently unrecognised potential of the farming sector to supply a wide range of timber products from across the nations farmlands.
* Support the provision of science-based professional advice and support to encourage private landowners to integrate tree plantings into the rural landscape.
* Recognise that involving the wider farming community can add great value to the forestry sector, help build community support for the sector overall and provide a broad range of environmental and social benefits for those living in the agricultural landscape.
* Encourage governments and the forestry sector to embrace the opportunities that farmers and the non-industrial private forest sector can provide to expand the plantation estate and contribute to management of natural forests on private land, including facilitating their active involvement in the forest sector through the following actions:
  + Promote transparency in costs and prices
  + Recognise there are means of achieving productivity increases to offset area reductions which can be achieved by supporting research and development.
  + Expand research and development funding to cover all aspects of the supply chain including breeding and genomics, silviculture, harvesting and haulage, processing for fibre, cellulose and solid wood
  + Address native forest market issues that are leading to a lack of management on private land
  + Facilitate recognition of public goods in private forests including for biodiversity, soil and water protection, cultural heritage and landscape management.
  + Increase recognition of the potential for multipurpose forests on farms to play a significant role in producing high quality commercial forest products across a wide range of sites.
  + Complement current policy of supporting the expansion of industrial plantations in specific hubs with a companion policy that supports the development of a wide range of timber production options across all agricultural regions involving a wide variety of landholders and investors.
  + Ensure that public funds provided to support land conservation, biodiversity and carbon sequestration enable carefully planned silvicultural management and the harvesting of forest products.
  + Support investment in education, extension and community development to deliver the desired public good outcomes from forest development within the farming community.
  + Support multipurpose agroforestry research and development aimed at providing knowledge, confidence and support (indirect incentives) for innovation and investment in trees on farms for both conservation and profit.

1. **Forests as a natural climate solution**

We, the members of Forestry Australia attending the National Conference held from 11 – 14 October 2021:

* Recognise the globally significant threats posed by human-induced climate change, and the critical roles that forest management must play in preparing for and mitigating the effects of a changing climate, through active and adaptive management across the national forest estate.
* Note the IPCC has stated that “*In the long term, a sustainable forest management strategy aimed at maintaining or increasing forest carbon stocks, while producing an annual sustained yield of timber, fibre or energy from the forest, will generate the largest sustained mitigation benefit.”[[1]](#footnote-1)*
* Recognise the importance of communicating the critical role for managed forests, and the need to present the benefits in the context of the landscape scale and using comprehensive life cycle analysis; in contrast to studies with a limited spatial or temporal extent that may present contrary perspectives on these opportunities.
* Encourage governments and society to recognise and embrace the opportunities that forest management and sustainable use of wood products and bioenergy can provide a nature-based approach to addressing climate change, whilst ensuring that other sectors fulfil their own obligations to meet climate change goals.
* Encourage governments and community leaders to engage and involve professional foresters and forest growers in all relevant government initiatives for climate change mitigation, including the design and implementation of emission reduction incentives and carbon trading schemes.
* Encourage specific consideration of the needs and opportunities for small-scale forest growers, to play a key role in expanding carbon stocks in forests, including through recognition of the value of harvested wood products, the carbon storage benefits of wood as a construction material, the opportunities for fossil fuel replacement by forest-sourced bioenergy and the potential for the use of biochar.
* Support further investment in research and development, and the application of innovative technologies and production systems, to maximise the contribution that forest management and use of renewable forest products can make to increase carbon sequestration and storage, and replace fossil fuels and emissions intensive products, through a range of applications that contribute further to developing a more circular bioeconomy in Australia.

1. **Natural Capital Accounting**

We, the members of Forestry Australia attending the National Conference held from 11 – 14 October 2021:

* Recognise the significant advances worldwide in the development of natural capital accounting frameworks and systems, and the increasing interest and progress in applying these frameworks and systems to the assessment of natural capital in forest estates in Australia.
* Recognise the importance and value of quantifying the benefits of natural capital, including forests and forest ecosystem services, in terms that can be readily understood and appreciated by government and non-government stakeholders, and society more broadly.
* Support the further development of natural capital accounting by forest managers, and development of guidelines to assist forest managers with best practice application of these frameworks and systems.
* Encourage governments and community leaders to support forest managers in their efforts to establish natural capital accounts, and recognise the costs and benefits associated with managing and enhancing natural capital through sustainable forest management practices.

1. **Forestry education**

We, the members of Forestry Australia attending the National Conference held from 11 – 14 October 2021:

* Note that that the Institute of Foresters 2017 Cairns Conference recognized the need to actively engage with education and professional institutions to drive the development of innovative and relevant forestry curricula and training programs and supported the development of a forestry education and professional development strategy. This strategy would target students and early career professionals and be developed in close collaboration with the above referenced institutions and associated student and early career bodies.
* Note that in the past, scholarships provided by government and the forestry industry supported viable forestry education at university level.
* Encourage governments and the forestry sector to redress declining skill sets by supporting the re-establishment of an Australian forestry school at university level to provide tertiary training in forest science at undergraduate and technical levels.

1. *Source: Nabuurs, et al., 2007: Forestry. In Climate Change 2007: Mitigation. Contribution of Working Group III to the Fourth Assessment Report of the e Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [B. Metz, O.R. Davidson, P.R. Bosch, R. Dave, L.A. Meyer (eds)], Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom and New York, NY, USA).* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)