



Australian Government

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

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An eNewsletter from Forest Industries Branch

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Tasmanian Community Forest Agreement

A new \$250 million agreement will boost Tasmania's forest industry by creating more jobs for its communities and providing greater protection for its forests.

The Tasmanian Community Forest Agreement, announced on 13 May 2005, is a joint commitment of the Australian and Tasmanian Governments.

The agreement includes the protection of an additional 170,000 hectares of forest, and increasing the protection of old-growth forest area to over 1 million hectares; further protection of the Tarkine and Styx Valley; a significant reduction in clear felling of old growth forest; and improving the productivity of existing regrowth forests and plantations. It also includes developing and revitalising the timber industry; and increasing the skills and training for forestry workers.

The Australian Government is providing a \$46 million industry assistance package to help the hardwood timber industry adjust to changes arising from the agreement. Country sawmills will receive \$4 million of this funding, and the softwood industry will receive assistance under a separate program.

The agreement builds on the 1997 Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement.

For more information, including a brochure, maps and fact sheets, contact the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry on (02) 6272 4422 or visit www.daff.gov.au/rfa, or the Tasmanian Department of Premier and Cabinet on (03) 6233 3464 or visit www.premier.tas.gov.au

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National and Regional Investment Workshops

Outcomes from National and Regional Investment Workshops, held around Australia over the past two years, will be used to develop a policy paper to improve the development of and investment in the forest and wood products industry.

The last of the national workshops was held in Hobart in April. It was attended by over 60 stakeholders.

On behalf of the Forestry and Forest Products Committee, the chair of the last workshop, Mark Kelly from URS Forestry, will develop the policy paper to present to the Primary Industries Ministerial Council (PIMC) in October. This policy paper will be critical to progress the work that has gone into all workshops.

Mr Kelly will identify six priority actions for governments to improve industry development opportunities and to foster greater investment in Australia's forest and wood products industries. One of these actions will be on forest education and skills development.

The policy paper's recommendations and actions will apply to native forests and plantations, and will seek agreement by all governments through the PIMC.

This policy paper will complement the Industry Vision and Growth Strategy, which when completed will provide a framework for activities governments and industry can pursue to support the industry. The policy paper will also be consistent with existing policies, such as the Plantations for Australia: The 2020 Vision and the Farm Forestry National Action Statement.

For more information, contact Aidan Flanagan on 02 6271 6380 or at aidan.flanagan@daff.gov.au

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International Arrangement on Forests

The future International Arrangement on Forests (IAF) was reviewed at the 5th session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF 5) held in New York in May 2005.

During the two-week session, delegates reviewed the progress and effectiveness of the arrangement and considered future activities; considered the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests; and considered ways to improve cooperation, and policy and program coordination.

The vast majority of the Forum also supported Australia's proposal that regional meetings occur every second year to progress practical actions.

Unfortunately, as countries held differing views on issues such as legally binding instruments, the Forum did not agree to strengthen the IAF at this time.

Negotiations will continue at UNFF 6 in February 2006.

For more information on the outcomes of UNFF 5, contact Kirsty Duffey on 6272 5847 or at kirsty.duffey@daff.gov.au.

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XXII IUFRO World Congress

Preparations for the largest gathering of world forestry experts are well on track, with more than 1000 delegates already registered to attend the XXII International Union of Forestry Research Organizations (IUFRO) World Congress in Brisbane this August.

The Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry is the principal sponsor and is planning a major exhibit as part of the Congress.

Thousands of the world's best and brightest forestry scientists and commercial operators are coming to Australia to experience a comprehensive showcase of international forestry innovations.

Scientists, growers, processors and managers will be able to access the latest advances in forest science and fast track their ability to apply these to forest management, production and environmental issues.

Conference organising committee chair, Dr Gary Bacon, said Australia's impressive track record in forestry science, including being the first country to successfully grow a softwood rainforest species in a commercial plantation, meant that many local achievements would also be on display.

"As a nation, we have a great deal of forestry achievements to showcase at the Congress, ranging from sustainable forest management practices to innovative research and cutting-edge clonal technology," Dr Bacon said.

"For Australian scientists, researchers and growers in the forestry sector this is an unprecedented opportunity to demonstrate their expertise under the international spotlight," he said.

For more information on the IUFRO World Congress, visit www.iufro2005.com or phone (07) 3854 1611.

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The Australian Wood and Paper Industry Growth Strategy

With the Australian forest industry entering a phase of unprecedented growth, industry and government have joined forces and developed the Australian Wood and Paper Industry Growth Strategy to ensure it reaches its full potential.

This whole-of-industry strategy will be developed in three stages and includes a review of industry initiatives; data compilation and analysis; evaluation of opportunities for growth; current and potential comparative advantages and perceived impediments to growth; and recommendations for subsequent stages of the strategy.

As part of stage one, industry initiatives were reviewed in June by a group comprised of GHD Pty Ltd, the Fifth Estate and the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics (ABARE).

The project will provide a national framework and help industry to innovate, grow and compete. It will be facilitated by a steering committee, chaired by the Australian Plantation Products and Paper Industry Council (A3P) and will be comprised of industry and government members.

For more information, contact Aidan Flanagan on 6271 6380 or at aidan.flanagan@daff.gov.au

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Australian Plantations Growing Strong



A new study has found that the Australian plantation timber industry increased in size by over 50,000 hectares last year.

Dr Colin Grant, Bureau of Rural Sciences (BRS) Executive Director, said the 2005 National Plantations Inventory (NPI) update shows growth of the plantation industry is strong and that investment in new plantations continues to be attractive.

The NPI, launched by the Australian Government Minister for Fisheries, Forestry and Conservation, Senator Ian Macdonald, revealed that about 27 per cent more new plantations were established in 2004, compared to 2003.

"The total plantation estate is expanding steadily — this is good news for the timber industry, investors and the environment," Dr Grant said.

"We now have over 1.7 million hectares of plantations in Australia, with over 1 million hectares of the total estate consisting of softwood species.

This is the first time that the area of softwoods has passed one million hectares, up from 988,000 hectares in 2003.

"Nearly 90% of the new plantations established in 2004 are privately owned — with around two-thirds owned by individual private investors, usually through managed investment schemes."

Copies of the National Plantation Inventory are available from www.daff.gov.au/nfi.

More information is also available by contacting BRS on 02 6272 4034 or at nfi.info@brs.gov.au.

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Australian Forestry Plantations: Planting for the Future



A new publication that promotes Australia's forest and timber industries, Australian Forestry Plantations: Planting for the Future, was launched by the Australian Government Minister for Fisheries, Forestry and Conservation, Senator Ian Macdonald, on 29 April 2005.

The joint Invest Australia/Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry publication was produced for

international businesses interested in establishing plantations in Australia.

The publication highlights the natural and commercial advantages offered by investing in new plantations, such as Australia's plentiful, high-yielding arable land; cost-effectiveness; an established and efficient infrastructure; internationally recognised commitment to ecologically sustainable forest management; expertise in plantation management, and a guaranteed future demand for high-quality product internationally.

Australian Forestry Plantations: Planting for the Future has been distributed internationally through Invest Australia's offices, and will be translated into Chinese and Korean later this year.

For more information, contact Aidan Flanagan on (02) 6271 6380 or at aidan.flanagan@daff.gov.au

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Australia's Forest Profile Series



Australia's major forest types are the subject of a new series of easy-to-read, colour profiles.

Produced by the Bureau of Rural Sciences' National Forest Inventory (NFI), the nine profiles provide the latest information and statistics on:

- Acacia forests
- Callitris forests
- Casuarina forests
- Eucalypt forests
- Melaleuca forests
- Mangrove forests
- Rainforests
- Plantation forests
- Australia's forests

They feature colour photographs and a map showing the distribution of the forest types across Australia, as well as information on the main species structure, extent, ownership, management, values and uses.

The profiles accompany a poster-sized map that shows the extent of Australia's forests types. The map is available free from the NFI.

The profiles are available as free downloads on the NFI web site at www.brs.gov.au/forest

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