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Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

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An eNewsletter from Forest Industries Branch

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Welcome to Forestlinks for 2005

Welcome to the first issue of Forestlinks for 2005. We hope you like the new format, which we've designed to make it easier to read on-screen.

We will continue to send Forestlinks to you bi-monthly, and you will have the choice of downloading it either with graphics or without.

Thanks to all of you who responded to our recent survey to help us make Forestlinks more interesting and relevant for you. We've taken your comments and suggestions on board, and you will see the results in this and following issues.

We hope you enjoy this issue, and we look forward to hearing from you. If you like Forestlinks in its new format, please show it to your friends, who can subscribe to Forestlinks mailing list under [DAFF website subscriptions](#).

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\$15 million boost for Western Australia

Western Australia's forest and timber industries have received a \$15 million boost from the Australian Government.

Australian Forestry Minister Senator Ian Macdonald said the Government would provide \$12.5 million to its Forestry Assistance Programme for Western Australia to back a range of new projects and value-adding opportunities.

The remaining \$2.5 million would go to the Western Australian Grants for Forest Communities Programme for community-based initiatives or to enable small businesses to create new job opportunities.

All up, 85 applicants will receive funding to upgrade or buy new processing equipment to add value to their timber, or for harvesting and hauling equipment to improve operations in plantation forests.

The funding will also back a variety of new projects, including a wood-based sculpture trail in a native forest, and construction of the world's biggest wooden clock.

The Australian Government has provided over \$2.42 million of the funding so far, which has encouraged the applicants to invest more than \$9.5 million of their own money in the projects.

For more information, contact Charles Body on 02 6272 4196 or Email: charles.body@daff.gov.au

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Forest Investment Workshop

More than 70 stakeholders – including two government ministers – participated in a wide-ranging workshop in the Forest Investment Workshop series at Mackay, Queensland, in March 2005.

Forest growers, managers and processors, along with non-government organisations, local, state and Australian government representatives, were among those attending the Central and Northern Queensland Forest Investment Workshop.

A representative of the Yuibera traditional land owners in the Mackay region, Gary Mooney, and the Deputy Mayor of Mackay, Cr Donald Rolls, welcomed workshop participants, who included Australian Government Minister for Fisheries, Forestry and Conservation, Senator Ian Macdonald, and the Queensland Minister for Primary Industries and Fisheries, Henry Palaszczuk.

Senator Macdonald outlined key national issues affecting the forest industry's development and Mr Palaszczuk talked about policy frameworks and forestry development opportunities in Queensland.

The participants recognised the important contribution forest industries – including public and private native forestry and plantations – make to Queensland's economy and regional communities. They also supported ongoing, sustainable industry development and raised concerns over the erosion of accessibility to public and private native forests.

Participants emphasised the need for whole-of-industry approaches to development to ensure access to resources and to promote resource development.

While recognising that private investment will be the strongest driver of new investment, participants acknowledged the role governments have played – and will continue to play – in encouraging investment in the industry.

The initiative for the Regional Forest Investment Workshops arose from the National Forest Investment Workshop held in Canberra in October 2002.

The workshops were arranged under the auspices of the Forest and Wood Products Council and the Forestry and Forest Products Committee, which is one of four committees reporting to the Primary Industries Standing Committee and Ministerial Council.

The Central and Northern Queensland workshop was the fifth in the workshop series, which was held in all states.

The aim of the workshops was to identify cooperative activities that industry and governments could pursue to attract new investments and develop the full range of benefits offered by the forest and wood products industries.

Governments and industry will use the outcomes of the workshops to develop a strategic vision for the industry over the next 20 years.

The vision is seen as an important step towards developing a best practice approach to realising the value of regional forests.

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

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Sustaining our private native forests

Northern NSW and Victoria's East Gippsland region will trial a new \$150,000 project to improve the sustainability of Australia's private native forests.

The Australian Government's Natural Heritage Trust will fund the two-year initiative — Sustainability and Private Native Forestry.

The project will:

- demonstrate how private native forests can be harvested in an environmentally sustainable manner;
- provide a better understanding of the extent and condition of private native forests in specific regions;
- develop common standards for mapping private native forests, and measuring stand condition, to better integrate regional resource management decisions; and
- boost the capacity of landholders to undertake sustainable private native forestry.

The Joint Venture Agroforestry Program, administered by the Rural Industries R&D Corporation, will manage the project.

For more information, contact Garry Grant on 02 6272 5301 or Email: garry.grant@daff.gov.au

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Montreal Process implementation review

Australia's Montreal Process Implementation Group (MIG) is currently reviewing the effectiveness, efficiency, measurability and practicality of Australia's national Montreal Process Indicators.

The review follows from the publication of Australia's first attempt at reporting against all of these criteria and indicators in the State of the Forests Report 2003.

It will provide a key input to Australia's contribution to the International Montreal Process indicator review, also currently underway and expected to be finished in February 2006.

The MIG was formed in 1996 to develop a common framework to implement the Montreal Process criteria and indicators in Australia. The Process helps identify trends in various aspects of forest sustainability.

The most recent meeting of MIG focussed on the domestic review of indicators, and issues such as sustainability performance measurement. MIG will consider the Indicator Review at their next meeting on 30 June 2005.

For further information email the MIG Secretariat at MIGSecretariat@daff.gov.au

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International Arrangement on Forests

The future International Arrangement on Forests will be considered at the 5th Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF 5) in New York from the 16-27 May 2005.

Delegates will consider the shape, scope and nature of the International Arrangements, as well as work through an extensive agenda.

For more information about the UNFF5 or the future International Arrangement on Forests, contact Kirsty Duffey on 02 6272 5847 or Email: kirsty.duffey@daff.gov.au

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