



National Association of
Forest Industries



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Media Release

In-principle support for illegal logging crack-down

Australia's peak forest industry body has provided in-principle support for the Labor Government's commitment to reducing the sale of illegally sourced wood products in Australia, as announced by Forestry Minister Tony Burke in Melbourne today.

The National Association of Forest Industries (NAFI) said while much of the detail of the proposed reforms are yet to be finalised, Australia was well placed to encourage the adoption of sustainable forest management practices overseas.

"The importation of illegally sourced products from overseas countries is a major concern for our domestic forest industry," said Allan Hansard, NAFI's Chief Executive Officer.

"NAFI urges the government to take an approach which combines a reduction in the importation of suspect timber, while also addressing the cause and not just the symptoms of illegal logging.

"Australia must encourage management practices in overseas forestry operations which emulate the high-standards in Australia.

"However, a simple blanket ban on suspect products could punish legally sourced timber and forest dependent communities or simply push the illegally logged products to other markets around the globe.

"The government also needs to consider the potential impacts for local industry which take into account World Trade Organisation (WTO) requirements when import conditions are imposed.

"NAFI looks forward to working with government agencies and the Australian Timber Importers Federation (ATIF) on the criteria that would be applied to imports of forest and wood products, as well as ensuring that domestic suppliers are not adversely affected.

"It is an unfortunate reality that Australia has a \$2 billion trade deficit in forest and wood products. The best way we can reduce our reliance on suspect imported forest and wood products is to grow the Australian industry.

"NAFI's recently released *Forest Industries Growth Plan* provides a roadmap to generate an extra \$19 billion in industry investment by 2020, while reducing carbon emissions by 80 million tonnes per year," he said.

The full plan and executive summary are available at: <http://www.nafi.com.au/site/publications.php>

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