



Media Release

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Churchill Fellowship will bring long term benefits to forestry industry

National Association of Forest Industries (NAFI) Deputy CEO, Mick Stephens, has been awarded a Churchill Fellowship to investigate overseas research and extension into integrating forestry and pastoral land use in the landscape.

The Churchill Fellowship is awarded by the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust as a way of recognising Australians striving for excellence and providing opportunities that benefit industries and the Australian community.

“The benefits of forestry in terms of economic, social and environmental outcomes are becoming increasingly important. At a landscape level, production forestry provides not only timber production, but rehabilitation and control of soil degradation, carbon sequestration and income diversification for regional communities,” Mr Stephens said.

“From a land management perspective, better integration of forestry and farming systems is becoming an increasingly important and lucrative enterprise, given its potential to lift agricultural productivity and alleviate many environmental problems while providing an additional revenue stream.

“I’ll be undertaking the Churchill Fellowship in coming months, involving visits to leading institutions and field sites in the United States and Europe, including the University of Santiago de Compostela in Spain, the Centre for Sub-Tropical Agroforestry at the University of Florida and the Institute for National Agricultural Research in Montpellier, France.

“During these visits I’ll learn more about maximising the triple bottom line benefits from tree planting at a landscape and farm level, including incentives for promoting carbon sequestration, ways to improve timber production and reduce climatic stress.

“Information from the Fellowship will be used to develop projects and networks amongst forest growers and researchers that can bring economic, social and environmental benefits to the forest industry and the Australian community,” Mr Stephens said.

NAFI CEO Allan Hansard said, “The Fellowship is testimony to the calibre and experience of Mr Stephens, who has extensive research and policy experience with the CSIRO, ABARE and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. The experience he gains will be not only be beneficial for NAFI members but also the industry as a whole.”

NAFI endorses the goals of the Churchill Fellowship program and is proud to be involved with the program.

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