



Media Release

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Forest management must be based on science, not outdated ideas

Any debate on the management of Australia's river red gum forests must rely on up-to-date scientific thinking and not on outdated ideas of what is conservation, according to the National Association of Forest Industries (NAFI).

NAFI CEO Allan Hansard said, "Australia's production native forests, including the NSW's river red gum forests, are managed to world class environmental standards. Sustainable forest management provides positive environmental and carbon sequestration outcomes while continuing to support jobs and communities now and into the future.

"New science and thinking on forest management, such as that adopted by the international scientists on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 2007 and the IUCN endorsed Forests Dialogue 2008, states the largest carbon sequestration benefit from forests is produced by the long term sustainable management of forests for timber, fibre and energy production.

"The outdated and passive management approach to 'lock up and leave' forest reserves and national parks, fails to protect against the ravages of bushfire, weeds and feral pests. This can lead to a degradation of the forest and loss of the very environmental values supposed to be being protected.

"Less than 0.1% of Australia's native forests are harvested each year and in keeping with sustainable forest management, every harvested tree is replanted.

"Australia's active forest management practices, underpinned by sound scientific and environmental research, mimic the natural state of the forest and help to protect against bushfires, weeds and pests that can degrade a passively managed forest. Sustainably managed forests provide a diversity of forest areas with mixed ages and habitats for forest dependant flora and fauna.

"The debate on forest management for the best environmental and economic outcomes needs to look at the 'big picture', taking into account the latest and best scientific thinking. Australia has some of the best forests in the world, and they need to be managed to ensure the ongoing protection of environmental and economic values. While we all celebrate and enjoy the productive, recreational and environmental qualities of our forests, relying on outdated and reductionist ideas of forest conservation fails in this endeavour."

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