



Media Release

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Governments urged to build our nation with Australian timbers

The National Association of Forest Industries (NAFI) is urging Australian Forest Ministers to recognise timber from Australia's sustainably managed forests and plantations in government procurement policies.

At a meeting held today in Perth, Forest Ministers will discuss the issue of government procurement guidelines and the recognition of timber.

We would like to see Ministers move to having all State and Federal government procurement policies recognise timber that meets Australia's forest standard. The Australian Forestry Standard assures timber is sourced from sustainably managed forests and plantations and meets internationally recognised environmental management standards," Mr Hansard NAFI CEO said.

The problem is that in recent years there has been a proliferation of environmental rating tools and systems popping up. Many of them adopted from overseas do not require timber to meet Australian Standards, specifically the Australian Forest Standard.

This means that people who use these rating tools, and think they are doing the right thing could in fact be using imported products rather than sustainable home grown products and supporting Australian businesses, Australian jobs and Australian communities.

We have been made aware of cases where the supply of timber for projects under the Building Education Revolution are being sourced from timber that does not meet the Australian Forest Standard because architects and specifiers have been using these imported environmental rating tools.

This is giving the benefit of our economic stimulus package to other countries rather than making sure Australians receive the benefit," Mr Hansard said.

Our advice to people who want to use these environmental rating tools is to firstly ensure the tool recognises timber that meets the Australian Forestry Standard.

We applaud the efforts of Minister Burke and other state Ministers to address this issue but every day that this issue is not addressed we are losing business and jobs to overseas imports. Policy that recognises timber that meets the Australian Forest Standard for use in government projects is a positive step, but a thorough Government review into whether these environmental rating tools deliver what they say they do and their effect on local business, jobs and communities is long overdue.

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