

Timber recycles carbon

TIMBER QUEENSLAND MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

19 February 2019



Queensland industry welcomes PM announcement on regional forestry hubs

The Queensland timber industry has welcomed the Prime Minister's weekend announcement of funding for new forest industry hubs, including one in South East Queensland and another in North Queensland.

On Saturday, the Prime Minister announced \$12.5 million in funding to kick-start new forest industry hubs, with the Queensland hubs to be implemented from 2020.

Timber Queensland Chief Executive Officer, Mr Mick Stephens said this was clear recognition of the industry's growth potential and the importance of taking a regional approach to solving development blockages.

"The Queensland forest and timber industry generates more than \$3 billion in value each year and supports 25,000 direct and indirect jobs. A focus on regional policies is a positive step forward as the opportunities for growth usually revolve around basic needs such as infrastructure, training and investment facilitation," said Mr Stephens

"There is already a well-established industry in South-East Queensland with a diversity of softwood and hardwood processing and value adding operations. Key regional issues include roading access for B-doubles to improve supply chains, manufacturing costs such as energy and resource security from state-owned land and private forestry," he said.

"In the Far North, there is an equal opportunity to develop and grow a sizeable timber industry. New tree plantings to support existing softwood processing operations, and further development of crown leasehold and private hardwood forests including indigenous forestry are exciting opportunities," he said

"Timber Queensland is already working closely with the Queensland Government on a regional training initiative in the South-East and Maryborough region, to identify and develop a long-term training capacity for future high-skilled timber workers.

"Some of the levers the Federal Government can bring to the table to create more jobs and growth in the Queensland timber industry include roading, training and private forestry development initiatives.

"While macroeconomic settings such as national energy policy have a significant impact on input costs, there are options for local initiatives around promotion of bioenergy and waste to energy in the regions," Mr Stephens said.

"It is important that all sides of politics support the positive growth prospects for the timber industry which has a strong regional footprint. The global demand for timber products remains unabated and the industry ticks all the boxes when it comes to delivering renewability, carbon friendly outcomes and regional jobs."

Contact: Clarissa Brandt, Strategic Relations & Communications Manager, 0416 350 328