



Senator the Hon. Richard Colbeck

Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources
Senator for Tasmania

MEDIA RELEASE

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Landmark agreement secures the future of WA forestry

The Australian and Western Australian Governments have signed the landmark 20 year extension of the Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) for the south-west forest region of Western Australia (WA RFA).

Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources Richard Colbeck said that the improvements and extension to the RFA provides long term confidence in the sustainable management of Western Australia's forests, including securing the future of the forest industry.

"The extended WA RFA will continue to deliver the right balance of economic, social and environmental outcomes for WA's forests," Minister Colbeck said.

"This twenty year extension includes five year reviews to provide ongoing confidence and monitoring of forest management practices, and a stable investment environment for Western Australia's \$1.4 billion forest and forest products industry.

"This is a critical agreement which builds on similar agreements already signed with Tasmania and New South Wales and delivers on our election promises.

"Forest management within the RFA region provides for the sustainable co-existence of forest-based industries (including timber production) and biodiversity outcomes.

"The south-west has a proud history of generations of foresters, and the WA RFA means that the next generation will have the opportunity to work in our sustainable forest industry too."

Since the WA RFA was signed, the area of forest in reserves has increased by 52 per cent and over one million hectares of forest is now protected. It also protects important environmental assets and threatened species.

The extension offers a modernised approach to forest management through greater transparency, outcomes-focused reporting and long-term sustainability of a truly renewable industry.

Fast facts:

- **In Western Australia there are around 6,000 jobs in the forestry and wood products industry**
- **Valued at \$1.4 billion, Western Australia's forest and forest products industry sector makes a significant contribution to both the Australian economy and many regional and rural economies**
- **Nationally, the sales and service income of Australia's forest product industries amounted to over \$23 billion in 2016-17, and provides more than 50,000 jobs**

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