

# Media Release

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## **Housing timber shortage driving native timber demand**

The current timber shortage for house frames is driving the construction industry to look at alternative timber supplies to close the supply gap.

Ms Deb Kerr, CEO of the Victorian Forest Products Association said, “Historically most houses in Victoria were built with native hardwood timber.”

“However, since 1999 successive government policies have reduced the native timber harvest area by nearly 55% and log take by 62%, with the supply gap sourced from both domestically produced softwood plantation and imported timber.” Ms Kerr said.

“With imported timber supplies drastically reduced, and a significant 30-year wait between planting and harvesting plantation trees, the construction sector is looking to Victoria’s native timber to supply this critical shortfall.”

“With many trees falling in the recent storms, VicForests is seeking to purchase these trees to help with the supply gap – these trees are of a lower quality ideally suited to house frames as they are unable to be used for floorboards or furniture.”

Ms Kerr said, “the strong demand for Victorian hardwood timber showed Victorian Government’s plan to exit native forestry by 2030 was short-sighted.”

“Victoria’s native forest industry uses just six trees in every 10,000 and Victoria’s stringent laws require that every harvest coup is regenerated,” concluded Ms Kerr.

“Using our Victorian softwood and hardwood timber is also a great environmental story as this locks carbon up in the house frame for the life of the house, and the harvested areas are resown,” Ms Kerr said.

“Importantly, the best time to plant trees for today’s houses was 30 years ago – the next best time is now to supply timber for the homeowners of 2050, and that requires a significant effort to expand Victoria’s plantation estate now,” Ms Kerr concluded.