

Media Release

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Climate change strategy welcome – falls short on support for wood products critical to deliver on emissions reduction targets

The Victorian Government's climate change strategy announcement provides a proposed roadmap for Victoria to achieve zero emissions but misses the opportunity to maximise carbon sequestration from wood and paper products.

“The Government's announcement implies that the best carbon sequestration is to leave trees in the ground; however, every tree planted and harvested will continue to store carbon,” said Ms Deb Kerr, the Chief Executive of the Victorian Forest Products Association (VFPA).

“Trees are mostly carbon and water. When the tree is harvested, around half the weight of the wood is carbon, which remains embedded in the wood and paper products that we use in our homes and work environments.”

“Wood products are the ultimate renewable – and Victoria will have a much greater chance of achieving its climate targets through:

- Carbon sequestered in growing forests.
- Carbon stored in harvested wood products.
- The substitution of high emissions construction materials with wood-based products.
- The use of sustainably sourced woody biomass for renewable energy.
- Replacing single use plastics with renewable wood products, and
- the development of new generation value added products such as biomaterials, biochemicals and bioenergy from renewable wood fibre.

“The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) also recognises the importance of carbon sequestration in well managed sustainable forests and forest products, as sinks in wood products, and mitigation through bioenergy production,” said Ms Kerr.

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“The current policy environment does not incentivise the expansion of our plantation estate and farm forestry remains a challenging business environment for commercial forestry outcomes. Expanding plantations will be critical in meeting both Victoria’s demand for timber products and the Government’s emissions reduction targets.”

“The Victorian community can support carbon sequestration to meet Victoria’s target by choosing to use Victoria’s wood products and in doing so, support the Victorian forest products sector,” concluded Ms Kerr.

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