

## Media Release

2 February 2023

### Wetlands and forests are made for one another

Today, the UN marks [World Wetlands Day](#). Wetlands perform many functions and are important for environmental, economic, social, and cultural reasons. They can help reduce the impacts of storm damage and flooding, maintain good water quality in rivers – they even store carbon and help control pests. In Australia, wetlands also have Aboriginal cultural significance and are important for science and education.

“Wetland restoration is not necessarily the first thing we think of when we think of forestry. But what many people don’t realise is that our growers actively care for the land on which they operate. That means improving the land, looking after it and leaving it better than they found it”, said Deb Kerr, CEO of the Victorian Forest Products Association (VFPA).

Some of VFPA’s members are involved in helping to restore wetlands. One member, HVP Plantations, is part of an exciting wetlands restoration project in Gippsland. The Providence Ponds and Perry River catchment is located between the Great Dividing Range and the Gippsland Lakes. It has unique and significant assets including Chain of Ponds and associated Sandy Floor Scrub vegetation, Gippsland Red Gum Grassy Woodlands, and a diversity of wetlands. These habitats support a surprisingly rich array of plants and animals that are not found in other places in Victoria.

“We were very happy to be actively involved in this project. The Chain of Ponds system we have here is so unique, and worth protecting and rehabilitating”, said Tim McBride, Environment and Certification Manager at HVP Plantations.

The stakeholder group involved is made up of Government departments, private and public landholders and the Gunai Kurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation, local Councils, Landcare Australia and many more.

“We undertake targeted on-ground actions to address the key threats to intact ponds and recovering ponds and vegetation restoration works.

“There’s often a misconception of what forestry involves. It doesn’t stop with harvesting trees, and it certainly doesn’t start there, either. Careful ongoing forest management includes environmental protection, while extracting and replanting sustainable amounts of timber. The results of the Sandy Creek Pond are a testament to that”, Mr McBride concluded.

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*Sandy Creek – prior to remediation works*



*Sandy Creek post rehabilitation Apr 2020*

## **ENDS**

### **About**

The Victorian Forest Products Association (VFPA) represents all elements of the value chain from sustainable harvesting of plantations and multiple-use natural forest resources. VFPA is a policy development and advocacy group that represents the interests of Victoria's sustainable forestry. We collaborate strongly with other industry bodies to ensure the best outcomes for forestry in general and our members more specifically. Our charter provides autonomy to manage state issues. We collaborate with the Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) on any issues that transcend state borders and have national implications.

VFPA represents forest growers, harvesters, and manufacturers of timber and paper products.