

## TIMBER QUEENSLAND MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### ***Doing Timber Business in Queensland* a great success – but still uncertainty with State Government**

As part of its *Doing Timber Business in Queensland* biennial conference series, Timber Queensland hosted a one-day symposium last Friday examining the significant opportunities and challenges to further grow the forest and timber industry in Queensland.

Major topics covered at the symposium included: the housing activity outlook in light of the global pandemic and building industry stimulus; research and technical innovation in the use of timber in future tall timber and mid-rise buildings; plantation softwood productivity and technology adoption; sustainability certification; new plantation investment models; regional supply chains; state forest industry policy and environmental regulation”.

Timber Queensland Chief Executive Officer, Mick Stephens said “These top-class presentations showcased Queensland’s high quality forest management, wood processing and timber engineering companies and institutions, experience and people, with an international reputation for applied research and management across the sector.”

“With 52.5 million hectares of native forests and around 200,000 hectares of high-quality softwood plantation we have the largest forested land area in the country. We also deliver significant value to the State supporting 25,000 jobs and annually contributing over \$3.2 billion to the economy,” said Mr Stephens.

He said the biennial *Doing Timber Business in Queensland* event once again brought the full industry supply chain together to discuss key policy issues for industry and supporting projects that can unlock further growth.

“We were pleased the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries, Mark Furner officially opened the Symposium, and outlined the Palaszczuk Governments Timber Action Plan announced in November 2019 to grow the industry into the future”.

‘Unfortunately, a lack of action on a number of key components of the plan such as the establishment of a Native Timber Advisory Panel has created considerable uncertainty for industry” he said.

“Without any tangible progress after 18 months, this is impacting resource security, investment and jobs. The hardwood industry wants to be at the table now to map out a strong plan for the future.”

“Concerns over a lack of Commonwealth and State regulatory compliance and audit checking of native log exports from Queensland was also noted by the hardwood industry as a critical issue. Timber Queensland will shortly be making more policy recommendations on how best to address this issue”, Mr Stephens said.

The *Doing Timber Business in Queensland* was one of the first forest and timber industry events that has been held since the start of the COVID 19 pandemic.

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“After a long-time using online meetings we felt it was time to provide those people who felt comfortable to do so, an opportunity to reconnect as part of a COVID Safe Event,” said Mr Stephens.

“More than 85 people attended the symposium which provided excellent networking opportunities and information sharing. The high level of engagement amongst colleagues spilled over to our inaugural barefoot bowls competition held at the end of the day. This was a great social event and a good way to wind down after some series policy and technical discussions”.

To coincide with International Day of Forests (which is held globally on 21 March each year), the Institute of Foresters of Australia (IFA) and Australian Forest Growers (AFG) Queensland Branch held a plantation management and fire recovery field trip to Jimna the day after the symposium.

“It was pleasing to see participants from the symposium and broader IFA/AFG members participate in the field day which was hosted by HQPlantations and their wonderful regional staff”.

“Along with other participants I was able to plant a pine tree as part of a new softwood plantation rotation and help celebrate the United Nations International Day of Forests”, said Mr Stephens.

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### **Photos**

- Minister Furner takes questions at Doing Timber Business in Queensland
- Face to Face Learning\_Networking
- Tree Planting\_International Day of Forests
- Mick Stephens and Shadow Minister for Agriculture Tony Perrett

More photos available on request.