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A3P welcomes ALP commitment to addressing illegal logging, climate change and skills shortages



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A3P has welcomed the launch of the ALP Forest Policy by Federal Labor Leader Kevin Rudd in Tasmania today.

The policy includes a strong commitment to crack down on the importation of illegally logged timber. In February this year A3P launched landmark guidelines that demonstrate the legality and sustainability of A3P member's product and call for a crack-down on illegal timber imports into Australia.

"Illegally logged forest products compete in the market against the products of Australia's plantation products and paper industry – an industry that meets the highest standards of environmental and corporate performance", said A3P CEO Neil Fisher.

The ALP has also committed to "developing more sophisticated accounting methodologies that more accurately reflect the emissions and sequestration from the sector over time". A3P has called for a market-based response to climate change that, among other things credits the benefits of carbon stored in plantations and wood-based products.

Mr Rudd's announcement also highlighted the need to address skills shortages in the industry and committed to declaring ForestWorks as an Industry Skills Council in its own right. A3P is committed, as a member of ForestWorks, to working to enhance skills in the industry.

A3P noted the ALP's proposed "Forest Industry Development Fund" aimed at boosting the export of forest products. A3P believes that this fund could also be used for addressing the \$2 billion trade deficit in wood and paper products through import replacement as well as through boosting exports.

"While the ALP Policy does not address all of the election priorities identified by A3P in our document "Growing Our Sustainable Future" we look forward to working with the ALP to address these issues", Mr Fisher concluded.

For more on A3P's election priorities see:
<http://www.a3p.asn.au/corporate/election.html>

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Further information

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