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A3P WELCOMES MARKET OPPORTUNITIES FOR AUSTRALIAN WOOD PRODUCTS IN ASIA

A3P welcomes the findings of a new ABARE report that reveals significant increases in exports of Australian wood products to Asia, despite soft demand in the domestic market.

The report, *Australian Forest and Wood Products Statistics*, shows that Australian sawn timber production and woodchip exports grew sustainably in the first six months of 2006-07.

Both the volume and value of hardwood woodchips increased by over 15 per cent compared with the previous year.

A3P CEO Mr Neil Fisher said, "A3P welcomes the increase in exports as evidence of the competitiveness of our industry and the delivery on the investment in plantation expansion supported by the joint industry and Government 2020 Vision strategy

"A3P acknowledges however, this outcome has occurred in a difficult commercial environment given the ongoing low level of domestic housing starts and the high value of the Australian Dollar. While production volumes are increasing or being maintained this does not always transfer into increased profits", said Mr Fisher.

"Early this year A3P launched our 2007 Election Priorities document which calls on the Australian Government to maintain its commitment to the sustainable increase of Australia's plantation resource through the Plantations for Australia - the 2020 Vision strategy.

"A3P is also ready to work with Governments and industry to identify strategies that will support the sustainable expansion of markets for Australian plantation products and paper both domestically and overseas", said Mr Fisher.

A3P's 2007 Election Priorities document also identifies actions to deliver tangible outcomes related to climate change, the creation of the new Forest and Wood Products Australia and national water management.

Download the document from www.a3p.asn.au

Further information

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