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A3P Outlines Budget Priorities

Reinvestment in manufacturing, skills, and minimising red tape are 2008-09 Budget priorities for Australia's plantation products and paper industry.

Peak industry association A3P says the Government should support Australia's sustainable and expanding plantation products and paper industry through responsible budget commitments.

"The plantation products and paper industry is a major contributor to the Australian economy and many regional communities. Our industry produces greenhouse positive building materials; communication, hygiene and packaging products; and a range of environmental services from Australia's sustainable plantation resource", said A3P CEO Mr Neil Fisher.

"Now more than ever the Government must invest in sustainable Australian industries that make a positive contribution to addressing the challenges presented by climate change", he said.

Budget priorities for the \$4 billion industry include reinvestment in Australia's manufacturing facilities, continued efforts to attract skilled labour to the industry and upgrading and maintenance of critical infrastructure, particularly rural roads.

Dedicated training advisors and scholarships are urgently needed to address the industry's critical skills shortage.

Other priorities include measures to address housing affordability by encouraging new home construction and ensuring that key industry data collection and research activities are maintained and improved.

Mr Fisher said, "The livelihoods of over 13,500 employees and many regional communities depend on our industry's future sustainability.

"A3P looks forward to working with the new Rudd Government to foster the growth of Australia's sustainable plantation products and paper industry", he said.

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Further information

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