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Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment – National Farm Forestry Strategy Survey

Looking out to 2030, what do you think are the major opportunities for expanding farm forestry in Australia?

The Federal environmental framework needs reform, to recognise that active and adaptive management of native forest, including the use of a reasonable proportion for timber production, can deliver superior environmental outcomes than lockup and neglect E zoning.

Active management of forest fuel levels with low intensity planned fire needs to be facilitated to allow farmers to mitigate risk of high intensity bushfires damaging the economic and environmental values of their properties.

Better informed farming and general communities of the environmental, social and economic benefits of timber production from native forests and plantations.

What would you like a National Farm Forestry Strategy to achieve?

Ensure that farmers have access to information, so they have a good understanding of the costs and benefits of:

Managing native forests for timber production; and

Establishing woodlots and plantations for farm shelter and timber production.

What are your top four priorities for a National Farm Forestry Strategy?

Reform of national and state environmental laws to ensure improved ecological benefits can be delivered, rather than the charred ruins being delivered by the lock up and neglect environmental law. Current laws use the precautionary principle to lock up farmers in green tape, which ensures so many of our species which have adapted to regular low intensity burns, are moving onto a growing threatened species list.

Establish regional networks of farmers and forest product processors to allow all parties to share native forest and plantation management and market information.

Develop a framework that allows farmers with small to medium scale operations to access forest and plantation certification at an affordable price.

Review environmental charity laws that currently allow registered charities to run false and misleading fund raising campaigns, which denigrate native forest harvesting and at times, plantation operations, that produce the most sustainable building products and communication and packaging papers available.



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How important do you think the following focus areas are for inclusion in a National Farm Forestry Strategy?

	Very important	Important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Not important
Wood and fibre production	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Income diversification for farmers and landholders	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increased farm productivity	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
New regional employment or business opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Soil and water protection	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improved biodiversity	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Carbon sequestration	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



What are the barriers to increased farm forestry in Australia?

1.

Limited landholder knowledge about forestry

2.

Access to markets

3.

Establishment costs

4.

Uncertainty over future harvesting rights

5.

Farm forestry returns against traditional agricultural activities

6.

Other (please specify) All the issues listed above are potential barriers. The importance of any particular issue varies from farmer to farmer. One critical issue that is not listed, but affects farmers across the nation is the environmental



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regulatory framework. The framework is underpinned by a terra nullius view of the Australian biota.

All state and national legislation assumes that protection of native forest environmental values can only be delivered by excluding any farming or forestry activity. The 2019-20 bushfire season confirmed this view is a fools errand and the regulatory framework and emergency response empire builders negative impact on bushfire mitigation must be reformed.

What could governments do to support the expansion of farm forestry?

The provision of quality extension services, delivered by proven professional tree growers, not tree huggers, is critical for a target market that has a limited understanding of the fundamentals of tree establishment, regeneration, management, harvest and sale.

How can a National Farm Forestry Strategy support the agricultural sector?

With more focus on animal welfare, additional trees on farms for shade and shelter are part of the solution. If the trees can be a source of future income, improved livestock outcomes and sale of forest products can increase farm productivity and income.

How can a National Farm Forestry Strategy support the forestry industry?

The 2019-20 bushfires (post fire salvage), has reduced future availability of hardwood and softwood log supply to Australian processors for several decades. Availability of softwood logs for export is also reduced post fire salvage. There are shortages of building timbers in Australia and home construction costs have increased.

The forest products trade deficit that has run at about \$2 billion+ per annum, is increasing. This will increase the need for log supply from farm forest operations

How can existing federal, state, and local government programs and policies be leveraged to support the expansion of farm forestry to improve landscape biodiversity and resilience?

Get professionals, with genuine forest management/tree planting experience into extension programs. For more than 3 decades, environmental tree planting programs have generally been managed by well intentioned amateurs. Many farmers have seen the environmental tree plantings with poor survival due to lack of attention to proper site preparation, weed control and browsing. This sends a regular message to farmers that tree planting is not a good use of land or money.

