

TIMBER QUEENSLAND MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

CARBON POLLUTION REDUCTION SCHEME COULD CUT TIMBER

Peak industry body Timber Queensland says it's submission to the Federal Government on the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS) welcomes the complex new regime but points out that it has the potential to impact negatively on the forest and timber industry – the only carbon positive sector of the economy.

Rod McInnes, CEO, Timber Queensland says that the forest industry has significant potential to contribute to addressing climate change by recognising carbon sequestered in plantations and then stored in timber products, as well as opportunities to produce bioenergy from our residues.

Timber Queensland supports the national timber industry position submission and has built on this by focusing on the outcomes of an Emissions Trading Workshop attended by industry and government stakeholders in Queensland's forest and timber industry.

"An important issue for our industry are the potential liabilities of participating in the CPRS," said Rod McInnes.

"Carbon credits are generated when a plantation is being established and carbon prices are likely to be lowest, whereas liabilities will be encountered later in a rotation, when carbon prices are likely to be higher," he said.

There are also impediments to Managed Investment Schemes participating in the CPRS, and Timber Queensland believes that the Government should identify a clear pathway for these to be addressed to ensure that forestry continues to make an effective contribution to carbon sequestration.

Rod McInnes says that the Timber Queensland submission explains why the inclusion of harvested wood products in the CPRS is necessary to ensure Queensland has adequate timber supply.

"Without recognition of carbon stored in wood products, there is a potential for the carbon value of plantations to outweigh their value for wood products, and thus be retained as carbon-only plantings," said Rod McInnes.

"We believe that the Australian Government should take the lead and include carbon stored in wood products within the CPRS from scheme inception, using simple, yet conservative accounting procedures that can be further refined over time," he said.

Timber recycles carbon

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The submission also calls for careful design of any support for emissions intensive trade exposed industries, such as steel and concrete, to ensure that they properly address the imbalance that such support can generate for high emission alternative products competing with low emission timber products.

Rod McInnes says that Timber Queensland encourages the Government to deliver a balance between the rapid development of the CPRS, and ensuring that there are workable rules that will deliver the necessary reductions in carbon pollution without unnecessarily impacting industry investment.

“A logical outcome of the CPRS would be a regime that enhances carbon sequestration in forests and timber, encourages the production and use of low emission products such as timber, as well as encourages a healthy market for low emission fuels such as biomass for energy generation.”

To read Timber Queensland’s submission visit www.timberqueensland.com.au

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