

TIMBER QUEENSLAND MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Gympie's Mayor Dyne wrong on plantation timber

The Gympie region could miss out on a great economic and environmental opportunity because of misconceptions held by their Council.

Peak Industry body Timber Queensland's CEO Rod McInnes said the outburst by Gympie's Mayor Dyne about proposed timber plantations in the Mary Valley being a "monoculture" and bad for jobs suggests he either doesn't know what he's talking about or is being badly advised.

"Firstly, what's the difference between a plantation of eucalypt trees or macadamia trees or avocado trees? They're all monocultures; all planted crops albeit with different rotation cycles," said Rod McInnes.

"Quite frankly, leasing Mary Valley Land to grow trees guarantees proper land management as timber plantations have to abide by strict Government imposed Codes of Practice. So there is no chance of feral weeds and animals taking over the landscape which is likely under the current proposals," he said.

Timber Queensland forecasts that logs harvested from local hardwood plantations could deliver 85,000 cubic metres of sawn timber each year or be peeled into high value veneer for appearance grade products - work that would deliver rather than cost jobs.

"Indeed, that volume available on a sustainable basis could see a new processing plant built worth tens of millions of dollars with hundreds of jobs during the construction and a similar number operating the plant," he said.

"When was the last time that sort of investment occurred in and around Gympie? What about the flow on economic value for new mill workers spending their wages in town, not to mention the support businesses in transport, fuel, machinery and supplies?."

Rod McInnes said if Mayor Dyne was concerned about losing rate revenue he should think about ways to negotiate "rate equivalent" charges that could be paid to assist in road maintenance and other council operations.

Timber Queensland also points out that Mayor Dyne's opposition also ignores that greater community good delivered by plantations absorbing the tens of thousands of tonnes of carbon dioxide pollution from the Bruce Highway.

"Pollution from those cars would be soaked up and stored in the trees and the products produced from the trees FOR EVER."

"And don't forget the timber plantations could be used for other purposes whilst the trees are growing for example bee-keeping, horse and trail bike riding, foliage production and animal grazing once the plantation is thinned to its final crop stocking."

"But then maybe all of these great social, financial and climate friendly advantages aren't for Gympie."

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