

Media release | **26/11/2021**

Industry rallies to protest McGowan Government's failings

FORESTRY business owners and employees staged a peaceful protest in Bunbury this morning, frustrated with a lack of clarity from the State Government surrounding its decision to end native forestry.

The protest coincided with the second meeting of the Native Forestry Transition Group, 11 weeks after the [announcement](#) that native forestry would cease from 2024.

Since the politically driven announcement, impacted businesses and employees have received no details as to how the so-called Just Transition Plan will assist them.

Forest Industries Federation WA (FIFWA) Chief Executive Officer Adele Farina called on the McGowan Government to honour its commitment to support timber businesses, impacted by its decision to ban native forest harvesting, through the transition process.

“It has been 11 weeks since the State Government made its announcement and government support for impacted timber businesses has been zero,” Ms Farina said.

“Impacted timber businesses are still waiting on answers to basic questions, including clarity on the State Government’s vision of what industry is required to transition to.”

“A vacuum of information is compounding industry uncertainty, with frustration levels increasing with each passing day and that is what we are seeing at the protest today - that frustration is understandably spilling over.”

Ms Farina said the inability of the McGowan Government to answer the most basic requests for information 11 weeks after its announcement was simply not good enough.

“Businesses need information on transition supports promised by the Government, including accessing business exit payments,” she said.

“Businesses need clarity and certainty to plan for the next two years and into the future.

“The community accepts it is the role of Government to make policy decisions, including closing down a sustainably managed industry, however the community also expects the Government to treat impacted businesses fairly and provide timely support and exit packages.

“I urge the State Government to step up and treat impacted timber businesses fairly. It is the right and proper thing to do and they deserve far better than the treatment they have received to date.”

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About FIFWA

Forest Industries Federation WA (FIFWA) has been representing the interests of the Western Australian timber industry since 1895. The industry is a key driver of economic activity and jobs in Western Australia, contributing \$1.4 billion to the WA economy and creating about 6000 jobs in WA, with more than 90% of those in regional areas. The industry employs careful and comprehensive management policies to ensure WA's forests are sustainably managed. Less than 1% of the total forest area is harvested annually, with the area harvested then replanted. In 2001 WA became the first state to abolish harvesting old-growth forests.