

Media Release | **13/09/2021**

Show of support for forestry

MORE than 300 people gathered in Manjimup today to rally against the State Government's decision to end native forestry.

Last week's announcement was made without industry consultation, leaving businesses, employees, and regional communities in a state of shock, conveyed by many who attended today.

Forest Industries Federation WA (FIFWA) Executive Director Melissa Haslam spoke at today's rally, which was held at the front of Manjimup's Timber Museum.

Other speakers included Shadow Forestry Minister Steve Martin, Shadow Minister for Local Government, Water and Regional Cities James Haywood and Manjimup Shire President Paul Omodei.

Mrs Haslam said the raw emotion conveyed today reflected the way people had been treated by the State Government in a purely political decision.

"People are upset, and they have every right to be, a snap decision has turned their world upside and today we heard some of those emotional stories," Mrs Haslam said.

"Since the politically motivated announcement last week, we have heard from many other sectors who are upset and will be massively impacted. The flow-on effects will be huge."

Mrs Haslam said the \$50 million Just Transition Plan offered by the State Government was inadequate, and industry would be pushing for more.

"The lack of detail behind the announcement causes terrible uncertainty for our businesses," she said.

"This current State Government signed off on the sustainability of the current forest management plan through the mid-term audit in 2018.

"In the lead up to the last election both major parties supported the sustainable native timber sector, so this backflip by government has shocked everyone."

WA's forestry industry contributes \$1.4 billion to the WA economy annually and supports about 6000 jobs, with more than 90% of those jobs located in regional communities.

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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.