

JOBS AND FOREST BASED INDUSTRIES

The Tasmanian RFA will directly create 550 new jobs through a substantial Commonwealth funded program of plantation establishment, native forest thinning and infrastructure development.

The certainty provided by the RFA and the total Commonwealth funding package of \$110 million will provide the opportunity for forest based industries to expand, develop exports, and create ongoing employment.

WOOD AND PAPER PRODUCTS INDUSTRY

The Tasmanian forest industry contributes about \$1 billion to the State's economy each year. The wood and paper products industry is the second largest employer of Tasmanians, accounting for more than 20 per cent of total manufacturing employment.

The Tasmanian RFA gives the forest products industry:

- twenty years' security on eucalypt supply levels
- new plantations which will increase sustainable yield over time
- the increased certainty it needs to plan ahead
- reduced sovereign risk
- deregulation of woodchip exports

There is a comprehensive Employment and Industries Development Strategy (*see Attachment 12 of the RFA*).

Commonwealth support includes:

- \$70 million for Tasmania to develop a program of hardwood plantations, intensive forest management and industry development initiatives. This includes thinning, non-chemical pest management, special species recovery and various research projects;
- \$10 million for a range of infrastructure initiatives, including \$6 million for roads, \$3 million for two new visitor centres and \$1 million for new reserve management.

TOURISM

Tasmania's forests are a major drawcard for tourists, attracting about 400,000 visitors each year. Visitor numbers are growing by between 5 and 10 per cent each year and are expected to double over the next 20 years. Overall, tourism employs about 10 per cent of the State's workforce and in 1992 was estimated to have contributed 7 per cent of its Gross State Product.

The RFA will boost tourism with:

- a world class reserve system;
- new national parks and State reserves, including Savage River, Friendly Beaches and Tasman;
- Beech Creek, Blakes Opening and some other forest areas adjacent to the existing World Heritage Area will be added to Tasmania's current national parks and will be available for inclusion in the World Heritage Area; and
- \$3 million for visitor centres to promote regional tourism and encourage further employment opportunities. The East Coast of Tasmania and the Great Western Tiers areas would be suitable locations as a result of the new reserves created in these areas. The centres will focus on a broad range of conservation and heritage features on forested lands.

MINING

Mining makes a major contribution to Tasmania's economy, providing over 40 per cent of the total value of State exports, and employing around 1.7 per cent of the total Tasmanian workforce.

Under the Regional Forest Agreement:

- certainty of access will give industry confidence to invest in new mineral exploration and mining;
- Tasmania will introduce a new reserve classification which recognises conservation and mining as complementary land uses; and
- in reserves which allow exploration and mining, environmental impact assessments will be carried out before any planned activity. Rehabilitation will aim to achieve world's best practice.