



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **For Immediate Release**

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### **A Boost for Sustainable Forest Management in Victoria's Native Forests**

VicForests, the government business responsible for the harvest and sale of timber from Victoria's State forests, has launched its Sustainable Forest Management Policy.

"This policy covers all aspects of forestry operations we undertake," said David Pollard, VicForests' CEO "It supports our commitment to continuous improvement and the application of the highest standards for forest management practices."

VicForests, which has been in operation for just 12 months, has already made significant positive impact on the management of native forests for timber production. This includes the introduction of a new open and transparent framework for the pricing and allocation of our scarce and valuable native forest timbers, the recent announcement of price reviews to better reflect the value of those timbers to the Victorian community and the implementation of a 10% reduction in timber sales to address impacts on sustainable harvesting levels.

"VicForests is committed to undertaking its commercial activities sustainably," said Mr Pollard "All of our staff understand the responsibility that we have for managing this valuable asset on behalf of Victorians."

The policy provides the platform for VicForests' pursuit of forest management certification. Achievement of certification will assist the timber processing industry to better position products made from sustainably harvested native forest timbers in the market. The policy will provide a reference point for VicForests' staff and stakeholders for the implementation of the organisation's certification program.

VicForests is aiming to achieve certification to the Australian Forestry Standard by the end of 2006. The Standard, which has recently achieved mutual recognition by the internationally based Program for Endorsement of Forestry Certification, has been specifically developed by forest management agencies and experts for Australian forest management, and is endorsed and supported by all Australian State and Federal Governments.

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