

Timber recycles carbon



Timber Queensland Limited
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Timber Queensland submission on the *Forest Wind Farm Development Bill 2020*

Introduction

Timber Queensland is the peak state body representing the interests of the Queensland forest and timber industry supply chain; from forest growers, harvesters and haulers through to processors, manufacturers and fabricators, timber *wholesalers* and traders.

The Queensland forest and timber industry makes a significant economic contribution to the State, supporting more than 25,000 direct and indirect jobs, as well as contributing more than \$3.2 billion to the state economy. Many of these jobs are located in rural and regional areas across the State.

Background

Timber Queensland (TQ) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the *Forest Wind Farm Development Bill 2020*. We understand from the consultation documentation that:

- The Bill proposes to provide tenure within the Toolara, Tuan and Neerdie State forests to enable a proposed major renewable energy project (the Forest Wind project) for Queensland to occur. Under the current legislative framework, the *Forestry Act 1959* prohibits the development of inconsistent and incompatible uses, including the grant of tenure for projects of this kind.
- The Forest Wind project seeks to establish a large-scale wind farm under the Investment Facilitation process for Exclusive Transactions – a process which offers a pathway for complex private sector commercial proposals to seek a mandate with Government.
- The Forest Wind project area is the subject of a current Plantation Licence. The Bill establishes a legislative framework for the project to coexist with the Plantation Licence and to otherwise be undertaken in the State forests

through exempting the project from certain provisions in the *Forestry Act 1959* and the *Land Act 1994*.

- The Bill also amends the *Planning Act 2016* to ensure the correct administration of the Springfield Structure Plan, including updating the dispute resolution procedures.

Key points

- TQ supports initiatives by governments and industry to grow the plantation forest industry and further develop downstream timber processing and valued-added opportunities in the sector.
- Some of the priorities for improving growth of the forests and forest processing sector include greater resource security to help underpin capital investment, the removal of barriers to new plantation forest investment and enhanced productivity of existing plantations, and improved manufacturing competitiveness through lower input costs such as energy.
- Following previous consultations with the Forest Wind Holdings (FWH) proponent, Timber Queensland (TQ) was advised that the main impacts and opportunities for the plantation timber sector would appear to be:
 - a reduction in plantation forest area of around 493 ha (equivalent to around 7,300 to 8,900 m³ of annual harvest volume);
 - a commitment from FWH for a 'no-net forestry loss approach' through a land offset for matched re-planting;
 - potential increased fire hazard, with a commitment from FWH for additional fire management and safety capability to manage such risks;
 - increased jobs and development in allied sectors in the region; and
 - operational implications in terms of truck movements and construction in the plantation area.

Provided the Bill is drafted to ensure the primacy of plantation land use within the Plantation Licence Area in the Tuan, Toolara and Neerdie State forests, and given the commitments made by FWH around 'no net loss' in forestry production, and measures to appropriately manage fire hazards and operational impacts, TQ would have no objection in-principle to the proposal at this early stage.

We can further advise that FWH have also given an undertaking to TQ, as the peak state body for the forestry and timber industry, to be regularly informed and

consulted on the proposal going forward, particularly on aspects affecting future timber supply volumes and related issues such as fire risk mitigation. These consultations will be important in terms of monitoring the implementation of the high-level commitments indicated by FWH to the timber industry.

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