




Speech By
Hon. Dr Steven Miles
MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA

Record of Proceedings, 27 May 2021

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Timber Industry

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning) (9.43 am): I am pleased to announce today that the Palaszczuk government has granted \$480,000 to Wik Timber Holdings to purchase and install a Gibson sawmill. This grant will allow the Far North Queensland Indigenous logging company to boost its milling of timber and create more than 50 new jobs in the Aurukun and Napranum Aboriginal shires.

Wik Timber is an Indigenous owned company that specialises in harvesting timber on mining leases that would otherwise have to be incinerated. This funding will assist Wik Timber to purchase, transport and install the Gibson sawmill from Mareeba to its Hay Point base near Weipa. The mill will break down the raw logs into green off-saw timber before shipping it to Cairns.

Importantly, the project will support more than 50 jobs in the forestry industry and additional new jobs in the wider community as well as generate sales of up to \$15 million and produce \$100 million worth of dressed timber annually. This government is committed to creating jobs in this region, which includes the Aboriginal shires of Aurukun and Napranum. We are proud to support a company that is creating jobs in the Far North and doing its bit for the environment by eliminating the need to burn timber.

The Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation is considering financing stage 2 of the project, constructing a shed to house the complete mill and an improved port for better access to load barges at Hay Point. Wik Timber has worked in partnership with Rio Tinto to harvest logs from the Amrun mining lease near Weipa. It has been developing a timber harvesting project that will produce up to 125,000 tonnes of timber per annum for export and domestic markets. The break down mill will reduce costs and eliminate the need to use contractors for initial sawing of logs so it can put on more Indigenous workers as its volume increases. Wik Timber will help develop new markets, with major Queensland retailers already indicating their interest in purchasing significant quantities of finished timber, mainly for uses such as decking. It is another local success story for an innovative new business in Far North Queensland and this government is proud to back it all the way.