

MEMBERS'
BULLETIN**July 2010****No 10****IN THIS ISSUE:**

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Welcome

This *Members' Bulletin* is intended to keep you up-to-date with ATIF activities. This issue reports on the still uncertain situation in relation to the pending Federal Government's illegal policy announcements, together other ATIF activities and topics of interest.

Federal Government illegal logging policy announcement

As reported in recent *ATIF Members' Updates*, meetings have taken place in Canberra with politicians and officials in relation to the direction and timing of the Federal Government's anticipated illegal logging policy announcement.

Following a round of meetings with ATIF Chairman Nils Koren, I met Tony Burke, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry in Parliament on 12 July to discuss aspects of the Government's illegal logging policy development and future actions.

At his request I summarised for the Minister aspects of the likely policy detail that the timber importing sector could work with and those that the sector would be less 'comfortable' about. The Minister has been provided with additional written advice from ATIF. This and other draft material, distributed to ATIF Board Members, will form the basis of comment and media releases from the Chairman when the Government's policy is announced.

Ongoing contact is being maintained with Minister Burkes' office in an attempt to keep across the likely content and timing of his policy announcement.

European Parliament illegal logging action

The European Parliament has passed regulations requiring all companies importing and selling timber in the European Union (EU) to demonstrate that they have exercised adequate due diligence



to ensure their timber has been harvested legally. From 2012 illegal timber and timber products will be banned from the EU market and companies importing timber or forest owners will have to provide information about the country of origin of the timber they purchase and its legality.

The regulations still need to be passed by the European Council of member states. It will then be up to the 27 member countries of the EU to implement specific regulations and set penalties. They have to do this by 2012.

Climate and forests lawyer for ClientEarth Tim Grabel said the European Parliament regulations should also provide the foundations for an auditing system that will make it easier for companies to track where the timber has been sourced. "The regulation makes timber traceable and requires robust due diligence to ensure only legal timber is traded in Europe."

Green groups acknowledge that it will be up to individual member states to enforce the new regulations and believe that robust policing and hefty fines will be required to ensure that imports of illegal timber are reduced.

Other news

- ▶ The present initiative to establish a single national organisation to represent the interests of the forest industry is likely to result in a merger of the National Association of Forest Industries and the Australian Plantations Products and Paper Industry Council. This initiative will not impact on the ATIF or other more narrowly-focused industry organisations.
- ▶ Detailed advice about the availability and properties of hardwood decking has just been received from the Malaysia Timber Council. This information will be made available to members shortly.
- ▶ Forest and Wood Products Australia (FWPA) is encouraging industry companies to join. All companies paying levies (and that includes all members of the ATIF) are eligible for membership. A number of ATIF member companies are already members of FWPA.

Joining the FWPA gives member companies a say in research and marketing investment decisions and other initiatives. There is no membership application fee or other costs in joining. A copy of the FWPA membership application form is enclosed with this issue of the *Members' Bulletin*.

- ▶ The ATIF annual accounts for the year ending 30 June 2010 are almost completed. A pre-audit set of accounts and budget for 2011 will shortly be circulated to Board Members.