

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS RAISED IN RRAT ON FORESTRY

With regard to our billion trees commitment

ABARES is in the process of finalising plantation statistics for 2019-20, with release expected in July 2021. This information will provide an update picture of the plantation estate, including its location and type. Changes in the estate will shed light on where we currently stand in terms of meeting the commitment for planting a billion trees by 2030.

The ABARES statistics are based on a survey of the major forest growers across the country which identify plantation expansion and contraction across the country.

The most current information is available in the *Australian plantation statistics 2020 update* released in June 2020. This report stated:

"In 2018–19 a total of 2,800 hectares of new plantations were established, comprising 2,750 hectares of softwood plantations and 50 hectares of hardwood plantations"

Table 6 of the report (page 6) outlines where the expansion occurred by state in the 2018-19 financial year:

Victoria	200 hectares
South Australia	900 hectares
<u>Western Australia</u>	<u>1,700 hectares</u>
Total new planting	2,800 hectares

Source: [Microsoft Word - AustPlantationStats_2020_v.1.0.0.docx \(sirsidynix.net.au\)](#)

In relation to the breadth of current jobs and creation of new jobs in the forestry industry

For the purposes of reporting on employment in forestry industries we base our information on numbers derived from the national census. The 2016 census identified 51,981 persons employed in the forestry related sectors. This was prior to the announcement of the National Forest Industries Plan. Current information will be collected in the upcoming 2021 census with data to be released from June 2022.

In terms of the creation of new jobs within the sector the regional Forestry Hubs are working on issues they have identified within their region as limiting growth opportunities. A number of the Hubs are currently investigating skills and training needs with the objective of supporting and adding value to both their forest growing and processing sectors.

The 3 National Institute for Forest Product Innovation centres are currently undertaking research, or proposing research, into value adding in the forestry industries. This research includes the development of new technologies supporting improvements to existing processing and developing technology and science for new processing opportunities. Commercialisation of the research being undertaken has the potential to support existing jobs and create new jobs.

On Farm Forestry resources, including the use of Queensland SLATS

ABARES are currently completing a national inventory of farm forestry plantings on private land which is funded through the National Forestry Industries Plan.

Reporting on the findings of this inventory work is expected to be completed in July 2021. ABARES have been consulting with state and territory forestry agencies. The SLATS (The Queensland Statewide Landcover and Trees Study) data set is used to inform the development of Australia's national forest cover data set, a key element of the Private Native forest inventory in Queensland.