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Tasmanian Government **Media Release**

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Guy Barnett, Minister for Resources

Tasmania to lead vision for forest product innovation and research

The Tasmanian Liberal Government enthusiastically supports and welcomes the proposed partnership between the Australian Forest Products Association and the University of Tasmania to develop innovative and sustainable forest products in Northern Tasmania.

The project would see industry (AFPA), UTAS and Government establish a world-scale forest industries research and development powerhouse, the *National Institute for Forest Products Innovation (NIFPI)*, at the University's Newnham Campus.

This would further complement the Tasmanian Government's commitment to invest \$15 million for state-of-the-art research facilities as part of a new nation-leading Tasmanian Agricultural Precinct at the Newnham Campus, including relocating the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture, realising the synergies of world-class research and collaboration across many fields.

The NIFPI would work with research networks around Australia to spearhead the development of clean, green and renewable wood-based products of the future.

Renewable timber and wood fibre industries are well placed to lead the way in replacing fossil fuel-based products such as plastics, chemicals and carbon-intensive building materials.

AFPA is predicting that global demand for wood fibre will triple over the next 30 years which will require technology-driven solutions that will open up new opportunities for our renewable forest industries, of which sustainable timber and forest products will be a key plank.

The new NIFPI proposal builds on the success of three pilot NIFPI centres, including one in Launceston, which was jointly funded by the Federal and the State governments and industry to support small-scale, short-term collaborative research projects.

Tasmania has a natural advantage with perfect conditions for timber production and we welcome this exciting proposal which will generate exciting job opportunities in research and innovation and will also support timber jobs in regional communities.