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Peak forest industry body supports Coalition policy

The peak representative body for the Victorian timber industry, the Victorian Association of Forest Industries (VAFI), has welcomed the Coalition's forestry announcement.

VAFI CEO Philip Dalidakis said the Coalition's policy aim to provide the industry with security was a significant step that would help ensure a sustainable future for forestry businesses and jobs and the communities they support.

"We support any measures either party takes to maintain security and reduce sovereign risk for the forestry industry," he said.

"The Coalition policies share a number of the objectives with the 10 point plan the VAFI released recently.

"In particular, we are pleased to see the inclusion of the renewal of Regional Forest Agreements, which is a key requirement for encouraging firms to reinvest in the industry."

Mr Dalidakis said the VAFI would withhold judgement until the release of the Labor Party's policies, but he believed the Coalition had shown definite commitment towards sustainable forestry jobs and businesses.

"Forestry in Victoria employs 24,000 people and provides renewable products used by Victorians every day," he said.

"We see Coalition support for the future of the industry and the people that work in it as a positive step, and looked forward to the Labor Party making a similar commitment, as indicated by Agriculture Minister Joe Helper at the VAFI Annual Dinner on Friday, 15 October."

The VAFI 10 point plan policy document can be downloaded from <http://www.vafi.org.au/election2010/>

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