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One of Australia's biggest industries releases new action plan on sustainable action this Monday 15 May 2006

The launch of a new action plan will see one of Australia's biggest industries commit to a series of actions to reduce water, chemical and energy use, greenhouse gas emissions, and help re-invigorate rural economies.

A3P's bold, *performance, people and prosperity: Sustainability Action Plan* is a first for Australia's plantation products and paper industry, which creates and sells more than \$5 billion of product each year.

"Our impact on Australia's present and future is significant so we need to manage it responsibly," says Rob Lord, Chairman of A3P, the peak national body representing the plantation growing, timber processing and paper manufacturing industries.

The plan will be launched Monday 15 May at the 7th National Business Leaders Forum on Sustainable Development being held in Brisbane.

The plan raises 21 issues and lists specific actions for addressing each. It includes targets, measures of performance, and a commitment to public reporting, including:

- certification through independent bodies—even though certification is voluntary
- greenhouse—further reduce emissions and encourage use of 'greenhouse friendly' plantation products
- imports of illegally logged forest products—prevent these from being imported, help identify legally sourced products
- economic and employment impact—optimise the economic value of production and increase level of sustainable employment
- chemical use—reduce and seek alternatives
- water use—increase water use efficiency, re-use water, improve quality of discharge
- air emissions and waste—minimise emissions and the impact of waste production
- safety—no level of accidents will be tolerated
- plantation management—developing and implementing techniques to exceed state/territory compliance levels.

"The plan was prepared in consultation with A3P members and leading environmental NGOs and is based on the best available research," says Mr Lord. "We adopted a product stewardship approach in developing the plan because effective results require action from everyone along the product lifecycle including growers, manufacturers, importers, governments, and consumers—who all share responsibility for environmental impacts."

"While our industry has already dramatically reduced water use, improved water discharge quality from timber and paper mills, and steadily reduced its greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption, today we make a commitment to do more", says Mr Lord.

A3P would like to acknowledge the valuable contribution of Mr Phillip Toyne, from EcoFutures Pty Ltd, and Mr Michael Smith and Mr Karlson Hargroves, both from The Natural Edge Project, to the drafting of the SAP and the contribution of NGOs, including the Australian Conservation Foundation, WWF Australia, Friends of the Earth, and the Wilderness Society.

performance, people and prosperity will be available in hard copy on 15 May at the 7th National Business Leaders Forum on Sustainable Development and the summary and full plan will be available on www.a3p.asn.au or through the media contacts listed below.

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