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Victorian voters support local forestry:

73% believe native forestry should be maintained at current levels or increased,
including 49% of Greens voters

The peak representative body for the Victorian timber industry, the Victorian Association of Forest Industries (VAFI), has announced polling results showing a majority of Victorian voters support local forestry and oppose the Greens' forest policies.

VAFI CEO Philip Dalidakis said the poll results made it clear 73% of Victorians wanted the level of native forest harvested annually in Victoria to be increased or maintained at current levels.

"What this poll shows is that the vast majority of Victorian voters understand that timber is a renewable, environmentally friendly product, and that as a community we should supply our own needs rather than import wood and paper product from overseas," he said.

"This includes 49% of Greens voters, indicating that their party — which has declared it would shut down native forestry — is not only ignoring the science of the issue, it is out of touch with its own supporters."

Mr Dalidakis said the evidence showed that the majority of Victorians (76%) would rather locally produced timber products and most opposed the Greens forestry policy (66%)

"Amazingly, even 28% of Greens voters do not support their party's forestry policy," he said.

"Clearly this indicates that the Greens and other groups — who are continually trying to shut down native forestry and strangle the plantation industry, and are endangering the jobs of up to 74,000 people employed by forestry or associated industries in Victoria — are not representative of the wider community, or even those who vote for them," he said.

"Clearly the Greens need to look at the science of the issue and at ways to work with the industry to ensure the community has access to the supply of sustainably produced native timber that it clearly wants."

The opinion poll was conducted by Galaxy Research for the VAFI and used a sample of 500 voters weighed to accurately represent the age, gender and region of Victorian voters. The poll and its results can be accessed here: www.vafi.org.au/poll

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