



Monday 13 June 2011

Farm forestry needs leadership

More than 60 people attended the Farm Forestry Futures Forum at the Dog Rock Convention Centre in Albany last Friday, to discuss the future of the farm forestry industry in the low carbon economy.

The all-day event drew several experts in the area of farm forestry including David Wettenhall (Plantall Forestry Consultants), Cassandra Stipanicev (Shire of Cranbrook), Aaron Sloanes (CO2 Australia), Brad Barr (Wespine Industries), Heather Adams (Oyster Harbour Catchment Group) and Dr. John McGrath (CRC Future farm Industries).

The Hon. Colin Holt MLC stepped in to speak on behalf of Minister Terry Redman MLA, who was in the North West meeting cattle farmers. Mr Holt emphasised that the State Government saw great potential in farm forestry but felt that it must be industry-driven rather than subsidised by the state.

Sarah Bellamy, Assistant Director of the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency, highlighted the philosophy and mechanisms of the Australian Government's proposed Carbon Farming Initiative and discussed how the farm forestry industry could take advantage of the scheme.

South Coast NRM project officer and Penni Hewett said the inaugural forum was very positive and it was refreshing to see attendees looking forward rather than dwelling on disappointments of the past.

"The Farm Forestry Futures Forum gave a good insight into where the industry is at and gave South Coast NRM and other stakeholders some direction for the future," she said.

"It's clear that the industry needs leadership, from the ground up and from the government down."

Special thanks to MC and Q&A facilitator Louise Duxbury from Green Skills who helped to stimulate good conversation. The Forum was funded through the Australian Government's Caring for Our Country program.

Audio recordings and Powerpoint notes from the forum can be obtained by emailing pennih@southcoastnrm.com.au or calling 9845 8537.

ENDS

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