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Foreword

Neil Andrew

Paper prepared for presentation at the “Forests, Wood and Livelihoods: Finding a Future for All” conference conducted by the Crawford Fund for International Agricultural Research, Parliament House, Canberra, Australia, August 16, 2005

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Foreword

THE HON. NEIL ANDREW

This conference was the eleventh in an annual series established by the *ATSE* Crawford Fund to raise awareness of the benefits that accrue both internationally and to Australia from international agricultural research — research that has as its primary goal the reduction of poverty, improvement of food security, and conservation of natural resources for agriculture in developing countries.

The conference focussed on forests, and specifically on the challenge of finding a balance between the world's competing demands for forest products and services, and the ability of natural and plantation forests to supply them.

Rarely does a week go by without a heated debate in Australia about the management and maintenance of forests. Worldwide, our forests and woodlands face escalating pressure to provide products and services essential for human life. The debate is an emotive one that tends to polarise audiences. Our aim was to get beyond the emotion and polarisation by highlighting the issues and the significant role of international forestry research in finding a way forward.

THE HON NEIL ANDREW was brought up in the SA Riverland, where his family and later Neil had interests in horticulture. He was an active participant in the SA Agricultural Bureau movement, and was Chairman 1980-82. In 1975, he was awarded a Nuffield Agricultural Scholarship to make an overseas study tour. In 1983, he was elected to the Australian Parliament as the member for Wakefield in the House of Representatives. With changes in the boundaries of his electorate, he later moved to Gawler. He held various positions including that of Government Whip from 1997, and from November 1998, became Speaker of the House of Representatives. Neil retired from the position and from his seat in November 2004. He now lives in Adelaide and became Chairman of the Crawford Fund on the retirement of The Hon. Tim Fischer in June 2005.

The conference was opened by The Hon. Alexander Downer, Minister for Foreign Affairs. It attracted an audience of about 240 people, representing Australian parliamentarians, the diplomatic corps, Australian Government Departments, scientific organisations, aid organisations, non-government organisations, the private sector, the media and the public. About 25 forestry students from more than a dozen countries were also in the audience.

The *ATSE* Crawford Fund wishes to acknowledge the following supporters for their important in-kind and financial support for the conference:

- ACIAR — Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research
- Alliance of Future Harvest Centres of the CGIAR
- AusAID — Australian Agency for International Development
- Australian Forest Growers
- Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
- A3P — Australian Plantation Products and Paper Industry Council
- CIFOR — Center for International Forestry Research
- CSIRO Forestry and Forest Products
- CSIRO Livestock Industries
- Forest and Wood Products R&D Corporation
- ICRAF — World Agroforestry Centre
- National Association of Forest Industries

I am grateful to these supporters, the staff of the Crawford Fund and the Editor of this set of proceedings, all of whom helped ensure the success of this seminar.

Forestry continues to be an issue which polarises debate in Australia but attendees at this seminar all agreed that the papers presented had indeed given an international perspective to the debate and offered a factual assessment of the importance of forestry in our sustainable future.

I hope you find this summary of proceedings as valuable a resource as the seminar proved to be.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Neil Andrew". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

The Hon. Neil Andrew
Chairman
ATSE Crawford Fund Board of Governors

