



Media release | 25/01/22

New farm forestry program launched

TODAY marked the official launch of a new, innovative farm forestry program, Decision Tree, in Bunbury.

Decision Tree has been designed to rapidly assess the suitability of farms for plantation forestry, as well as provide information and assistance to landowners seeking to plant trees.

Through Decision Tree's unique assessment tool, farmers or landowners simply add in a few details such as their location and rainfall and the result will tell them if farm forestry is a potentially profitable crop choice.

From there, landowners have a choice of investment models and how closely they choose to work with industry professionals to manage the trees and assist in maximising carbon credits.

The South West Timber Hub (SWTH) being one of the key drivers of the Decision Tree project, SWTH Project Manager Wendy Perdon recognised the significance of today's launch.

"Decision Tree is a culmination of industry collaboration and a lot of hard work, so we are extremely proud for today's official launch," Mrs Perdon said.

"Decision Tree will allow farmers and landowners to quickly assess if forestry is a profitable option, factoring in their local conditions, distance to mill, alternative land uses and carbon prices to generate a potential profit margin.

"If the result generates interest, Decision Tree has different investment models to select from depending on how hands-on the landowner wishes to be in their farm forestry project."

Mrs Perdon said this was just the first phase of Decision Tree, with further development and program expansion planned for the next 12 months, including turning the assessment tool into a web-based application.

The phase two expansion will utilise funding of \$500,000 from an agreement between the Commonwealth and WA Government.

Examining and overcoming barriers to private forestry was a key activity for the SWHT, with that work being fundamental in the creation of Decision Tree.

Input and resources from Wespine and the Forest Products Commission have also been critical to the creation of Decision Tree.

"Integrating commercial tree planting on farms will be vital for farmers looking to reduce their carbon footprint while still generating profits," Mrs Perdon said.

Federal Member for Forrest Nola Marino MP officially launched the program warmly welcoming the Decision Tree initiative.

“Decision Tree will help landholders determine how beneficial commercial plantations can be on their land,” Mrs Marino said.

“It will take into account the particular circumstances of their land and how well suited it is for timber production.

“It will enable the commercial interests of landholders to align with the needs of the forest products sector. The emergence of carbon markets adds an exciting dimension to this decision process.

“This new tool is particularly crucial given the historic lack of accurate objective information to guide farm forestry enterprise decisions.”

Image: Federal Member for Forrest Nola Marino MP (left) and South West Timber Hub Project Manager Wendy Perdon.

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