

28 June 2026

PRESS RELEASE

6 July 2026

PRESS RELEASE

**Wood Products Trade Growth Will Strengthen Sector**

Increased trade is key to driving an innovative wood processing and manufacturing sector that will strengthen regional communities, reduce emissions, and build a more resilient and prosperous New Zealand, says Mark Ross, Chief Executive of the Wood Processors and Manufacturers Association of New Zealand (WPMA).

"This includes supporting trade policies that open markets for high-value wood products, backing programmes such as the Value-Added Wood Exports Growth Accelerator, along with encouraging investment in domestic wood processing to grow the sector," Ross says.

"Equally important is supporting efforts to remove trade barriers that restrict market access and limit opportunities for New Zealand manufacturers."

Ross said the National Party's policy document released at the weekend, *Building the Future: New Zealand's Next Billion Customers*, signals an on-going commitment to growing New Zealand's export sector. "A clear focus on export growth and trade support is good news for New Zealand businesses. It's encouraging to see these priorities recognised, and exporters will welcome the commitment to strengthening New Zealand's international trade opportunities if National is re-elected," he said.

For our sector specifically, National has signalled a focus on driving value-added wood exports rather than raw log exports, with attention on opportunities created through trade agreements such as the CPTPP, RCEP and a future India Free Trade Agreement. The policy also highlights leading value-added wood and forestry trade missions into Asia and the Gulf region and promoting products such as engineered wood, mass timber and construction products.

Trade should remain a priority for all political parties. New Zealand has a strong tradition of cross-party support for trade. Maintaining that approach will be vital for the continued growth of the wood products sector and for New Zealand's future economic success.

" By working together to expand market access and support value-added exports, we can unlock greater economic value from our forest and wood resources, create more skilled jobs in our regions, and build a stronger wood processing and manufacturing sector."

The Building the Future: New Zealand's Next Billion Customers' can be found here [Building the Future – New Zealands Next Billion Customers](#)

### **Who we are**

The Wood Processors and Manufacturers Association of NZ (WPMA) is a national, voluntary industry body representing companies that convert harvested logs into finished wood products such as sawn timber, pulp, panels, laminated products, mouldings, engineered wood, and emerging bio-forest product solutions. WPMA supports a sector employing more than 38,000 direct staff, mostly in the regions. Our members export over \$3.2 billion in value added wood products and generate around \$2 billion in domestic wood sales each year.

### **Media Contact**

Mark Ross

Chief Executive, Wood Processors and Manufacturers Association of New Zealand

E: [mark@wpma.org.nz](mailto:mark@wpma.org.nz)

M: 027 442 9965