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Media Release

Wood processors welcome Resource Management consenting changes

Reducing the time period within which a consent authority must process and decide an application for a resource consent for a specified wood processing activity to 1 year after the date the application is lodged as outlined within the new Resource Consenting (RMA) Act passed in Parliament this week is applauded by the wood products industry.

‘With examples of resource consent renewal for wood processing sites taking up to 13 years and costing in excess of \$2 million due to the drawn-out regional council processes, a more efficient system is essential,’ said Chief Executive of the Wood Processors and Manufacturers Association of NZ (WPMA), Mark Ross. ‘The new Act amends the RMA to open up a consenting pathway for all wood processing and related activities, which is intended to reduce costs and time frames, plus open up much-needed investment opportunities for the industry.’

‘In adopting this change, the Government has listened to WPMA and our members and for that we thank the Minister responsible for reform, Chris Bishop, and Act MP and Parliamentary Under-Secretary Simon Court, for providing the leadership needed to back future development of both new and existing wood processing facilities’.

As a low net emissions industry, wood processing offers many public benefits, including being a high-value regional employer, adding value to commodities that are otherwise exported in raw form, along with providing domestic resilience in terms of the supply of building materials, residues for sustainable packaging and biofuel.

The full replacement for the RMA will be introduced to Parliament this year, be passed into law next year, and be in effect by 2027, but in the meantime, through this Amendment Bill, we should see a quicker and simpler process to consent wood processing activities, thus incentivising future growth within our industry. **END**

Footnote: Wood Processing and Related Activities

As defined in the new RMA Act, Wood processing activity means the establishment, operation, or maintenance of a facility that specialises in the production of long-lived wood products, products derived from wood fibre, or wood-derived bioenergy, for example, the production of sawn timber, panel products (for example, veneer, plywood, laminated veneer, lumber, particle board, or fibreboard), pulp, paper, and paperboard, wood chips, bioproducts, chemicals, and materials; or provides for the storage of logs, processed wood products, or hazardous materials used in or produced by the operation of the facility.

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