

Appointment to address critical national skills shortage

Dr Lyndall Bull, currently a Senior Manager with Timbercorp Limited, has been appointed Convenor of the new Australian National Forestry Masters Program. The appointment is part of a coordinated strategic response to the critical shortage of professional foresters across Australia, through a program in which 5 universities are cooperating. University forestry education will be the focus of a National Summit convened by the Institute of Foresters of Australia, in Canberra on 20 May.

The National Forestry Masters Program is a joint initiative of the Australian National University, Southern Cross University, University of Melbourne, University of Queensland and University of Tasmania, with funding from the Australian Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. The Program is supported by the Bushfire and Forestry CRCs, Greening Australia, and the Institute of Foresters of Australia.

Twenty students, enrolled across all of the participating universities, have joined the first year of the Program. More will join mid-year and in 2009.

Dr Bull completed her PhD in forest sector innovation with the Wood Innovations CRC at the University of Melbourne in 2005. Prior to joining Timbercorp in Perth, she led a national study of forest-sector skills shortages for the peak industry associations, NAFI & A3P. This study helped catalyse the National Forestry Masters Program.

Dr Bull will be based at the ANU in Canberra, but will work across Australia with forest sector partners, including Timbercorp. Timbercorp's General Manager Forestry, Tim Browning, said "Lyndall is a terrific gain for the Forestry Masters Program and -while she will be a loss to our company - we recognise the importance of her role to the continued success of the Australian forestry industry. We're especially pleased she will be able to continue working with us as a special projects consultant, and look forward to contributing students to her stewardship as well as drawing future employees from it".

Peter Kanowski, ANU Professor of Forestry and Program Co-Convenor, said that Dr Bull was an ideal choice for the Program: "we wanted a convenor who could work with academics, students and partners across the forest sector, and contribute to innovation in forestry education and knowledge. Lyndall's perfect for this nationally-important role".

Dr Bull, who will take up her appointment in June, said: "The National Forestry Masters role is a unique opportunity to help shape the future of Australian forestry education, and the quality of Australia's forest management. I am looking forward to working with all sectors of the Australian forestry industry in this partnership to address a critical national skills shortage."

Further information:

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