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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Contribution to Private Forestry recognised.**

After eight years as Chairman of Gippsland Private Forestry Inc. (GPF), Doug Stevenson stepped down from the position at the organisation's AGM held last week. Doug, a long time resident of Bairnsdale, was appointed as Chairman of Gippsland Farm Plantations, (as GPF was then known) in November 1996.



Since that time he has helped to guide the activities of GPF in its role of promoting sustainable, commercial private forestry development in Gippsland.

The new GPF Chairman is Max Speedy, who lives in the Mirboo North district. Max is the immediate past President of Australian Forest Growers, the national association representing and promoting private forestry in Australia. Max is therefore well placed to lead GPF as it continues its industry development role for the private forestry sector in this region.

Max paid tribute to Doug's contribution to private forestry in Gippsland. "Doug Stevenson has given sterling service to this organisation and the industry in general" he said at the AGM. "Doug has provided excellent leadership to the GPF Board, and has been actively involved in the organisation's events and projects". Max observed that Doug was particularly interested in the practical aspects of private forestry, utilising his forestry background to provide advice at the various private forestry Field Days conducted in the region.

Doug enjoyed managing his own farm woodlot at Newmerella, and he was influential in the development and management of the Farm Forestry Demonstration Sites on the Red Gum Plains between Bairnsdale and Stratford. Max said he was pleased that Doug was remaining on the GPF Board, and looked forward to his support in maintaining the momentum that GPF has developed over the past 8 years.

In his final AGM report as Chairman, Doug commented on some of the recent achievements of GPF during 2004. "Twenty-four hectares of Indigenous Species Plantations have been established with participating landowners, a Socio-economic Assessment of the Timber Industry in Gippsland has been undertaken, a survey of existing and prospective corporate and private commercial tree growers in the region was well underway, and the GPF website has been revamped and updated."

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