

For immediate release

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### **Department merger for better service supported by Greenlife Industry Australia**

Greenlife Industry Australia (GIA) has welcomed Prime Minister Scott Morrison's announcement of a major public service restructure designed to streamline the delivery of policy outcomes for agriculture and the environment.

"This decision means that nursery production, as the single biggest leviable commodity of horticulture, can work collaboratively with the Department on cross-sector issues including biosecurity and water more efficiently," said GIA President, Glenn Fenton in support of the merger.

In a joint statement Senator Bridget McKenzie and David Littleproud MP said, "Environment, water and agriculture are inextricably linked across regional and rural Australia and metropolitan centres," and "Farmers and agricultural industries are at the frontline of Australia's conservation and environmental efforts."

"We could not agree more," says Glenn. "Greenlife production in Australia services the agriculture and environmental sectors, with the industry supplying more than 1.9 billion plants into environmental horticulture and primary production each year."

Peter Vaughan, CEO of GIA says the greenlife production industry in Australia has a farmgate value of \$2.4billion. With new figures due for release in early 2020, the industry is predicted to grow with more than half the industry's growers indicating they will be expanding operations in the next 5 years.

Mr Vaughan said growers need a cohesive and responsive government which is supportive of the important role of greenlife in shading and cooling Australia's suburbs and cities; and supporting human health and well-being through access to fresh produce and the availability of green space.

"The consolidation of departmental resources will help to deliver the expansive agenda, particularly in the areas of quarantine, protecting plant health and the workforce," Peter continued.

"The nursery production industry is the primary source of greenlife for all landscapes, green infrastructure, land rehabilitation and commercial production horticulture. We will work with the newly created Department, to support the industry in meeting Australia's production demand across all sectors into the future."

The restructure sees the environmental functions of the former Department of Environment & Energy consolidated into the Department of Agriculture & Water Resources, with the establishment of the Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment. Andrew Metcalfe AO will take up the position of Secretary of the Department on 1 February 2020.

Existing ministers will continue in their portfolios, with Sussan Ley as Minister for the Environment. Senator Bridget McKenzie remains as Agriculture Minister and David Littleproud as Minister for Water Resources, Drought, Rural Finance, Natural Disaster and Emergency Management.

## Ends

For more information, interviews or images please contact Greenlife Industry Australia Communications Manager Kobie Keenan on 0410686901 or by email at [kobie.keenan@greenlifeindustry.com.au](mailto:kobie.keenan@greenlifeindustry.com.au)

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