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## **POLL: HARNESS AUSTRALIANS DESIRE TO BACK THE BUSH**

"Australians are deeply aware of the vital contribution our rural and regional communities make to our nation. Our leaders need to heed this and refocus policies to back the bush, and bridge the city-country divide," said Daniel Wild, Deputy Executive Director of the Institute of Public Affairs.

As the *2023 Bush Summit* continues around Australia, the IPA has today released new research on the attitudes of Australians on key regional industries and activities. The research found:

- **70% of Australians believe that the mining and resources sector is critical to our nation's future success. Only 8% disagree.**
- **68% of Australians believe that farmers, food producers, and Australia's mining sector are under-appreciated. Only 11% disagree.**
- **60% of Australians agree that government revenue provided by the resources sector has benefited the whole community through the funding of schools, roads, and hospitals. Only 10% disagree.**
- **Two and half times more Australians think farming has a positive impact on the environment (48%) than negative (18%, with 34% unsure).**

"The *2023 Bush Summit* is a key initiative to celebrate and raise the awareness of how the bush positively impacts our everyday lives. It is also an opportunity to chart a new policy course that places this vital contribution at the centre of the national debate," said Mr Wild.

"The response to Western Australia's cultural heritage laws was a telling case study of how the community will not stand for extreme policies, imposed by inner-city elites, committed to shutting down regional industries that generate our national's wealth and pay for the services we all use."

The research also highlighted what an important a duty it is to ensure Australians retain this understanding to ensure ongoing cultural connections between the city and the country, as well as our thriving and productive industries. The research also found:

- **Only 24% of Australians have considered a job in the farming, mining, or resources sector.**
- **Only 30% of Australians have visited a farm in the past year.**
- **84% underestimated the level of Australia's food production, which is enough to feed the nation three-times over.**

"Australians, no matter where they are from, need to understand the role the bush plays in our lives, and what role it could play in their own future, particularly through employment. Too often those in the city only hear one-side of the story, when the bush is denigrated by activists," said Mr Wild.

Backing the bush also means repealing job-destroying and growth limiting policies, including reducing red tape. [Recent IPA research](#) found that since the year 2000:

- The federal environmental bureaucracy has more than tripled, while employment in agriculture throughout the country has declined by one-fifth.
- The cost of the federal government's environmental bureaucracy has grown at almost three times the rate as the size of Australia's entire agriculture sector.
- For every job created in the environmental bureaucracy, 14 jobs have been destroyed in Australia's agricultural sector.

"Each year, governments at all levels impose more red tape on our farming, mining, and resources sectors to satisfy the concerns of the inner-city, all while making it harder for regional areas to prosper and expand via economic growth," said Mr Wild.

"It is time governments got out of the way and backed the bush to continue to deliver for all of us, just as it has done for the past two centuries."

To download the research [click here](#).

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