

## Clarins gets the good oil in WA

TERESA OOI  
COSMETICS

FOR almost 10 years, one of the world's biggest cosmetics and perfume houses, Clarins, has been buying Australian sandalwood oil from Mount Romance in Albany, Western Australia.

Two weeks ago chairman Christian Courtin-Clarins snapped up 400kg of Australian sandalwood oil to make Clarins's signature French perfume — Angel by Thierry Mugler — the world's fourth-biggest selling fragrance.

The elder son of the founder of Clarins, Mr Courtin-Clarins makes no secret of why he travels all the way from France to see for himself how the trees are grown and how the oil is extracted.

He says the purity of Australian sandalwood oil — and the way it is sustainably extracted and processed — are some of the main reasons why he is such a keen advocate of the Australian oil, produced by listed forestry company TFS. "We are studying how Clarins can use Australian sandalwood when manufacturing our cosmetic line," Mr Courtin-Clarins said.



**Christian Courtin-Clarins**

"We can easily double our purchase of Australian sandalwood over the next five years."

He said that traditionally Indian sandalwood trees produced the best oil, which was used to make Clarins' signature face and body treatment oils.

However, Indian sandalwood trees had been badly pillaged and were fast disappearing from the country because of over-logging. Clarins was now looking to Australia as a sustainable and environmentally responsible supplier.

TFS founder and managing director Frank Wilson said the company exported about 16 tonnes of Australian sandalwood oil a year, two-thirds to India and a third to Givaudan, one of Europe's biggest fragrance makers, which pro-

duced perfume for Chanel, Christian Dior, Estee Lauder and Hermes.

TFS has started planting Indian sandalwood trees on 2500ha in WA's Kununurra region and expects to harvest the first oil crop in 2012.

The company has just signed a deal with a US endowment fund, which will invest \$20 million in TFS to plant an additional 180ha of Indian sandalwood trees. The investment could rise to \$100m over the next five years.

Clarins, which reported total sales of \$1.4 billion last year and sells products at beauty counters in 128 countries, is the top-selling cosmetic brand in Australia.

Over 50 years ago, the brand incorporated plant extracts and essential oils into its beauty line.

Mr Courtin-Clarins said compared with other premium global beauty brands, Clarins' prices had been kept deliberately "accessible" to ensure repeat sales.

"Clarins has its own laboratory in France which produces all our creams, face treatment oils and perfume," he said.

Cosmetic research had managed to slow down the ravages of old age by about 10 years.

+