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Alex in tune with new focus on state native forestry compliance

COVER STORY P 3



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Australian sawn softwood imports lift 62%

AUSTRALIA'S imports of sawn softwood rose an astounding 62.2% year-ended May 2022, lifting to 895,314 m3 for the full year.

While weighted average import prices may have peaked in January, there is very real prospect that annualised imports will continue to grow in coming months.

One factor that could sway the continued growth in imports is Russia's war on Ukraine.

The evident tightening in global wood fibre markets is likely to begin having an impact for supply delivered around August and after. To date, the extent of that tightening on Australian markets has been unclear and we expect will remain that way for some months.

Meantime, importers have responded magnificently to



the rapid growth in demand, delivering a huge volume of imports and ramping up their supply in very short order.

There is little doubt, and the data shows this, that importers came to the party over the last year. Led by Germany and Sweden, there were very large increases in imports to meet Australia's record demand. The sole exception was New Zealand, whose imports to Australia were wound back modestly as local producers worked to meet New Zealand's own spike in demand.

A large number of countries provide softwood products to Australia. Seven of them experienced very large

increases over the last year, and in fact, over the course of the pandemic.

Whether all this is sustainable remains to be seen, especially as the big increase from Germany is understood to be related to salvage harvesting.

There is little doubt the import supply to Australia has made all the difference over the last two years.

The reality is import prices have become necessarily more expensive, both for the goods and on a delivered basis. While shipping and freight costs are gradually beginning to unwind, we should not operate under any

illusions about freight costs coming down dramatically.

Tom Burton addressed in the AFR on 18th July saying the expectation is the cost of shipping containers will subside over the next year, but there is no appetite expectation for the USD3,000 container price to return. The question of the timing of lower sea freight costs is also a matter for continued conjecture because of continued congestion, labour shortages and supply chains that are struggling to find equilibrium.

According to RaboResearch, no real softening in freight costs should be expected until 2024.

It seems import volumes and prices will remain high for some time to come.

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Industry liaison officer joins Qld project to build greater compliance for cypress, native hardwoods

THE Queensland timber industry has welcomed the appointment of a new Industry Liaison Officer as part of a project to build greater capacity in compliance and improved management systems for operators in the state based native hardwood and cypress sectors.

Timber Queensland Chief Executive Officer, Mr Mick Stephens said the range of regulations typically required by operators included environmental, sustainable forestry, cultural heritage and workplace health and safety obligations.

“The forest and timber industry prides itself on working within a well-regulated environment and needs to maintain adequate competency standards in



Stand of cypress with riparian buffer zone tree marking.
Photo: Timber Queensland

compliance,” Mr Stephens said.

“This week we were pleased to welcome the appointment of Alex Riddington as Industry Liaison Officer for the regulatory capacity building project. Alex has previously worked in a range of roles in the Queensland and Victorian forest industries.”

Verterra have been contracted by Timber Queensland to deliver the objectives of the project, which include building greater awareness of the suite of regulatory requirements, assessing priority needs and delivering relevant training and resources. Alex is part of an experienced Verterra team

for the project which will be undertaken through to 2024.

“I look forward to working with operators in the native forestry sector and in assisting with their responsibilities on crown land in Queensland. It will also be important to work with regulators and other stakeholders to ensure a common understanding of compliance requirements,” Ms Riddington said.

“Given my background in environmental science and previous field experience in forestry operations, I can appreciate the complexity of rules and regulations designed to achieve safe working outcomes and a sustainable forestry industry,” she said.

“WE WELCOME THE APPOINTMENT”

On the cover: CEO Mick Stephens welcomes new industry liaison officer Alex Riddington to the Timber Hub team in Brisbane. Alex's focus will be on native forestry regulatory compliance and training.

New measures in place in NSW for Varroa mite emergency

NEW measures have been put in place as part of the Varroa mite emergency response in NSW to help deal with an expected increase in bee activity as the weather heats up.

The NSW Minister for Agriculture Dugald Saunders said people need to be prepared as we head into spring to prevent the mite from spreading which could have a damaging impact on hive numbers and crops.

“Bees typically swarm during warmer months as a way of establishing new colonies, so we’re reminding people to be aware that these swarms can become feral or unmanaged in places like chimneys or walls of houses over many years,” Mr Saunders said.

“Reporting these swarms



The damaging mite was discovered in the NSW Hunter region in June



and colonies is really important so we’re asking members of the public who find any to exercise caution and contact the Department of Primary Industries (DPI), so they can take targeted action to remove them.

“A plan has been developed to manage feral colonies, which includes euthanising colonies in the eradication zones.

The NSW Department of

Primary Industries (NSW DPI) Varroa mite tracing and surveillance work has confirmed nine new detections of Varroa mite in the Newcastle area in NSW, bringing the total number of infested premises to 73.

NSW DPI Acting Chief Plant Protection Officer Chris Anderson said nine new detections were detected within existing emergency zones at Raymond Terrace (4 premises), Mayfield East, Tarro, Heatherbrae (two premises) and Ferodale.

“The overall area covered by

the eradication zones hasn’t changed significantly, but a new emergency order has been issued to include the new sites,” he said.

“We have refocused our efforts on tracing and euthanising hives within the eradication zone, which has led to an increased number of detections in recent days.

“The good news is that all the confirmed cases either have clear links to existing cases or are geographically linked through the movement of hives or equipment, which continues to give us confidence we are on the right track.”

For more information on the Varroa mite emergency response, visit www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/varroa

“CASES ARE LINKED THROUGH MOVEMENT”

BoM warns of more rain

IT is not the news that the timber and building industry wants to hear however, the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) has warned that more wet weather could be on the way with La Niña likely to return.

The BoM has moved from ‘La Niña WATCH’ to ‘La Niña ALERT’ saying the likelihood of the weather pattern returning this spring has increased to around 3 times the normal risk.

“When La Niña criteria have been met in the past, a La Niña event has developed

around 70% of the time,” a spokesperson for the BoM said.

La Niña refers to changes in sea surface temperatures in the tropical Pacific Ocean, with waters in the eastern Pacific being cooler than normal, and waters in the western tropical Pacific being warmer than normal. Trade winds strengthen, increasing the water moisture in the air, which usually brings rainfall to eastern and central Australia and a wetter start to the northern wet season.



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‘Find Your Fit In Forestry’. Discover New Zealand’s new recruitment campaign

‘FIND Your Fit In Forestry’ is a recruitment based campaign which aims to draw attention to the varied career opportunities available in New Zealand’s growing forestry industry.

A sector-wide initiative, the campaign has just launched and hopes to attract more young people into the industry and fill people shortages being felt throughout the sector.

Designed to demonstrate the huge range of roles and opportunities available in forestry, the mostly digital ‘Find Your Fit In Forestry’ campaign is primarily targeted at school leavers and young people.

FICA CEO and project lead Prue Younger says the aim is to showcase the dynamic and diverse forestry industry and to attract more people into the many roles that are available.

“This campaign is unique in that it is a collaboration within the wider forestry industry. We’ve made it broad enough that we hope people will see that no matter what your skills or passion are there’s a place for everyone within the industry,” she says.

“There is an ongoing shortage of skilled workers across the sector, so we’re hoping by targeting young people we can capture hearts



Prue Younger... aims to showcase the dynamic and diverse forestry industry.

and minds from the get-go and place people in roles that fit their interests.”

Showcasing everything from machine operation, silviculture and harvest management to science-based roles and wood processing, the campaign attempts to match a candidate’s areas of interest

with suitable jobs.

A range of videos have been created, featuring real people working in forestry. A digital platform has been created, that prompts people to answer a quick-fire survey about their interests, before suggesting the areas of forestry that might fit them best.

Over the next 6 months this promotional collateral will appear across media channels including NZ Herald, google and social media – Facebook and Newstalk ZB and ZM.

Find Your Fit In Forestry is funded by the Ministry of Primary Industries, Forest Industry Contractors Association the Forest Owners Association and actioned by the Forest and Wood Processing Workforce Council.

Visit www.forestrycareers.nz

“ WE CAN CAPTURE HEARTS ”



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SEPTEMBER

11-16: Gottstein Trust Understanding Wood Science Course – Sunday evening, September 11, 2022, in Albury, NSW, for the field trip component, ending on Friday, September 16, in Canberra. The course is fully booked and a wait list is operating on a first-in-first-served basis. Delivered in partnership with the ANU. The course program can be downloaded at www.gottsteintrust.org

14: AFPA's gala dinner – Great Hall, Parliament House, Canberra, ACT. Time: 6 pm-10 pm. Dress code business attire. To take advantage of the 15% discount, guests can visit their web sites directly and follow the links to make a reservation. Enquiries 0408 404 764 or email enquiries@ausfpa.com.au

26-29: Malaysian Timber Council (MTC) Marketing Mission – Sydney and Melbourne. Executives from MTC will be visiting to liaise with timber supply chain representatives, including hosting meetings and visiting wholesale and manufacturing facilities. Further information to follow. Enquiries to John Halkett on 0417 421 187 or email: john.halkett@atif.asn.au

OCTOBER

12: Australian Timber Importers Federation Board meeting – Brisbane, QLD. For further information contact John Halkett on 0417 421 187 or email: john.halkett@atif.asn.au

20-22: Forestry Australia Symposium – Mantra Hotel, Albury, NSW, and online. Theme: Leading, Adapting and Reimagining the Future for Forestry. Closing keynote

address by corporate speaker James O'Loughlin, one of Australia's most respected, entertaining and experienced corporate speakers. Early bird registrations close August 10. Take advantage of discounted fees for in person and virtual registration and register early. Contact Forestry Australia on +61 3 7065 4252 or email: conference@forestry.org.au Visit www.forestry.org.au

26-28: DANA-Gingko Global Woodchip and Biomass Trade Conference – Marriott Singapore Tang Plaza Hotel, Singapore. Includes post-conference field trip to inspect chip and wood pellet mills in Vietnam. Field trip places are limited and preference will be given to those registering for the conference. Information on the conference and field trip is on danaevents.co.nz/2022singapore/ or contact Mariela Ferrari at

marielaFerrari.e@gmail.com

28: TABMA Australia NSW awards gala evening – Le Montage Lilyfield NSW. Nominations and ticket sales open later this month, so look out for further information. Contact Alicia Oelkers on 0418 449 031 or free phone 1300 693 483.

NOVEMBER

18-19: Fast & Forward Forestry Expo – Rotorua, New Zealand. New Zealand's first event of its kind, Fast & Forward Forestry brings the forestry industry together, showcasing the contribution the sector makes to the New Zealand economy. Visit: www.fica.org.nz/fast-and-forward-expo or contact the Forest Industry Contractors Association Email: office@fica.org.au or phone (New Zealand only) 0800 342 269.

A sappy goodbye to one of Sydney's historic trees

ONE of the most significant trees in the Domain Sydney, the Hoop Pine *Araucaria cunninghamii*, is being removed this week after a resilient history battling over a century of weather conditions.

The Christmas-looking pine has become an icon, perched on Mrs Macquarie's Point, with its distinctive hoop-like bark has become a treasured part of the Garden's history.

It has stood the test of time with the most prominent weather event leading to its deterioration over the years being a 2017 thunderstorm, which sent an electric wave through the Hoop Pine's trunk.

Horticulturist at the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney, Scott Jones, said when the tree was struck by lightning it caused damage to the upper canopy, a natural occurrence



The historic Hoop Pine Araucaria cunninghamii will be removed on August 18 after weathering many storms.

The Hoop Pine *Araucaria cunninghamii* will be waiting for its goodbyes with a red X at Mrs Macquaries Point in The Domain near the viewing deck until Thursday, 18th August.

All of the wood removed will be recycled and given another life.

for trees due to their height.

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250,000 house frames short by 2035 – construction industry faces supply gap without new plantings

AUSTRALIA'S housing construction sector faces a serious timber supply gap by mid-century if the nation doesn't move quickly to implement the billion new production trees plan, a new Forest and Wood Products Australia (FWPA) report has found.

The Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) and Master Builders Australia (MBA) says the final report released recently reveals the demand for new housing will rise from an average of 183,000 new dwellings per annum to an average of 259,000 per annum by 2050, driving huge demand for timber.

To bridge the supply gap, Australia needs to meet the One Billion New Production

Trees goal and not rely on vastly increased imports to fill the gap.

"International demand for timber continues to surge as governments demand more timber in buildings and fibre to replace plastics to meet laudable climate goals," AFPA CEO Ross Hampton said.

"This is a good thing but will make it even harder to source imports to fill our own expanding timber demands.

"Australia has vast areas of land suitable for timber production, yet our plantation estate has been stagnant – and has even been going



backwards in some places – for the last two decades. That has to be reversed and there is no time to lose.

"Forest industries look forward to working quickly with the Albanese Government to commence the rollout of the \$86 million committed during the election campaign as the first tranche of funding required to get seedlings into the ground."

Master Builders Australia CEO Denita Wawn said, "The severe timber shortages experienced by the industry have put a huge strain on thousands of building and construction businesses and contributed to the inflationary pressures

that our industry has been experiencing for many months.

"The case for increasing the supply of locally grown timber is compelling and will remain so even as COVID related supply chain disruption eases. It's a move that will support jobs and economic activity in the nation's residential building sector."



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For the hug of trees!



Finland's freestyle entry at the 2021 championships. (Saara-Maria Salonen/Courtesy HaliPuu)



A creative British tree hugger in 2020 (Eat Shoot Drive/Courtesy HaliPuu)

If you have a real love of trees, this may be for you!

The third annual tree hugging championships in Arctic Finland takes place on August 20, and organizers say they're looking forward to another successful event.

"The competition is a fun way to bring attention to nature, and how trees and forests, and nature in general, can really bring well-being into your life and make you feel better when you're stressed," Riitta Raekallio-Wunderink, the CEO and Chief Tree Hugging officer of HaliPuu, a Finnish adopt-a-tree business said.

Raekallio-Wunderink got the idea for the tree hugging championships during the pandemic when she thought people needed a lift.

"We started in 2020 when coronavirus hit," Raekallio-Wunderink said.

"We wanted to do

“THERE ARE SOME SERIOUS ACROBATIC SKILLS

something to make people happier. Everyone was stuck inside so I thought this is something we can do to cheer people up."

This year event organisers are expecting representatives from ten different countries or regions to compete in three different events: speed hugging; dedication and freestyle.

Speed-hugging requires contestants to hug as many trees as they can in one minute while still respecting the minimum hug length of five seconds.

Meanwhile free-style is the place where contestants can really let their personalities shine.

"We've seen really fun entries from very creative to some quite acrobatic skills," Raekallio-Wunderink said.

The on-site event is by invitation only, however, it will be live streamed so keen spectators can tune in.

And while we can't all be in Finland to participate, tree huggers are encouraged to post a picture giving a tree a hug!



Forestry Australia has welcomed a new vice-president

JIM Wilson has been welcomed as the new vice-president for Forestry Australia, covering the position made vacant by Dr Michelle Freeman while she takes maternity leave.

"I am delighted to provide service to Forestry Australia as vice-president," Mr Wilson said.

"The future is bright for our profession," Mr Wilson said of his appointment.

"We are increasingly recognised as an enabler to a significant climate change solution. My passion is with people and I'm interested in supporting Forestry Australia as we mature and recruit broader membership interest from all who are passionate about well-managed forests."

President Bob Gordon welcomed Mr Wilson into the role, saying his experience and knowledge would help the organisation continue to provide excellent outcomes for its members.

"Jim is a registered forestry professional, with a career which has been focused in the private sector. He



Jim Wilson has been welcomed with his wealth of experience.

has invested his recent years working with Forico in Tasmania, as well as providing significant service to the forest sector in advocacy and leadership," Mr Gordon said.

"Jim is also an active farm forester with both plantation and native forest in Tasmania. His experience and knowledge in these areas are extremely valuable to the board and his recruitment to vice-president progresses Forestry Australia's succession plans.

"Forestry Australia has made some great



Dr Michelle Freeman will be taking maternity leave from the position.

achievements over the past 12 months, including a 10% increase in membership, more student and young members, a record 1420 registrations for our annual webinar program, a booming 456 National Conference participants and 60 people taking part in our newly launched mentoring program.

"We are proud to have also produced an operating surplus, which allows us to reinvest in projects and

“THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT

initiatives that are important to members, which has, in turn, increased the pride they feel in their Forestry Australia."

Mr Gordon thanked Dr Freeman for her service to the organisation as vice-president, a position she plans to resume later in 2023.

"Michelle has been a dedicated and passionate advocate for our profession for several years now, and while we will miss her presence and knowledge, we are delighted for her and her family in this exciting chapter of their lives," Mr Gordon said.

"Forestry Australia is very proud of the diversity of our leadership and our membership more broadly, and we are pleased that Michelle is planning to resume her role as vice-president following the completion of her leave in 2023."

Forestry Australia's conference and membership manager Naomi Will is also taking maternity leave, commencing late September.

Vote for Australia's favourite tree

THE hunt is on to find Australia's favourite tree with everyone invited to get involved and vote.

The ABC is running the quest for the best as part of National Science Week which runs through to Sunday, August 21.

"We've had more than 100,000 votes in our search for Australia's favourite tree and now it's time to get (a bit more) serious!" a

spokesperson for the ABC said.

"The trees have been pruned down to the top 20 and the second round of voting is underway."

So far a number of species have been cut from



Eucalyptus pauciflora.

the list with some of the continent's unique flora in the running to be crowned the best.

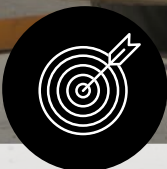
Gums are top of the list with several making the top 20 including the ghost gum, gungurru, karri, mountain ash, red flowering gum, river red gum, snow gum and Sydney red gum.

Australia's favourite tree will be announced next week.

SCAN TO WATCH



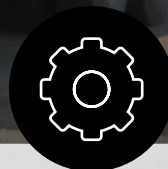
Enabler of the transition from green metric tonnes to cubic metres, and reduction of the required number of log truck movements. (Forico, Tasmania)



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Responsible Wood appointed to national building design judging panel

JASON Ross, Responsible Wood's Marketing and Communication Officer, has been appointed as a judge of the 2022 BDAA National Design Awards with entries now open online at www.bdaa.com.au/design-awards-2022/.

The BDAA National Design Awards is one of Australia's most prestigious building design awards, showcasing the best building designs across 29 distinct categories and announced at a deluxe gala dinner set to take place

on the 29th of October 2022 in Melbourne.

The Building Design Association of Australia (The BDAA) is Australia's leading National Peak Body representing residential, commercial, and industrial building designers, architects, landscape architects, thermal performance assessors and design students.

This year's awards program will feature a myriad of design generic categories in all sizes and price ranges – see a full list of award program



Adam Dovile... the Ultimate Renewable™ Ambassador for wood.

guidelines online.

Responsible Wood's Jason Ross, who has a background in building and construction, is thrilled to participate in the judging process, noting

the role of certified-timber in achieving sustainability and circularity in the built-environment.

"Timber is the ultimate building material; it is the ultimate renewable," Mr Ross said.

"However, the sustainability of timber can only be verified through the sustainable management of the forest and monitored for conformity through the supply chain."

"That's what Responsible Wood is all about, we are third party certification system, with more than 300 suppliers carrying formal-claims through the timber-supply chain."

"I look forward to judging entries across the full

Cont P 13

“ I LOOK FORWARD TO JUDGING ENTRIES ”

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From P 12

spectrum of residential, commercial, and industrial buildings, providing BDAA members and stakeholders with the information they need to carry Responsible Wood-claims through the supply chain," Mr Ross said.

In early August 2022, Responsible Wood and the BDAA were announced as partners in the Wood You Like to Know extravaganza August 24-25 in Melbourne.

Titled 'Wood You Like to Know', it aligns with the Ultimate Renewable theme promoting timber as "undeniably the most sustainable building material to be specified and used across all building applications and classes".

Responsible Wood-certified Weathertex's National Marketing Manager Vanda Correia said the event, sponsored by the Building

Designers Association of Australia, Responsible Wood, WoodSolutions, Sculptform and FWPA's The Ultimate Renewable initiative, would provide ground-breaking information regarding the state of this nation's sustainable timber industry, offering timely viewpoints and compelling presentations from experts in this field.

Highlights include presentations by the Green Building Council of Australia, Global Green Tag, Industry Edge, the Forest and Wood Products Association and Planet Ark.

In February 2022, Responsible Wood was recognised as part of the Green Building Council of Australia's new Responsible Products Framework.

The new framework, which provides guidance for all building materials used in Green Star projects will apply to all new Green Star

Rating Tools published by the GBCA and is an important component of the circular economy.

"The Responsible Products Framework provides a new definition for responsible products, it recognises schemes like Responsible Wood which have a positive environmental impact, are transparent, respect human rights, and take action to reduce carbon content," Responsible Wood Marketing and Communications Officer Jason Ross said.

"Our new 2021 standard for Sustainable Forest Management has been assessed highly favourably and is amongst the world's leading standards for sustainable

forest management."

If you want to attend, tickets are available through eventbrite including the 'ultimate package' which includes the two-day program and kicks off with a morning or afternoon session on 24 August at the Holmesglen Institute.

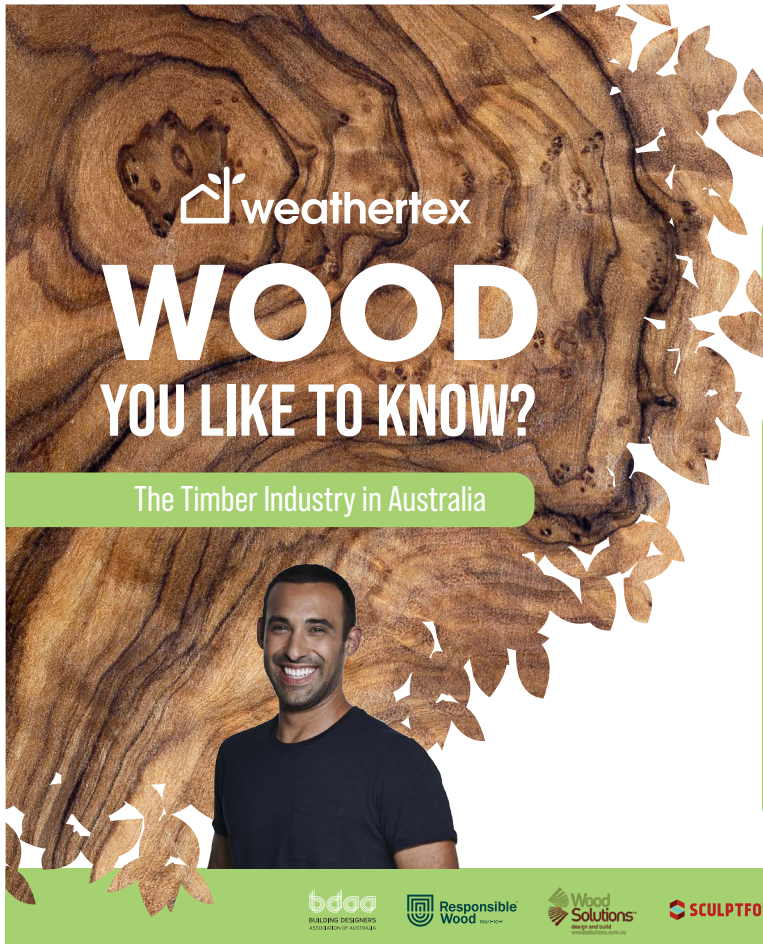
Attendees will be eligible for up to 8 CPD points recognised by the BDAA as well as a day conference on 25 August at the stunning Sculptform Design Studio.

The event rounds off with a VIP cocktail function where participants will have the opportunity to meet Adam Dovile, the industry's new Ambassador for Wood.

Additionally, Responsible Wood marketing and communications officer Jason Ross has been announced as the master of ceremonies for the second day.

You can register online.

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DAY 2 [VIEW PROGRAM](#)

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Jorge Chiapa
Green Building Council of Australia

Moving from Sustainable to Full Transparency
David Baggs
Global GreenTag

Pathway to Compliance with Timber
Boris Iskra
FWPA

Outlook of Australian Forestry & Timber Products
Tim Woods
Industry Edge

Biophilic Design is Changing the Environment
David Rowlinson
Planet Ark

Ultimate Renewable
Meet and greet cocktail function with special guest Adam Dovile
The Ultimate Renewable™ Ambassador

#woodyouliketoknow

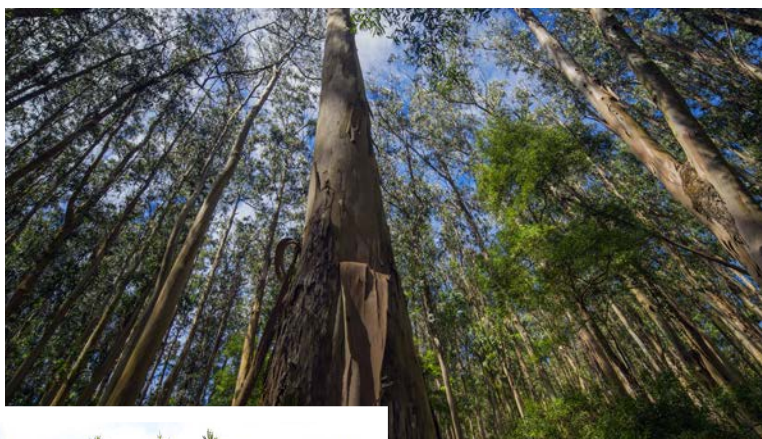
Making native forests too valuable to remove

IT'S more bad news it would seem with the recent release of the latest State of the Environment report, with the impacts of climate change and the horrendous 2019-2020 bush fires contributing to disappointing environmental outcomes.

The report lists a number of declining environmental benchmarks, including deforestation that in other words, means the removal of forests – or land clearing if you like that has contributed to environmental degradation, so cutting down trees and replacing them with something else. The report also details habitat destruction and invasive species.

Also identified is that Australia has lost more mammal species than any other continent and continues to have one of the highest rates of species decline. With this, the number of new species now listed in a higher threatened category has increased by eight per cent since 2016.

But getting back to forest loss, there is an apparent clue here and a real opportunity for forestry to improve the country's overall environmental performance. Making native forests too valuable to remove, and planting lots and lots more



trees would contribute to much better environmental results.

Now, as I understand it, with hardwood timber in really short supply, careful sustainable forest management, independent certification along with a fair-dinkum carbon trading system would collectively be a large step in the right direction. So, I reckon making native forests and plantations precious and promoting their environmental values would mean that forests were not cleared and replaced with grass and cows, and tree planting would finally start to happen.

If I may say so, the very wise and experienced president of Forestry Australia Bob Gordon confirms that forestry professionals take



issues of threatened species and risk of extinction very seriously.

He says that the greatest, most pervasive threats to forest ecosystems and biodiversity are a combination of invasive species; change in land use and the increased frequency and intensity of bushfires, exacerbated by climate change. These impacts, Bob says, will not be improved by passive conservation techniques.

"A commonly heard narrative is that creating more national parks and conservation areas is what is required to protect our

forests. However, invasive species, fire and other climate change impacts, do not honour tenure boundaries."

Forestry Australia has been advocating a much more rational approach to forest management now for some time – they make a lot sense – and governments would do well to listen.

Obviously, same goes for tropical forests – go to Bunnings and see for yourself – both hardwood and softwood timber prices have climbed through the roof by as much as 400 per cent in many cases. Natural forests here in Australia or elsewhere, are just too economically valuable to abuse or remove.

It's pretty clear. You would have to think that with climbing timber prices and a carbon trading mechanism, and with the correct government policy signals, investors would be lining up with a spade in one hand and a bag of seedlings in the other to get involved in an emerging forestry bonanza! Let's hope so.

So, positive and progressive forest policy and forestry practice could be the good news story that comes out of the despondent 'State of the Environment' report. Do you agree?

See you same place, same time next month.

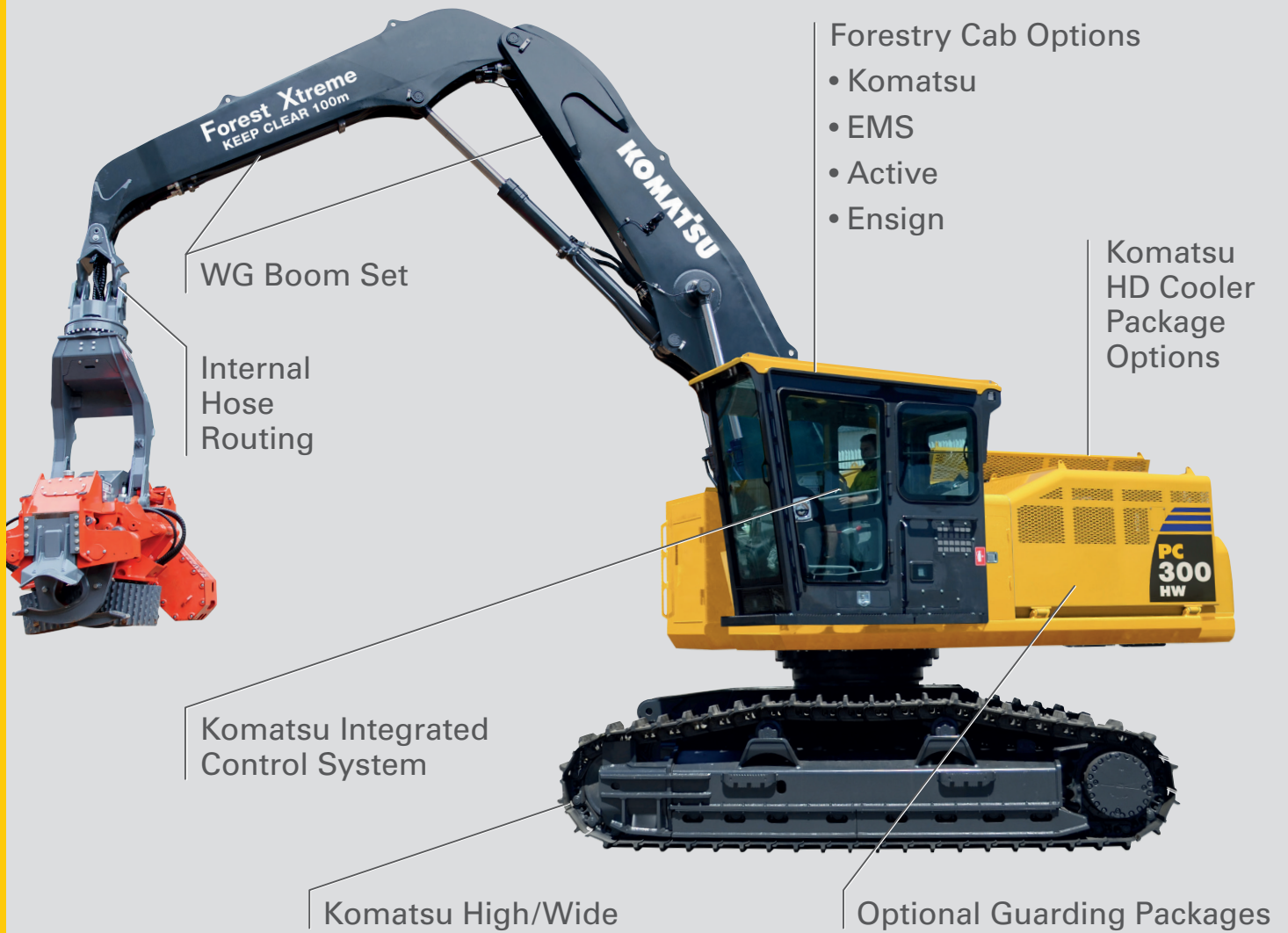
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\$30m grant programs to help support communities transition after WA native forest harvesting closure

WA Forestry Minister Dave Kelly this week announced three new grant programs to support economic development and job creation in the state's south-west communities, ahead of the end of native forest logging in 2024.

The Industry and community development programs are the third and final pillar of the Native Forestry Transition Plan, funded by an additional \$30 million announced in the 2022-23 state Budget. The third pillar in the \$80 million transition plan will help build strong, diverse regional economies and support the creation of local jobs.

The \$15 million Small Business Development and



1/ WA government says the decision to end native forest logging will save an additional 400,000 ha of karri, jarrah and wandoo forests.
2/ Dave Kelly... government is committed to making sure south-west communities continue to grow and prosper into the future," he said.

Diversification program will provide grants of up to \$400,000 to small businesses that have been impacted by the end of native forest

logging to diversify or expand their business into new business streams. This funding is designed to assist

secondary businesses that have a reliance on the native timber industry but do not have a direct contract with the Forest Products Commission.

New industry expansion and innovation in the region will be supported through a \$10 million New Industry Development and Attraction Program. The industry-led program will provide grants of up to \$2 million, with matched funding, to accelerate new and existing business development, attract new industries and strengthen regional economies with diverse employment opportunities.

Funding of up to \$100,000 will also be made available

Cont P 17



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Victorian sawmill closures casts shadow on government and greens

VICTORIAN Forest Products Association chief executive Deborah Kerr has warned of a “catastrophic” shortage of timber – about half the state’s 17 timber mills are without logs or with less than two weeks’ supply.

It comes as a sawmill in eastern Victoria, Mectec, confirms it will be forced to close as its supply runs out with the owner passing blame to environmentalists and the sitting government.

Victorian supplies of hardwood timber, have been hit because of court injunctions in place since December to protect against a possible threat to greater gliders, cat-sized possums with large ears, long tails and claws. The orders have prevented the state government-backed VicForests from harvesting timber in the Central Highlands, Tambo or Gippsland, locking up to 90 per cent of Victoria’s ash harvest zones.

Victoria’s Nationals leader Peter Walsh said the nine workers at Mectec sawmill in the small East Gippsland town of Newmerella were



Covid, along with legal changes have presented challenges for the mill which will be forced to close.

the human face of Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews’ war on the timber industry, with native logging being stepped down until it is banned in 2030.

“Communities such as Newmerella rely on Victoria’s \$7.3 billion native timber industry to put food on the table and keep the lights on,” he said.

“But again we see Labor abandoning regional Victorians to pander to the Greens and their inner-city voters.

“Daniel Andrews signed off on the industry’s closure in 2018, based on sham focus groups, social media analytics, and a radical green ideological

agenda.”

CFMEU manufacturing division national secretary Michael O’Connor said the government had a “moral obligation” to support the timber workers, who had been stood down because of hardwood shortages caused by legal challenges and government policy failures with a JobKeeper-style support plan.

He said hundreds of sawmill workers across Victoria faced reduced hours and had been asked to take leave; hundreds

“IT’S THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG”

more were facing imminent stand-downs in a dozen mills around the state.

“Victorian government inaction for two years on the injunctions that closed down operations has led to this situation,” he told The Australian Financial Review.

“An increase in third-party litigation in forestry operations has impacted timber supply, leading to hardwood shortages, and the slowing down and even closing of production at mills,” he said. “The closure of the Mectec sawmill in East Gippsland is the tip of the iceberg.”

MecTec has operated for 80 years in Newmerella, Gippsland but will need to close and axe nine employees, after not receiving enough logs to keep the business operating. It hopes to reopen if normal supplies resume.

“I had a meeting with the guys and told them that when we cut the last log, which could be this week or early next week, we’ll be finished,” owner John Mekken said.

(Source: Australian Financial Review)

From P 16

through the \$5 million Community Development Small Grants program for projects that aim to stimulate regional economies and enhance the livability of communities.

Applications for the programs will commence opening from September.

The programs were developed in consultation with the Native Forestry Transition Group, local

government authorities, the Forest Industries Federation of Western Australia, the Australian Workers Union, and regional chambers of Commerce and Industry.

Since September last year, the McGowan government has committed \$80 million to support the transition of workers, businesses and communities linked to the native forest industry.

The government has also invested a record \$350 million for new softwood plantations

across the south-west region, which will create and support WA forestry jobs.

Mr Kelly says the decision to end native forest logging from 2024 will preserve an additional 400,000 ha of karri, jarrah and wandoo forests, and protect native forests for future generations.

“The government is committed to making sure south-west communities continue to grow and prosper into the future,” he said.

“Our historic decision to protect the state’s native forests creates significant opportunities for the region’s communities.

“We are making \$30 million in grants available to help attract new industries to the region and develop sustainable regional economies that provide a choice of employment options not only to retain former native timber workers in the region, but to attract new workers and their families to our regions.”

International journalist and media personality Nicky Ainley joins the Timber & Forestry e-news team

JOURNALIST, producer, writer, blogger, marketing and media, events and social media personality Nicky Ainley has joined the Timber & Forestry e-news team. A resident of the NSW Hunter Valley, Nicky has a wide reputation as an engaging, powerful journalist and presenter with a way with words and a passion for people and stories.

Now with family business interests in timber and hardware, and a mum to twin boys, after letting her career take her all over the world, Nicky is continuing to follow her passion of writing and radio broadcasting. Nicky holds a Masters in Journalism and continues her passion for the airwaves with MMM

Newcastle after presenting breakfast radio across the Hunter, the Central West and producing in Sydney.

Nicky is also a senior editor for a number of digital news publications overseeing a team of journalists to deliver daily news to regional NSW markets and is a guest lecturer at Charles Sturt University specialising in digital media.

Nicky's had her first taste of media while still at school working with Strictly Ballroom and Totally Wild. Kick starting her journalism career, Nicky was the youngest female working with the 32nd America's Cup reporting and presenting for Metro Media. Based in Europe for six years Nicky found her niche in



Nicky Ainley ... international journalist and media personality joins e-news team.

sports, health and lifestyle media.

Nicky has worked along side global leaders including FOX, Metro Media, CNN, Punto 1 and more, she has covered the international sailing circuits, La Liga, the

World Cup, Formula 1, the ATP Tennis Tour, the Volvo Ocean Race and the 32-34th America's Cups – just to name a few.

A passionate writer and widely published journalist, Nicky enjoys travel, food and lifestyle writing. Nicky is also an accomplished MC having fronted a range of events around the world, including VIP events, corporate functions, international launches, community and charity events and award nights.

When it comes to joining the Timber & Forestry e-news team Nicky says she is wrapped and excited to building her new home along side her new writing journey!

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Mass-ive embrace of tall timber across 50 US states

THE mass-timber revolution is swiftly making its mark on the American landscape. As of March, an estimated 1384 mass-timber buildings have been constructed or are in design in all 50 states, and this month the 25-storey Ascent tower in downtown Milwaukee edged out Voll Arkitekter's Mjøstårne in Norway for the distinction of the world's tallest timber building.

Sustainability, heavily emphasised by the timber industry, has been the major accelerant of the phenomenon. Compared to steel or concrete, the benefits of timber construction are significant, both in the long-term storing of carbon and in emissions reductions from forest to jobsite. Yet the idea that "all wood is good" glosses over the intricacies of a complex supply chain, particularly in the Pacific Northwest, where the abundance of high-quality lumber – primarily Douglas fir – is the mainstay of the US lumber business.

"If building designers are going to make these significant sustainability claims, they need to know where the product comes from," says architect Michael Green, a vocal advocate for



The 25-storey Ascent tower in downtown Milwaukee edges out Voll Arkitekter's Mjøstårne in Norway as the world's tallest mass-timber building.

timber construction, whose eponymous Vancouver-based firm has millions of square metres of mass-timber projects under way.

Some in the timber business readily concur. "Mass timber is not a panacea; it's not a silver bullet. The main thing it does is increase demand for lumber," says Benjamin Hayes, a sixth-generation logger, whose company Springboard Forestry offers sustainability consulting and management services to small timber farms in northwest Oregon.

The growing popularity of mass-timber construction has opened a hopeful chapter in the region's bitter timber wars. In March, the Oregon state legislature passed a significant bill affecting private forest

management, the culmination of an historic agreement between environmental groups and the timber industry. The bill limits logging activity around streams to protect water quality and aquatic habitats; sets new standards for the design of forest roads used by loggers; and expands monitoring of compliance.

"We can look toward a new phase of forest management and move beyond the tensions that are still very present in forestry today," Benjamin Hayes says of the new law.

In his view, the next step is to develop and strengthen infrastructure to help buyers penetrate the opacity of the timber supply chain and choose products with

environmental and social value.

"Architects, designers, and developers have the potential to dramatically shift what American forests look like through their purchasing decisions," he says.

Sustainable timber sourcing is a priority for the Portland, Oregon-based architects at ZGF, who have been working with mass timber for at least 20 years. The firm is designing 92,900 sq m expansion of the Portland International Airport, which will be capped with an undulating 35,300 sq m canopy of glulam beams and mass-plywood. "In the Pacific Northwest, timber is in our blood," says Jacob Dunn, sustainability consultant for the firm.

"Any major project, especially one at the front door of the region, requires fundamental engagement with the timber industry, mass timber, and the innovation that's happening in our region," he said.

The firm used wood from within a 965-ha radius; all 600,000 board feet of the project are 100% traceable to their forest of origin.

To ensure this, Dunn and his team analysed six possible 'pathways' timber.

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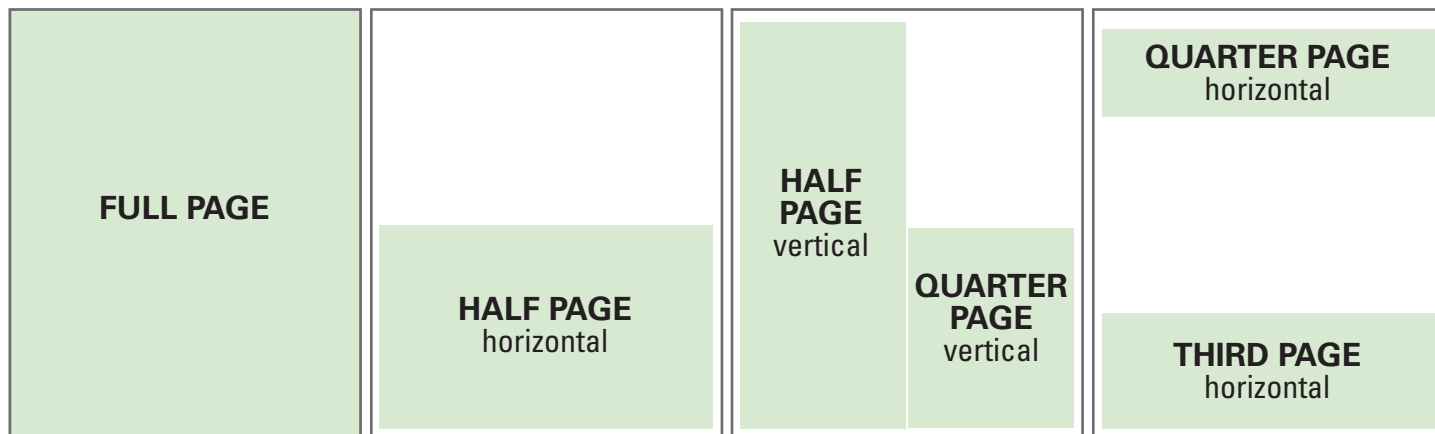
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