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NZIF welcomes 'Why Pines?' paper, advocates for diverse forestry integration

THE New Zealand Institute of Forestry (NZIF) welcomes the recent publication of the paper titled 'Why Pines?', *A Context for Recent Research Results from the Our Land and Water Science Challenge*. This important research provides a valuable context for understanding the role of pine forestry in New Zealand's landscape, particularly in terms of land conversion and economic viability.

However, in a statement, NZIF said, that while NZIF acknowledges the insights presented, we believe the discussion should not be limited to a binary choice between pine and other types of trees. Instead, the focus should be on the strategic incorporation of a wide range of tree species into New Zealand's landscapes.

"Forestry is not a matter of choosing one type of tree over another. The goal should be to create a mosaic of farm paddocks and trees which enhances both economic returns and environmental sustainability," says James Treadwell, President of NZIF. "We need to think about



NZIF has responded to the report which highlights the role of pine forestry in the New Zealand forestry landscape. Image: Shutterstock

forestry in a holistic manner, placing trees where they will deliver the greatest benefits."

NZIF advocates for a strategic approach where plantation species, such as pines, are integrated into farms on less productive land. These trees can contribute to New Zealand's emissions trading scheme (ETS) and serve as a valuable future timber resource.

In parallel, native trees and long-lived species should be prioritised in riparian zones, on steep and highly erodible

land, and in areas of farms where harvesting would be uneconomic. These native plantings play a critical role in enhancing biodiversity, protecting waterways, and stabilising soils, contributing to the overall health of the ecosystem. They can also be entered into the ETS providing the landowner income.

A practical rule of thumb to guide landowners might be trees should be planted in areas where sheep and beef are creating contour tracks around hillsides. This

approach not only supports sustainable land use but also promotes biodiversity and enhances the resilience of the landscape.

NZIF remains committed to promoting the sustainable management of New Zealand's forests, recognising the need for a diversified

approach which balances economic, environmental, and social goals.

The New Zealand Institute of Forestry (NZIF) is the professional body for New Zealand's forestry sector. It represents the interests of foresters, forest scientists, and other professionals involved in the management of all forests. The Institute advocates for sustainable forest management and promotes the role of forests of all types and forestry in mitigating climate change.

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Plantation grant recipients and workforce training providers announced

THE Albanese Government has used National Forestry Day (August 20) to announce Round 2 recipients under the Support Plantation Establishment Program (SPEP) and that ForestWorks Ltd will deliver the Forestry Workforce Training Program (FWTP) promised at the 2022 Federal Election, Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA), Diana Hallam said today.

"On behalf of Australia's forest industries, we welcome and thank the Hon. Julie Collins MP, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and the Albanese Government for these announcements, both fulfilling Labor election commitments made in 2022, on National Forestry Day," Diana Hallam said.

Eight new plantation projects in NSW, Victoria, WA and Tasmania have been



The announcement was made on National Forestry Day in mid August with Diana Hallam welcoming the news. Image: via Facebook/Ausfpa

announced under Round 2 of the SPEP worth \$5.65 million. They are, in addition to the 19 projects from Round 1 worth over \$10 million.

ForestWorks Ltd has

also been confirmed as the provider for the \$10 million FWTP and will deliver a suite of activities to improve qualification and credentials access for the sector. It will

include pilot projects and trials including a school-to-work traineeship transition program, mentorship for Indigenous Australians and women, and improving training in remote and regional Australia.

"Ongoing investment in Australia's forest industries is critical for the sector to realise its potential for the decades ahead. We are responsible for essential and high quality, sustainable products, provide highly skilled jobs across Australia, and are a big part of Australia's climate change solution and path to net zero emissions," Diana Hallam said.

"We welcome the Government and Minister Collins using National Forestry Day to recognise the broader sector through the plantation establishment and workforce training announcements. It certainly was a very happy National Forestry Day!" Diana Hallam concluded.

2024 HIA Australian GreenSmart Home of the Year

OSKA'S house, located in the heart of suburban Canberra won the highest accolade – the 2024 HIA Australian GreenSmart Home - while also being awarded the HIA Australian GreenSmart Custom Built Home, partnered by COLORBOND® steel.

Using solar passive principles and NatHERS energy modelling, the floor plan was optimised to create a new family home with more functional space and better flow and connection.

Despite its relatively small footprint the home pays attention to the



Oska's House was reimagined to create a more functional family home with the use of NatHERS energy modelling as well as repurposing salvaged materials. Image: HIA Australia

basics, showing what can be done with good design, good detailing and quality construction.

The HIA Australian GreenSmart Awards recognise the best in sustainable

housing. Award winners and finalists make a positive difference to the environment by building energy-efficient and comfortable homes.

Ovens & King Builders from Victoria won HIA Australian

GreenSmart Energy Efficiency for a home that showcases intelligent design and puts the focus on energy efficiency and sustainability in construction. The home showcased large timber features. This Buffalo Creek home showcases intelligent design and puts the focus on energy efficiency and sustainability in construction. Low embodied carbon choices include cork flooring and hempcrete wall construction whilst an all electric build ensure the home is net zero ready.

View more winners at hia.com.au.

Source: HIA Australia

Forestry Corporation make rare discovery

A RARE Coastal Emu nest, containing nine eggs, has been discovered by Forestry Corporation staff in a State forest on the North Coast, giving hope for the future of the endangered population.



1/ **The discovery is a significant ecological find and critical to the continued survival of the species.** Image: Shutterstock
 2/ **The nest was discovered by lead Forestry Officer Kurt Holzhauser.** Image: Forestry Corporation

The discovery near Grafton was made by Forestry Corporation Lead Forestry Officer Kurt Holzhauser during a broad area habitat search for threatened and endangered species.

“IT’S AN AMAZING PROSPECT”

The NSW Government, under Saving Our Species, has invested years of conservation and habitat protection work on the North Coast to save the Coastal Emu, after the population was classified as endangered.

Forestry Corporation’s Senior Ecologist Chris Slade said the discovery of the nest

was a significant ecological find and every effort will now be taken to ensure the nest contributes to recovery actions for the population.

“It is estimated that there may be fewer than 50 Coastal Emus left on the North Coast, so to discover a nest bearing eggs, is a significant moment for that endangered population,” Mr Slade said.

“It’s an amazing prospect as the timing of the discovery is perfect in the sense that every effort can now be taken to try and ensure those eggs hatch into emu chicks.”

Genetically isolated from their western emu relatives, Coastal Emus have faced high mortality rates due to predation and car strikes.

Loss of emus from the North Coast would have a serious impact on the

environment, as the birds eat and spread fruits and seeds across a range of coastal habitats.

The emu also has significant cultural value to Yaegl, Gumbaynggirr and Bundjalung peoples.

“The nest found by Kurt is within the distribution of the threatened emu population,” Mr Slade explained.

“Forestry Corporation is now working with Saving Our Species on the best way to ensure this nest contributes to broader recovery actions,” he said.

The Coastal Emu, (*Dromaius novaehollandiae*) was once widespread across north-eastern NSW, but is now only found within the Evans Head, Red Rock and Bungawalbin areas.

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The Coastal Emu, (*Dromaius novaehollandiae*) was once widespread across north-eastern NSW, but is now only found within the Evans Head, Red Rock and Bungawalbin areas. Image: Forestry Corporation

Peter Duncan AM to chair expert panel consulting on Industry Action Plan

THE NSW Government has announced the appointment of an expert panel to lead consultation on a Forestry Industry Action Plan, which will outline the path NSW will take to ensure a sustainable timber industry which the Minn's Government says will 'align with the government's key environmental priorities'.

Peter Duncan AM will chair the Independent Forestry Panel, bringing more than 40 years of experience in primary industries, infrastructure and regional NSW. Professor Mary O'Kane AC and the Hon. Mick Veitch will also sit on the Panel.

According to the Minns Government, the panel will be tasked with consulting with a broad range of stakeholders and reporting to the Government on the best options to achieve the balance between sustainable supplies of timber and our environmental commitments.

Stakeholders include representatives from the timber industry, forest growers, environment groups, unions, Aboriginal

communities, local government, businesses, related industries, tourism, scientific experts and the Commonwealth Government.

The Plan will address the following key areas:

- Sustainability of current and future forestry operations in NSW;
- Environmental and cultural values of forests, including threatened species;
- Community demand for timber products, particularly as relates to NSW housing, construction, mining, transport and retail;
- The future of softwood and hardwood plantations and the continuation of Private Native Forestry in helping meet timber supply needs;
- The role of State Forests in maximising the delivery of a range of environmental, economic and social outcomes;
- Opportunities to realise



Minister for the Environment Penny Sharpe believes the balance between the timber industry and environmental concerns needs to be met.

Image: via Facebook/PennySharpe

for the future of this industry, so the NSW Government is taking action to give certainty to communities, workers and industry.

"The NSW Government is consulting on the future of forestry in NSW," Minister for the Environment Penny Sharpe said

"Whether it's hardwood, softwood or private native forest, our forests and the native species which call them home have faced challenges

including bushfires, floods and the ongoing risks due to climate change.

"We want your input on what forests and a sustainable forestry industry will look like in the next 30 years.

"The expert panel will

carbon and biodiversity benefits and support carbon and biodiversity markets, and mitigate and adapt to climate change risks; and

- Greenhouse gas emission impacts of different uses of forests and assessment of climate change risks to forests.

The former Coalition Government neglected to plan

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Workforce boost for Wide Bay forest and timber industry

THE Wide Bay region is set to benefit from a new workforce development plan aimed at supporting the future skills needs of the forest and timber industry.

Jobs Queensland has partnered with Timber Queensland and local industry stakeholders to develop the Wide Bay Forest and Timber Industry Workforce Development Plan, to help address local workforce challenges and support those in the industry to live and work locally.

Thirty-seven actions across four key themes undertaken in an industry-led approach will guide the Wide Bay region's forest and timber industry towards its future state.

The four key themes of the Wide Bay Forest and Timber Industry Workforce Development Plan aim to:

- improve industry awareness and attraction
- grow a healthy training system
- build business capability
- develop diversity in people and products.

"The forest and timber industry is important to this region's economy, and it's been so wonderful to see that industry has partnered with Jobs Queensland to plant the seeds now for its future workforce," said Bruce



Wide Bay Forest and Timber Industry Workforce Development Plan launch, held at Baywood's Maryborough head office: (L-R) Amanda McLoughlin, DTM; Curly Tatnell, DTM; Mick Stephens, Timber Queensland; Bruce Saunders, MP; Michael Dart, Jobs Queensland Board; Kylie Newey, Jobs Queensland; Nigel Pederson, Baywood; Kerry Fullarton, South & Central Queensland forestry hub; Jimmy Chand, Baywood; Daniel Pfrunder, HQPlantations; Andie Josey, Jobs Queensland.
Image: Timber Queensland

Saunders MP, Member for Maryborough.

"Supporting the local industry in this way could not have come at a better time and hearing about how the industry themselves have driven this project for over a year now is a testament to their future focus even during times of disruption and change".

"The forest and timber industry contributes to a comprehensive ecosystem involving many other industries, from nurseries to research entities through to construction companies.

"Changes in one sector can significantly impact on others.

"Jobs Queensland's research highlighted that less than half of those in the industry hold a related qualification, which represents both a challenge and an opportunity.

"The Queensland Government and Jobs Queensland have a shared vision of good jobs for all Queenslanders and a skilled

Cont P 7

SEPTEMBER

4: Forestry Australia Field Trip – South Burnett, QLD. Learn about the growing production of hardwood plantations at a farm forestry scale and more. For more information and to register, visit: <https://www.forestry.org.au/qld-events/>

7: WFTN 'Cocktails for Charity' event, 2.00 - 6.00pm – Loft West End, Brisbane. Join us for an afternoon of cocktails and charity to support RizeUp, an organisation dedicated to providing life-changing practical assistance to families affected by domestic and family violence. To purchase tickets and for more information, visit: <https://www.ntha.com.au/eventdetails/25321/wftn-cocktails-for-charity>.

cocktails-for-charity.

11: Forestry Australia Webinar - Carbon method development – ONLINE EVENT, 12.30am-1.45pm (AEST). For more details and to register, visit <https://www.forestry.org.au/webinar-carbon-method-development/>

13: NTHA NSW/ACT State Awards – Hilton, Sydney. Join us in celebrating the New South Wales & ACT Timber and Hardware Industry. Nominations open at <https://www.ntha.com.au/events/2024-nswact-state-awards-nominations/> Contact Tahlia at events@ntha.com.au

23: Latin America Forest Investment Conference – Porto Alegre, Brazil.

24-25: International Woodchip and Biomass Trade Conference – Porto Alegre, Brazil.

25-27: Field Trip – Rio Grande do Sul State, Brazil.

OCTOBER

22-23: International Woodchip and Biomass Seminar and Networking Event – Singapore.

29-31: Forestry Australia 2024 Symposium – Mercure Ballarat Convention Centre, Golden Point, VIC. Theme: Healthy and resilient forests for our future, will facilitate conversation and collaboration that regardless of land tenure and ownership, healthy and resilient forests should be the objective for all forest and land managers. The Symposium is a focused three-day gathering, consisting

of two days of plenary and concurrent sessions, and a day of Field Trips. The two-day program will feature a range of Keynote and Invited Speakers, who are experts and thought leaders in their field. The Symposium will also feature several social functions, facilitating networking and collaboration in an informal and relaxed environment. For more information, visit <https://www.forestry.org.au/2024-symposium/>

NOVEMBER

13-15: AFCA annual Gala dinner & conference – Launceston, Tas. For more information visit: <https://www.afca.asn.au/Events/afca-2023-conference-photo-gallery>

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workforce for Queensland.

"I thank Jobs Queensland for delivering the Wide Bay Forest and Timber Industry Workforce Development Plan to address local workforce challenges and highlight that Wide Bay offers good jobs, better services and a great lifestyle."

Jim Varghese AM, Jobs Queensland Board Chair said Jobs Queensland's Anticipating Future Skills data suggests that the Wide Bay region is projected to experience the fastest increase in employment in Queensland

"Agriculture, forestry and fishing is the largest employing industry in three of the five local government areas in Wide Bay, so this workforce plan is important for the region to continue to thrive."

"Our research reveals that community connection is a strong motivator to staying in the region."

"By harnessing the voice of local stakeholders, this plan will equip the region to meet workforce challenges and provide locals with access to meaningful work."

Chief Executive Officer, Timber Queensland Mick



(L-R) Scott Hill, Baywood; Jimmy Chand, Baywood. Image: Timber Queensland

Stephens said "It has been very encouraging to see the industry pull together to drive the development of this plan."

"It represents the most comprehensive deep dive into this industry for this region so

far and will form part of a solid strategy to build resilience in our industry."

"Now the real work begins as industry and other stakeholders take steps to carry out each one of the identified actions in the plan – which will take ongoing effort."

"However, with the growth of the bioeconomy and housing demand creating new and expanding markets for wood products, new jobs and roles are emerging and we need to be prepared for that. This plan will help the local industry have the skills and workforce to deliver."

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Meet your certified supplier: Australian Panels

At Responsible Wood, our mission is to develop and promote sustainable forest management and responsible sourcing of forest products through rigorous third-party certification. Recently, our Sustainability Manager, Matt de Jongh, visited Australian Panels' NSW Central Coast site, reinforcing our shared commitment to sustainability and responsible forestry.

WHO IS AUSTRALIAN PANELS?

Australian Panels is the market leader in manufactured board products for joinery and structural applications, with over 30 years of experience serving the Australian joinery and construction industries. Known for innovation and quality, their product range includes flooring, wall panels, and joinery components engineered to withstand Australia's demanding climate. Products manufactured at Australian Panels' facilities are sustainably grown, made, and owned in Australia, reflecting a deep understanding of local needs and environmental management.

THE IMPORTANCE OF WOOD-BASED PANELS IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Wood-based panels, like those produced by Australian Panels, play a pivotal role in the sustainable built environment. As renewable resources, these

panels contribute significantly to carbon storage, capturing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and locking it into long-lasting products. This function is particularly vital as the construction industry moves towards reducing its carbon footprint.

Moreover, these panels maximize resource efficiency by using wood fibres and particles that might otherwise go to waste. This approach not only reduces environmental impact but also promotes a circular economy, where materials are reused and repurposed rather than discarded.

In addition to their environmental benefits, wood-based panels offer versatile performance in construction and design. They provide excellent insulation properties, helping to reduce energy consumption in buildings, and are ideal for creating acoustically sound environments.

COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY

A cornerstone of Australian Panels' operations is their dedication to sustainable sourcing and manufacturing. The company continuously invests in state-of-the-art machinery and manufacturing processes to ensure their products are not only



Stuart Toakley, Sales Manager at Australian Panels, advocates the benefits of certification with Matt de Jongh (right), Sustainability Manager of Responsible Wood. Photo: Responsible Wood

robust and durable but also environmentally responsible. By sourcing timber from certified sustainably managed forests and controlled sources, Australian Panels minimizes environmental impact while delivering high-quality products to the market.

"Our products are designed with the unique Australian environment in mind," explains Australian Panels' CEO, Jim Snelson. "We ensure that our offerings are crafted to meet our sustainability objectives, balancing ecological, social, and economic needs."

CERTIFIED QUALITY AND INNOVATION

Australian Panels is committed to leading the market with products that meet the ever-changing demands of lifestyle and construction.

By integrating cutting-edge production and manufacturing techniques, they ensure that their panels remain at the forefront of durability and sustainability. This innovative spirit is supported by continuous investment in research and development, allowing the company to craft solutions that exceed industry expectations.

CERTIFICATION WITH RESPONSIBLE WOOD

Responsible Wood, the Australian national governing body for PEFC International, plays a critical role in promoting sustainable forest management through certification. During his visit, Matt de Jongh highlighted the importance of this certification: "Our mission is to uphold globally recognized standards for sustainable forest management. Observing Australian Panels' operations firsthand reinforces our belief that Australia's forests, and the products derived from them, are among the most sustainably managed in the world."

Responsible Wood's certification ensures that forest products meet stringent requirements for ethical timber harvesting and sourcing. This certification provides consumers with confidence that the wood products they purchase are not only environmentally sound but also socially responsible and economically viable.

“DESIGNED WITH THE UNIQUE AUSTRALIAN ENVIRONMENT IN MIND”

From P 5

consult a wide range of stakeholders and we encourage everyone to have their say," Sharpe said.

Minister for Regional NSW Tara Moriarty said we need both trees and wood.

"We must strike the right balance for communities and our environment in regional NSW.

"Timber is a crucial part of our everyday lives, with timber needed for community and government priorities such as housing, transport infrastructure, electricity distribution, and freight transport.

"The families, businesses and communities that make

“TIMBER IS A CRUCIAL PART OF OUR EVERYDAY LIVES

up this industry will be considered for the Action Plan. Their knowledge and experience will be essential for understanding the issues and finding solutions.

"Our timber workers also play a crucial role, when we need it most, to protect our forests and our communities during bushfires. They are part of our frontline in those difficult times, where their skills and equipment are critical in the fight.

"The consultative work that is set to go into this Action Plan will ensure all stakeholders are listened to and we arrive at the best future for the timber industry and sustainable state forests," Tara said.

CEO of Timber NSW, Maree McCaskill, who represents thousands of industry workers across the sector has welcomed the opportunity to discuss the industry's

future with the Government. McCaskill said it's positive if the Minns government is willing to listen and consult with those most impacted by the changes.

Pentarch Executive Director Stephen Dadd said the independence of the panel members showed a willingness by the NSW Government to allow commonsense and evidence to inform forestry policy.

"It is refreshing that the NSW Government has taken a long-term view for our vital timber industry," he said.

"We congratulate the Minister for the Environment and Minister for Regional NSW for taking an evidence-based approach in creating a Forestry Industry Action Plan and the panel which will advise it.

"We've seen firsthand the impacts of policy driven by ideology on regional

communities in Victoria and Western Australia.

"The independence of the IFP members shows a commitment by the NSW Government to ensure science and commonsense inform future forestry policy."

"We look forward to consulting with the IFP and demonstrating the many important benefits our industry provides to the environment, economy and regional communities," Mr Dadd said.

To stay informed on the Independent Forestry Panel's process, please register your interest at www.nsw.gov.au/have-your-say/forestry-industry-action-plan

On the cover: The Minns Government has announced the new panel designed to 'find the balance between sustainable timber and environmental policies.
Main image: Shutterstock. Inset image: via Facebook/Chrisminns

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Contact: editors@timberandforestrynews.com

Grants are provided by State and Federal Governments and in some cases work together or in conjunction with some large

LGA. As we understand it, not all grants are made public as high-demand or a quick closing date might result in communication being limited to registered grant writers. Keep an eye on *Enews* as we list what is open and potentially available to you.

A NEW grant that aims to foster new industries and innovation business expansion in Western Australia's native forestry timber region is now open.

The \$3 million grant program offers businesses up to \$250,000 in matched funding to support economic diversification and sustainable job creation within the native forestry timber region.

The grant is designed to foster new industries and innovative business expansion to enable a vibrant and sustainable future for the native forestry timber region.

15 local government areas make up the native forestry region and to be eligible for funding, the proposal must occur within one of the local government areas within the native forestry region.

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Submit only one application
- Hold an Australian Company Number (ACN) or Australian Business Number (ABN)
- Be registered for Goods and Services Tax (GST)



The new grant offers businesses up to \$250,000 to support expansion in forestry in WA. Image: Shutterstock

- Be a solvent business based in Western Australia, including recent financial statements or projections to demonstrate financial capacity
 - Be a legal entity capable of entering into a legally binding funding agreement with the Western Australian Government
 - For applicants (directors/owners, even if applying under a different business) that have received previous NFTP funding, apply only for the difference up to \$250,000 and for new projects only
 - Submit a comprehensive application via Smarty Grants, answering all questions
 - Be able to sign the Financial Assistance Agreement (FAA) within 60 days of the grant award.
- Proposals must also demonstrate the ability to:
- Be delivered within, or propose outcomes within, the native forestry region
 - Be completed within 12 months of signing the FAA. Projects may be staged

but must provide a clear pathway to completion with staged outcomes

- Obtain or submit all necessary approvals, with timeframes accounting for any outstanding approvals
- Provide proof of matched funding, such as bank statements, loan approval, or partnership agreements (except for businesses with at least 50% reliance on the native timber industry)
- Include a comprehensive business plan detailing the project's goals, strategies, financial projections, and expected outcomes
- Attach any additional supporting documentation, such as letters of support, approvals, environmental assessments, or technical feasibility studies.

Applications for the grant are now open with round one closing on 6 October.

To apply and for further information visit: <https://www.wa.gov.au/government/publications/native-forest-transition-timber-region-transition-grant-trtg>

NZ Mayors and PM gather to discuss mill closures

MAYORS from the Central North Island districts in New Zealand, Ruapehu, Kawerau and Taupo, whose forestry mill operations are threatened by soaring electricity prices, have met with the New Zealand Prime Minister Hon. Chris Luxon and Regional Development Minister Hon. Shane Jones to discuss urgent actions to prevent the closure of mills and other export manufacturers.

Ruapehu Mayor Weston Kirton, Kawerau Mayor Faylene Tunui, and Taupo Mayor David Trewavas, together with local iwi, expressed united concern for the central North Island economy and its communities following Winstone Pulp International's (WPI) announcement of plans to shut

down its Tangiwai Sawmill and Karioi Pulpmill due to unsustainable energy costs.

They warned that this impending closure is only the 'tip of the iceberg' unless an urgent solution is found for other New Zealand export manufacturers facing similar pressures from unsustainable energy costs.

The mayors were 'cautiously optimistic' about the prospects of keeping WPI operational after they met with the Prime Minister and the Regional Development Minister.

"There is no doubt that the Prime Minister and Minister



Ruapehu Chief Executive Clive Manley, Ruapehu Mayor Weston Kirton, Minister for Regional Development Hon. Shane Jones, Kawerau Mayor Faylene Tunui, and Taupo Mayor David Trewavas at the LGNZ National Conference. Image: Ruapehu District Council

proposal outlining what it would take to keep the mills operating. We are now urgently working to develop a solution to put to them.

We are grateful for the government's attention and support in addressing the

Jones are acutely aware of what is at stake. They share our concerns for the economy and our communities, and want to find a workable solution," said Mayor Kirton.

"The government has demonstrated its commitment by inviting us to collaborate with WPI and present a

immediate crisis facing WPI. The government has committed to considering whatever short-term solution we can put forward while they work to establish a long-term fix to prevent such a situation from arising again in the future," he said.

Source: Ruapehu District Council

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‘Strong as steel’ - hardwood hub eyed off for Green Triangle

FORESTRY companies Bluegum plantations, Midway, and New Forests are collaborating with Green Triangle Forest Industries Hub (GTFIH) and the Victorian Forest Products Association (VFPA) to develop a hardwood timber manufacturing hub in Victoria’s Glenelg Shire that could utilise engineered soft and hardwood products.

The group has unveiled plans for feasibility studies that would support a business case to construct an integrated manufacturing hub, examining the best location close to existing facilities which could help grow a new regional hardwood-engineered timber product industry.

Bluegum Plantations CEO Russ Hughes said early research has shown a potential new hardwood manufacturing hub could create 40 full-time jobs as well as more than 100 jobs during its construction phase. He added that it would support new highly skilled jobs and boost the local economy

“AN INCREASINGLY POPULAR DESIGN CHOICE



Member for Western Victoria Jacinta Ermacora and Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence (centre) with PF Olsen managing director Nathan Windebank (left), Midway Limited managing director Tony McKenna, and Australian Bluegum Plantations CEO Russ Hughes with the new GLT hardwood prototype.
Image: supplied

while strengthening the forestry sector.

Midway managing director Tony McKenna said this manufacturing hub could support the development of a sustainable building product that could replace steel or concrete, providing the same durability with less embodied carbon.

During National Forestry Day, the group showcased their latest development. This new engineered wood product, two years in the making, is a Glue Laminated Timber made

entirely from the bluegum eucalyptus grown in the region’s green triangle, which runs across Victoria and South Australia.

The group’s prototype Glue Laminated Timber product aligns with the Green Triangle Forest Industries Hub’s Splinters to Structures program, which aimed to create hybrid wood products that could meet the rising demand from the housing and construction industries for more sustainable wood.

Blue laminated timber,

known as Glulam or GLT, has high strength and load-bearing capabilities and can potentially replace steel and concrete beams in load-bearing structures. While it is made from different, smaller pieces of wood glued together, because all the wood is oriented in one direction within the product it acts as a single solid piece of wood.

Henkel recently announced it would begin producing its Loctite brand of polyurethane adhesives in Australia to support the increased interest in engineered timber for construction, as the world’s tallest timber hotel is built in Adelaide and the world’s tallest hybrid timber building is approved for construction in Perth.

Henkel said that engineered wood had become “an increasingly popular design choice for load-bearing mass timber and high-tech structural engineering application” due to growing environmental awareness around construction and material use.

A prototype of the new GLT Hardwood was shared with the Victorian Government on National Forestry Day.

China’s wood furniture exports surge

China’s wood furniture export volume surged by 24% year-on-year in the first seven months of 2024, reaching 256 million pieces. This sharp increase in volume drove a 9% rise in export value to \$13.4 billion, despite a decline in average prices, according to Lesprom Analytics.

Chinese furniture exports in the first seven months of

2024 were on pace to reach an annual rate of 439 million pieces, approaching the historical peak of 452 million pieces set in 2021. Meanwhile, the average price per piece fell by 12% to \$52, suggesting that Chinese exporters are attempting to stimulate demand by lowering prices.

The United States remained the largest destination for

Chinese wood furniture, accounting for 30% of exports. Shipments to the U.S. rose by 20% to 77 million pieces, despite a 13% drop in the average price per piece. The total export value to the U.S. increased by 5% to \$3.9 billion.

Germany saw significant growth, with a 35% increase in export volume to 13 million pieces and a 30% rise in

value to \$420 million. The Netherlands posted the highest volume growth, with exports increasing by 74% to 12 million pieces, leading to a 39% rise in value to \$296 million. The United Kingdom saw exports grow by 23% to 17 million pieces, with the total value rising by 10% to \$842 million, despite a 10% drop in the average price to \$50 per piece.

Source: [lesprom.com](https://www.lesprom.com)

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“Living With Purpose” garden guru hosts new podcast

REPURPOSE is thrilled to announce the launch of "Living With Purpose," an innovative podcast series dedicated to exploring the future of sustainability and the pivotal role it plays in shaping our world.

Hosted by renowned sustainability advocate Jamie Durie OAM and Repurpose It's visionary CEO, George Hatzimanolis, this series brings together industry leaders to discuss innovative solutions, emerging trends, and impactful strides towards a more sustainable future.

Repurpose It, a leading Victorian-based resource recovery and recycling pioneer is aiming to make sustainability a more prioritised focus for individuals and industries alike. Through engaging conversations and expert insights, the podcast aims to inspire and educate listeners on the importance of the circular economy and the people making an impact.

Jamie Durie said "When this opportunity arose I couldn't

say no. The idea of talking about something that is so important to me and that I'm so passionate about, was a no-brainer. We have hand-selected guests who provide incredible well-rounded insight into the industry as a whole. We're excited to share what we've been up to."

Repurpose It CEO, George Hatzimanolis, expresses his enthusiasm for the project, stating, "We're thrilled to bring this podcast to audiences. Our objective is to highlight the critical role the circular economy plays in shaping our future and to provide actionable insights that listeners can implement in their own lives and businesses." He continued by sharing "We're lucky to have so many leaders in the space who have stepped forward to join the podcast to share their knowledge and showcase how businesses are making a positive impact."

The podcast features an impressive lineup of industry leaders and visionaries who bring their unique perspectives



Renowned host and garden guru will take the anchor for the new audio production. Photo: via Facebook/JamieDurie

and expertise to each episode. The lineup includes government officials, CEOs and key opinion leaders in the industry.

The CEO of Palisade Impact, Steve Gross, echoed the importance of the podcast, saying "It's so important that we share our learnings with as many people as possible,

then we can see a change."

On the podcast, Steve Gross addresses impact investment stating, "impact investment is not just about identifying green opportunities; it's about ensuring that these opportunities truly contribute to a better future. We are committed to investing in projects where we don't sacrifice value for values - they promise financial returns but also deliver tangible

environmental and social benefits. It's crucial to focus on genuine, impactful investments that drive real change."

The podcast is now live with more episodes to roll out over the coming months on Spotify and YouTube. For more information please visit: www.repurposeit.com.au

Ireland calls for increase in timber use

IRELAND'S Climate Change Advisory Council (CCAC) has urged the government to adopt more sustainable construction methods to reduce sector emissions immediately. Publishing its annual review of Ireland's industry and waste sectors, the CCAC emphasised the need for increased timber use and modern construction methods (MMC). It also called for whole-life carbon assessments and targets in planning public buildings to meet sectoral targets. The review noted a 6%

drop in industrial emissions from the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) in 2023, with reductions in the food sector, pharmaceuticals manufacturing and cement production.

Commenting on the review, Marie Donnelly, Chair, CCAC, said: "One of the primary sources of industrial emissions is cement production. We must address this now by promoting more sustainable building methods, including increasing the use of timber in construction and reducing

emissions in the cement production process.

David Murray, Head of Technical Affairs & Ireland Sales, Medite Smartply, believes the CCAC's pressing call to increase the use of timber in the construction of new builds in Ireland recognises timber's vast potential as a construction method.

He explained: "At the individual building level, carbon storage is approximately 50% higher in timber-framed homes

than in masonry homes. Timber has already proven itself as a good alternative to less sustainable construction methods. According to the CIF, 48% to 50% of new-build homes in Ireland are timber-framed, compared to less than 25% in 2021. This illustrates the sharp rise in timber frame construction over the past two years, which is widely expected to continue growing and shows the promising potential of timber in meeting the growing housing demand."

Source: Irish Construct

Governments cannot tax their way to increased housing supply - HIA

"LEGISLATION introduced in Victoria will not improve housing supply or reduce pressure on public housing stock," stated HIA's Chief Economist, Tim Reardon.

Mr Reardon was speaking in response to the introduction of the 'Short Stay Levy Bill 2024'.

"The contention is that taxing short-stay accommodation will see more homes be made available for long term rentals and raise revenue to



The HIA says recent tax legislation introduced in Victoria is not a solution to the housing crisis. Image: Shutterstock

fund public housing," added Mr Reardon.

"No one supports landlords withholding

homes from the market. But the proposition that another tax on short-stay accommodation will increase

housing supply or make more homes available for rent, in the long term, lacks logic.

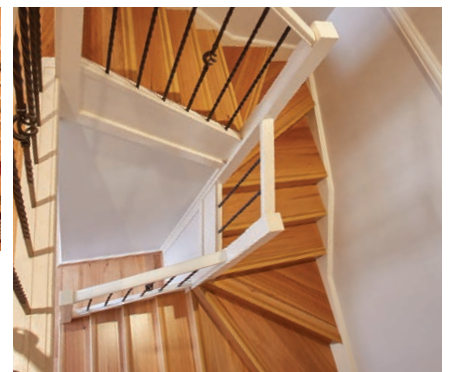
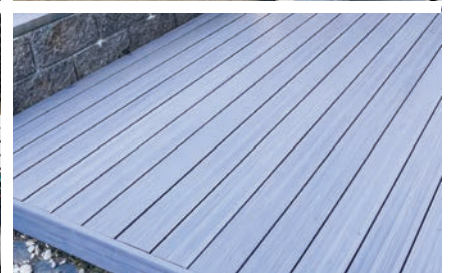
"The 'first order effect' of a tax on short-term rentals may see some rental properties become available for long-term accommodation. The second-order effects will negate this benefit. Fewer short-term rentals, and growing demand, will see the rent on these properties continue to rise attracting landlords back out of the long-term rental market.

"Taxing short stay accommodation does not increase housing supply. In the long run, it will increase

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From P 15

rental prices in short and long stay rental properties.

"This is just another tax on housing, that will reduce the supply of homes further and exacerbate the problem.

"This tax comes on top of other new taxes and costs on housing in recent years including:

A windfall gains tax, whereby when land is re-zoned, any subsequent uplift in the value of that land more than \$100,000 is taxed at a rate of up to 62.5 per cent.

A land tax surcharge for Victorians with more than one home, up to a \$975 flat

surcharge plus a 0.1 per cent increased rate of land tax.

An absentee owner surcharge of 4 per cent, up from 0.5 per cent in 2016.

A vacant residential land tax of up to 3 per cent on the capital improved value of taxable land

The latest changes to the National Construction Code, which add tens of thousands of dollars to the cost of construction of a new home

"Governments cannot increase the supply of housing by taxing them more, even if the revenue is allocated to new public housing stock. This is an own goal that will further reduce

housing supply and place more pressure on public housing stock.

"A lack of public housing is not the cause of the housing crisis, and it is therefore not the solution. It is a symptom of higher government taxes and costs on housing.

"Victoria requires more public housing stock, and this is the right time in the cycle to build more public housing.

"But public housing is a public good and should be paid for by all Victorians, not



a tax on a narrow cohort of renters or households.

"Burdening new home buyers and renters with the cost of providing public or subsidised housing is part of the cause of this housing shortage, not the solution.

"Up to 50 per cent of the cost of a house and land package is taxes, fees and charges. Housing is the most heavily taxed item in the economy other than fuel, alcohol and tobacco.

"It is these taxes and government regulations that are the cause of the housing shortage and removing them is the solution.

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\$3 million boost to sustainable wood construction in Canada

NEW, low-carbon construction materials and technologies allow for the sector to create greener, climate-resilient homes in Canada. Thanks to innovative solutions, the construction and automobile sectors are reducing emissions and supporting sustainable job creation across the Canadian supply chain.

Francis Scarpaleggia, Member of Parliament for Lac-Saint-Louis, Canada, on behalf of the Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, announced a federal contribution of more than \$2.8 million to FPInnovations for three projects. The funding includes investments to support the use of low-carbon Canadian wood in the Canadian construction market and a project to support the use of zero-emissions vehicles in the forestry and commercial transportation sectors. These investments are provided through Natural Resources Canada's (NRCAN) Green Construction through Wood (GCWood) program and the Zero Emission Vehicle Awareness Initiative (ZEVAI).

To support the expansion of low-carbon construction materials, FPInnovations will collect and analyse market data and develop market intelligence with several collaborators in provinces across Canada. This will involve research and testing activities to enable the commercialization of various wood-building systems and to generate the necessary data to enable these wood-based systems to be adopted in Canadian building codes.



The Canadian Government is helping forest sector workers in Montreal and across the country to adopt the most cutting-edge technologies available to drive down costs and help the construction industry access the low-carbon Canadian wood products it needs to build more homes. Image: Shutterstock

NRCAN is providing more than \$2.5 million through its GCWood Program to FPInnovations for these two initiatives.

FPInnovations will also develop resources to support the use of vehicles that are zero-emission or use clean fuels through demonstrations, short operational trials and highlights — helping to reduce emissions and enhance the modernization of the Canadian forestry and commercial transportation sectors. NRCAN is investing over \$212,000 to FPInnovations through the ZEVAI to support this initiative.

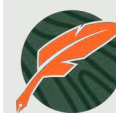
Through a historic series of investments, including the GCWood program, the Government of Canada is helping forest sector workers in Montreal and across the country to adopt the most cutting-edge technologies available to drive down costs and help the construction industry access the low-carbon Canadian wood products it needs to build more homes for Canadians.

"FPInnovations has been a long-standing pillar of applied research in one of Canada's most important resource-based sectors," The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson Minister of Energy and Natural Resource said.

"The funding announcement highlights the vital partnership between the federal government and FPInnovations in guiding the forestry industry's ongoing transformation. With the help of this federal contribution, FPInnovations will be able to conduct market research to expand the role of wood in residential and commercial construction."

"It will also be able to conduct research to adapt ZEV and LEV technology to vehicles used in forestry operations. In both cases, the government and FPInnovations together are helping Canada's efforts to lower our emissions and meet our GHG targets in the fight against climate change," he said.

Source: Natural Resources Canada



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