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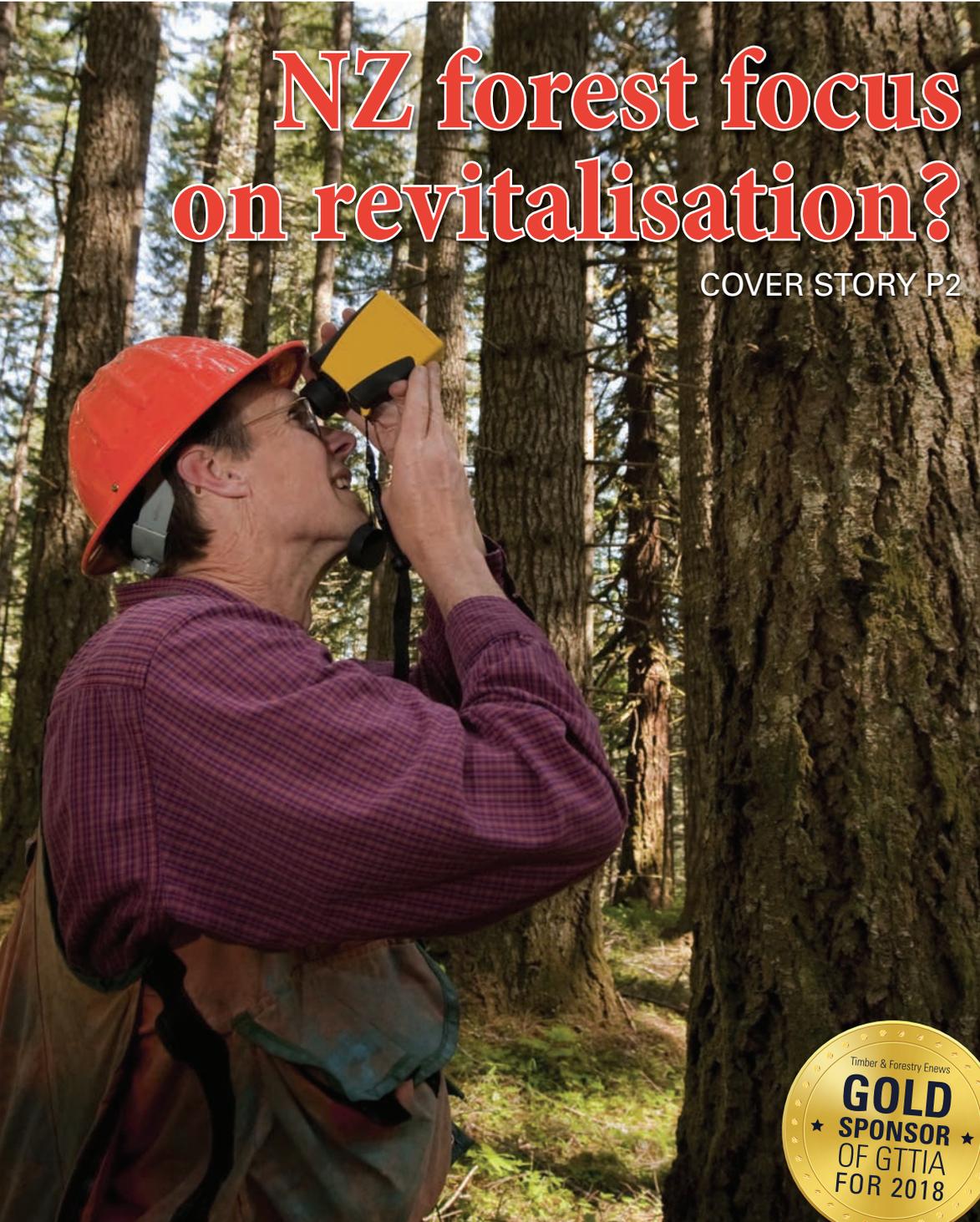
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## NZ forest focus on revitalisation?

COVER STORY P2



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# Must the NZ forest industry be world-class to compete globally?

VETERAN observer of the New Zealand forestry, wood processing and wood trade sectors in New Zealand, DANA director Dennis Neilson, thinks the sector is at a major crossroads.

“It could go either way,” he says. “A slow decline over time, or a revitalisation.”

Speaking ahead of a DANA conference and field trip in Taupo in October, Neilson says some factors that will determine the industry’s direction are external, and others are in the hands of industry leaders.

The New Zealand plantation industry was a global pioneer, he said. More than 100 years ago, and long before other countries took note, New Zealand had identified a future limit to its native forest resource. It had tested over 80 exotic plantation species and had determined that radiata pine, and to a lesser extent Douglas fir, could grow well.



- 1/ *Decline over time, or a revitalisation? New Zealand forest sector at the crossroads.*
- 2/ *Dennis Neilson... importance of scale for serious growth in the sector*
- 3/ *Shane Jones... key conference speaker on massive plantation target.*

It had planted hundreds of thousands of hectares before World War 2, and soon after, in two visionary strategic moves, the government and industry had formed two world-scale unintegrated wood processing companies which then built (then

considered to be) two world-scale integrated processing plants.

“However, since the 1980s, with a few exceptions, the New Zealand industry has largely been on ‘flight mode’, drifting along,” Neilson notes. “A major new land planting

program in the 1990s set the industry up for a big processing expansion opportunity 25-30 years later.

“However, a huge increase in Chinese log demand since 2009 has so far nipped that in the bud. Log exports to Asia in 2017 totalled 19.4 million cub m, or 59% of the total New Zealand harvest of 33.1 million cub m.

“The now defunct (thank goodness) NZ Forest Industry Council had lofty plans for a huge expansion in the industry when it published its 2000 Strategic Plan, which targeted the industry to once again become a world leader.

Says Neilson: “Eighteen years into this 25-year program, one would have to give this lofty set of FIC targets an F-grade so far – after almost 20 years of ‘drifting’.

Cont P 3



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From P 2

“Then again in 2012, NZ WoodCo, the FIC ‘replacement’ at the top of the NZ forest sector leadership tree (and soon perhaps to become defunct, thank goodness) published the ‘New Zealand Forest and Wood Products Industry Strategic Action Plan’. It targeted forest products import earnings to jump from \$4.5 million in 2011 to \$12 million by 2022.

“However, by 2017, five years later and half way to the target date, this revenue had increased to \$5.4 million, or only 11% along the targeted increase path. This leaves a huge (and very unlikely) jump to be met in the second five-year tranche.”

Neilson said DANA and others had for several years been harping on about the importance of scale in achieving serious growth in a sector so dependent on exports for forest products, given the tiny New Zealand population of less than five million. Does the NZ sector have any scale left? “It does, but needs more,” says Neilson.

DANA has organised a series of ‘case study’ presentations for its 2018 Conference to be held in Taupo on October 1 and 2. The theme of this year’s conference is ‘Does the NZ Industry Have to be World Class to Compete in



**Going offshore... log exports to Asia in 2017 totalled 19.4 million cub m, or 59% of the total New Zealand harvest of 33.1 million cub m.**

the World?’

Speakers will present on several relevant topics, which include one of the best managed and possibly most profitable forests in the world; an existing major integrated forestry and wood processing company; an expected major new arrival with an integrated forest products model; an expected huge new project in wood processing; a huge new sawmill (the largest in the Southern Hemisphere); a world-scale port operation; a world-class forest research institution – and much more.

**“MODERN RUSSIA CAN TEACH US HOW TO BE COMPETITIVE**

Two keynote speakers will feature.

One is the NZ Minister of Forests Shane Jones, who plans to transform the forestry sector from a

backwater largely neglected for nine years by the previous government, to one which features a massive new land plantation target (one billion trees) and “targeted” approvals for overseas investment. The other is an expert on the gigantic and growing Russian forest industry sector and its wood export business and potential.

“If any country can teach us about the importance of scale to become internationally competitive it is modern Russia,” says Neilson.

The 1½-day conference in Taupo will be followed by a 1½-day field trip visiting several sites, including the largest pruned log sawmill in the world, a major Maori-owned plantation forest, a wood pellet mill and a large treated post and pole operation

Visit [www.danaevents.co.nz/2018taupo](http://www.danaevents.co.nz/2018taupo) or contact Julie Bell at [admin@dana.co.nz](mailto:admin@dana.co.nz)



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\$3.1 billion export earnings	> \$14 billion
Third largest exporter	Largest exporter
Top 20 global suppliers	Top 5 global suppliers
1.7 million hectares	3.5 - 4.0 million hectares
19.4 million CM harvest (December 2000)	55-60 million CM

# On the hustings knocking on wood

BOTH PM Malcolm Turnbull and Opposition Leader Bill Shorten were last week chasing votes for the July 28 'Super Saturday' by-elections in key timber regions some 700 km apart.

The by-elections will be fought in the Braddon electorate in Tasmania, Longman (Qld) Perth (WA), Fremantle (WA), and Mayo (SA).

The PM was in the Longman electorate to commit \$10 million to assist with a \$50 million expansion of AKD softwoods at Caboolture

This funding will see the installation of a new saw line, upgrades to drying kilns, and the first stages of a new distribution facility. The upgrade will provide 100 new jobs for the region.



1/ **Tour of inspection...** Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull looks over the AKD softwoods mill at Caboolture with Greg Levinge, acting site manager, Craig Neale, general manager (right), and Trevor Ruthenberg, LNP candidate for Longman (partly obscured).



2/ **Quick visit...** Bill Shorten drops in to talk to workers at the Britton Timbers sawmill at Smithton in the Braddon electorate. (ABC News)

The AKD mill currently processes more than 215,000 cub m of sawlog a year, and this new investment will more than double this to 450,000 cub m.

Labor backbencher Susan Lamb holds the working-class electorate by a narrow margin of less than 1%. Longman

was considered a safe LNP seat under former member Wyatt Roy, who took over from Mal Brough in 2010, had a comfortable margin of almost 7%, and who easily outpolled Lamb on primaries in 2016.

But Lamb snuck past Roy on crucial One Nation preferences, which flowed roughly 60:40 her way in the last round of counting.

Former Newman government MP Trevor Ruthenberg is contesting Longman for the LNP.

Meanwhile, in Tasmania, Bill Shorten visited the Britton Timbers sawmill at Smithton in the lead up to the Braddon by-election. He dropped in on the family-run hardwood sawmill just as the workers were knocking off for the day.

Britton Timbers has interests in timber harvesting, sawmilling, international timber import and export, and distribution. From humble beginnings in the state's northwest coast more than a century ago, the company has grown to become Australia's largest importer of sustainably-produced exotic hardwoods and a source for premium Tasmanian timbers.

Re-contesting the seat as a solely-Australian citizen at

the by-election she caused, first-term MP Ms Justine Keay is fighting to keep the seat of Braddon for Labor. Her predecessor, Liberal Brett Whiteley, is hoping the by-election will see him return to federal politics.

The by-election is expected to be a close result, with the most recent poll showing the Coalition leading Labor 54 to 46.

Tasmania, a traditionally a strong state for Labor, can usually count on a higher proportion of the vote than it can on the mainland. But Braddon usually polls below the average Tasmanian vote for Labor. The seat has changed hands five times since 2004.

**“ PM COMMITS \$10M TO AKD SAWMILL EXPANSION**

The Australian Forest Products Association welcomed the AKD funding, which is in line with calls to support the growth of the Australian timber manufacturing industry. And AFPA is undertaking advocacy work targeting Braddon in the lead up to the by-election.

– JIM BOWDEN



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# PNG workshop outcome seeks to strengthen legality of timber trade

A LANDMARK workshop in Port Moresby last month focused on the PNG government's commitment to improve current law enforcement and forest sector governance.

The two-day conference on the country's Timber Legality Verification System (TLVS) marked the establishment of a regulatory process that would strengthen timber legality and compliance. It also focused on the necessary resources for those responsible in ensuring the country's timbers are legal and verified for trade.

PNG Forest Authority managing director Tunou Sabuin said the TLS had been refined, tested and scaled up through the collaborative



*At the PNG workshop... Dr Hitofumi Abe, EU/FAO PNG, Simon Dorries, Responsible Wood, Bruno Cammaert, forestry officer, FAO-EU FLEGT program, Alison Lewin, RAFT program manager, Masamichi Haraguchi, KKC/JICA/UN-REDD PNG national program, Cosmas Apelis, GIS conservation officer, TNC, and Braden Jenkin, Sylva Systems (FAO consultant).*

efforts of all stakeholders.

"The current PNGFA monitoring systems such

**“ COLLABORATIVE EFFORT BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS ”**

as the decision support system, which is populated with relevant data, will be consolidated into this new system, and be reinforced," Mr Sabuin said.

"With a high degree of stakeholder involvement, I

am confident the TLS and the TLVS, once finalised, will be acceptable."

He said PNG's legal framework governing the trade of timber needs was being addressed and since

*Cont P 6*

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From P 5

this was a living document there would be room for amendments.

“The PNG Forest Authority ensures there is credibility in its timbers and the country’s forest resources are properly managed and traded” Mr Sabuin said.

“It is why PNGFA is developing and implementing both the Timber Legality Standards (TLS) and the Timber Legality Verification Standards (TLVS).”

The workshop was supported by the government, The Nature Conservancy/ Responsible Asia Forestry and Trade (3) and the UN’s Food and Agriculture Organisation.

The meetings brought together a range of PNG government, industry and civil society representatives and external experts working on a range of projects in support of the PNG Forest Industries



Verified legal... native PNG forest logs for export showing correct labels and SGS tags.

Association’s development objectives.

A workshop was hosted by the PNG Forest Authority and supported by the European Union, The Nature Conservancy, Responsible Asia Forestry and Trade (RAFT 3) and the UN’s Food and Agriculture Organisation.

Delegates were addressed by Braden Jenkin, FAO consultant, who has worked

12 months on the project, and Simon Dorries, CEO, Responsible Wood, who was invited to provide technical input.

Australia, the EU and the US place obligations by importers

**“OBLIGATIONS BY IMPORTERS TO PROVE WOOD IS LEGAL”**

to prove wood imported is from a legal source. Timber legality verification is different from voluntary sustainable forest management certification in that it has legal consequences and is limited to legal requirements.

An important point is that it is not about perceptions of right and wrong, nor sustainable or not sustainable, but what is legal or not.

Timber legality is defined commencing with the laws of the country in which the stump is located.

A country can narrow the scope of the laws which it considers are most relevant by preparing a timber legality standard (TLS), and Papua New Guinea has prepared a draft TLS.

PNG exported 3.26 million cub m of logs in 2017, providing significant revenues to the country.

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**JULY**

**12-14: Inaugural International Furniture Show Australia – International Convention Centre, Sydney.** Presentations by Australian retailers and wholesalers and opportunity to deal directly with global furniture manufacturers. Contact Australasian Furnishing Association at [compliance@australianfurniture.org.au](mailto:compliance@australianfurniture.org.au)

**AUGUST**

**8: FIEA Forest Industry Safety and Technology 2018 – Rotorua, NZ.**

**15: FIEA Forest Industry Safety and Technology 2018 – Melbourne, Australia.**

Covering updates and developments in forest industry safety, as well as providing a space for sharing ideas on how people, culture, technologies and systems are used to improve the safety of workers.

Visit [www.forestsafety.events](http://www.forestsafety.events)

**SEPTEMBER**

**2-5: IFA and AFG Conference – University House, Australian National**

*University.* Titled 'Forests for healthy cities, farms and people'. Title 'Forests for healthy cities, farms and people'. It will be preceded by AFG's pre-conference tour from Friday, August 31, to Sunday, September 2. Contact: (02) 6153 3044 or visit [www.forestry.org.au](http://www.forestry.org.au)

**11-12: FIEA WoodTech 2018 – Melbourne, Australia.**

**18-19: FIEA Woodech 2018 – Rotorua, NZ.**

Drymill scanning, wood machining, timber manufacturing. Visit [www.woodtech.events](http://www.woodtech.events)

**OCTOBER**

**1-3: 2018 DANA NZ Forest-Wood Processing Conference & Optional Field Trip – Wairakei Resort, Taupo.**

Theme: 'Does the NZ industry have to be world class to compete in the world?'

One-and-half day conference, followed by one-and-half field Trip with nine Central North Island industry and industry-related site visits. Pre-conference afternoon / dinner cruise on Lake Taupo. Contact Julie Bell [admin@dana.co.nz](mailto:admin@dana.co.nz)

or visit [www.danaevents.co.nz/2018taupo/](http://www.danaevents.co.nz/2018taupo/)

**9-11: 2018 DANA Australian Forest-Wood Processing Conference & Optional Field Trip – Hotel Grand Chancellor, Launceston.**

One-and-half day conference, one-and-half day field trip. Contact Julie Bell [admin@dana.co.nz](mailto:admin@dana.co.nz) or [www.danaevents.co.nz/2018tas/](http://www.danaevents.co.nz/2018tas/)

**13: Gala Queensland Timber Industry Awards evening – Rydges South Bank, Brisbane.**

Hosted by TABMA Queensland, 6:30 - 11:30 pm. Dress formal. Contact Alicia Oelkers on (07) 07 3456 76065 or email [Alicia@tabma.com.au](mailto:Alicia@tabma.com.au)

**19: Victorian Association of Forest Industries annual dinner – RACV Club, Melbourne.**

Tickets available from VAFI in July. Contact VAFI on (03) 9611 9000 or [info@vafi.org.au](mailto:info@vafi.org.au)

**19th Australian Timber Design Awards in Sydney.**

Full details TBA. Entries open February 12 and close July 6. Judging period July 16-20. People's Choice voting July

23-August 17. Awards gala dinner mid-October. Visit [www.timberawards.com.au](http://www.timberawards.com.au)

**26: TABMA national industry dinner – Hyatt Regency Hotel, Sydney.**

Contact (02) 9277 3100 or visit [www.tabma.com.au](http://www.tabma.com.au)

**26: Green Triangle Timber Industry Awards – The Barn, Mount Gambier.**

Nominations close 17 August, Green Triangle Timber Industry Awards dinner 26 October.

For further information contact Prue Younger, event manager +64 (21) 2765484.

For more information or visit [www.gttia.com](http://www.gttia.com)

**NOVEMBER**

**4-5: FIEA ForestTech 2018 – Rotorua, NZ.**

**20-21: FIEA ForestTech 2018 – Melbourne, Australia.**

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**JULY**

**16-20: COFO 23 - World Forest Week – Rome, Italy.** For further information see [www.fao.org/about/meetings/cofo](http://www.fao.org/about/meetings/cofo)

**SEPTEMBER**

**4-6: 8th World Congress on Biofuels and Bioenergy – Zurich, Switzerland.** For further information see: [www.biofuels-bioenergy.conferenceseries.com/Europe](http://www.biofuels-bioenergy.conferenceseries.com/Europe)

**6-8: 15th Annual Global Buyers Mission – Whistler, BC, Canada BC.** Wood event to find new sources of high quality, competitively priced Canadian wood products, while reconnecting with current suppliers and socializing with peers. Contact: Brian Hawrysh CEO, BC Wood at [bhawrysh@bcwood.com](mailto:bhawrysh@bcwood.com) or call 1-604-882-7100. To register, request your access code from [gbm@bcwood.com](mailto:gbm@bcwood.com)

**16-17: 8th China Global Wood Trade Conference and Tour – Chongqing, China.** FEA Canada and China Timber & Wood Products Distribution Association. This will be the fourth joint-conference that both groups

have been collaborated. The 2018 event s expected to set record attendance levels. See: [www.woodmarkets.com/conference/conferences-china/2018-china-global-wood-trade-conference/](http://www.woodmarkets.com/conference/conferences-china/2018-china-global-wood-trade-conference/)

**17-21: RISI Tenth International Woodfibre Trade Conference – Durban, South Africa.** See: [www.events.risiinfo.com/wood-fiber/](http://www.events.risiinfo.com/wood-fiber/) Email: [conferences@risi.com](mailto:conferences@risi.com), Tel: + 866.271.8525, + 32.2.536.0748

**17-21: Managing Eucalyptus plantations under global changes – Le Corum, Montpellier, France IUFRO.** Improving resource use efficiency in eucalypt plantations. See: [www.iufro.org](http://www.iufro.org) and [www.cirad.fr](http://www.cirad.fr)

**25-26: FSC Asia Pacific Business Forum 2018 – Mumbai, India.** Email: [info@au.fsc.org](mailto:info@au.fsc.org)

**OCTOBER**

**18-20: Timber Legality Research Symposium – University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark.** To be held in association with the Forests & Livelihoods: Assessment, Research, and

Engagement network. See: [www.globaltimbertrackingnetwork.org/event/timber-legality-research-symposium](http://www.globaltimbertrackingnetwork.org/event/timber-legality-research-symposium) Email: [cph@ifro.ku.dk](mailto:cph@ifro.ku.dk)

**23-27: 4th International Congress on Planted Forests – Nanning, Guangxi, China.** Congress aims to investigate the contribution of planted forests to green development in the context of global changes. Topics will include the sustainability of planted forests in the context of changing climates and the future role of planted forests in bio-resources sustainability, environmental protection and green development. See: [www.efiatlantic.efi.int/portal/events/](http://www.efiatlantic.efi.int/portal/events/) Email: [christophe.orazio@efi.int](mailto:christophe.orazio@efi.int)

**NOVEMBER**

**5-10: 54th Session of the International Tropical Timber Council and Sessions of the Associated Committees – Yokohama, Kanagawa, Japan.** ITTO Secretariat. See: [www.itto.int/workshop\\_detail](http://www.itto.int/workshop_detail) Email: [itto@itto.int](mailto:itto@itto.int) Tel: +81-45-223-1110

**12-17: 2nd DANA 2-day**

**Central America and Andes Forestry Sector Investment Conference – Cancun Mexico.** With 2-day optional pre-conference field trip to teak and eucalyptus plantations; a large modern MDF mill in Villahermosa region; and a 2- day optional post-conference tour to Mayan archaeological and recreational sites. For further information: [www.danaevents.co.nz/2018mexico/](http://www.danaevents.co.nz/2018mexico/)

**12-18: XI International Workshop on Uneven-aged Silviculture: Challenges for increasing adaptability – Valdivia, Chile.** Uneven-aged silviculture is attracting increased interest due to its positive effects upon carbon sequestration, biodiversity, landscapes, and in its ability to provide a range of goods and services from managed forest ecosystems. Do uneven-aged forests have better options for adaptation to these future changes? See: [www.uas.uach.cl/2018](http://www.uas.uach.cl/2018) Email: [pdonosos@uach.cl](mailto:pdonosos@uach.cl)

• Please send any events listings to [johnh@timberandforestrynews.com](mailto:johnh@timberandforestrynews.com)

# Pinnacle awards ‘gold key’ to US furnishing market

THE American Society of Furniture Designers (ASFD) has invited Australia’s furniture design community to enter the global 2018 Pinnacle Awards.

The awards, promoted by the Australasian Furnishing Association, are intended to celebrate designs for furniture that are produced in large numbers for sale to consumers.

The recipient of the Pinnacle Awards is the designer or designers who were directly involved in the ‘design craft’ of products – “the person who puts pen to paper bringing the idea



Talking furniture and chain-of-custody certification at the recent AWISA 2018 exhibition in Sydney... furniture maker Frank Pentifallo and Simon Dorries, CEO, Responsible Wood.

to life”. Products entered must have been introduced during or since July 2017, be in current production and must have been shown and sold at one of the major

retail furniture markets (worldwide). Completed entries must be received by July 31.

“The Pinnacle Awards are recognised by consumers and industry professionals

as the ‘gold key’ to enter the American home furnishing market,” a spokesperson for Australasian Furnishing Association.

Entry fees are \$75 for ASFD members and \$150 for non-members. Student entries for the awards are free. Completed entries must be received by July 31.

Contact the Australasian Furnishing Association on (03) 8691 4244 or email CEO Patrizia Torelli at [ptorelli@australianfurniture.org.au](mailto:ptorelli@australianfurniture.org.au)

Enter the Pinnacle Awards on line [www.asfd.preciscentral.com](http://www.asfd.preciscentral.com)

# Timber a national asset theme for conference of councils in August

REGISTRATIONS are open for the National Timber Councils Association's annual conference at the Bayview on Eden in Melbourne August 9 and 10 under the theme Timber – A National Asset.

Expected attendees include local government CEOs, councillors, infrastructure managers, planners, economic development officers, as well as environmental professionals and timber and private sector industry representatives.

NTCA is a national peak body for local government areas with timber interests.

The NTCA's Sandy Kam said the conference was an opportunity to review and contribute to forest and timber-related policy, planning and regulatory frameworks.

Through membership to the NTCA, councils are provided with an opportunity to engage in effective dialogue with the federal government on forestry-related issues and to discuss their impact on local communities.

NTCA national president Dale Harriman said the conference had attracted a



**Dale Harriman**



**Sandy Kam**



**Joel Fitzgibbon**



**Ross Hampton**

great selection of presenters, covering a range of topics such as resource security, proposed infrastructure funding and the wood encouragement policy.

"We also have Joel Fitzgibbon, the federal Shadow Minister for Agriculture and Forestry speaking on Labor's plans regarding the future of the forest and timber industry and how the ALP is planning to support the maintenance and growth of the timber industry as well as freight infrastructure funding support

"Australian Forest Products Association CEO Ross Hampton will present on the proposed National Forest Plan."

The NTCA provides a local government voice at a national level on issues

affecting local communities, industry, the environment and government in timber regions. Cost of membership

is \$2500 annually.

Those interested in attending or submitting an abstract for presentation at the conference should contact Sandy Kam on 0498 487 844.

Conference registration is \$399 (members) and \$449 (non-members).

Visit [www.ntct.org.au](http://www.ntct.org.au)

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**Conference venue... Bayview on Eden in Melbourne.**

# China buying spree on wood scares Vietnam's struggling manufacturers

CHINA continues to increase purchases of raw timber materials from neighbouring countries and Chinese traders are thick on the ground in countries such as Vietnam.

Vifores, the trade group representing manufacturers, processors and traders of forest products in Vietnam, says that because of the impacts of trade with the US, several Chinese enterprises plan to invest in the industry "to take advantage of cheap labour and preferential policies".

At the end of 2016, Chinese enterprises snapped up materials from timber plantations in the central highlands and southeastern region of Vietnam, causing concerns over a lack of raw materials among domestic firms.

Although there are no detailed statistics, in southern Binh Duong Province where 600 enterprises are operating in the wood processing industry, one-third are from China and Taiwan.

Vifores says this move is understandable as Chinese



**Under pressure... changes in US trade policy and an investment shift in the wood industry from China is impacting on Vietnam's timber processing industry.**

products are subject to high anti-dumping duties in the US, which spends \$30 billion a year on wooden products from China.

Pressure on raw material supplies, changes in US trade policy, and an investment shift in the wood industry from China had affected and would continue to impact Vietnam.

The Vietnam Forestry Administration reports that more than 1500 enterprises had signed commitments to consume raw materials of clear origin and would not violate regulations of

importing countries.

Vietnam plans to focus on investment in large-scale timber plantations, certification and affiliations with local forest growers to supply raw materials for the domestic processing industry.

Vietnam earned \$US 4.15 billion from exports of wood and wooden products in the first six months of this year,

marking an increase of 8.4% cent compared with the same period last year.

The Vietnam Forestry Administration under the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development said the US, China, Japan and South Korea remained the four largest importers of wood and wooden products from the country, accounting for 78% of total export value.

The country also spent nearly \$1.1 billion importing wood, up 2% year on year. Imports from the US, German and France rose during the first half of this year, while shipments from Cambodia and Malaysia fell.

According to Vifores, the drop in imports from Cambodia and Malaysia was due to the fact that Chinese businesses had increased purchases from neighbouring countries, including Cambodia and Malaysia. At the same time, Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar had tightened exports of timber due to a ban on shipments of logs and sawn timber from plantation forests.

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# Vekta Automation makes the cut at Rising Star business awards in WA

MALAGA, WA-based truss and frame saw systems developer Vekta Automation was announced runner-up in the Business News Rising Star Awards in the medium business category.

The awards on June 27 recognised the achievements of Western Australia's growing private companies. This year more than 60 applicants across nine different categories contested the awards, judged on a number of criteria, including revenue, staff growth, not-for-profit involvement and diversity.

Organisations needed to present a solid growth strategy to become a rising star finalist.



Centre stage... Vekta Automation announced Rising Star runner-up at WA business awards.

Vekta Razer saws are designed specifically for the truss and frame industry. Both the V5 and S5 Razer saw modules take up just 2.1 sq m in comparison to other larger saws on the market, some more than four times the size.

Vekta's success was in the

medium business category covering businesses from 20-100 employees.

In nine years, Vekta has gone from three people working out of a shed to be recognised with the best of WA businesses – a true testament to the hard work and tenacity of the whole

Vekta team.

Vekta Automation managing director Ed Serrano congratulated the winner in the category, Cranecorp Australia, which provides machinery to the mines and has 100 employees.

US-born Mr Serrano has more than 10 years' experience in the prefabricated truss and frame industry, all of which has involved the Razer linear saw and other forms of automation.

In 2004, he graduated from Curtin University (Perth) with honours as a robotic engineer (mechatronic engineering).



## Growing the future of Tasmanian forestry

### \$4 million research funding investment to boost sustainability, jobs and economic benefits in partnership with industry

With the support of the Australian and Tasmanian governments, the Launceston hub of the National Institute for Forest Products Innovation has up to \$4 million available for research grants to grow the future of forestry.

Research projects could be ideas for new and innovative products, solutions which could see Tasmanians get more benefit from existing forestry resources, become more sustainable and safer, grow jobs or create new products and services.

Individual research grants will range from \$50,000-\$500,000 and will be for periods of up to three years in duration. Funding proposals close on 13 July 2018 and should be lodged via email to [funding.tas@nifpi.org.au](mailto:funding.tas@nifpi.org.au)

For further information, including a proposal template and briefing document, see [www.nifpi.org.au](http://www.nifpi.org.au)

**About us** The Launceston hub of the National Institute for Forest Products Innovation is a joint venture between the Australian Government, the Tasmanian Government and the forest and wood products industry with the goal of growing forestry into the future.



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# Backyard barometer points to the future: trees the balance of nature

## Let's get stuck in to it and start planting like demons'

BEING treated like one of the boys around here I take as a bit of a badge of honour.

Mostly the 'smoko' talk turns to women – real weird women. But it is not at all difficult to work out why girls might give these guys the flick. Come on lift your game!

I reckon overall people can be weird, I mean schizophrenic and illogical. Lamb chops and T-bone steaks are totally well received where I eat. When they are being wolfed down they are never equated to spring lambs bouncing around among the daffodils or steers lined up to be electrocuted and slaughtered at the abattoir.

But when it comes to wood and trees the perceptions out there in the wider community are equally conflicted. Everyone loves a stunning blackbutt, jarrah or brushbox floor, even a nice radiata pine dinning suite, but no don't cut down trees. That's universally bad!

Interesting to look at recent research about what people are broadly thinking about environmental issues, including cutting down trees. I have had a read what WWF are calling their Backyard Barometer (Australian Attitudes to Nature 2017 Report, prepared for WWF-Australia by Roy Morgan Research).

According to WWF, it is the first report to track the nation's attitudes towards the environment over a 20-year period, combined with a new Roy Morgan survey of



*At least the Chinese are planting trees like demons. It's time we gave it a try.*

1800 Australians.

WWF say the report shows that Australians have a strong affinity with forests, beaches, oceans and wildlife, and overwhelmingly support more action to protect Australia's natural habitats.

The research tests attitudes to environmental issues and priorities, but didn't ask about attitudes to wood. However, other solid research confirms that it is universally loved.

Overall, the top reasons why Australians believe wildlife, forests and natural places are important are: they are critical to maintaining the balance of nature; and that it is the responsibility of the current generation to leave the nature healthy for the future generations.

In addition, 84% of

“GETTING THE CONNECTION BETWEEN A WOODEN FLOOR AND CLIMATE CHANGE

change which is believed to be a threat by 56% of Australians.

So what to think from this research. Putting the universal love for things wooden aside, it indicates a real opportunity for the forest industry to get stuck in and start planting trees like demons – which we are not doing. Clearly, everyone should realise, or be told, that planting trees costs money, and the best way of ensuring that tree planting happens is to ensure a commercial return from this tree planting expenditure, plus the other benefits identified like climate change and habitat creation.

So a job for someone – are you listening Ric Sinclair? – to tweak the argument so people get the connection between a beautiful wood floor, climate change and sustainability benefits of planting and utilising trees. Here is a quote I like:

“More trees, please” should be a central objective as Australia moves to contain climate change, arrest land degradation, tackle salinity and confront other environmental hurdles.

Trees will also supply part of our future renewable energy needs, a wider range of building and other commodities and help create a more sustainable life style in the world of tomorrow.

I wonder if I can sell this line at 'smoko' tomorrow. I will give it a try. What do you reckon?

Catch you next time.

**Cheryl**

### TRUNK LINES



With **CHERYL FORREST**

Australians will either strongly support or support actions by state governments to stop excessive land and tree-clearing and no one is going to argue about these findings.

Interestingly, more than 80% of those surveyed agree there is a need to grow more trees, and that they are worried about future generations growing up with lesser access to nature and wildlife than them.

Most Australians view urban expansion, and introduced animals and weeds as threats to Australia's wildlife and plants. This is followed by climate

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# Virtual reality opportunity to develop the next generation of forest learners

JUST as technology has changed the way we communicate, do business, watch movies and more, it's also revolutionising the classroom.

Electronic devices, the Internet and now augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) are set to transform the processes of teaching and learning.

Industry-supported body, ForestLearning is exploring the creation and use of these exciting new resources – and looking for help, with content, experience and more.

**“FOREST, WOOD INDUSTRIES GIVE RICH OUTDOOR LEARNING OPPORTUNITY**

Engaging with its teacher association and industry partners, ForestLearning is scoping the development of teaching and learning resources incorporating VR and AR technologies for Australian classrooms. Aimed



*Electronic devices... set to transform the processes of teaching and learning.*

to assist urban, regional and remote students to learn about the diversity of Australian renewable forests and wood products, the new tools will be a 'first' for the industry.

The new ForestLearning resources will allow students to virtually experience forests and processing facilities, with a range of subject area and year level outcomes, aligned to the Australian curriculum to ensure greater adoption by teachers.

The opportunities of these

**FORESTLEARNING**



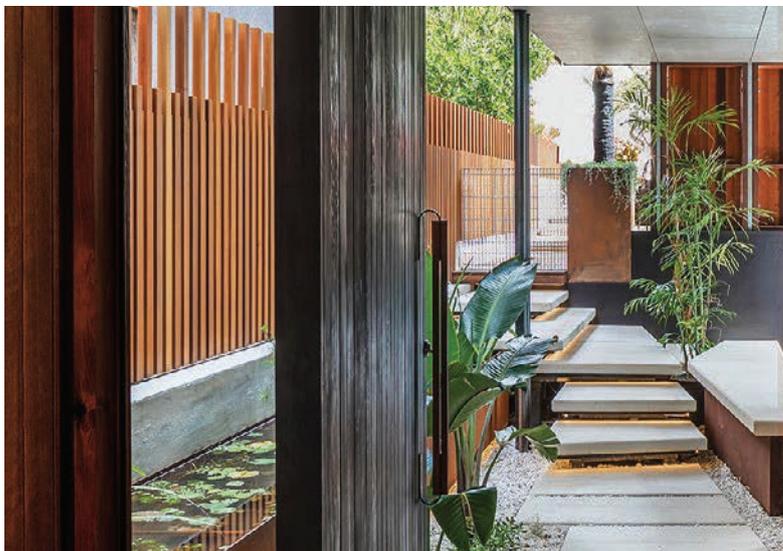
**With BETH WELDEN**

new materials have been identified by educational researchers. In a recent paper 'Enhancing Education

by Augmenting Outdoor Environments' (2015), Monash University's Dr Michael Phillips argued that while technology can't replace the value of real excursions to forest and wood product facilities, it can be more accessible to students and delivered by teachers with limited experience.

The forest and wood products industry possesses a unique and rich outdoor learning opportunity for

*Cont P 16*

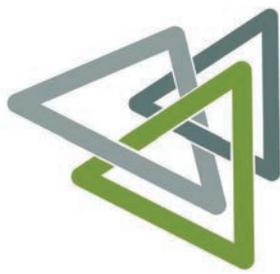


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# GREEN TRIANGLE TIMBER INDUSTRY AWARDS



# NOMINATIONS OPEN

An opportunity exists for you to nominate an industry person or company that deserves to be recognised for their contribution to the forestry industry.

We are seeking suitable candidates that reflect all sectors and work within the Green Triangle region and with this inaugural event, let's make it the success it should be and provide the chance to celebrate the high achievers and players that hold credible status within the industry.

It is important to get involved this year as looking ahead, the opportunity to make it an annual event will be very real. The value proposition for nominees to be finalists and winners will generate industry opportunities and will grow the profile of the region to benefit businesses and industry.

Get involved, nominate today and step up.

Check out our website for nomination category criteria and details [www.gttia.com](http://www.gttia.com)

## Key Dates 2018

18 June  
17 August  
September  
26 October

Nominations Open  
Nominations Close  
Judging Process  
**GREEN TRIANGLE  
TIMBER INDUSTRY AWARDS**

## Sponsors 2018



From P 14

teaching and learning experiences. However, the challenges include taking students on forest industry excursions including travel time and cost; teacher confidence in both the content of forests, and the behaviour management of students in new outdoor learning environments; willing and available industry hosts at times that suits a school's curriculum calendar; OH&S issues at work site ... and more.

As an industry in which it can be so difficult to provide student access to real life experiences, we should be embracing these new technologies as an opportunity to inform and educate the emerging generations on whom we will depend for social licence, investment and participation.

The Forest and Wood



**Dr Michael Phillips... enhancing education by augmenting outdoor environments.**

Products Australia board has approved a ForestLearning project to scope and develop new AR and VR tools in the coming year. Some industry members of FWPA have already indicated their intention to partner in this project by providing access to their facilities (plantations, mills, native forests, wood processing) for filming or other assistance to generate such resources.

However, we need more

partners to achieve our goals of delivering the best possible educational opportunities for our industry, Australia-wide.

Would you like to be involved? You can help by being a part of the working group developing the scope

**“INDUSTRY PARTNERS NEEDED TO ACHIEVE GOALS**

of the project, or contributing existing digital resources such as 360 videos of your operation or forest, AR/VR of your workplace or forest, time lapse photos of plantation or native forest sites, or other technologies.

Contact Beth Welden, ForestLearning manager, on [beth@forestlearning.edu.au](mailto:beth@forestlearning.edu.au)

The FWPA-funded ForestLearning program has continued to go from strength to strengths, with more teachers and students than ever before accessing an ever-growing set of resources.

Established in 2011 in response to industry feedback, the forestlearning.edu.au website aims to encourage school teachers and other educators to use Australian forest and wood-based teaching resources, and embed their messages into the curriculum.

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# What's next after Tathra and the needless human cost of bushfires?

VIC JURSKIS

PM Malcolm Turnbull was disappointed that the Greens linked the Tathra fires to climate change.

He said: "Nature hurls her worst at Australians... you can see how unpredictable it is".

Turnbull's rhetoric, like that of Greens leader Richard Di Natal, had nothing to do with history, science, or common sense.

Three-dimensionally continuous fuels feed ember storms when ignited under extreme conditions. No amount of water bombers, fire tankers, personnel or powerline maintenance can prevent fires from exploding in dense scrub during bad weather.

Professor Ross Bradstock (director of the Centre for Environmental Risk Management of Bushfires at Wollongong University) says the lack of burning wasn't a factor in the disaster.

The Rural Fire Service backs him, reporting that 93 hazard reduction 'activities' were carried out in the previous 11 years covering 517 ha. That's

**Background: The Tathra bushfire devastated communities in the NSW south coast region on March 18 and 19 this year, burning up to 1000 ha of residential areas, farm land and forest reserves. Some 70 homes were destroyed in the town.**



**1/ Home regrown... female koala in booming scrub at Mumbulla in the Bega Valley, NSW.**

**2/ Vic Jurskis... mindless modelling instead of management.**

a piddling average of six hectares per activity and eight activities a year totalling 49 hectares.

Bradstock said broad scale burning was ineffective while narrow breaks around houses could create "defensible space". But he admitted that houses at Tathra were ignited by long distance ember storms driven by high winds.

The fire jumped the Bega River and much of Tathra because it was fed by embers from heavy fuels in long unburnt bush far away.

Just before Tathra, New South Wales announced it



was giving Bradstock \$4 million to research 'impacts and management of hazard reduction burns' and 'drivers

Cont P 19

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From P 18

of bushfire frequency and severity’.

He doesn't know how to burn or how to control wildfires, and his silly modelling has led to regulations that have reduced the extent and effectiveness of hazard reduction burning in that state.

The Tathra fire started near a new park created to 'save' koalas that are currently irrupting in long unburnt chronically declining forest. The working plan for the koala park says: "Fire is a major threat to koalas. We will help protect them from fire by

applying low intensity burns in small patches in appropriate locations surrounding identified areas of koala activity to provide low-fuel buffers against wildfire."

Photos I have taken are examples of 'the declining forest' and show booming scrub in the koala park (see image).

I took them in 2012 while showing the problem to forestry fire manager Rob Young. Rob prepared a burning plan which was not implemented because of regulations to "protect koalas"

After Canberra burnt in

2003, the Nairn Inquiry came up with the right answer – that we need to burn the bush properly.

NSW and Victoria boycotted it and set up the COAG Inquiry in 2004. Professor Rob Whelan (University of Wollongong), who set up the academy now headed by Bradstock, was on the panel.

Now we have the media, evacuation plans, water

bombers and mindless modelling instead of management.

Since COAG (Council of Australian Governments), hundreds of human lives, thousands of houses and livestock and countless millions of native animals have been needlessly lost.

• Vic Jurskis has a Bachelor of Science (Forestry) degree from ANU and was awarded the (British) Commonwealth Forestry Book Prize for academic achievement. He worked for many years with the NSW Forestry Commission in all types of native forests and woodlands and was an active member of the bushfire brigade. He is author of Firestick Ecology: Faidinkum Science in Plain English.

“REGULATIONS HAVE REDUCED EFFECTIVENESS OF HAZARD REDUCTION

## ABS: building activity climb sees record number of new homes

THE boom in building activity over recent years is still resulting in a record number of new homes being built," says Housing Industry Association

principal economist, Tim Reardon.

The ABS has released data on housing finance for the month of May and new

building commencements for the March quarter.

"The number of new homes commenced in the March quarter of this year has kept

climbing and remains at near record levels," Mr Reardon said. "Only once in the past 25 years have more homes been commenced."

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# Merger proposed for two trade bodies in UK forest and forest products sector

TWO leading trade associations in the UK forestry and forest products sector, the Confederation of Forest Industries (Confor) and the UK Forest Products Association (UKFPA) have proposed a merger.

Discussions are now at an advanced stage and are being considered by members of both organisations with the aim of launching the merged organisation in January next year.

“This is an exciting time for the forestry and wood processing industry,” Confor chair Athole McKillop said.

“We have so many challenges facing us, from Brexit to plant health, to securing future wood supply,

so it's vital that we make best use of the sector's resources to promote our interests and to provide technical advice and services to businesses in the industry.”

The sector is worth almost £2 billion annually to the UK and employs more than 43,000 people

Echoing that sentiment, Gavin Davidson and Rod Gordon, UKFPA vice-presidents, said: “In view of the challenges and opportunities facing our sector, we believe that the time is right to bring together the two trade associations, to provide a stronger and more effective voice for our industry, while at the same time maintaining focus on the needs of our



**Stuart Goodall... Brexit puts up challenges.**

respective members and the cost-effective delivery of services to them.

“This is an ideal opportunity to build on the acknowledged strengths of the two highly-regarded organisations, for the benefit of members.”

Confor's chief executive Stuart Goodall said the merger provided an unparalleled combination of economic, environmental and social benefits – but it could deliver much more.

“Brexit will have a huge impact, but we must not become consumed by it, or be paralysed by process,” he said.

“The decision to leave the European Union creates challenges, but also provides enormous opportunities as policies and support measures, regulations and trade agreements all change. We need to get stuck in and keep getting stuck in, explaining why backing forestry and timber is good for the country, not just for the countryside.”

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# **DANA** | **RUGBY** & Japanese Forestry/ **2019** | **WORLD CUP** Wood Processing Tour



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sawmills (domestic and imported logs), plywood mill, a biomass power  
plant, a pulp mill, house making factory, the Toyota car factory, and more.

**DANA JAPAN FOREST INDUSTRY TOUR #2** 28 October–01 November  
5 day tour centred on Kyushu Island & Tokyo\*\* to visit forests, import and export ports, a pulp mill, a biomass power plant,  
sawmills (domestic and imported logs) a plywood mill, a CLT plant, Sapporo beer factory, and more.

\*\* Tour details & final costing estimates have been identified & are being finalised (& will be subject to final host approvals).

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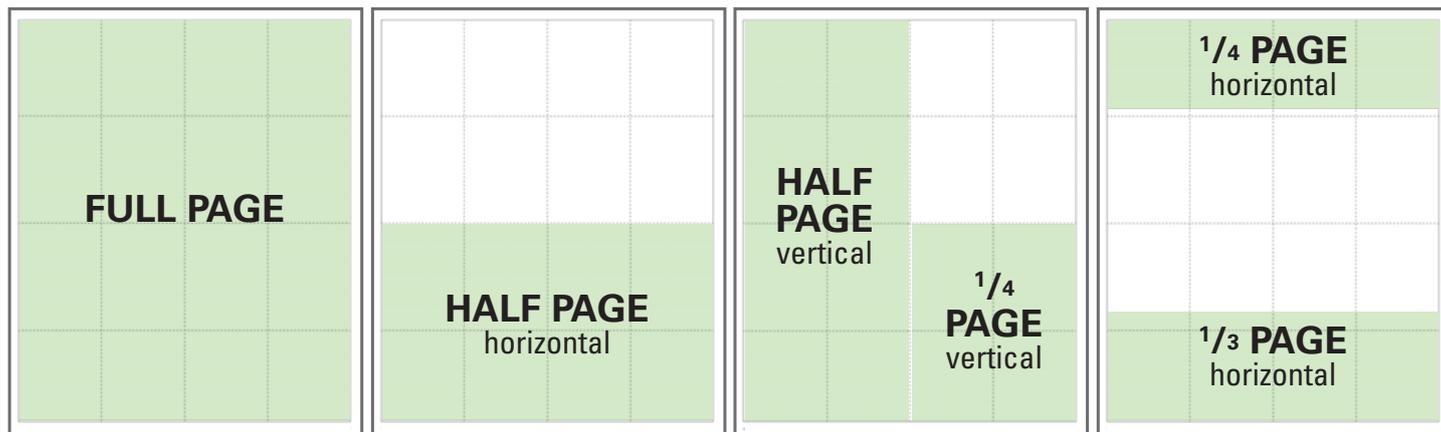
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\* Publishers' claim. The publication draws on a new data-base vault of more than 14,500 emails – a number that grows weekly.

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