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COVER STORY P8



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Quo vadis hardwood forests in Qld? We're quickly running out of supply

SEAN RYAN

SO what is the plan for the future hardwood timber supply in Queensland ... and where is the industry going in southeast Queensland?

Currently, there is limited contractual demand for accredited hardwood timbers, and even with all their 'sustainability' bleating, it's not a pre-condition for most local, state or Australian government tenders.

Bunnings demands it, but get around it by importing from suspect sources (Pacific jarrah, merbau).

However, there is a slow grinding momentum towards it being a pre-requisite just as the supply line from Queensland native forests dries up.

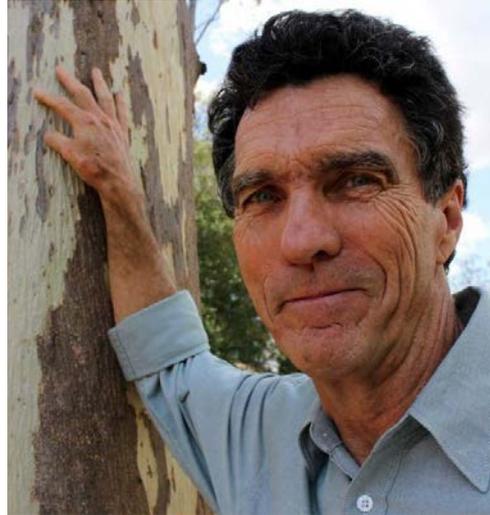
Post-2024 there will be little accredited hardwood from state forests in southeast Queensland and timber from all leasehold country (state-owned) has been removed from DAF defined forest area as they have little management control and so are no longer accredited.

There is currently less than 7000 ha of private native forests in Queensland under any accredited management system – Responsible Wood or FSC.

Post-2024 the industry will have a markedly increased dependence on the private native resource with no accredited wood available

Currently, the plan is for a closure of state forests by 2024 with a partial extension to 2026 from forests north of Gympie. But there is strong evidence that there is insufficient wood left in these reserves even for two years' limited supply.

This only leaves the private native forest resource – and the issues:



Sean Ryan... post-2024 there will be little accredited hardwood from state forests in southeast Queensland.

- Current high grading harvesting practices are severely impacting on the future productivity of the resource.
- There has been a draft review of the Code of Practice for private native forests which has not been published but from all reports would have a devastating impact on the industry if accepted in its current form. A committee is being formed to review the code and recommend on its final direction and content.

There is little likelihood of any progress before the state election at the end of October.

• *Sean Ryan is CEO, Private Forestry Service Queensland. PFSQ comprises highly-trained, qualified and experienced personnel who are passionate about sustainable forestry. Qualifications range from environmental sciences to silvicultural degrees with extensive and diverse experience across an even wider range of disciplines.*

- There is very little data on the future supply capability of the resource, other than most of the forests are in poor productive condition.
- There is no future industry plan.

“SUPPLY LINE FROM NATIVE FORESTS IS DRYING UP”



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Compliance issues rise to the top of debate over Victoria's native forests

Timber task force rejects illegal tag by state government and Bunnings

JIM BOWDEN

THE newly-formed Native Timber Taskforce is mounting a challenge to the Victoria government's decision to phase out native forest harvesting by 2030 and immediately ban access to old-growth timber.

In tandem with this action, the taskforce, formed by the Wellington Shire in eastern Victoria, has attacked Bunnings Hardware's decision to ban what it describes as "illegal" timber products.

The taskforce is chaired by Wellington Shire Council Mayor Alan Hall. Members include the East Gippsland Shire Council, Timber Towns Victoria, Australian Sustainable Hardwoods, Radial Timbers and the Construction Forestry Mining Energy Union (CFMEU).

"The government action and that taken by Bunnings to stop sourcing native timbers from local timber mills is likely to see an increase in imports that are clearly not subject to the same protocols and processes that exist in Victoria, putting at risk some of the world's most vulnerable species," Cr Hall said.

Bunnings is demanding all Victorian native forest timber is certified by the Forest Stewardship Council of Australia.

In May, the Federal Court ruled state agency VicForests breached Codes of Practice in relation to the protection of the greater glider and Leadbeater's possum habitat.

After court orders were



Under threat... well-managed state forests in Victoria.

received in mid-July, VicForests is appealing the decision, maintaining its management of native timber harvesting "meets the highest standards of forest management".

VicForests has now lodged a formal complaint against three directors of FSC for breaching standards and articles of constitution.

Quoted on the citizens' online National Forum, timber merchant David Hutchens has got to the nub of the forest compliance issue. The timber retailer from Geelong who also buys and sells recycled timber, says internationally FSC retains a credible identity as a forest certification body for native forests. (But) in Australia it is not credible in its primary role.

"By any measure, in the

“CHALLENGE TO BUNNINGS AND STATE GOVERNMENT

certification – but a mere handful with a small sawlog output have," he says. "To keep busy, FSC has been tasked to certify pulp log plantations, paper manufacturers and printers. In the timber arena they have been role-playing to an apparently insistent public demand for FSC-certified native hardwood – which in the retail world, barely exists."

Mr Hutchens says Bunnings suppliers managed FSC forest certification for fragile West Papuan rainforests in a developing nation with

14 years since launching, many small private native forests should have achieved

Cont P 21

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Forest and wood products sector is hanging tough in Covid uncertainty

Industry has been agile in expanding sales in non-structural areas

JIM HOUGHTON

AS our political leaders continue to tell us, it's difficult to look too far ahead when dealing with such a contagious virus as COVID-19.

Having reached zero cases on June 9 in Victoria the expectation was that the worst was behind us. However, at the time of writing, here in Melbourne, Victoria has recorded 429 cases of coronavirus and another 13 deaths as the state enters Stage 4 lockdown. Premier Daniel Andrews has announced temporary shutdowns of



Work in the pipeline... on-going building projects a determining factor.

year just finished FY20 is expected to see a contraction of GDP of -0.25% with a further decline in FY21 of -2.50%. Specifically, for our industry, dwelling investment is expected to decline in FY20 by -10% with a further hit in FY21 of -16%. These are big numbers putting us in uncharted territory.

However, there are a lot of moving parts and a lot to play out in terms of public policy and the shape of the recovery. Federal and state governments and our key institutions including the RBA and trading banks have all been active. Programs such as JobKeeper and HomeBuilder are providing needed assistance.

This is flowing through to the economy where the current available data is showing our industry is hanging tough. The FWPA softwood data series for June indicates solid timber sales and prices holding up.

However, the growth is not just about structural timber for housing. In the face of current challenges

'non-essential' businesses for at least six weeks.

This uncertainty continues to overshadow the economic outlook. The Treasurer's economic update on July 23 was sobering reading. The forecast for the financial

“THE LEVEL OF LIQUIDITY PUMPED INTO THE SYSTEM IS MAKING A BIG DIFFERENCE”

Cont P 5

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SOFTWOOD TIMBER SALES – 12 MONTH YEAR-ENDING

Product Category	2019 M06 cubic metres	2020 M06 cubic metres	% change
Outdoor Domestic	238,738	265,418	11.1%
Fencing	91,376	99,249	8.6%
Packaging	566,618	685,435	20.9%
Export	98,512	111,555	13.2%

Source: FWPA Softwood Data Series

From P 4

the industry has been agile in expanding sales in non-structural areas as can be seen in the softwood timber sales graph.

This is an interesting development as packaging and exports are driven by different market dynamics to domestic housing, while outdoor domestic (eg treated decking) and fencing are associated with the tail-end of the building process or the renovation market.

This is a good outcome when combined with structural sales where



Interesting development... packaging and exports are driven by different market dynamics to domestic housing.

moderate growth in volumes and stable prices have been experienced. As can be seen

in the structural treated and untreated graph, weighted average prices for the east coast structural timber grouping were up slightly for the quarter at +0.1% with the structural treated grouping up +1.9%.

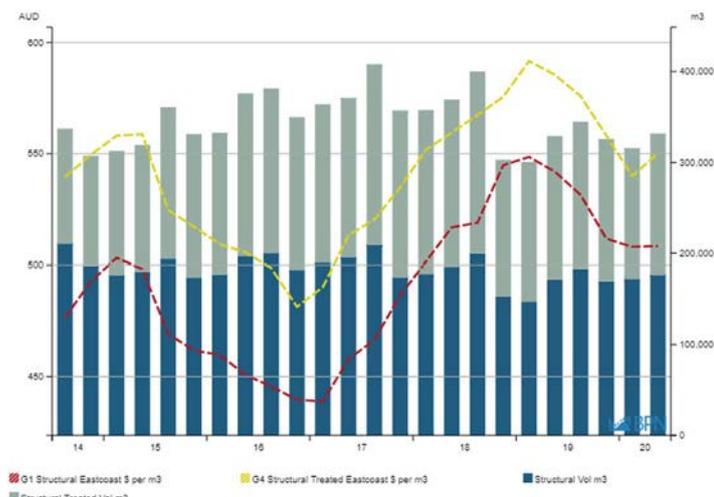
This might seem counter intuitive given the macro-economic picture which is unfolding. Traditional drivers for our industry such as household formation rates have been impacted by the slump in net migration and growing unemployment.

However, the level of liquidity being pumped into the system is making a big difference. The scale of this can be seen in the economic update graph with the contrast of public and private final demand.

This level of support is having an impact. Early indicators such as the HIA monthly survey of new house sales for the top 100 builders for June was 6477 sales well up on the 12 month average of some 4500 sales. Other lagged indicators such as building activity measures for the March quarter which include some COVID-19 activity are also holding up.

In the March, quarter houses under construction were stable at 57,149 while housing starts during the period were 25,523 a slight increase of +1.3% on the previous quarter. Supporting that activity across the sector is high levels of alterations and additions with the value of work done in the March quarter \$2.33 billion

STRUCTURAL TREATED AND UNTREATED <120MM WEIGHTED AVERAGE PRICES MGP10, MGP12, 70 & 90, 45 QUARTERLY PRICES AUD\$ PER M³



Source: FWPA Softwood Data Series

“NEW HOUSE SALES FOR TOP BUILDERS WELL ON 12-MONTH AVERAGE

Cont P 6



Hyne Timber Glue Laminated Structure at Mon Repos Turtle Centre, Queensland

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From P 5

– up 2.1% on the previous quarter.

The big question is can this continue? The determining factor here will be work in the pipeline. Builders have done a good job in pulling forward projects. This has meant houses under construction while lower is still above the low



point experienced during the GFC. Initiatives such as

HomeBuilder are making an immediate contribution by backfilling the pipeline of work.

To see if this current boost is sustainable, we will need to keep an eye on housing approvals over coming months. A logical

Fencing and decking... busy renovation market associated with the tail-end of the building process.

extension of these policies would be direct spending on social housing. Although this requires a longer time frame to implement it would address at a macro level the shortfall in demand from the decline in net migration. As with all matters economic, time will tell.

“AS WITH ALL MATTERS ECONOMIC, TIME WILL TELL

• *Jim Houghton is statistics and economics manager of Forest and Wood Products Australia, based in Melbourne.*

PUBLIC & PRIVATE FINAL DEMAND

	Outcome FY19	Outcome FY20	Outcome FY21
Private final demand	1.0%	-3.5%	-4.0%
Public final demand	4.4%	5.0%	4.5%

Source: Treasury, Economic Update 23 July, 2020

This webinar series is supported by the Australia’s Forest and Woods Products Sector

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August 18, 11am-12pm.
August 25, 11am-12pm.
September 1, 11am-12.30pm.
Course must be booked as a whole, sessions are not separately bookable. This course has CPD points available. This is a ticketed course. Full course program and registration at www.timberqueensland.com.au/Events/Default.aspx?id=3098

OCTOBER

21st Australian Timber Design Awards – Sydney, NSW, Australia (date and venue to be advised). Entries

close June 1. Voting for the People’s Choice Award is open from August to September. Visit the new awards website for information and registration instructions. www.timberdesignawards.com.au

30: Green Triangle Timber Industry Awards POSTPONED – Barn Palais, Mount Gambier, SA, Australia.

Nominations open 1 June 2020 and close 14 August 2020. For more information visit: www.gttia.com/

MARCH 2021

17-19: Doing Timber Business in Queensland – Marriott Hotel, Brisbane, QLD, Australia. State conference, workshops and innovation tour organised by Timber Queensland. Visit www.doingtimberbusinessinql.com

APRIL 2021

DANA New Zealand Forest Industry Status and Outlook Conference and field trip.

Dates and venue TBA. To register interest as delegate or presenter please email admin@danaevents.co.nz

EVENTS LISTS MAY HAVE BEEN, OR ARE LIKELY TO BE CANCELLED OR POSTPONED DUE TO CORONAVIRUS TRAVEL, SOCIAL DISTANCING AND OTHER RESTRICTIONS. PLEASE CHECK THE RELEVANT WEBSITES.

SEPTEMBER

27-30: Council on Forest Engineering Annual Meeting – POSTPONED.

Visit www.cofe.org for update.

OCTOBER

21-23: Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) Annual Conference – Vancouver, BC, Canada.

The 2020 SFI Annual Conference will be focused on how forests can make a difference when it comes to so many of the most important sustainability challenges faced in the forest sector and communities. For additional information see: sficonference.org

NOVEMBER

1-5: 3rd DANA African Forest Industry Investment Conference and field trip

POSTPONED – Durban, South Africa.

Possible 2021 conference and field trip - Dates and venue TBA. To register interest as delegate or presenter please email admin@danaevents.co.nz

DECEMBER

7-9: International Forest Business Conference and Tour – Sopot, Poland.

A two-day conference on megatrends that shape forest and wood industry sectors. The event will highlight the transformation of forest-related businesses towards a low-carbon bioeconomy, discuss tensions between sustainability and cost competitiveness, and call attention to new green innovations. Field trip on December 7 to IKEA and Egger mills. The event will welcome institutional investors from

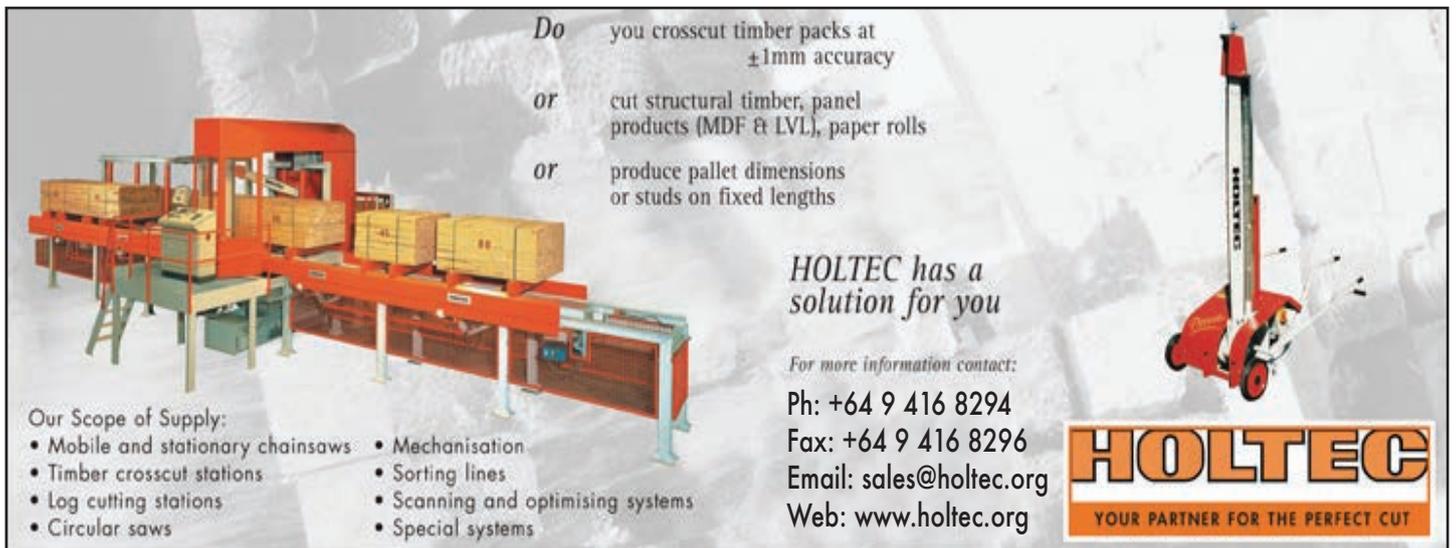
across the globe to discuss investment opportunities in timber to diversify their portfolios and achieve healthy returns. Register at www.fba-events.com or contact karolina@forest-analytics.com

JANUARY 2021

11-14 : World Conference on Timber Engineering (WCTE Santiago 2020) – Santiago, Chile.

Topics include Sustainable Forests for timber production; wood products, connections; timber engineering; timber architecture; building and environmental impacts; policies, education and future trends. For further information see: www.wcte2021.com/

• Please send any events listings to John Halkett via email: johnh@timberandforestryenews.com



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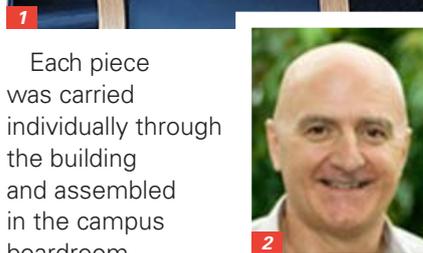
Recycled ironbark at heart of campus

THE new University of the Sunshine Coast Moreton Bay campus built on the site of the old Petrie paper mill in Queensland's Moreton Bay region has a very old feature at its heart – a boardroom table created from recycled ironbark.

The table, designed by USC architect Zeyad Elkojje, was created from almost 100 pieces of ironbark timber (*Eucalyptus paniculata*) from the former Petrie mill and transformed into a characteristic one-tonne centrepiece by a team of 15 'sculpturers' at Kennedy's Timbers, Narangba.

Head of USC Moreton Bay Professor Karen Becker said the table was a fitting monument to the deep history of the area, and the mill that used to process and recycle paper.

"The table is an impressive piece of design and workmanship," Professor Becker said.



Each piece was carried individually through the building and assembled in the campus boardroom. The entire table measures 8.8 m in length, 2.4 m at its widest point and weighs 960 kg, almost a full tonne.

Kennedy's Timbers is well known as a leading supplier of premium Australian recycled and eco-sustainable timbers.

1/ Tabled for discussion... the finished boardroom centrepiece at USC Moreton Bay Campus, created from recycled ironbark.

2/ Zeyad Elkojje... architect and designer of the campus table.

Founder and CEO Michael Kennedy said he highly enjoyed working on this fantastic project with the designer Zeyad Eikojje.

Mr Eikojje is responsible for managing the planning and design of capital projects at the campus, which includes using his extensive

architectural experience in the preparation of design solutions for effective space utilisation.

The Moreton Bay campus, which has attracted 1800 students since opening in February, was recognised with a top construction prize. The project team, led by Hansen Yuncken, won the Master Builders Association Award for an education facility over \$10

million at the 2020 Housing and Construction Awards and is now in the running for the Queensland state finals in October.

On the cover: The USC Moreton Bay campus ironbark table under construction at Kennedy's Timbers, Narangba.

Anti-forests slur a callous disregard for workers

ON the same day the Victorian government announced that, due to COVID-19 lockdowns, the state economy will likely be in a deep recession with the loss of potentially tens of thousands of jobs, the Wilderness Society has taken its extremist campaign against the state's sustainably-managed native forest industries to an international audience, and trivialised the global scourge of illegal logging.

The environmental group has appealed to enforcement agencies in Europe and the US to step in against "illegal logging in some of the most fire-affected forests and wildlife habitats."

Australian Forest Products Association CEO Ross Hampton said, "It seems to be lost on the Wilderness Society that amid the unprecedented lockdown in Victoria and the devastating impact on the state's economy, the state's native forest industries continue to operate to produce essential products such as packaging, timber products for the building industry, pallets for supermarket deliveries and firewood."

Mr Hampton said these were vital jobs producing essential products in a lawful, sustainable industry that a vocal minority of extremists wanted to close down.

Victorian Association of



1/ Ross Hampton... lawful sustainable industry.

2/ Tim Johnston ... putting lives at risk.

Forest Industries CEO Tim Johnston said most Victorians would be rightly horrified by the Wilderness Society's conduct.

"Actions like this just embolden protestors who choose to disrupt legal timber harvesting operations and put themselves and others at risk," Mr Johnston said.

"These are the same forest contractors that are asked by the state government to risk their lives and fight bushfires."

Ross Hampton said it was also wrong of the Wilderness Society to be equating VicForests' tightly-regulated harvesting operations with the global illegal logging trade.

"The Wilderness Society effectively trivialises the global criminal trade in illegally logged forest products that leads to deforestation, poor working conditions and environmental vandalism, and it undermines the huge efforts of global agencies such as Interpol in combating this scourge," he said.



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‘It was devastating watching those fires track over the forests we love’

That Black Summer: stories from the frontline of a fierce battle

BLACK Summer ran from July 2019 until February this year and in New South Wales alone burnt more than 5.37 million ha of the state’s land mass.

Certified by Responsible Wood, the Forest Corporation of NSW has more than 100 years’ experience in fire management and maintains high levels of fire planning, preparedness and suppression capacity.

As one of NSW’s primary firefighting agencies, the Forestry Corporation was at the forefront of the bushfire response with staff contributing more than 13,000

Responsible Wood and the Forestry Corporation of NSW, which manages more than 2 million ha of NSW state forests, have come together to share stories from those on the frontline managing and preserving forests amid the 2019-20 Black Summer fires.

In this, the first of a three-part-series, now available on the Responsible Wood website, Forestry Corporation staff share their experiences from an extraordinary fire season.

firefighting shifts and 2500 incident management shifts – all while continuing to manage the production of timber, making forests safe for visitors and protecting the environment. By the end of the season, more than half of the state forest was protected from fire with 910,000 ha burnt.



Kathy Lyons... brave staff worked as part of a coordinated response.

“EXHAUSTED, WE WORKED FOR MONTHS ON END”

Responding to fire outbreaks across an enormous land mass, the scale and breadth

Cont P 11



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From P 10

of the task is breathtaking. With fires north and south, the responsibility fell to Forestry Corporation's brave staff working as part of a coordinated response with the Rural Fire Service, National Parks and Wildlife Service and NSW Fire and Rescue to protect people, communities and the forest.

In this first series, Responsible Wood talks to Kathy Lyons, the senior manager responsible for the stewardship of coastal hardwoods state forests including firefighting and prescribed burning.

During the fire season, Kathy and her team coordinated the fire battle in the state's native forests and hardwood plantations.

Reflecting on the



In the thick of it... Forestry Corporation staff were involved in fighting more than 100 major fires across the season.

extraordinary event, Kathy said the team had never been as exhausted: "We worked for months on end and I constantly watched the patterns of fire from the Queensland-Victoria border, monitored the weather and tried to predict the balance of resources our people would need in advance to achieve the best results they could on the ground – while staying safe."

There were more than 250 individual fires impacting on NSW state forests and many of these ultimately joined up to form major fire complexes. Forestry Corporation staff were involved in fighting more than 100 major fires across the season.

"It was devastating watching those fires track over the forests we love; as our staff continued to put in

control lines they had to pull back time and time again to save many houses and communities while the forests burned," Kathy said.

"By early January we had every available person in the business engaged in firefighting or incident management along with most of our harvesting contractors across the state."

But the fires didn't stop. They started in the north and kept burning while new ignitions progressed to the south.

Kathy says the NSW south coast and the Tumbarumba-Tumut areas were particularly heartbreaking as fires quickly burnt forests with little time to defend them.

Three Forestry Corporation firefighters lost their homes. Visit responsiblewood.org.au

Hybrid office a 'living laboratory' for mass timber

CONSTRUCTION of Fast + Epp's four-storey mass timber hybrid office in Vancouver, British Columbia, has been completed.

The new building was erected four weeks CLT floors and wall panels, glulam beams and steel posts. Exterior wall panels, including firewall at the property line, were pre-clad with membrane and insulation.

"As a living laboratory, it is exciting to be able to test new ideas and technologies beyond the construction phase, but also throughout the life of the building, and



Fast + Epp's mass timber office in Vancouver... new ideas and new technologies.

create a safe and healthy work environment," said Paul Fast, the founder of Fast + Epp a Canadian-based international

structural engineering firm.

The office building uses 'tectonus' devices, an earthquake-resistance

technology being used for the first time in North America. The connectors act as shock absorbers and are installed at the base of the CLT shear walls and will be left uncovered as part of the design aesthetic along with exposed timber in the building's interior.

The floor system, consisting of 105 mm-thick CLT panels with a 50-mm concrete topping, is being tested by Fast + Epp using accelerometers to assess vibration performance.

Move-in by the firm is anticipated for late 2020.

Optimising value of Top End plantations

TO meet future challenges and sustain investments into northern Australia's timberlands, it's imperative that plantations look to diversify through secondary income streams and high value markets.

That's according to a report released this week by 2019 NT Nuffield Scholar and CEO of African Mahogany Australia Frank Miller, which investigates the drivers and opportunities that will add value and attract investments into existing plantations in northern Australia.

With support from ANZ and the NT government, Mr Miller travelled across Michigan and Wisconsin, Florida, Costa Rica, Colombia, Paraguay, New Zealand and China, visiting plantations that have found productivity success in

exploring high value markets and integrating various land uses on-farm.

Travelling to Valledupar, Colombia, Mr Miller visited a local commercial tree plantation and saw first-hand the benefits of implementing an integrated land approach.

"Previously an established cotton operation, this business was facing significant productivity issues due to land degradation. To rehabilitate the land and boost productivity, the business decided to build a commercially feasible timber production and livestock grazing enterprise," Mr Miller said.

"After the initial timber planting, cattle were introduced after 12 months for grazing purposes. This led to improved environmental conditions and enhanced



Mark Miller... diversifying plantations through secondary income streams.

productivity, reducing weeds and herbicide application, and lowering operational expenses."

With the establishment of high value timber plantations slowing in Australia, Mr Miller said it's important to look at how diversification can optimise value and drive new investments to

timber plantations.

"It's imperative that we look outside of both our standard revenue streams and current markets to ensure existing plantations are reaching the highest value," he said.

"To successfully implement and execute integrated timberland and agricultural investments, the barriers and limiting factors must be well understood and included in the business model."

Mr Miller recommends implementing a Silvopastoral System (SPS) in northern Australia to attract investment and growth opportunities for high-value timber within existing plantations.

"A diversified and well integrated approach to sustainable land use, fulfils many drivers of tropical timberland investment."



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Vic. housing sector deemed an essential and a safe industry

THE Victorian government has recognised the importance of the housing industry as an essential industry that can continue to operate safely for the next six weeks.

“The decision to allow domestic building to continue with limited numbers of workers on a domestic building site will allow hundreds of thousands of Victorians to stay in work and complete the more than 60,000 homes now under construction in the state,” HIA regional executive director Fiona Nield said.

“During the first wave of COVID-19 restrictions and the subsequent lock down, HIA and its members voluntarily adopted a set of industry guidelines and systems to help builders, trade contractors and suppliers safe on a building site which included a limit of six workers on site,” Ms Nield said.

“From the start, the nature of the domestic building sector means that it is possible for workers to socially distance and keep home building projects going.

“ECONOMICS OF DECISION ARE CRITICAL

“As Victoria moves into this stage four lockdown phase, this week’s decision is vital recognition by the government that the procedures our industry has already put into place are working and that housing



Fiona Nield... housing industry will operate safely for the next six weeks.

construction can practice the necessary safety measures.

“The economics of this decision are also critical – allowing housing projects to continue will save jobs, limit the risk of longer rental costs and loan charges for home owners, and ensure housing supply keeps up with demand.”

Ms Nield said there were more than 30,000 houses under construction across Victoria, and there were more than another 30,000 apartments under construction, mostly in Melbourne.

“This is an industry that can navigate its way through this crisis and stay open,” she said.

“Supporting home building with practical arrangements for trade supplies and building products and material will ensure activity can continue with sensible COVID-19 safety controls.”

These resources are freely available to assist everyone working in the residential building industry.

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The China syndrome: Hypocrisy of Bunnings just takes my breath away

Zero-tolerance approach to illegally-logged timber. Who are they kidding?

I'VE got to tell you – wow – the hypocrisy of Bunnings in banning Victorian hardwood timber is breath taking!

Do the test yourself – I have! Go into your local Bunnings warehouse and you will see solid timber products labelled with certification certificates, then a whole array of other products of dubious origin with credentials – or no credentials at all. It's absolutely true.

Bunnings merchandise director Phil Bishop seems happy to trash decades of world-leading sustainable, certificated forest management in Victoria, and in the process completely shredded his credibility. He has banged on about Bunnings products coming from legal and sustainable operations, with good working conditions and fair treatment of people. He has got to be joking!

What about all those Chinese flat-pack kitchens, made from compressed board sourced from who knows where, non-compliant with Australia standards and imported via a dubious supply chain from Chinese manufacturers? So just turn a blind-eye to that ... and the el cheapo engineered flooring with no certification labels, also from China.

Rightly, Assistant Minister for Forestry Senator Jonno Duniham has commented that the decision by Bunnings is wrong and will cost good jobs at a time when the economy



1/ **Tell us another wood story Bunnings.**

2/ **Jonno Duniham... wrong decision by Bunnings that will cost jobs.**

and people without jobs are on their knees.

Let's be honest, it's really about pandering to green groups who are now calling on Bunnings to extend its halt on native forest products in Victoria into New South Wales. So, expect to see a lot more imported very questionable hardwood timber in stores. Better forest management practices than in Victoria? As Michael Caton said in his iconic role as Darryl Kerrigan in *The Castle* ... tell him he's dreamin'.

Bunnings co-founder Bob Bunning, 81, has told our editor that "the green

“AN ARRAY OF DODGY PRODUCTS OF DUBIOUS ORIGIN

argument that illegal product is being supplied is a complete nonsense – a dead, dried and smoked red herring.

Robbo has urged Bunnings to reverse its decision ... to choose Australian timber over imported non-compliant timber and to back Australian jobs, as the nation begins to rebuild in the wake of COVID-19.

Victoria's Agriculture Minister Jaclyn Symes said the government was disappointed by the move from Bunnings.

"There are strong environmental safeguards around timber harvesting in Victoria – protections that don't exist in other timber supply markets around the world," she said.

Federal Member for Gippsland Darren Chester said Bunnings had shown complete contempt for their suppliers and hard-working timber industry families.

"We have a world-class timber industry in Victoria where 94% of forest is protected, and a small proportion of native forests are harvested and then allowed to regenerate in a sustainable cycle," Mr Chester said.

The Bunnings founders and hardwood sawmilling pioneers can be rightly disgusted at the politically motivated weak-kneed action of today's managers of the warehouse empire they created.

I am disgusted as well. Talk to you again next month – unless the Bunnings police have tracked me down.

Cheryl

TRUNK LINES



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madness continues."

"We've seen it all before," he told Jim Bowden. "In the forest wars of the 1980s in Western Australia, along with other states like NSW and Queensland, armed with a sustainable forest management record earned over generations, we fought for and defended our hardwood industry for more than 10 years."

Phil Bishop says Bunnings has a zero-tolerance approach to illegally logged timber, but clearly all current Victorian timber offered to Bunnings has been approved by the Victorian government regulator. So, the

The MARKET Leader...



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Use Queensland timber and grow jobs

Product choices impact regional economies across the supply chain

QUEENSLAND tradies and home renovators are being encouraged to Grow Queensland Jobs (#growqldjobs) by ensuring their next project uses timber products grown and processed in Queensland.

“The impact of COVID-19 on businesses across the state means we need to support local products and services to keep our friends, families and colleagues working,” Timber Queensland strategic relations manager Clarissa Brandt said.

“Purchasing choices impact jobs and regional economies,” she said.

“For example, choosing to use timber grown in the Maryborough region to build a house frame in Brisbane supports an extensive supply chain across our regions; foresters, harvest and haulage contractors, sawmillers, truss and frame fabricators and timber merchants all benefit from that initial choice.

“Queensland’s forest and timber industry supports 25,000 direct and indirect jobs so we strongly encourage anyone planning or working on a project, particularly those supported by the federal



Growing jobs... Sarah Porter, Timber Queensland's communications officer, helps deliver the message.

government HomeBuilder grant and the Queensland government’s regional home building boost, to actively prioritise buying from local businesses and producers as much as possible.”

Ms Brandt says it easy to identify and find a timber merchant or hardware supplier that sells Queensland

grown and processed timber products.

“Just look out for products labelled with the Accredited Queensland Timber Product

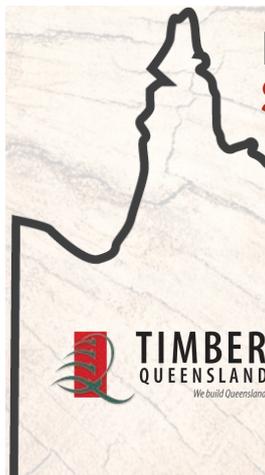
“IT'S EASY TO IDENTIFY A TIMBER MERCHANT”

trademark and visit www.buyqldtimber.com.au to find your closest member of the Accredited Queensland Merchant Network who can supply local product for your job,” she said.

“Network staff receive training on the latest building regulations and technical aspects of timber application and use from Australia’s leading timber experts, so you get the right product and the right advice.”

Buying locally grown and produced timber will generate the largest benefits with a strong capacity for industry to meet the bulk of consumer needs. Ms Brandt added: “However, given our local supply cannot meet total demand for timber, sourcing from interstate and overseas suppliers, with the strongest links to downstream processing and manufacturing, will provide the next order of positive benefits.”

Building professionals and consumers on Wednesday joined Timber Queensland’s free webinar ‘Your Guide to Buying Local: Understanding the Impact of the Timber Supply Chain’.



REGIONAL FORESTRY HUB MANAGERS – SOUTH EAST AND NORTH QUEENSLAND

Timber Queensland, the peak body for Queensland's forest and timber industry, has partnered with the Australian Government to deliver on the implementation of two new Regional Forestry Hubs in South-East Queensland and North Queensland. The regional hubs are a key action under the Australian Government's National Forest Industries Plan.

We are seeking a self-motivated individual to undertake the role of hub manager in each region. Reporting to the Chief Executive and working with a Steering Committee of local industry and regional stakeholders, the successful applicant will manage the implementation of the relevant hub to progress further development of the industry in the region.

Relevant experience and/or skills in project management, stakeholder engagement and communications will be essential. A salary package will be negotiated with the right applicant, either on a full time or part-time basis. The position will be on a contract basis for two years initially with scope for extension depending upon funding. Positions descriptions are available at www.timberqueensland.com.au

As there are two separate positions, please indicate whether you are applying for the South-East Queensland or North Queensland position. The positions will be locally based in each region, most likely in Maryborough and Cairns (locations subject to negotiation).

Written applications, including a short curriculum vitae, nominating referees and a statement addressing the position description should be addressed to: Chief Executive, Timber Queensland, PO Box 231 Kedron Qld 4031 Email applications are preferable, and should be sent to: admin@timberqueensland.com.au **Applications close COB Monday 10 August 2020**

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Authors pull no punches in review of forest industry in New Zealand

So much turmoil for so many sectors – and all at the same time

LEAD author of the just completed 12th edition of the NZ Forest Industry Sector Review – the first since late 2017 – says he can't remember when so many sectors of the industry faced so much turmoil ... all at the same time.

Dennis Neilson has worked on all 12 editions and the new release includes nine chapters and almost 100 tables and charts with more than 40 forest owners and 50 sawmills and all other wood processing companies profiled.

Land use conflicts between farming and forestry, long buried from the 1970s,



Author Dennis Neilson with Russia spruce logs at the Russia-China border 2018. Russian logs and timber are the greatest threat to NZ wood exports.

have been resurrected, says Neilson.

In mid-2020, forest owners and pastoral (hill country)

farmers are juking it out by political lobbying in the media and even with concurrent television adverts running together in July and August.

Efficiencies and automation of agriculture and migration to bigger towns have decimated rural communities.

“But the fading populations of dozens of these broken towns do not want trees under any circumstance, and especially with an influx of NZ forestry workers to spoil their colonial-era gin and tonic soirees,” Neilson said.

“This is in spite of a lifeline being offered by forestry.”

Many of these towns grew up dotting the landscape when 20 km was as far as a horse and buggy could travel in a day. In some districts 80% of these towns are past their useful purpose, which was when there had to be (long since closed) dairy factories and a freezing works on every corner.

In 2019, 60% of the total NZ harvest of 35.9 million cub m was exported as logs.

For forest owners this was the financially sensible thing to do, given prices and the ability of especially China to utilise lower-grade logs not commercially killable in New Zealand.

One example is the small log KIS grade (U grade in Australia with sed down to 12 cm) where China veneer log prices are double those of pulp logs, the only alternative use in New Zealand.

To the Minister of Forests and some sawmillers, this was heresy.

“HEADWINDS BUT NZ STILL ATTRACTIVE LOCATION FOR INVESTMENT”

However, in any event, the previously stable China log market has become very volatile in both demand and pricing from 2019 and into 2020. It is likely to remain that way until (if) the Covid-19 crisis ends, and also when the huge oversupply of beetle-killed spruce log exports from Europe to China diminishes. This could continue for least two to three years.

The globally unique position of New Zealand to support a large ‘pruned log’ processing industry to produce clear lumber for markets in Oceania, the US and Europe is under threat. Major forest owners stopped pruning some years ago. The current ‘bubble’ harvest of private

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Cont P 10

From P 9

pruned forests will be gone in the next decade. International demand for clear timber exceeds demand but many owners still refuse to start or re-start pruning.

The sawmilling industry has not been able to mirror the growth in the major log harvest industry – especially in timber exports. Indeed, exports to its previous major market Australia had by 2019 shrunk to only 27% of what it was in 2000. The NZ Forest Industry Sector Review provides details of 55 sawmills which have failed in the last 17 years.

Production and exports of plywood, MDF, particleboard and paper have all shrunk in the last several years, and pulp is static.

However, in spite of several headwinds, New Zealand is still seen as very attractive location for institutional fund



Dennis Neilson (left) with one of his 24-year-old pine trees in Hawkes Bay.

managers and forest products companies to invest. Prices paid for limited transactions in 2018-2020 have been surprisingly good. The huge Australian TIMO New Forests continues to increase its NZ-based forest assets.

The government has legislated to allow carbon forestry to provide attractive returns – in itself the major cause of land use conflict in

mid-2020.

Volatile log markets, conflicts over land use and between domestic processing versus log exports contrast with some seriously

**“ INNOVATION
IN THE WOOD
PROCESSING
SECTOR**

innovative work being done by some forest owners and processors. One company has a strategic target of '50 by 50' which is to have radiata pine growing at 50 cub m a year by 2050; and it is well along that trajectory which would be twice the current growth rate.

There are also several innovative things being done by the wood processing sector, including the recent completion of the largest and most efficient sawmill in the southern hemisphere, the construction of a major new CLT plant, expansion in the manufacture of thermo modified timber' (TMT) and a seriously good (and patented) post and pole making and installing process.

All in all the new DANA review makes for an interesting and seriously informative read, with the authors pulling no punches.

THE 12TH EDITION OF THE NEW ZEALAND FOREST PRODUCTS INDUSTRY REVIEW



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Bushfire recovery on the road in NSW

THE \$46 million bushfire recovery program from the NSW government is seeing work happening now to rebuild state forest roads and bridges lost in the 2019-2020 fire season.

Member for Clarence Chris Gulaptis said the \$46 million equity injection is part of the larger state government \$100 million Covid stimulus package, and will see Forestry Corporation NSW repair damaged public infrastructure and expand its Grafton and Blowering nurseries to begin planting activities in bushfire affected state forests.



Bridging the gap... Peter Walters, acting protection manager, Forestry Corporation of NSW (right) and Jason Blanch, general manager Big River Group, Grafton.

“This is great news for the timber industry in the Grafton region which was devastated by the bushfires earlier in the year,” Mr Gulaptis said.

“Forestry is an incredibly important industry in New South Wales, particularly in this area, which is why the government is committed to

seeing the industry get back on its feet.”

One local project is replacing burnt bridges in Doubleduke state forest

“We are partnering with local industries and contractors to repair or replace bridges and reopen main forest roads, while supporting the local timber

industry,” Forestry Corporation acting forest protection manager Peter Walters said.

“In the Doubleduke forest we are working with Grafton-based business Big River Timbers to rebuild forest bridges using timber from state forests,” he said.

“This will mean Glencoe Road can reopen, a strategic forest access and firefighting road, as well as other forest roads in the area.”

Find out more about Forestry Corporation’s bushfire recovery program at www.forestrycorporation.com.au

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From P 3

greater speed and less palaver than VicForests has with compliance for robust eucalypt forests in a first world nation.

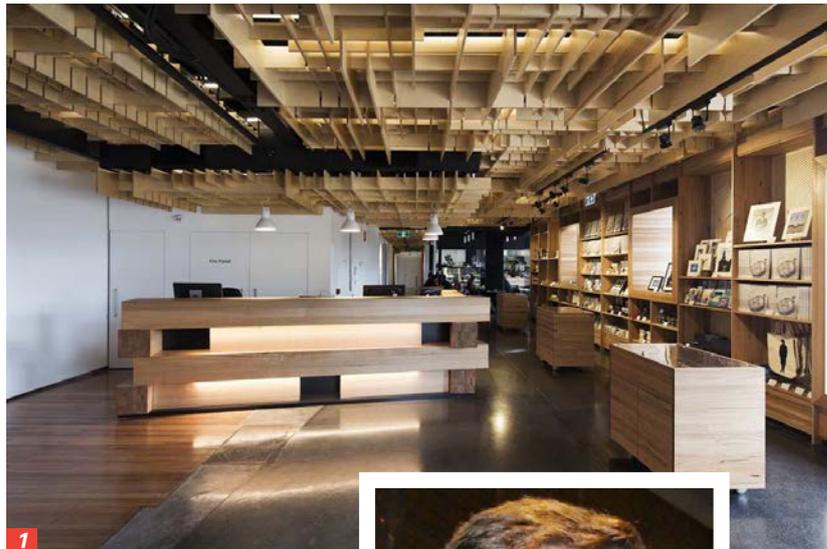
“West Papua has stakeholders who are poor, hungry, denied suffrage and desperate for enterprise at village level. Australia has wealth and power concentrated in urban centres and an educated, privileged, organised, and independent-minded knowledge class. These are differentials that play out in forest certification.”

Dr Wayne Tibbits, forest program manager for Global-Mark, which works with more than 5000 clients and about 10,000 current issued certificates, says certification audits to the alternative Australian forest management standard AS4708 assess conformance to a suite of requirements that support the achievement of sustainable forest management that go well beyond and “set the bar” beyond laws and regulations.

More than 11 million ha of forest is now certified in Australia.

Dr Tibbits says a forest manager must comply with all legal requirements plus

“NARROW VIEW OF NATIVE FOREST POLICY



1/ Getting the most from regrowth harvesting of native timbers... Australian Sustainable Hardwoods.

2/ Tim Johnston... a prosperous future for Gippsland must include a mix of high-quality hardwoods from state forests and plantation timber at a variety of scales.



demonstrate conformance to additional requirements within the standard.

“It is here that the independent audit team is to possess a unique set of competencies for sustainable forest management that go well beyond the regulatory framework,” he said.

Certification to the Australian forest management standard is voluntary, being only achieved and retained on the basis of audits undertaken by an independent third-party audit team from an accredited certification body.

“The Australian forest

management standard supports the regulatory framework within which a forest manager operates,” Dr Tibbits said.

“This is through multiple performance requirements embedded in the standard where the adherence to these legal compliance matters must be demonstrated by evidence to an independent audit team.”

Joining the debate, Tim Johnston, CEO, Victorian Association of Forest Industries, said the recent announcement of state-federal

matched funding of \$4 million to establish forestry research hubs in Victoria ran counter to the state government’s short-sighted native forestry policy, which clearly expected the entire timber and forest industry to transition to plantation resources, no matter how unrealistic that

might be.

“In response, I have always said “it’s not a case of one or the other – we need hardwood and softwood, we need native resource and plantations,” Mr Johnston said.

“A prosperous future for Gippsland must include a mix of high-quality hardwoods from state forests and plantation timber at a variety of scales, from stand-alone commercial operations to smaller plantings integrated on farms.”

Mr Johnston added: “Project committees led by the best in our regional industry could drive new product innovation for local and export markets. Forestry research can seek to integrate traditional owner knowledge of land and fire into sustainable, landscape-scale forest management systems.”

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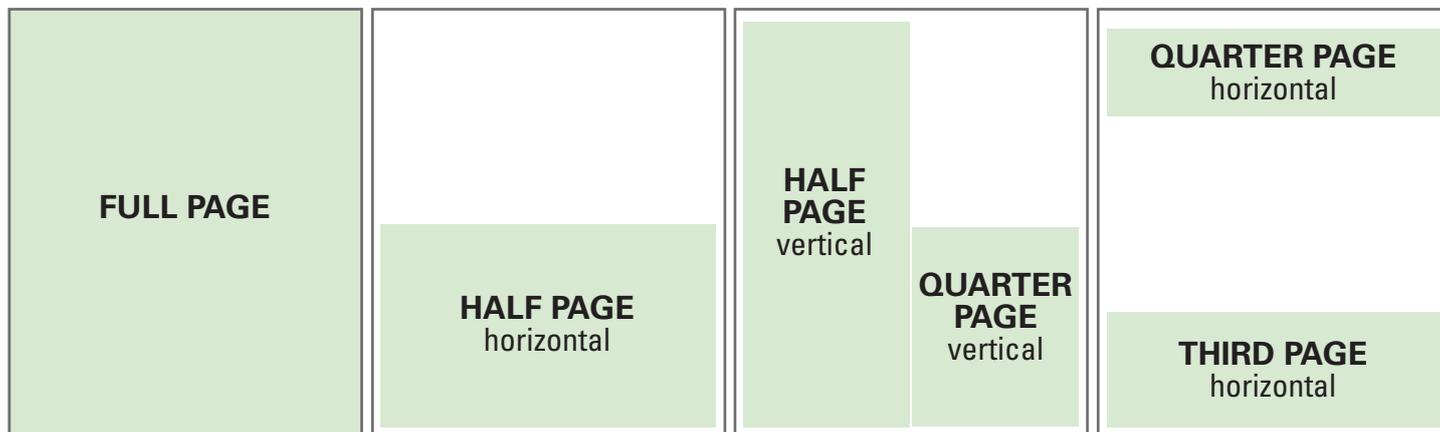
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