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## Timber hub's pavilion scores gold in coveted design awards

COVER STORY P6



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# Dan's plan a sham: promise to transition to plantations is hollower than an old log

## Government's token of 250 ha of bluegums 'useless for sawmillers'

HARDWOOD sawmillers have called on Premier Daniel Andrews to come clean with the tens of thousands of workers and their families who depend on the timber industry after it was revealed his promised "transition" to plantations is in tatters.

Eastern Victoria MP Melina Bath says almost a year on from the premier's announcement to close down the industry in 2030, not a single tree of new plantation has been planted,

and that the only species being planted cannot be used by the local timber industry.

Victorian Hardwood Sawmillers Association spokesman Leonard Fenning has inspected an existing plantation site in Maryvale where the Victorian government will re-plant just



1



2



3

- 1/ Leonard Fenning... transition promise a lie.
- 2/ Dan Andrews... plantation plan in tatters.
- 3/ Melina Bath... wrong species planted.

250 ha of bluegum, a species only suited for woodchips and barely enough trees to feed a paper mill for one day. This follows last year's planting of 250 ha, also on an existing plantation site.

"I was dismayed to see first-hand that the promised transition to plantations for our sawmills was a lie, and that not a single tree will be

**“NOT A TREE PLANTED WILL BE SUITABLE FOR SAWMILLS**

planted that can be used by our hardwood sawmills to make the appearance-grade timber products that Australians love," Mr Fenning said.

"At a time when Victorians are facing the worst economic and employment crisis of our time, Daniel Andrews must stop this absurd plan that will cost taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars and put thousands of Victorians out of work," he said.

The Victorian native timber industry is highly regulated and sustainably managed, with only 3000 ha a year harvested and replanted, in an overall forest estate of nearly 8 million ha – equivalent of only four trees out of every 10,000 harvested annually every year.

The state's native timber sector generates around 2500 direct jobs and thousands more indirect jobs. It generates around \$770 million in revenue annually,

Cont P.3



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# As wildfires rage through US top forest ecologist says biomass could be answer

AS wild fires rage across the west coast of America – so massive that the smoke has been reported over the skies of New York City – an esteemed US forest ecologist says biomass could be one of the answers.

University of California Associate Professor of Forest Ecology, Department of Plant Sciences, Malcolm North said mid-elevation forests of ponderosa pine and mixed conifers used to have about 60 trees per ha 150 years ago.

Backed by a US Department of Agriculture study, Dr North says those figures in California forests are now more like 170-180 trees per ha.

“That’s about a 3- to-1 increase from what it used to be like historically,” Dr North says.

“Other studies suggest the forests in California are

somewhere between three and five times as dense as they used to be.”

He says fire suppression has changed forest densities and resulted in aggressive blazes.

More than 17,000 firefighters are on the ground this week battling California’s largest-ever fire season in terms of area burned – 1.4 million ha. Additionally, smoke plumes have travelled across the country prompting concerns of widespread hampered respiratory health amid the global Covid-19 pandemic.

Dr North says there is a place for controlled burns and mechanical thinning. But, something less talked about could be the key to restoring healthy, fire-resistant forests — biomass.

Biomass focuses on removing small trees and underbrush from the forest

government has committed for new plantations,” Mr Hampton said.

He said the state government, if it remained unchanged, would actually amount to Victoria ‘transitioning’ to 100% imported appearance grade hardwood.

“Some of this will almost certainly come from areas being deforested for palm oil and other land uses in southeast Asia,” Mr Hampton said.

“It is scarcely believable that the Victorian government believes this is a better approach than creating these products at home.”

Mr Hampton commended Melina Bath for her support of the hardwood industry.



**Dr Malcolm North... biomass key to restoring healthy, fire-resistant forests.**

and burning it for electricity.

“I frankly just don’t understand any rationale for being against those (biomass plants),” Dr North said. “It would be a huge help to the problem.”

He said any fears about this being a nefarious way for logging to start up again should be dismissed because the biomass mills can only process items of no more than 30 cm.

Recently, the senate introduced the Emergency Wildfire and Public Safety Act. If passed, the bill would create a program to incentivise the collection of woody biomass and help expand processing facilities to make biomass more economically viable.

Dr Malcolm North added: There’s definitely a really effective role for thinning, particularly when the thinning is not simply about cutting

*Cont P 10*

*From P 2*

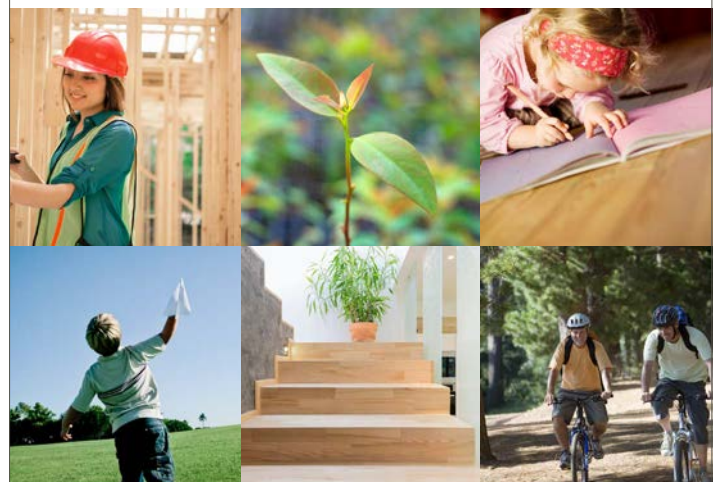
with \$297 million value added in regional communities.

Australian Forest Products Association CEO Ross Hampton said if the Victorian government was fair dinkum about ‘transitioning sawmills to plantations’ they would need about 60 years to grow the right trees and many tens of thousands of hectares to accommodate them.

“The cost to achieve this is many times more than the \$110 million the Andrews

**“THEY WOULD NEED ABOUT 60 YEARS TO GROW THE RIGHT TREES**

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# Parrots and frogs: their impact on our well-managed and sustainable forests

## Tasmanian timber producers losing more resource in new 'swifty wars'

JIM BOWDEN

TASMANIA'S forest industry has been operating efficiently and sustainably since a peace deal to 'cool' the conflict between the sector and environmentalists was struck in 2012.

After the Liberal government put a symbolic end to the pact in 2014, a new calm descended among forest communities as they went about selectively harvesting certified timber and enjoying the security of hard-earned jobs.

But the tide has turned – again. This time a 25 cm red-faced parrot is opening up



*Swift parrot... feeding on blue gum nectar.*



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a new battleground – and war zone – in the island state.

Former Greens leader Bob Brown says the forestry industry had failed to protect the critically endangered swift parrot, a migratory species that breeds in Tasmania's old-growth forests.

Sustainable Timber Tasmania has included forest areas used by the parrot in its harvesting plans for the next three years. It will undertake comprehensive planning to inform how it manages habitats.

Meantime, STT is working with the Forest Practices Authority, the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment and species experts to find ways to reduce the potential impact of harvesting operations on the parrot, while retaining the ability to meet legislated and contractual production requirements.

A major step forward in the management of the parrot's habitat was the acceptance of a Public Authority Management Agreement finalised between STT and the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment.

“THE TIDE HAS TURNED YET AGAIN”

The PAMA includes the identification and exclusion from production of 10,000 ha of potential swift parrot nesting habitat. In those areas not excluded from production, forest harvesting operations can continue to be planned and implemented in a manner that meets obligations under the forest practices system and Forest Management Act 2014.

Cont P 10

# CLT panels project further strengthens confidence in mass timber construction

JIM BOWDEN

A BREAKTHROUGH project in Queensland driven by the dramatic shift to mass timber construction in Australia will significantly influence greater demand for quality forest products.

The project adds to the current portfolio of mass timber product research, which is assisting Australian companies to further explore opportunities in a market showing a growth rate of around 15-25%.

The project at the DAF Salisbury Research Facility in Brisbane has involved the non-destructive assessment of CLT panels within conditions similar to an industrial manufacturing facility scenario (setup, background noise etc.).

The CLT panels have then been tested using conventional static (destructive) testing methods to allow comparisons between



**Mass timber panels project team ... technical assistant Eric Littee, timber engineer Adam Faircloth and senior scientist Dr Chandan Kumar.**

the test methods. Early experiments reveal the results from the newly-developed non-destructive process are accurate.

The project forms part of the Centre for Future Timber Structures and the ARC Future Timber Hub. On the project team are senior scientist Dr Chandan Kumar, timber engineer Adam Faircloth and technical assistant Eric Littee.

Current evaluation methods of mass timber products are conducted through either pre-manufacturing processes

based on individual board qualities or post-manufacturing processes

Knowing the mechanical properties of CLT panels will give building professionals even more confidence in using mass timber systems. By capturing the vibrations induced into the panel in a simple and quick impact test, the qualities of stiffness for both major and minor axial directions as well as shear moduli can be determined.

Adam Faircloth, a Masters of Philosophy student at

Griffith University, presented the project outcomes at the recent Australian Young Researchers Conference (YRC) held by both Griffith University and the Institute of Structural Engineers (IStructE). Mr Faircloth was also invited to present at the International YRC in London earlier this year, but Covid-19 restrictions prevented this opportunity.

Further validation of the developed system will continue and will include a focus on thick panels to predict their shear modulus capacity.

An additional component of the project will investigate acoustic characterisation of mass timber panels including sound absorption, transmission, and impact response properties. Findings are expected to provide guidance of design and use of the products in future tall timber structures.

The final stage of the project will explore the opportunities to have the newly-developed system operating as an 'in-line' system.

**“RESULTS SHOW ACCURACY OF NEW PROCESS”**



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# Timber Hub's 'pavilion' scores gold in prestigious 2020 Good Design Awards

## Under-valued sawmill products turned into value-added timber structures

A PROJECT that has turned under-valued sawmill products into value-added timber structures has been recognised with a gold accolade in the engineering category of Australia's peak international design awards.

The Suspended Remnants Timber Pavilion, a structure created from a collaboration between two ARC Future Timber Hub projects – alternative uses for under-valued sawmill products in innovative timber structures and prefabrication and digital fabrication strategies for large-scale timber construction – scored in the Good Design Award for 'outstanding design and innovation'.

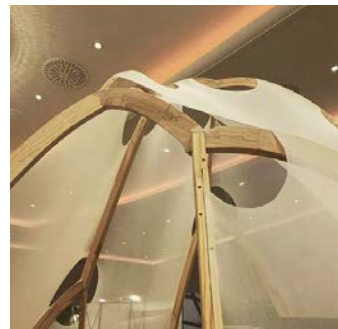
**“GENUINE ALLIANCE IN CRAFTING OF TIMBER**

The annual Good Design Awards, announced this month during 2020 Good Design Week, is Australia's oldest and most prestigious international event for design and innovation, with a proud history dating back to 1958. The event celebrates the best new products and services on the Australian market, excellence in architectural design, engineering, fashion, digital and communication design, design strategy, social impact design and young designers.

More than 55 Good Design Awards jurors evaluated each entry according to a strict set of design criteria, which covered good design, design



**Winning team in the Good Design Awards... Jane Burry, Aurimas Bukauskas, Joe Gattas, Kim Baber, and Canhui Chen.**



innovation and design impact. Projects for the awards must demonstrate excellence in good design and convince the jury they are worthy of recognition at this level.

The Suspended Remnants pavilion was designed and fabricated using a bespoke computational tool that combines the generation of structurally efficient geometry with a material inventory constraint. Through automation, an inventory of timber members of short

unique lengths, typically deemed unusable in the industry, are repurposed into high-value architectural component (see illustrations).

The full project team included University of Queensland (UQ) researchers and Future Timber Hub chief investigators Kim Baber and Joe Gattas; research partners from Swinburne University of Technology Jane Burry and Canhui Chen; students and graduates from the UQ's School of Architecture including Daniel Foote, Harry McCullough, Fatemeh Raouf and Nick Russel; and visiting timber researchers

Benedikt Blumenröder from the Technical University of Kaiserslautern and Aurimas Bukauskas from the University of Bath.

The pavilion was fabricated in the Future Timber Hub's architecture workshops at UQ with support from Sam Butler and Mark Lynne, and Future Timber Hub industry partner Hyne Timber.

The awards jury said the innovation applied in material optimisation and form finding optimisation using computational tools was highly commended ... "as is the creativity in optimising material management from source timber. The engineered connections are unique and have applications which are both scalable and suited to 3D printing."

CEO of Good Design Australia Dr Brandon Gien said receiving a Good Design Award was a significant achievement given the very high calibre and record number of entries received this year.

"There's no doubt it has been a really tough year for everyone, so it's nice to be able to share some good news for a change," Dr Gien said.

"The projects represented in this year's awards shine a positive light on our creative and innovative capacity as human beings," he said. "These inspirational winning projects give me hope and optimism that our design community will continue to innovate, no matter how

Cont P 9

**SEPT/OCT**

**Timber Queensland 4-part webinar training program – Understanding AS1684.2.**

September 15, 10am-12pm;  
September 22, 10-11.30 am;  
September 29, 10-11.30 am;  
October 6, 10 am-12 pm.  
Cost \$200 (inc. gst) \$200, non-members \$250 (inc. gst).  
Course must be booked as a whole; sessions are not separately bookable. CPD points available. This is a ticketed course. Register at

www.timberqueensland.com.au

**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**

**16–19: DANA New Zealand Forest Industry Status and Outlook Conference and Field Trip – Napier Conference Centre,**

*Marine Parade, Napier, New Zealand.* Website under construction, for further information contact Conference Organiser Julie Bell admin@dana.co.nz

**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

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**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**

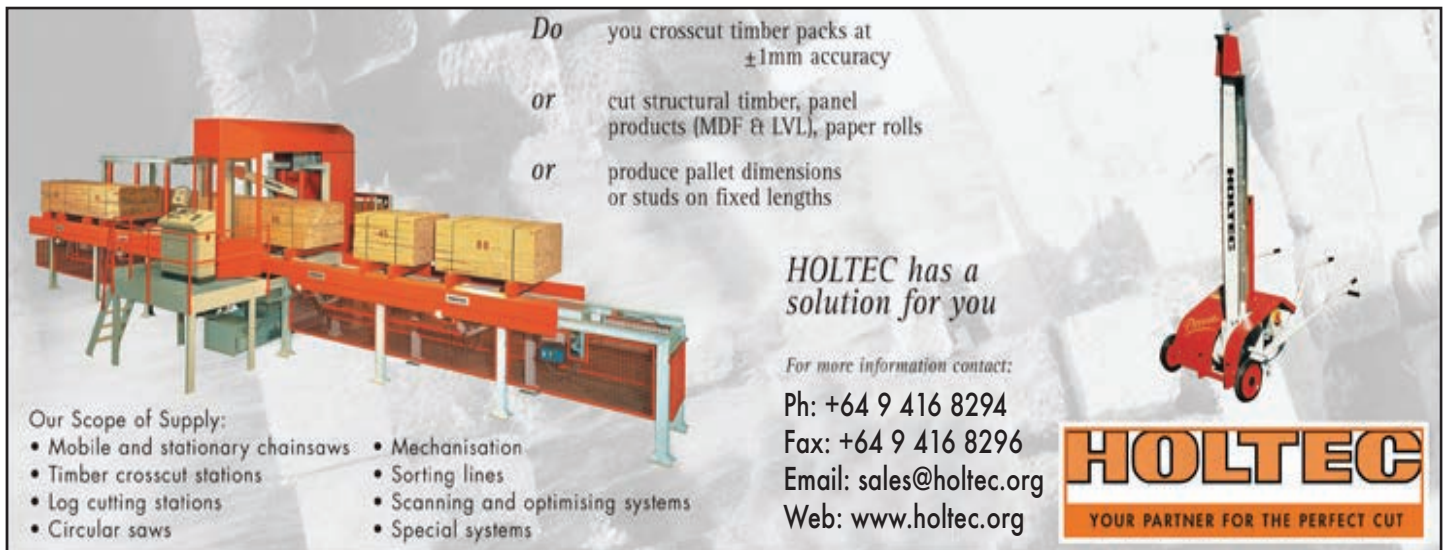
**7-9: International Forest Business Conference and Tour – Sopot, Poland.** A two-day conference on megatrends that shape forest and wood industry sectors. The event will highlight the transformation of forest-related businesses towards a low-carbon bioeconomy, discuss tensions between sustainability 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@timberandforestrynews.com



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and productivity.

CMTP sources solid wood for its manufacturing processes from Dongwha Australia in Bombala and from AKD Softwood sawmills.

Enews co-publisher John Halkett visited the factory at Campbelltown in Sydney. His article will be published in a couple of weeks' time. In the meantime, does anyone know that these boxes (pictured) are and what they are used for? No, the prize isn't a holiday in Melbourne.

From P 6

challenging the world around us is."

The 2020 Good Design Awards attracted a record number of submissions with an astonishing 835 design projects evaluated in this year's international event.

"Our project has been a genuine collaboration between the fields of architecture and engineering, combining attention to detail in the crafting of timber and fabric elements using sophisticated computational design," chief investigator Kim Baber said.

The ARC Future Timber

Hub gave a special thank you to its research collaborators Swinburne University of Technology (special mention to Canhui Chen), who submitted the entry with The University of Queensland, and special mention to the support given to the project from Future Timber Hub industry partner Hyne Timber.

Visit [www.futuretimberhub.org](http://www.futuretimberhub.org)

**On the cover: Contributing to the success of the Suspended Remnants pavilion in the 2020 Good Design Awards are Harry McCullough, Benedikt Blumenröder and Daniel Foote pictured at the UO Structures Lab.**





From P 4

STT supports third party certification, both FSC and PEFC (Responsible Wood), as a means of providing confidence to consumers that the forest from which their products are sourced are managed responsibly.

Obtaining FSC certification may potentially enable the government agency to broaden its market for forest products. The 2019 FSC audit report highlighted that STT complies with most of the required criteria of the FSC standard, with a further refinement of three complex issues: the management of swift parrots; greater retention of habitat trees in harvest areas; and better understanding the impact of fire and other disturbances on old growth.

**“THE SUPER SLEEPER FROG THAT CLOSED THE FORESTS**

Sustainable Timber Tasmania is taking action to address these issues.

Land management general manager Suzette Weeding says STT is “fully committed to obtaining FSC certification and was not ruling out extending the 10,000 ha protected area”.

A similar issue dogged the forestry industry in the Conondales in the Queensland Sunshine Coast hinterland in the 1980s when environmentalists claimed timber harvesting had decimated the habitat of the gastric-brooding or platypus frog, the only frog to give birth through its mouth. “The frog has disappeared,” they moaned, but later they cheered as sawmills closed and jobs were lost.

Then, a few years later, before the region was turned into a national park, Rheobatrachus popped up in great numbers. An amphibian research professor on holiday from Finland explained that the “super-sleeper” species



**Suzette Weeding...committed to FSC certification.**

hibernates at different times only to return from beneath mud and water a year or so later, using its ability to breathe through its skin to remain out of sight as nature’s Rip Van Winkle. I remember the professor as a little bloke with a goatee who was also an expert on fleas.

Of interest also I am sure, nature tells us the genitalia of the male and female frog is housed within their bodies. Both release their sex cells through holes in their bodies (for this specific purpose). The amplexus embrace between frogs stimulates the female

to release her eggs which she expels in the form of a gelatinous mass. So there you have it – no intercourse, just lots of rubbing (an idea in these Covid-19 times?).

Interestingly, the swift parrot (*Lathamus discolor*) is a migratory bird that flies out of Tasmania – at great speed (88 km an hour) every year to spend most of the winter mating in southeast Australia, returning to the spring breeding season to feed on the nectar of blue gums (*Eucalyptus globulus*).

As spring progresses, expect to see many of them as they fly back to the forests in great numbers and at speed to face their major threat – predation by sugar gliders and mortality of adults through collisions with man-made structures such as windows, chain-link fences and wind farms.

• *Next week: koalas, possums and the forests they live in.*

From P 3

down the big trees but really focuses a lot on reducing the density of the forest and taking care of the fuels problem.

He says most of the fuel load is in the form of smaller trees that aren’t economically viable for logging companies.

“By the time you get them (trees) down to the mill you’ll

probably spend more on gas than you’ll get for those logs,” he said.

Dr North did a Sierra-wide analysis that showed only 28% of the forests can even

be mechanically thinned. He estimated that 72% of the forests will require something else such as prescribed fire burns to provide fire resistance and good health.



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# Salvaged Douglas fir helps save the fleet

A PARTNERSHIP between Forestry Corporation NSW and Sydney Heritage Fleet has seen a shipment of bushfire salvaged timber delivered to help preserve heritage ships across Australia.

The timber comes from the iconic Sugar Pine Walk and adjacent Douglas fir plantation near Tumut which was destroyed in the 2019-20 bushfires, but is still salvageable.

Sydney Heritage Fleet is storing the timber in its Bathurst storage facility and will work with historical ship custodians across Australia to make use of it.

"We are pleased to see this resource going to help maintain Australia's historical ships, and appreciate the support of Forestry Corporation NSW," the



**Cheryl Hawkins and Grant Cobden from Bergin's Logging... transporting salvaged timber to Sydney Heritage Fleet's storage facility in Bathurst.**

organisation's shipwright superintendent Peter Gossell said.

"Douglas fir in particular is well suited to shipbuilding and repair due to its strength, durability and light weight," he said.

"There are around 20

historical ships across Australia that will need repairs at some point, so it's great to have this resource on hand when needed."

Forestry Corporation's haulage and sales manager Nick Firth said the original plantations were established in the 1920s as part of forestry

trials happening at the time.

"Sadly these stands were destroyed in last summer's bushfires, but we are pleased to see Sydney Heritage Fleet is able to put the timber to use and help maintain Australia's heritage maritime fleet," Mr Firth said.

"We have harvested small amounts of this timber in the past for Sydney Heritage Fleet to repair ships such as the James Craig (the only fully-restored authentic tall ship in the world). But the impact of the bushfires has meant around 70 large timber logs are now available for stockpiling."

Forestry Corporation has covered all costs of harvesting and transporting the timber from Laurel Hill to the Sydney Heritage Fleet's storage facility in Bathurst.

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# Tigercat 6050 carbonator reduces wood debris in a carbon sequestration process

## High-value conversion a sensible, commercial alternative to burning or landfill

A HEAVY duty harvesting head specifically designed to match the high-performance capabilities of Tigercat carriers impressed at a demonstration day in the Green Hills region of southern NSW state forests where about 52,000 ha of radiata plantation were burned by the summer bushfires.

The Tigercat 575 was destined for AUSTimber 2020, which was postponed to 2021.

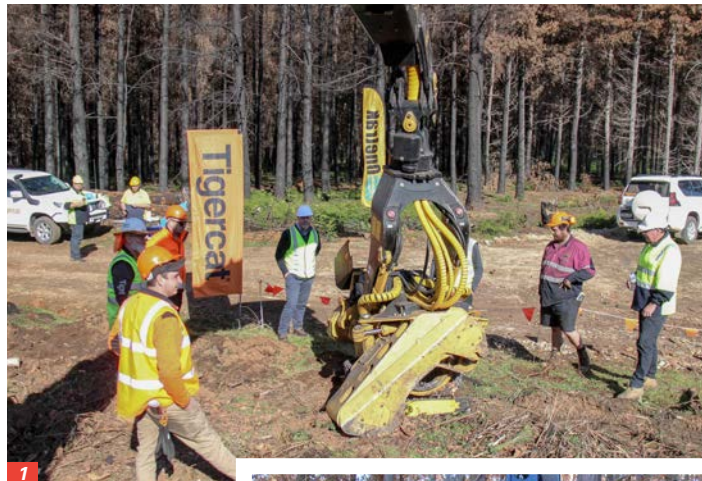
District manager for Tigercat Australia and New Zealand Glen Marley said the unit had a shorter 8.2 m boom option for better stability and lift capacity in larger trees.

The machine is productive and reliable in a variety of demanding applications and tree profiles. An extremely durable all-around harvester head, it is well suited to in-stand harvesting, roadside processing, multi-stem pulpwood processing and eucalyptus debarking.

With independent knife arms, the 575 harvesting head excels in tough timber with large limbs and poor stem form. Optional timed knives are available for easier picking in roadside processing applications.

Tigercat's patented Autoshift drive system provides extra power and positive grip when feeding large trees, fast speed in smaller trees, and full manual control when required.

The 575 starts in 3WD, maximising feed force for faster acceleration and to quickly power through bigger trees. As the load drops,



**1/ High-performance...** Tigercat 575 harvesting head impresses at in-field salvage trials in the Green Hills region of southern NSW where about 52,000 ha of radiata plantation was burned by the summer bushfires.

**2/ Debut...** the Tigercat 575 is put through its paces in the southern NSW radiata state forest.



it automatically shifts to 2WD, improving efficiency and increasing feed speed. The system shifts back and forth seamlessly with no operator input required, all while maintaining precise and accurate length measurements.

Lee Worley of G & J Groves Pty Ltd was impressed by the trial, reporting that the Tigercat 575 has plenty of feed power and processing speed.

"It holds the trees up into the head well and has plenty of drive motor torque," he said. "The Tigercat automatic 3WD to 2WD was seamless and there was very little feed slippage even in heavily-limbed trees."

He said the optimiser was excellent with automatic log selection quick and faultless.

"It made operating this head a breeze," said Mr Worley. An auto tensioner on both main saw and topping saw worked very well and reduced saw chain maintenance. Saw torque and power was great and fast to cut, especially when felling.

Mr Worley added: "The bar lube oiler worked very well and used less oil than my current head. Also, the automatic colour-marking system was excellent, especially on felling cuts. The butt marking was clear and worked without fault.

"Daily servicing was

much smoother than what I'm used to, and the grease nipples were accessible and easy to get to, so end-of-day maintenance was quick."

Mr Worley said he would love to operate the 575 full time as the Tigercat head was really easy to operate. And with the optimizer working so well he didn't feel as tired at the end of the shift.

Glen Marley said feedback from trials was excellent ... "it gives us great confidence in this head and its suitability for Australian conditions."

As a matter of fact, he says reviews of the 575 from local operators are generally the most positive reports

received for a demo unit, which is very encouraging.

Key benefits of the Tigercat 575 harvesting head include larger diameter hoses and larger capacity valves than similar class heads to match the greater hydraulic flow and power of Tigercat harvester carriers; robust design, high quality components for high duty cycles and long life; precise diameter and length measuring; and efficient hydraulics for high performance, efficiency and improved carrier component life.

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# Forestry Minister ‘late to the party’ for wood processing sector in New Zealand

## Biofuels and wood for steelmaking figure in ‘Wood Fibre Future’ study

DENNIS NEILSON

IN late 2017 when the Coalition government ‘won’ the New Zealand election, it selected NZ First’s Shane Jones as Minister of Forestry and Minister of Regional Economic Development.

Soon after, it entrusted the minister (with other ministers also signing off on bigger sums) with allocating grants and loans totally \$NZ3 billion over three years in a ‘Provincial Growth Fund’ to worthy investment causes in the provinces.

Forestry has benefitted from PGF allocations throughout New Zealand, although they were largely focused on Northland and Gisborne, and some with native (mostly non-commercial) forestry initiatives rather than directly for commercial forest expansion.

Wood processing has indirectly benefitted from roading and rail investment projects, but direct grants or even loans have not been a priority, in spite of the wood processing industry languished for much of the government cycle, and indeed the Minister trying his best to ban, restrict or tax log exports to help local mills.

However, there has been some previous investment, but mostly in loans rather than grants.

An initial \$19.5 million allocation was made in mid-2019 to set up a ‘Wood Cluster Centre of Excellence’ in Gisborne. In his



**KLC Ltd's add-value processing plant at Kaingaroa Village, in the middle of the vast 180,000 ha Kaingaroa Forest near Rotorua**

announcement, the Minister said the centre was being developed as a hub for wood processing, wood products, marketing and distribution, and training and research.

From this, a \$12.1 million loan was soon made to Wood Engineering Technology (WET), which had already established a sub-commercial plant to make high technology ‘Optimised Engineered Lumber’ (OEL). This process is so ‘hi-tech’ that is not possible to publically visit the robotic manufacturing operations, which cut logs into small pieces of lumber and then reassembles them as very stable timber framing.

A small (\$500,000) allocation was made to the then Far East Sawmills-managed Prime sawmill, also on the same site. However, management control of this mill has now changed to Kiwi

Lumber Company, which recently announced it will expand this mill with the help of \$15 million which we understand will come from a combination of funding from the PGF, some from a Gisborne ratepayer owned Tairawhiti Trust and from KLC itself. Details of this allocation and if any of this is grant of loan funds has not been disclosed.

**“FUTURE IS UNCLEAR AHEAD OF NZ ELECTION**

Then really late in its term, in mid-September, the PFG announced ‘investments’ of \$22 million for four wood processing projects in the Bay of Plenty.

Rotorua-based Red Stag Solutions will receive a \$15

million loan to help with its soon to be completed CLT plant. This 50,000 cub m a year capacity plant will be commissioned in early 2021.

[We contrast this with what we understand to be a \$NZ14 million Australian government grant made to a much smaller CLT plant being built in Tasmania. Indeed, over the years Australian federal and state governments

have been seriously more generous to help wood processing than has been the case in New Zealand. Examples include a new lightweight coated paper mill in Tasmania and the expansion of a major sawmill in Mount Gambier].

A second payment in the Bay of Plenty will be made to an add value timber processor at Kaingaroa Village, KLC Ltd. It will receive a \$3 million support package to keep operating and to expand jobs in a ‘low socioeconomic area’.

A third operation, Tunncliffe Timber Solutions, will receive \$2.25 million to help expand its thermal modified timber (TMT) operation, particularly making TMT doors and windows.

Finally, Te Puke-based

Cont P 15



From P 14

Pukepine sawmills will receive a loan of \$1.6 million to increase production and employ more staff.

Compared with their Australian counterparts, even the largest of these PGF allocations to NZ companies (mostly loans only) are

very modest indeed, but are a most welcome contribution to a sometimes struggling sector.

And, to top it all off, one of the last PGF allocations made is \$45 million for a new log barging port at the top of the East Coast of the North Island, presumably to barge logs to bigger ports to export. This has been made in spite of the local District Council rejecting the plan as



**NZ Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern visits Tunnickliffes Timber with co-owner Scott McCabe and Tipene Van Den Anker.**

not feasible, and local Maori tribes also being against it. In no way would this help wood processing

The NZ election is on October 17 and just what an incoming government will do to further simulate wood processing remains to be seen.

However, the government has just published a major international study on options to transform the sector. Called

'Wood Fibre Futures', the 120-page very detailed document lists its priorities to include the manufacture of biocrude oil, liquid biofuels and coking coal replacement with wood for energy to make steel. It identifies Australian TIMO New Forests as a 'case study'

**“EMERGING BIO-PRODUCT MARKETS**

which New Zealand should follow closely; including its recent decision to move into CLT manufacturing (via Timberlink), and especially its decision to hire the former head of innovation of Finnish giant forest products company Stora Enso to guide its entry into emerging bio-products markets.

If the new NZ government is serious about a transformation to a bio-economy using wood fibre, overseas evidence would suggest that direct government subsidies (not loans) to get any of these sometimes massive projects over the line will total hundreds of millions of dollars, or even billions – and not the peppercorn assistance it has made to the sector so far.

Whether or not the governments of 2020-2023 and beyond will be up to it will be interesting indeed.

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# Global heavyweight keeps up supplies of sustainably-managed forest products

## Nine sawmills in Europe and facilities in all main Australian centres

WHILE domestic sawmilling continues to supply the bulk of Australia's timber needs, Europe has for centuries been a key part of the supply to this country.

The forestry sector has clearly been affected by the summer bushfires, and there are increasing concerns about the long-term timber supply implications.

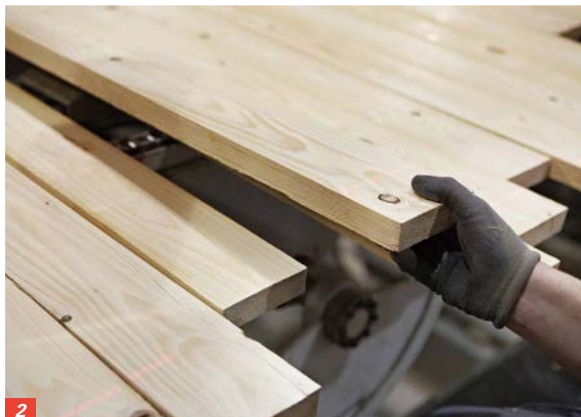
On top of this, Australia is now facing the uncertainty that Covid-19 brings to the economy and to the industry.

Fortunately, Australia has access to the wide range of global supply options that are constantly providing the domestic market with high-quality wood from sustainably-managed forests.

"We have partnered with Australian building material retailers and merchants, frame and truss manufacturers and construction companies for several decades," says Darrin Wheeler, Stora Enso sales director in Australia.

"In my 20 years with Stora Enso, I believe we have done this in a very stable and responsible way and will continue to do so into the future," he said.

"Our range of sawmills in nine European countries and facilities in all main Australian population centres provide a uniquely strong supply base and great competitive access



1/ Proud heritage... Stora Enso's Sunila Mill at Kotka in southern Finland.

2/ MGP10 Baltic pine ... timber products arriving into Australia are of high quality and from well-managed forests.

European forests are managed to satisfy strict forest laws to ensure their future health and productivity while at the same time protecting biodiversity.

"This means that the timber products arriving into Australia are of high quality and from well-managed forests," Darrin Wheeler said. "And 100% of our wood comes from sustainable and fully traceable sources."

the development of products and technologies based on renewable materials.

The company has its

manufacturing base in Europe, a continent of about 180 million ha of forest, corresponding to 45% of the land area. The net annual increment from European forests is more than 700 million cub m, with harvesting consistently at the level of two-thirds of the annual growth increment, ensuring that the amount of wood available is continuously increasing.

**“GOOD STOCK VOLUMES IN AUSTRALIAN WAREHOUSES**

to serve our key customers across the country.

"We have good stock volumes in all warehouses, with a full pipeline of product always in production. Our sawmills have the capacity to ramp up if indeed that need is required."

Stora Enso is one of the world's largest users of wood and last year delivered 36.3 million cub m of wood to its mills. This equates to about 50% more than Australia processes domestically.

The Stockholm-based company has a proud heritage in forestry and timber and is committed to

Stora Enso is providing the Australian market with the full range of structural timbers and is further developing engineered wood products, all graded to Australian standards.

"We've also been supplying mass timber products, such as CLT, to some of the landmark tall wooden buildings in Australia," Mr Wheeler said. "We're well positioned to continue to provide the Australian market with this renewable raw material."

He says along with other wholesalers and importers, Stora Enso Australia is totally focused on customers' needs.

Stora Enso has some 25,000 employees in more than 30 countries and is publicly listed on the Helsinki and Stockholm stock exchanges.



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# Tasmania webinar guides on certification

CONSUMERS and professionals want to be assured that the timber products they specify or purchase are from responsibly and sustainably managed forests.

But with multiple certification schemes in Australia, it's hard to know what the best environmental choice is.

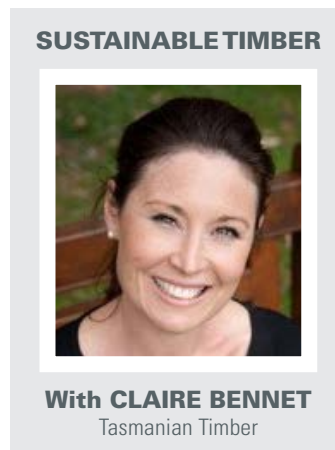
Tasmanian Timber and Responsible Wood are co-hosting a webinar series, starting on September 23 at 1 pm, to provide architects, designers and specifiers with the knowledge needed to confidently specify a local and sustainable material that will withstand the test of time.

First and foremost, consumers must select timber that holds forest certification that shows

the products are from sustainably-managed forest. The two largest internationally recognised forest certification schemes are PEFC and FSC.

But there is a second important consideration ... to purchase local timber. When you buy local, the timber is from a nearby forest and not transported across the world, therefore creating a smaller carbon footprint. It is also being managed in accordance with local values. Choosing timber that carries the Responsible Wood brand is the best choice for specifiers and consumers because it incorporates PEFC certification and meets Australian standards.

Tasmanian Timber, which has Responsible Wood certification, has PEFC certification at its core, but



additional checks and balances in the system ensure it meets very high environmental standards. For example, chain-of-custody certification follows a tree harvested in a sustainably managed Tasmanian forest to the mill, into a board and then a finished product. This ensures that the entire supply chain is also meeting the same

high standards.

Chain of custody allows the consumer to track the end product they are purchasing right back to the sustainably managed forest that it has come from. This very high level of rigour combined with world-class forest practices system is held in high regard internationally.

Meeting Australian values also means supporting the local economy. So, when purchasing Tasmanian timber, consumers can be confident they're getting a piece of timber from a local forest that is both certified sustainable and meets Australia's environmental and social values.

To register for the Tasmanian Timber Webinar series click here <https://my.demio.com/ref/q7NvaE3t7YQQltq1>

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# Mazda CX-9: turbo-powered economy

TURBO-charged engines are still at the centre of modern motorcar technology, giving drivers more horsepower and greater efficiency.

But they've been around for a long time. Forced induction dates back to the 1885, when Gottlieb Daimler patented the technique of using a gear-driven pump to force air into an internal combustion engine.

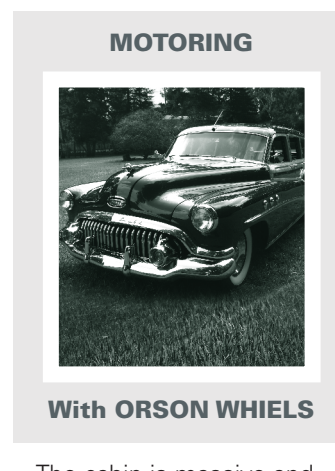
The forced air system also won a war. The British Spitfire of World War 2, an engineering masterpiece, was always more than the sum of its component parts. As well as a cutting edge all-metal monocoque airframe and a wing that was a work of sheer genius, the crucial element that actually took the guns all the way to the enemy was its engine, the super-charged Rolls-Royce Merlin, a 27-litre liquid-cooled V12, producing an initial power output of 1000 hp, which was doubled during the course of the war.

Turbo-chargers today have mostly been the result of

engine downsizing and an attempt by automakers to improve fuel economy across the board. This brings us to the SkyActiv-G 2.5T system, a 2.5-litre 170kW / 420Nm direct-injection turbo engine and the first turbo-charged unit of the series in Mazda's mid-size crossover CX-9 and sedan Mazda 6.

A week on Covid restriction-free city streets and the open road in the black-leathered, 'soul-red crystal' CX-9 SUV tourer showed us just how smooth and powerful the acceleration can be, while still giving outstanding fuel economy. This takes in the CX-9's hefty weight of 2006 kg, which gives a respectful towing capacity of 750 kg unbraked and 2000 kg braked.

The official combined cycle figure for the CX-9 is 9L/100km. The fuel tank is a big one, with 74 litres.



The cabin is massive and the new seat leather is impressive. Other vehicles in this class don't compare to the quality and layout of the interior. With all three rows in use there's 230 litres of boot space; folded this jumps to 810 litres!

As with other Mazdas, the CX-9 is packed with safety gear and scores five ANCAP stars. Along with six airbags, ABS, stability and

traction controls, you get forward and reverse AEB, reverse cross traffic alert, blind-spot monitoring, lane-keep assist, lane-departure warning, forward and rear collision warning, rollover stability, trailer-sway control, driver-fatigue monitoring and traffic-sign recognition. The pedestrian detection also works at night.

Little has changed in CX-9's 2020 appearance, apart from the new 20-in. wheels – and perhaps a touch more grandeur. And an added touch of class ... heated and ventilated seats and heated steering wheel, putting a dent in driving glove sales.

The Mazda CX-9 FWD version is great-looking, comfortable and well-built seven-seater that feels better to drive than any other big SUV near its price –\$64,893. Go zoom-zoom.



1/ Mazda X-9... a touch more grandeur. 2/ A touch of class... black red-trimmed leathered seats and heated steering wheel.

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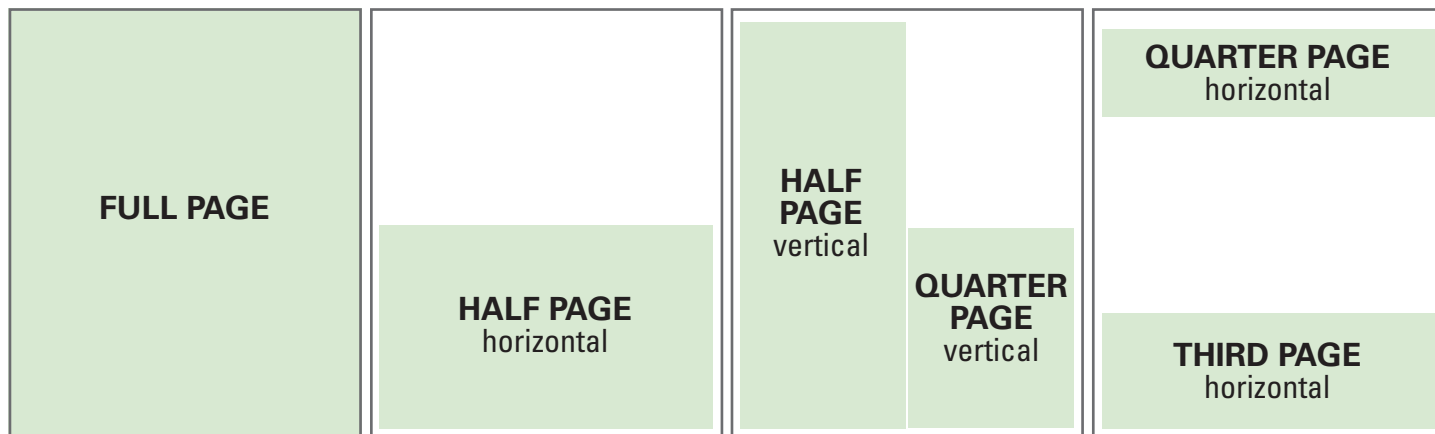
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