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Woolies has safe environment in the bag

MORE and more shoppers are ditching plastic packaging and opting for environmentally-kind alternatives such as naturally recyclable, fibre-based products.

Woolworths will be stocking PEFC-certified Australian-made paper bags in South Australia and the Northern Territory ahead of a progressive roll out over the next 12 months.

Woolworths' paper shopping bags were first launched in June 2020 in response to customer demand for a paper carry bag option.

Woolworths Supermarkets said: "Whilst almost all customers are now bringing their own reusable bags, we



know unplanned shops will present a challenge from time to time.

"Earlier this year we introduced the option of a paper bag, which can be recycled at home, and the feedback from customers has been positive," managing

director Natalie Davis said.

Responsible Wood-certified Detpak will manufacture the bags.

CEO of Detpak parent Detmold Group Alf Ianniello says the bags support a move to a circular economy; they are made from 70% locally-

sourced recycled content.

Responsible Wood CEO Simon Dorries says the move supports sustainable forest management.

"By choosing paper from PEFC-certified fibre, consumers can have confidence that their decisions have not contributed to an unsustainable practice, nor damaged the ecological, social and economic wellbeing of our forests."

Since Woolworths began phasing out single-use plastic bags in 2018, more than six billion bags have been taken out of circulation. Only 15% of customers now purchase a new bag during a transaction when visiting a Woolworth's store.

Gary Hopewell appointed forestry science business manager

AN experienced principal scientist with a demonstrated working history in research, development and extension has been appointed business manager, horticulture and forestry science, Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Gary Hopewell, who

this week celebrates 39 years since he joined the department at the Bollon Forest Station in the Dalby district, then the Department of Forestry.

Skilled in research and development with a Master's degree in wood science from the University of Melbourne,



Gary Hopewell... specialist in wood ID and wood anatomy.

Mr Hopewell was principal scientist, process and product

development at the Salisbury/Dutton Park research facility from 2018 to 2020 where he specialised in timber identification, wood anatomy and forensic investigations, process improvement, lean methodologies, product prototype development and testing, technical editing.



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EWPs remain 'fitness solution' to built environment, says new EWPAA chief

Gavin Matthew's appointment draws on experience in softwood manufacturing

GIVEN the increased use of engineered wood product solutions in new buildings across Australia, and indeed the world, including mid-rise and commercial construction, manufacturing EWPs remains an exciting and innovative sector into 2021 and beyond, says the newly-appointed CEO of the Engineered Wood Products Association of Australasia.

Gavin Matthew, an experienced senior policy manager and a veteran staff member of the Australian Forest Products Association and manager of AFPA's softwood manufacturing chamber, leaves AFPA to take up his new position in mid January.

“ENGINEERED WOOD AN EXCITING AND INNOVATIVE SECTOR

“Gavin has been an invaluable part of AFPA for its whole 10 years, leading policy work in first the pulp and paper chamber and in the last several years in the softwood manufacturing chamber,” CEO Ross Hampton said.

“He also delivered important policy work in climate change, energy and trade, and under his leadership the softwood manufacturing chamber has moved progressively into extremely significant work which will help build the sector for years to come,” Mr Hampton said.

The range of innovative products manufactured and merchandised by

EWPAA members includes interior, exterior and marine plywood products, as well as a wide range of modern engineered wood products. This encompasses structural plywoods used for formwork, residential and commercial flooring, wind and earthquake bracing, and feature cladding and includes LVL, particleboard, MDF, hardboard, CLT and I-beam products used in both commercial and residential structures.

EWPAA supports members throughout Australia and New Zealand and in Fiji and Papua New Guinea, from its Brisbane-based office and testing laboratory in the northern suburb of Virginia.

Mr Matthew fills the position of Dave Gover who has taken on the role of business development manager with AKD, based in Queensland.

Speaking after his appointment, Gavin Matthew said the Australasian wood products industry had long promoted the supply of healthy, sustainable and safe wood products through responsible sourcing programs, Australian product standards and independent product certification.

Over many years, EWPAA had conducted third-party certification programs much valued by industry which blended technical expertise with rigorous certification to ensure engineered wood products were 'fit for purpose' in the built environment.

“An established fact, renewable wood products are



Gavin Matthew... promoting healthy, sustainable and safe wood products.

good for the environment,” Mr Matthew said.

“There are many ways occupants of buildings can be better connected with nature.

Wood is a natural material to which people are innately attracted. Its natural grain pattern and variation in colour can provide subtle sensory variety and can be relatively easily formed into curved shapes through lamination, fabrication, machining, or a combination of these processes.”

He said wood also provided physiological benefits to occupants and improved productivity and air quality.

“Wood products have very low carbon footprints relative to other building materials and provide an immediate advantage in reducing embodied carbon,” he said.

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Timber importers ready to plug gaps as future supply challenges building sector

ATIF seeks to identify international softwood and hardwood markets

AS long as Covid continues to impact on the ability of businesses to travel to develop and interrogate often complex supply chains, 2021 looks like continuing the challenges of last year for timber wholesalers and importers.

General manager of the Australian Timber Importers Federation John Halkett says importers recognise that the building and construction industries are relying on them to plug supply gaps – particularly in the face of a recognition that the 2019-2020 summer bushfires not only destroyed forward timber supplies, but further reduced



1/ Changes in metropolitan building preferences... from detached housing to apartments.
2/ John Halkett... increased demand for imported engineered wood products.

the already muted interest in investment in long-run softwood plantations.

supply of both softwood and hardwood timber products into the Australian market," Mr Halkett said.

"Future supply-side questions will include where to get additional supplies of MGP10 structural softwoods; where to source future supplies of engineered wood products and building components; and where to source high-quality hardwoods."

At a national level, ATIF sees merit in seeking to identify future international softwood and hardwood supplies, and to identify current impediments to the importation of timber products.

Mr Halkett said future policy and research efforts should include work on the acceptance and/or harmonisation of international building codes and standards, grades and sizes and other impediments, directed at improving the opportunities to expand softwood and hardwood timber imports.



"This in addition to the continuing equivocation on the part of state governments related to ongoing native hardwood supplies," Mr Halkett said.

"So, some significant supply-side issues will need to be tackled in 2021."

Mr Halkett suggested that the predicted post-Covid building and construction contraction has not eventuated, and this is further exacerbating supply side pressures.

He said adding to this were the changes in metropolitan building preferences from detached housing to apartments, which had increased the demand for imported engineered wood products.

"Importers will have a job to do in 2021 to assist to develop new international sources of

“ POST-COVID SUPPLY ISSUES NEED TO BE TACKLED DURING 2021

Mr Halkett said the ATIF board would be seeking to advance these issues via a meeting with Senator Jonathon Duniham, assistant minister responsible for forestry, when Covid restrictions permitted.

ATIF will also seek to provide additional advice to Forest and Wood Products Australia as part of the review of FWPA strategic direction.

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Federal election, the China log ban and resource issues on the agenda for 2021

Good riddance to the year of zoom and gloom, heartache and harassment

JIM BOWDEN

FIT for duty under the cloud of Covid-19, the timber and forestry industry is confronting a range of hot issues in the infancy of 2021.

Between the pandemic, the impact of the Black Summer bushfires and the China trade bans, 2020 has been a year like no other.

In no order of preference, the industry is mobilising responses to:

• FEDERAL ELECTION

A general election is expected this year to capitalise on Scott Morrison's success at dealing with the coronavirus. MPs on both sides of politics believe the PM will call the poll early to take advantage of his popularity over Labor leader Anthony Albanese.

In a lead-up, AFPA,

“POLICY PUSH AS FEDERAL POLL LOOMS



Scott Morrison... a run for re-election in 2021?

• CHINA LOG BAN

Just before Christmas, Chinese customs suspended the import of logs from Victoria, Queensland, Tasmania and South Australia then extended this to NSW and

celebrating its 10th year in 2021, will further emphasise to federal policy makers that the industry is part of the essential building, food and groceries supply chain. It will seek responses in Canberra to the Andrews Labor government's determination to end native forestry by 2030. Also, in May the Federal Court ruling in Victoria put a cloud over RFAs. This is being appealed and Nationals Senator Bridget McKenzie has tabled legislation which should remove any uncertainty with the bill to be debated when parliament

resumes in February.

Ahead of a federal election, AFPA would press for a higher profile in the federal cabinet, asserting that industry should have its own 'exclusive' Minister for Forests. A \$22 billion business that overtakes agriculture and fisheries when each is compared singularly deserves this.

A replacement for AFPA senior policy maker Gavin Matthew is on the New Year agenda this month following his appointment as CEO of EWPA.

Western Australia. AFPA will continued discussions with Australian governments on the impact across the forest industries supply chain. There will be calls for short and long-term assistance for affected workers and businesses and to avoid further widespread job losses and mill closures.

The federal government' has assured it will help find alternative markets for those exports and has acknowledged the need for

Cont P 5



Wildlife Retreat at Taronga, NSW

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From P 5

new domestic manufacturing opportunities.

Timber Queensland says the China log ban has provided an opportunity for the state government to move beyond its rhetoric and facilitate an investment environment that can truly support downstream wood processing and timber manufacturing. TQ

recognises that the hardwood plantation program was unsuccessful, and is pressing the government "to work on a refreshed resource security arrangement post the 2024 SEQFA deadline, drawing on state forests, other Crown land and private native forest resources over the longer-term.

However, that still leaves low-value pulp logs out in the cold, with authorities at the port of Portland keen to clear a log jam they don't need. As the year progresses, some of these logs might be destined for MDF manufacture in Victoria or NSW.

The hardwood industry already processes around 280,000 cub m of sawlog each year that is turned into high-value products such as decking, furniture and structural beams and posts. With timber demand rising, there is plenty of room for growth.

But it is also recognised that log exports can play an important role in generating export income and providing a market for wood that would otherwise not be suitable for domestic processing.

• THE RESOURCE



Logs stacked at the port of Portland... nowhere to go.

The inclusion of \$15 million in freight support for burnt timber, as part of the National Bushfire Industry Recovery Package, was welcomed in 2020, but more is needed to help the industry recover.

More than two million tonnes of timber has been salvaged, hauled and processed from bushfire-affected plantations in NSW. This massive achievement represents 46,700 truckloads of logs and a significant boost for communities recovering from the Black Summer fires.

“SERIOUS SUPPLY ISSUES EMERGE FROM BUSHFIRES

But the industry and governments this year must address the 'interference' of the Environmental Protection Authority where site-specific rules for selective harvesting and lengthy dithering on what is considered environmental risk frustrates salvaging.

This year will see serious supply issues emerging from the 2019-20 bushfire-affected landscape, notably in relation to structural softwoods and

engineered wood products. Timber importers will refresh dialogue in 2021 with a wide range of current and prospective suppliers into the Australian market, including Canada and Russia.

The continuing vagaries around ongoing supplies of native hardwood timber in Victoria and elsewhere has also been picked up by suppliers of temperate hardwoods and by new potential suppliers of hardwood timber products from South America and southeast Asia.

• VICTORIA

The new Labor minister responsible for forestry in Victoria starts the New Year under a barrage of attacks from the CFMEU with the powerful union's national secretary (manufacturing) Michael O'Connor calling on Mary-Anne Thomas to fix the mess she has inherited from her government's "hopeless management of the timber industry and atrocious plan to destroy timber jobs and communities".

"Let's welcome her to the job by generating emails to her and her colleagues about the immediate threats to the livelihoods of thousands

of workers, their families and communities to ensure this issue is at the front of her mind from Day 1," O'Connor stormed.

• TASMANIA

The Tasmanian Forest Products Association this month cautioned against misinterpreting the agreement between Sustainable Timber Tasmania and the Bob Brown

Foundation, pending the outcome of the Federal Court case.

"This is simply a case of STT voluntarily agreeing to a further moratorium in order to avoid costly court action for all parties," says TFPA CEO Nick Steel.

"Anyone trying to claim this as some sort of "win" is completely wrong, and is engaging in deceptive spin," he says.

"In regards to the swift parrot, the causes of a decline in populations are complex and include nest predation by sugar gliders, collision mortality, competition from other bird species, climate variability and change, and illegal wildlife capture and trading, as well as habitat loss."

A trial funded by the Tasmanian government has been successfully completed, and has resulted in a \$700,000 federal government investment in work over the next three years to trap sugar gliders in nesting boxes to effectively create safe breeding zones for the parrot.

Meanwhile Dr No to the Forest Industry former

Cont P 14

MARCH

15-18: DANA New Zealand Forest Industry Status and Outlook Conference and Field Trip – Napier Conference Centre, Marine Parade, Napier, New Zealand. For further information visit www.danaevents.co.nz/2021napier/ or contact Conference Organiser Julie Bell admin@dana.co.nz

19: Doing Timber Business in Queensland – Northern Suburbs Bowls Club 175 Edinburgh Castle Rd, Wavell Heights, QLD. Join QLD's full industry supply chain at a one day symposium followed by barefoot bowls & BBQ networking. For more information visit www.timberqueensland.com.au/

events or email admin@timberqueensland.com.au

JUNE

16-18: TABMA National Conference – Oaks Cypress Lakes Resort, Hunter Valley, NSW. Contact Alicia Oelkers at alicia@tabma.com.au

JULY

10: Victorian & Tasmanian Hardware Awards – Showtime Events Centre, Melbourne, VIC. 6:30pm-11:30pm. Contact Natalie Scott at n.scott@hardwareaustralia.com.au

17: Queensland Hardware Industry Awards – Rydges South Bank, Brisbane, QLD. 6:30pm-11:30pm. Contact Natalie Scott at n.scott@hardwareaustralia.com.au

AUGUST

13: South Australian Hardware Industry Awards – Stamford Grand, Glenelg, SA. 6:30-11:30pm. Contact Natalie Scott at n.scott@hardwareaustralia.com.au

SEPTEMBER

4: TABMA QLD Awards Dinner – Rydges South Bank, Brisbane, QLD. 6.00pm start. Contact Alicia Oelkers at alicia@tabma.com.au

10: New South Wales Hardware Legends and Industry Awards – Doltone House Darling Island, Sydney, NSW. 12:00pm – 4:30pm. Contact Natalie Scott at n.scott@hardwareaustralia.com.au

17: Western Australia Industry Awards –

Beaumont on the Point, Perth, WA. 12:00pm – 3:30pm. Contact Natalie Scott at n.scott@hardwareaustralia.com.au

OCTOBER

TBA: TABMA NSW Awards Dinner – Sydney, NSW. Contact Alicia Oelkers at alicia@tabma.com.au

11-14: IFA/AFG national conference 'Your Forests, Our Future' – Country Club Tasmania, Launceston, TAS, Australia. Open to forest scientists, forestry professionals and forest growers. Call for abstracts and sponsorship opportunities will be released in coming months. Contact Institute of Foresters of Australia. Visit www.forestry.org.au or phone (03) 9695 8940.

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.

JANUARY 2021

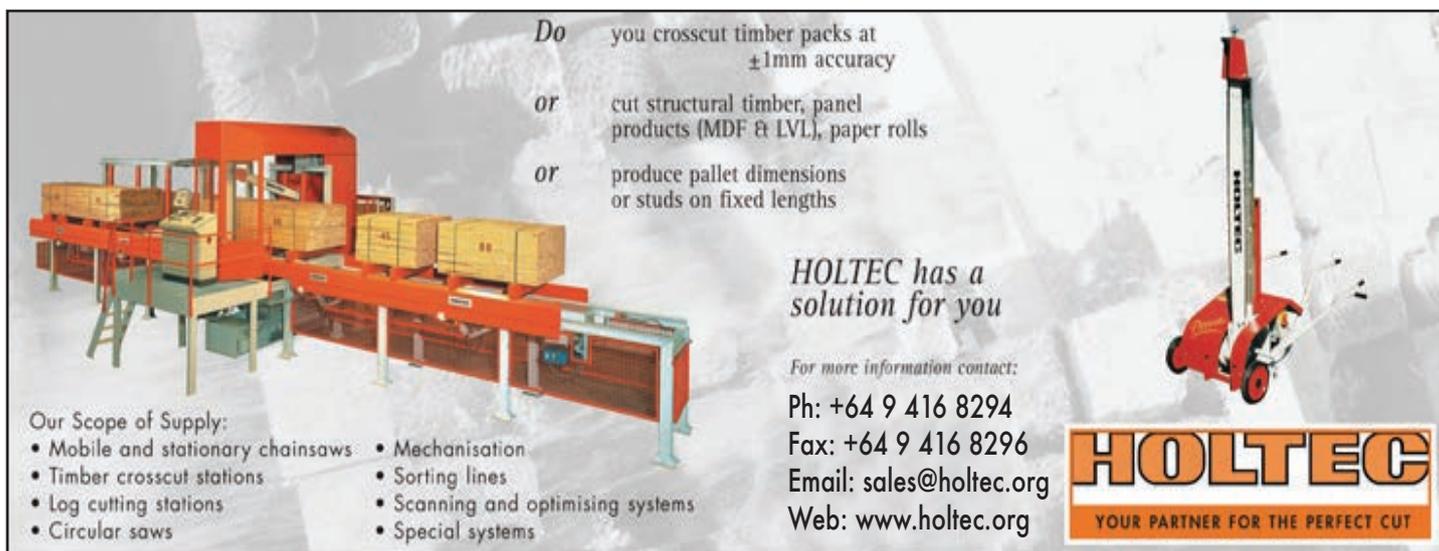
11-14 : World Conference on Timber Engineering (WCTE Santiago 2020) – Santiago, Chile. Topics include Sustainable Forests for timber production; wood products, connections: timber engineering' timber architecture; building and environmental impacts; policies, education and future trends.

For more information see: www.wcte2021.com/

25-29 : B C Wood Global Buyers Mission – VIRTUAL EVENT. Live virtual event to meet and interact with pre-qualified international buyers from around the world. The event to find new sources of high quality, competitively priced Canadian wood products, while

letting you reconnect with current suppliers. For more information go to: <https://bcwood.com/events/global-buyers-mission/>

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



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NZ forest industry sector starts 2021 in good heart after multi-week lock-down

Most sawmills starting off with prospects of their best year in a decade

DENNIS NEILSON

WE have previously summarised an almost miraculous recovery of the sector from a total multi-week Covid-induced shut down in Q1 and Q2 2020.

As New Zealand forest harvesting and sawmilling operators filter back after their Christmas break featuring glorious weather, the industry is hoping for an equally 'glorious' chain of events through 2021.

And 100% community Covid-free Kiwis still wake up and pinch themselves every day as they read about the tragic pandemic illness and



1/ Forest owners in New Zealand got a New Year's surprise with a \$5-\$6 cub m jump in the NZ dollar at 'wharf gate' prices for China log exports.

2/ Right man for the right job... new NZ Minister for Forests Stuart Nash holds a Masters Degree in Forestry.



death on an industrial scale in the US, UK and much of Europe – and even on the 'eggshell' vulnerability of Australian states, as they work in almost global isolation without a Covid-care in the world – but with an expert stating just this week that New Zealand is at its highest risk of an incoming traveller infection breakout at any time.

On the log export front, forest owners got a New Year's surprise with a \$5-6 cub m jump in the NZ dollar at 'wharf gate' prices for China log exports.

No change was expected.

“THE BAN ON AUSSIE PINE LOGS IS NOT HURTING THE NZ CAUSE

Chinese softwood log stocks have fallen from a huge 5 million cub m in April 2020, to 3.5 million cub m in July and to a super-low 2.8 million cub m at year end – with Chinese sawmills consuming around 3500-4000 truck-loads of softwood logs a day.

The continuing ban on Australian pine log imports is not hurting the NZ cause.

Most NZ sawmills are starting off with prospects of their best year in more than a decade – perhaps in two.

Record housing starts should be bolstered by proliferate government spending on building 'state' houses in 2021, and all pundits are again predicting record house price increases – as the FOMO (fear of missing out) effect forces even those who can't afford it to over-extend themselves to get onto the housing ladder. Super low interest rates are helping.

Red Stag's huge new CLT plant at Rotorua will be commissioned in early 2021. It will be somewhat protected from competition by NZ standards requiring CLT laminars to be full penetration H1.2 boron treated.

High comparative softwood pulp prices versus very low hardwood pulp prices (which plummeted to new lows from late-2018 to late-2019 and still remain depressed), have boosted the New Zealand kraft and mechanical pulp industry, even while tanking hardwood pulp prices have severely

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Cont P 9



Red Stag's huge new CLT plant at Rotorua will be commissioned in early 2021.

From P 8

curtailed Australian eucalyptus woodchip exports to North Asia (especially to Japan), and even to booming China pulp mills as they sought cheaper imports.

The NZ Ministry of Primary Industries has almost sobered up after its madcap keystone cops ride of keeping up with the drunken sailor's lurches to the right and then to the left by the now almost forgotten Minister of Forests from 2017 to 2020. Instead, it can now look forward to the much more measured policies and strategies of the new minister, Stuart Nash, himself with a Masters Degree in Forestry.

MPI has been engaging all numbers of international consultants to give it advice on how to transform much of the sector directly from the 19th and into to the 21st century.

Some advice has been positively bizarre, but hopefully a new MPI contract with respected Finnish consulting firm Indufor (with major offices in Auckland and Melbourne) will produce recommendations that will keep the government's feet firmly on the ground.

The Indufor brief includes summarising what pre-competitive steps have been undertaken by government – what has worked/what has not; the obstacles faced by New Zealand exporters in key markets; and, what additional pre-competitive activities

could be done to support exporters in key markets.

While that brief is the 'hardy annual' canvassed by a dozen consultants advising numerous ministers over the last 20 years (including by DANA in 2005 and nothing has changed since then!) the government is looking for some serious guidance this time.

“THE NZ GOVERNMENT IS LOOKING FOR SOME SERIOUS GUIDANCE

A DANA approach would get this sorted in a heartbeat: just plot/plan/subsidise the planting of one million new land (farm) hectares in radiata pine trees (only) immediately, then go to the beach, and when that extra lot is ready to harvest, the industry will sort it all out itself. It always has and always will do.

DANA's mid-March Napier conference on the sector outlook, and field trip to several forests and mills and a port, will also directly address many of these issues. Visit danaevents/co.nz/

As a co-publisher of Timber&Forestry enews, I am happy to say we are with this great forest industry all the way, in good and difficult times. You have our support ... and best wishes for a busy, fruitful and interesting 12 months ahead.



Smoke is smoke? Not so, say some experts

INHALING wildfire smoke can be harmful, but smoke from unintended wildfires may be worse than smoke from prescribed burns, according to a new study.

That means the health risks from wildfires might be prevented by implementing prescribed burns.

“When comparing how smoke from wildfires and prescribed burns affected children, we saw worse effects from the wildfire,” says Dr. Mary Prunicki, who directs air pollution and health research at the Sean N. Parker Centre for Allergy and Asthma Research at Stanford University.

The study team found that children who lived near where a wildfire occurred suffered more severe respiratory and immune effects than those who lived near a prescribed burn.

It is an important comparison because prescribed burns are a crucial tool for reducing wildfire risk. And while support for prescribed burns has increased in recent years as wildfires have worsened, there is still plenty of scepticism from the public about burn safety.

Long-time California forest



Dr Fabienne Reisen... prescribed burns tend to burn for shorter periods and consume less vegetation than wildfires.

activist Craig Thomas says “fire is part of the deal out here.” He mentions that indigenous groups have long employed the practice of prescribed burns, while also lessening wildfire risk.

“But starting in the 20th century, forest managers, trying to protect the forests, suppressed fires, leading to a build up of brush and grasses which became fodder for the record-breaking wildfires in the US and Canada in recent years.

Dr Prunicki says the difference in levels of particulate matter might be due to the control measures

officials use to keep smoke from prescribed burns away from population centres.

“For prescribed burns, officials burn debris slowly, on days with low wind, so the particulate matter can disperse before it reaches population centres,” she said.

Dr Prunicki thinks this research will become even more important as climate change continues to play a role

“STILL PLENTY OF SCEPTICISM ABOUT BURN SAFETY”

in a worsening wildfire season.

“Because of climate change – and our avoidance of prescribed burns – wildfires have increased in size, duration and intensity,” she says.

“And with that comes an increased health risk from smoke. “I don’t think people are aware of how much it’s impacting our health.”

Dr Fabienne Reisen, who studies the chemistry of smoke at CSIRO, notes that prescribed burns also tend to burn for shorter periods and consume less vegetation than wildfires.

“You don’t burn as much and you don’t burn as intensively,” she says

Chemical Transport Models and CSIRO’s own AQFx smoke forecasting system rely on emission factors to seed their simulations and to ensure they can adapt to the ever changing conditions during fires and planned burns.

Despite the ferocity of flaming combustion, it is relatively short lived when compared to the smouldering of logs which may continue for an extended period after the initial fire front has been contained.



From the Team at Lonza Wood Protection Oceania we would like to thank you for your support over the last 12 months, and look forward to your ongoing support in the year ahead.

Wishing you and your families a safe and enjoyable Christmas and New Year Holiday.



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Sustainable wood will ‘build back better’

THE timber and forestry sector may emerge from the Covid-19 crisis with higher social and operational standards and social measures than before, says a confident Jason Ross, who manages Responsible Wood’s marketing and communications program.

“What is clear is that the sustainable wood sector must be part of the global strategy to ‘build back better,’” he said.

“The challenge for forestry businesses is to implement sustainable practices, certification schemes and so far as practicable, invest in innovation and digitisation.”

Responsible Wood manages the Australian standard for Sustainable Forest Management and is Australia’s largest forest certification scheme.

In 2021, Responsible Wood



Jason Ross... the challenge for forestry businesses is to implement sustainable practices.

will publish the new trans-Tasman sustainable forest management standard (AS / NZS 4708) which will, for the first time, provide common benchmarks for certified Australian and New Zealand forests.

In addition, Responsible Wood is endorsed by PEFC, the world’s largest forest



certification authority.

“And it is through involvement with global authorities such as PEFC where the forest products industry can lead the world in reducing poverty and reverse risks to sustainable forestry,” Mr Ross said.

“Countries need to prioritise providing financial support to small-to-medium sized forest enterprises; they can

work to integrate smallholders, communities and forest enterprise in more coordinated and sustainable supply chains.”

Mr Ross said as consumers in the global community, we need to be aware of the availability of sustainable wood

products and commit to responsible consumption, particularly at a time when the world is focused on promoting a circular economy and climate change mitigation in a post-Covid-19 environment.

For more information about the Australian standard for Sustainable Forest Management or forest certification more generally, visit responsiblewood.org.au



Expression of Interest Supply of biomass to Hunter Energy



Hunter Energy is seeking potential biomass residue suppliers to enter into a non-binding Expression of Interest to supply the Redbank Power Station, near Singleton in the NSW Hunter Valley with biomass after the power station is recommissioned from mid-2021.

Biomass can be:

- Sawmill and wood processing residues
- Forest residues from harvesting and thinning
- End-of-life, industrial and other wood waste streams

Prospective suppliers should be able to supply a minimum of 2000 tonnes a year, and should be located within a 400 km radius of Singleton.



For further information contact: **Matt Corbett** via email: mcorbett@rongbuk.com.au or mob: 0434 632 533



Chins up and chests out ... and every success for the months ahead in 2021

... and it's great to be working and living in green plantations again

THANKS to Annastacia Palaszczuk, I was (just) able to travel to Brisby over the Christmas break to see my sister and niece.

Unfortunately for many others they weren't able to get across the border before it was slammed shut again because of the Northern Beaches Covid cluster outbreak in NSW.

My God ... it sounds like we are living in a POW escape movie!

I am so sorry for the many thousands who couldn't catch up with family and friends in Queensland over Christmas, or had to scuttle back across the border quick-smart before the welcome mat was unceremoniously withdrawn (again). Sometimes life seems so unfair.

But lucky me, I made it back into NSW with a couple of days to spare. I hadn't seen my sister and niece for more than a year now. Wow, how little kids grow! My niece is now a real little girl, and it was nice to be called Auntie Cheryl.

Thankfully, this was ahead

“OPTIMISTIC THAT WE AGAIN MEET FACE TO FACE AT INDUSTRY EVENTS



1/ Getting across the border into Queensland – and back again... like living in a prison camp.



2/ Brisbane a great place to visit... lots of socialising outdoors, hot and sticky, especially with masks, but virus free.



A real drain on emotions... saving much of last year salvaging blackened, fire-killed trees.

of Greater Brisbane's three-day lockdown while contact tracers worked to ensure the UK variant of Covid-19 was not circulating in the community.

Brisbane is a great place to visit even if I had to keep the motor running and one eye on the border. Lots of socialising outdoors in cafes and restaurants was had. It was hot and sticky, especially with masks, but virus free!

I was able to catch up with our editor Jim Bowden, but only briefly. Always pleasant to see Jim. His unbounded enthusiasm and love of life

TRUNK LINES



With CHERYL FORREST

is infectious. He was on about ideas for a bigger and better enews in 2021 – so stay tuned. Also expect to see him spring out of the box after the numerous lockdowns – hobnobbing with industry leaders in Parliament House in Canberra and at workplaces talking to the real people in the industry. Will any of that be possible before the vaccine arrives, I wonder?

But as always, all good things come to an end, and I am now back to reality in Tumut, but looking forward to this year that just has to be better than 2020. I will be

keen to be working in living green plantations again after spending much of last year salvaging blackened, fire-killed trees – a real drain on emotions.

Being an eternal optimist, I am also looking forward to be able to catch up again with others in the industry at local events, field days and some get-togethers further afield, such as AUStimber that I am assuming will be on at Traralgon in Victoria this November – coronavirus and vaccines willing.

So, let's all start off with positive thoughts this year. They say that what doesn't kill you makes you stronger, so chin up and chest out, and every success for the year ahead.

This is my first column for the year and I am pleased to report that I have been kept on the books, even if the pay is lousy, so I will look forward to catching up with you again next month – and thereafter. Best wishes for 2021.

Cheryl

The MARKET Leader...



Komatsu 875 & 895

Komatsu Forest have maintained a very strong market position with their two most popular forwarders being the Komatsu 875 (16 tonne) which really compliments the 895 (20 tonne).

These two current models have been further refined to meet expectations and to cover all the contractors' extraction requirements with the latest developments in these key areas.

- New transmission system for greater traction and control.
- Improved crane performance with a large bunk area.
- Introducing Maxifleet to provide the ultimate service and production tool.
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The latest Komatsu forwarders have been taken to another level in lifting the overall standards for forwarding which make them the best in their class.

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From P 6

Greens Leader Senator Bob Brown was arrested in Tasmania's northeast highland forests before Christmas, 24 hours after his first arrest for stopping logging of swift parrot habitat.

In a significant act of defiance, Brown was arrested with two fellow forest defenders Bob Brown Foundation campaign manager Jenny Weber and retired organic gardener Kevin Vaughan.

Brown was released on bail to appear in Hobart's Magistrates court on March 31.

• **WOOD PROMOTION**

FWPA has commissioned an Independent Performance Review, to determine what the industry service company is doing well and areas for improvement. Direct feedback from stakeholders is being sought in 2021 through an independent consultancy. While the review is a requirement of a statutory funding agreement with the federal government, it will also offer useful insights to help guide FWPA's future direction.

• **HOUSING**

Residential construction companies buoyed by government assistance during Covid-19 will face severe cash flow problems in 2021 once schemes are



Burnt logs if harvested quickly provide good quality lumber and plywood. The longer the harvest is delayed the less moisture they will have, making it harder to recover the most value out of the fibre.

wound back. But government initiatives will result in most residential builders getting through to the end of the year, boosted by an unprecedented spike in activity.

GDP figures show HomeBuilder is already moving the economy forward. Compared with October 2019 figures, the number of loans for new home construction has expended by 82.8%.

The announcement around the extension to HomeBuilder represents a positive development; new home building and major home renovations work can look forward to a steady

“HOUSING A BRIGHT SPOT FOR INDUSTRY

pipeline into 2022.

HomeBuilder is not the only reason for the strength in



Housing on a high... HomeBuilder is moving the economy forward.

new home sales, although it was the trigger for improved market confidence. Low interest rates, house price growth and a change in consumer preferences away from apartment style living, have all seen demand for detached housing rise.

Many households have diverted their expenditure from travel and entertainment towards housing, including renovating their home. The strength of new home sales is a positive sign that home building will support the broader economy as we enter 2021.

• **COVID**

The wood sector may emerge from the Covid crisis with higher social and operational standards and social measures than before. Countries must prioritise providing financial support to small and medium forest enterprises, which require cash transfers and subsidies to stay afloat.

Forestry businesses need

to advance the implementation of sustainable practices, certification schemes and, as far as possible, invest in innovation and digitisation.

On the cover: The sun rises over a section of the Sugar Pine Walk in the Bago state forest between Tumbarumba and Batlow in NSW. Photo: Robyn MacRae

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Environmental benefits from briquettes

Pentarch plant to compress and package low-value wood residues

THE planned Pentarch Forestry briquette plant at the Eden export facility will add value to the wood by-products and residues generated at the site.

The briquette plant will compress and package low-value wood residues from processing and produce around 8000 tonnes a year of high-quality briquettes for domestic consumption. Branded as FIREBRIOS, the product is planned to be rolled out in mid-2021.

The briquette plant, developed at the Allied Natural Wood Exports Eden site, the southernmost deep-water harbour in NSW, will complement the new multi-million dollar timber processing and optimisation hub.

FIREBRIOS, made from



1/ Pentarch Forestry plant will process and produce 8000 tonnes of briquettes a year for domestic consumption.

2/ Paul Heubner... a multitude of positive environmental outcomes.



PEFC certified timber, burn hot and clean due to their low moisture content and are a convenient supplement or alternative to firewood.

Pentarch Forestry CEO Paul Heubner said the development of the briquette plant would support economic growth and

improve the environmental sustainability of the Eden operation.

"The value-added investment within the briquette plant will lead to less waste, better environmental outcomes, and a more sustainable commercial

operation," Mr Heubner said.

"Developments such as these are examples of how renewable, sustainable forestry has a multitude of positive environmental outcomes, a fact not lost on decision makers."

He said Pentarch Forestry was thankful for the support of the federal and NSW governments and the Bega Valley Shire Council.

"As we continue to invest in the region, employment opportunities will increase - helping to retain and grow skills and people in the area, while delivering years of socio-economic benefits to the region," Mr Heubner said.

The briquette plant is expected to be operational by April this year.

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Meet the expert craftsman bringing the ‘timber hub’ to life in a Brisbane office

WHEN Timber Queensland and Responsible Wood relocated together at their new offices in Brisbane, an opportunity arose for both to create a ‘timber hub’ – a shared vision to showcase Responsible Wood certified Queensland timber species to visitors and stakeholders.

Working with long-term Timber Queensland members and stakeholders, the timber hub has undergone a transformation with timber materials and supplies for the new fit-out donated by a variety of members.

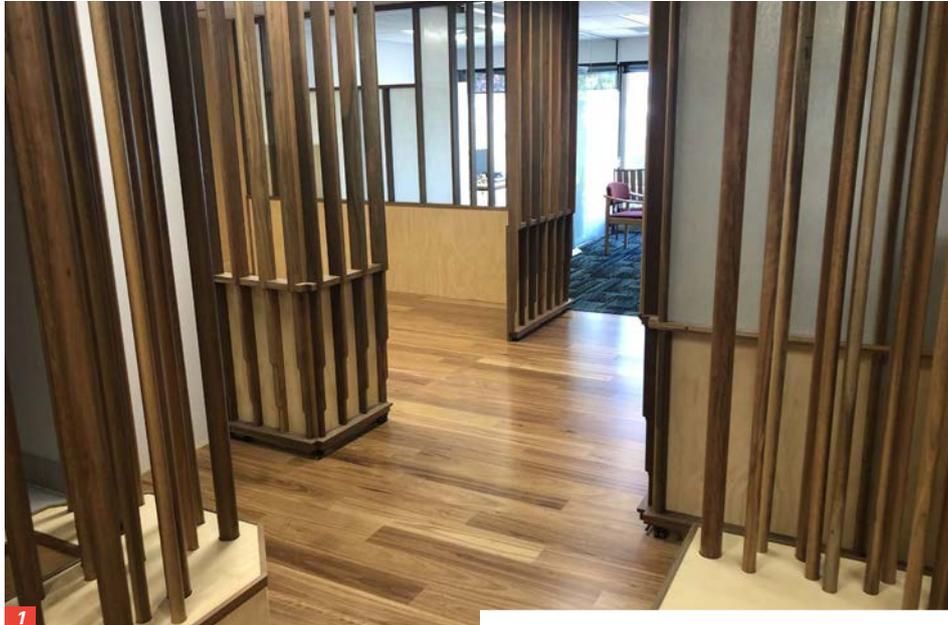
And behind every great transformation is an expert craftsman.

Enter Peter Arcus of Anything Wood, who draws on 45 years of craftsmanship in carpentry and joinery:

“I was thrilled to be commissioned by Timber Queensland to be a part of this broad-spectrum project,” Peter said. “It was not without its fair share of construction issues but sorting these and getting results satisfactory to all involved is always for me a powerful motivator. And all the while keeping within budget.”

A native New Zealander, Peter runs his own timber joinery operation in Brisbane

“OFFICIAL OPENING IN MARCH



1/ A timber ‘forest’... a feature in the foyer at Timber House.

2/ Sharing a vision... Peter Arcus and Mick Stephens at the ‘timber hub’ in Brisbane.

and has also spent time working on Norfolk Island as manager of the local sawmill and timber cabinetry business.

With a passion for joinery and music, Peter’s company Anything Wood specialises in delivering bespoke timber carpentry and joinery services.

He installed the pre-fabricated walls as well as other on-site detailing, including timber doors and cladding, bringing the original vision for Timber Queensland developed by Mark Hogan from Architectus to life.

Individual offices, common and break areas and the foyer have been framed with a variety of timbers and hardwood upright dowels – a deliberate emphasis on ‘biomorphism’ where wood is used to reflect the patterns and shapes as seen in nature.

“The concept from day one was to reflect the warm



and wonderful features of wood as well as showcase the variety of commercial timber products and species produced in Queensland,” Timber Queensland CEO Mick Stephens said.

The ‘timber forest’ screens in the foyer were a highlight of the project and a testimony to Peter and his craftsmanship, having put into practice the artistic vision of the concept design.

As the project nears completion, the next phase will be the installation of timber furniture including an exquisite board room table using three Far North Queensland species sourced from Branch95 and produced

by DTM Timber in Maryborough. Mary Valley Timbers from Dagon are also producing a raised meeting table using local eucalyptus hardwood from southeast Queensland.

“As a finishing touch, I’d also like to enhance the office space with a locally crafted timber surfboard

as a well as a fine acoustic guitar made with local wood species,” Mick Stephens said.

“This would provide additional life and

ambience to the office space and would represent the ubiquitous nature of wood in our everyday lives. Many of the great people working in the Queensland timber industry are avid surfers, and at the end of the day who doesn’t like music?”

The offices will be officially opened on March 18 by Queensland Housing Minister Mick de Brenni. This will be followed on March 19 by the Doing Timber Business in Queensland symposium with a linked IFA field trip to Imbil near Gympie in the Wide Bay-Burnett region on March 21 – the UN’s International Day of Forests.

TIP project report confirms viability of a regional native species-based industry

Promising log-to-lumber recovery rates for sustainably-managed totara

MICHAEL SMITH

FURTHER to our recent article on the business case for a sustainably managed farm-totara industry in Northland, New Zealand ... a two-year investigation has confirmed there is enough totara on private and Maori-owned land to sustain a regional industry.

The Northland totara initiative got off the ground in 2014 when a number of groups (previously active in separate projects and research tasks) came together to run several small programs – including a harvesting and sawing trial in 2017.

More partners joined the initiative and eventually a steering group structure was formalised in the shape of the Totara Industry Pilot (TIP) project. The current partners include Tane's Tree Trust (also representing the Northland Totara Working Group), Scion, Taitokerau Maori Forestry Inc. and Te Uru Rakau – along with other government agencies and private landowners.

Elizabeth Dunningham, a qualified project manager with Scion, was appointed by the steering group, and it was agreed that Scion would be the project's fund holder and contracting entity.

The TIP project addressed key uncertainties throughout the supply chain ... with many of the identified risks mitigated via two harvesting and processing trials.

According to the recently released project report, estimates of the total value



1/ Continuous cover forest management principles were successfully applied in the trial harvests.

2/ Processing totara on a commercial scale at Northpine's Waipu sawmill.



to the economy (after 10 years) range from \$5 million p.a. using a basic NZ-only strategy, to a high-value scenario of nearly \$40 million p.a. – depending on harvest rate and product mix.

The targeted mix includes higher-value items such as wall panelling, ceiling sarking, and other interior fit-out and joinery products, as well as furniture, and decorative objects such as carvings.

Timber merchant JSC Timbers was engaged to sell the project timber for a wide

range of interior applications. But there was no requirement to market the product for exterior use, given that long-term field tests on the heartwood of farm-totara have yet to be completed.

According to the project report, JSC is presently marketing farm-totara “as a ‘cut of log’ grade”;

the acceptance of farm-totara. Potential North Island customers were more receptive, whereas South Island prospects were concerned about “cutting down native trees,” so more information is needed to make an informed decision”.

The project report highlighted a number of key findings ... most notably that there is sufficient farm-totara in Northland “to sustain a small industry for the first 10 years. There is a greater resource of younger trees (<50-years-old) that will grow over time to merchantable size and add to the available resource.”

The trial harvests demonstrated that continuous-cover forest management and low-impact harvesting principles (via single-tree selection and extraction) were applied successfully to farm-totara stands.

And the report noted that totara can be processed in existing (radiata) sawmills with promising log-to-lumber recovery rates; and successfully kiln-dried on a commercial scale.

(Reference: Totara Industry Pilot project, Final Summary Report, V2.1 August 2020).

• *Next week we conclude our analysis of the TIP project report with a look at remaining gaps, risks and issues – including efforts to more accurately gauge Northland's totara resource.*

“SUCCESSFUL TRIALS ALONG SUPPLY CHAIN”

Horses for courses: Mazda BT-50 is on track

COVID lock-down lifted in Brisbane ... so it's time again to make hay while the sun shines.

As we drove out of 2020 in a Mazda BT-50 XT diesel dual cab it was time to run with the horses ... 197 horses in fact, or 147 kW power, to help a trainer friend shift some hay bales at his Nudgee stables.

Horsepower? Nags used to do a lot of work, pulling wagons, ploughs, discs, and other implements. In the 1780s, Scottish engineer James Watt was looking for a compelling way to market his new invention – a steam engine superior to the then classic Newcomen steam engine.

Many of his prospective customers used horses to power their operation, so Watt came up with a new measurement unit to push the advantage of using his steam engine over horses. Hence ... horse power.

The third-generation Mazda BT-50 3L diesel certainly has power ... and muscle – up to 3.5 tonnes of braked towing.



1

1/ The Mazda BT 50 in ice white... the comfortable ute that looks like a ute and acts like a ute.



2

2/ Hungry horses can't wait... feeding from the Mazda BT50's 1800 mm tray.

The Japanese manufacturer boasts the biggest set of changes in 10 years. Ending a utility partnership with Ford that dates back to the 1970s, Mazda has teamed up with Isuzu, copying the nuts and bolts from the new third-generation D-MAX.

Mazda's new dual-cab range is a carbon copy of the Isuzu in terms of suspension and steering tune and engine and gearbox calibration – an is even built by Isuzu at its Thai production factory.

The BT-50 is a ute that looks like a ute and behaves like a ute with an inline five-cylinder turbo diesel engine – a largest-in-class capacity of 3.2 litres connected to a six-speed automatic and part-time four-wheel-drive system.

Engine outputs are rated at 147 kW of power at 3000

rpm and 470 Nm of torque from 1750 to 2500 rpm.

Mazda is banking on the new ute's exterior design and strong showing of safety, driver assistance and connectivity to persuade buyers. It comes with six airbags, rear-view camera, traction and stability control, rollover mitigation and trailer sway control, front seat belt pretensioners, front disc/rear drum brakes with ABS and emergency brake assist, and a rear diff lock to assist in off-road situations.

There are a few items rivals offer that Mazda doesn't, such as push-button start, heated seats and adaptive cruise headlights, but this doesn't take anything away from the BT-50.

The top-spec model, at around \$57,000

recommended delivered price, includes leather trim, electrically adjusted driver's seat, dual-zone climate control, cruise control, satellite navigation, rain-sensing wipers, 17-inch alloy wheels, and a sports bar in the tub. In addition there's rear parking sensors, autonomous emergency braking and LED headlamps, Android auto and wireless Apple CarPlay via a 7in. or 9 in. touchscreen.

Mazda says these extras as standard and safety technology brings an additional \$3500 in value.

Featuring 4x2 and 4x4 drivetrain, its powerful tow capacity and versatile tray make it perfect for work and leisure. Mazda claims fuel consumption at 10L/100 km or up to 13L/100 km in rough country.

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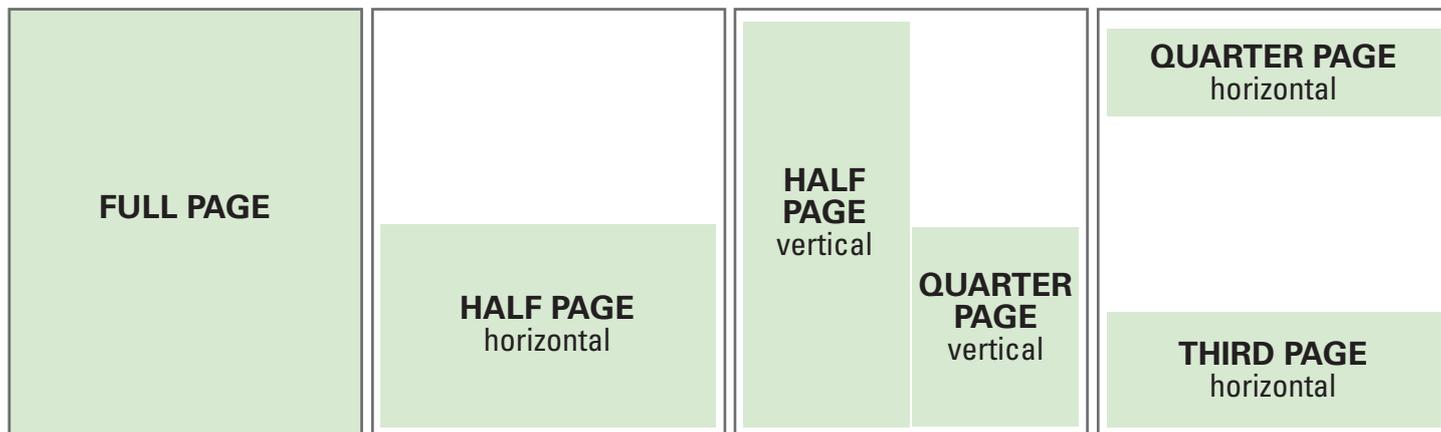
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