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## Women challenging the status quo in plantations

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# TABMA event ‘shaping the future’ as industry un.masks for conference

## Hunter Valley hosts 3 days of inspirational speakers and social events

JIM BOWDEN

HANDSHAKES, smiles of recognition, happy banter among industry stakeholders ... all face to face – and without masks!

TABMA Australia’s inaugural national conference in the NSW Hunter Valley in June will be the 2021 ‘circuit-breaker’ for the forest and timber sector after Covid lockdowns.

The conference at the 125-ha five-star Cypress Lakes Resort at Pokolbin near Cessnock, from June 16 to 18, celebrates TABMA’s 80th year with the theme “Honour our Past, Treasure the Present and Shape the Future”.

A panel of keynote speakers is being confirmed along with video messages from federal and state ministers aligned to the forestry sector.

A gala network dinner will honour industry legends and announce the winner of the Andrew Bone TABMA Member of the Year Shield and Trainee and Apprentice



**Claire Madden... confronting Gen Z.**



**Justin Jones... inspirational speaker.**



**Alicia Oelkers... give me a call..**

Member of the Year Award.

“We will recognise the achievements and contributions of industry icons past and present, while celebrating the wealth of young talent we’ve seen introduced over the last few years,” TABMA Australia CEO David Little said.

“Sessions will focus on the challenges of finding, engaging and developing young talent and address the twin issues of an aging workforce and skill shortages,” he said.

Dinner speakers include

author and social researcher Claire Madden, a leading international voice on Generation Z (also known as zoomers or ‘digital natives’) – the first social generation to have grown up with access to the Internet and portable digital technology from a young age.

“Claire will impart practical skills on how to understand and manage Gen Z,” TABMA membership general manager Alicia Oelkers said.

“Delegates will also be challenged to feel inspired by adventurer and motivational

speaker Justin Jones who has pushed the boundaries of human endurance and undertaken large-scale expeditions over the past 14 years that have captured global acclaim.”

Delegates can enjoy a range of optional activities

on the final day such as hot air balloon rides, golf on an 18-hole championship course and Hunter Valley wine and cheese tours.

Other activities have been crafted for partners of conference delegates.

Conference inquiries and bookings can be directed to Alicia Oelkers, TABMA Australia, on (07) 3456 7065, mobile 0418 449 031 or email [alicia@tabma.com.au](mailto:alicia@tabma.com.au)

Visit [www.tabma.com.au](http://www.tabma.com.au)

• **Industry has changed dramatically, P 4.**



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# Labor urges parliamentary inquiry as timber supply and jobs run out

NSW Labor is calling for a parliamentary inquiry into the long-term sustainable future of the NSW forestry and timber industry following the Deputy Premier's admission that timber supply shortages will increase the price of new homes, delay construction and cost jobs.

John Barilaro told a NSW Budget Estimates hearing last week that "there will be a struggle with supply" and that NSW is facing a "cliff-edge moment" where timber supply would run out.

Labor Shadow Minister for Natural Resources Paul Scully said: "We've been urging the government to come up with a timber plan that provides long-term certainty and an immediate fix to the problems small businesses are having right now to secure timber stock.

"But the government instead has focused much of its energy on trying to 'flog off' the Forestry Corporation and on the chaos in the Coalition that it has ignored these issues," Mr Scully said.

"Now we have real supply problems, house prices will increase, there are delays in housing construction and it's starting to cost jobs in rural and regional areas.

"While the government finally adopted NSW Labor's call to abandon the Forestry Corporation sell-off early last year, it has left timber-dependent communities with little hope."

In February 2020, NSW Labor called on the state government to appoint a forestry recovery commissioner, along with a timber industry recovery



**John Barilaro... NSW facing a 'cliff-edge moment' on timber supply.**

advisory taskforce, to guide the implementation of a recovery plan.

"We now need a parliamentary inquiry into the long-term sustainable future of the forestry and timber industry because of the government's failures," Mr Scully said.

**“INQUIRY WOULD GIVE HOPE AND DIRECTION FOR WORKERS**

"The inquiry we are proposing will help to better understand the projections for softwood and hardwood timber supply and demand, transparent reporting of the timber supply and the opportunities for the timber and forestry products industry and timber-dependent communities.

"We feel it's time the parliament took the initiative because clearly this 10-year-old Government has run out of ideas."

Mr Scully said a parliamentary inquiry would



**Paul Scully... timber plan will provide long-term certainty for industry.**

give some hope and direction to workers in the forestry industry, mill owners and operators, and timber-dependent communities across the state.

He said there had not been a major review of, or

inquiry into, the NSW forestry industry for at least 20 years.

"A lot has changed in the forestry and forest product industry during this time, including the major impact of the unprecedented bushfires of 2019-20, so it is timely to examine the supply and value chains of the industry, and let the voice of timber-dependent communities be heard," Mr Scully said.

Labor's Deputy Leader and opposition spokeswoman for jobs Yasmin Catley said the shortage of timber for the domestic construction industry put "thousands of jobs at risk" and could prevent the promised economic recovery from the Covid recession.

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# Dramatic changes but members have traded extremely well through Covid

## TABMA Australia delivered over 100 new trainees during pandemic

JIM BOWDEN

“LET’S face it ... the wood industry generally has changed dramatically over the past 18 months.”

Sydney-based TABMA Australia CEO David Little was talking up the sector in his office at St Leonard’s ahead of the inaugural national conference in the Hunter Valley in June which celebrates the association’s 80 years.

“The last time we spoke we were intent on re-focusing TABMA on our industry and re-engineering our two major divisions – workforce and training,” Mr Little said.



*The Lakes Resort in the Hunter Valley... venue for TABMA Australia’s inaugural national conference in June.*



*Preparing for the TABMA Australia conference... David Little, CEO, and Cate Peat, finance manager.*

“We were well down the re-engineering track when

Covid hit and then, suddenly, members wanted information about the pandemic and its effects on business.

“We were putting out member alerts daily, sometimes more than one a day, so we have built a solid information hub online updating current guidelines and legislation.”

TABMA was able to help members take advantage of government stimulus packages during Covid enabling them to receive almost \$2.5 million in funding.

Mr Little said most members had traded extremely well through the pandemic.

“While it has been difficult to find suitable young workers – and it still is – TABMA delivered more than 100 new trainees and apprentices to industry despite Covid,” he said.

Meanwhile, TABMA has been working on its E-learning platform, soon to be released.

“We already have a number of modules available including a full suite of Workplace, Health and Safety training courses, with more soon to follow,” Mr Little said.

“Members are also becoming aware of the benefits of formal qualifications for existing workers, with our Leadership and Management Certificate level programs particularly popular. In just the last two months we enrolled more than 100 new students into TABMA training.”

Mr Little said TABMA had taken a ‘lobbyist’ position with governments, going in to bat for members on topics such as demanding that manufacturers and merchants be regarded as essential services, action on port congestion and engaging with politicians over the use of the ‘B’ word instead of ‘your local hardware store’.

TABMA has re-launched its WHS inspection service... and is finding it difficult to keep up with the demand.

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# Women challenging the status quo in forest management at HQPlantations

## Workplace diversity contributes to broader range of ideas and experiences

AS International Women's Day on March 8 approaches, HQPlantations is celebrating the achievements of its female employees ... in the office and in the field.

HQP is one of Australia's largest forest growers, managing plantations from the NSW-Queensland border to Kuranda north of Cairns.

CEO Jeremy Callachor said the company employed more than 30 talented women in a wide variety of professional roles including forest science, resources, planning, sales, finance, business systems, law, stakeholder engagement, land management, human resources, and business and technical support.

This may be work that

**“DEVELOPING AN INCLUSIVE AND DIVERSE WORKFORCE AT ALL LEVELS**



**Julie Langridge... fire tank driver at the ready.**

historically has been done mostly by men, but a growing number of women are challenging the status quo at HQP and throughout forest management.

“Workplace diversity contributes a broader range of ideas, experiences and perspectives, increasing creativity and productivity for the individual and the company,” Mr Callachor said. “Everyone benefits.”

To ensure women, and all HQP's employees, continue to feel welcome, respected

and valued, the company has established a diversity and inclusion reference committee striving to develop an inclusive and diverse workforce at all levels of the company and champion a culture of 'growing together'.

“There are plenty of opportunities in forest management for women who enjoy varied, challenging work using innovative technology in office and natural environments,” Jeremy Callachor said.

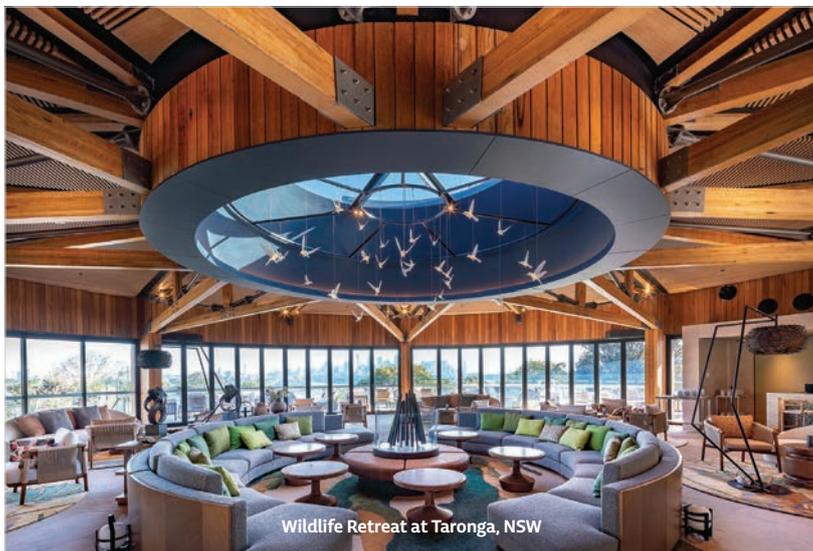
Many of the women at

HQP also assist with fire protection, with many accredited female fire fighters working on the fire ground or in logistics roles.

By day, Julie Langridge is HQP's permit administration officer in the company's Beerburum office in the picturesque Glass House Mountains on the Sunshine Coast north of Brisbane.

Julie ensures that permit applications lodged by members of the public

*Cont P 6*



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From P 5

and organised groups to undertake activities in the plantation are assessed in accordance with HQP's requirements against key criteria for sustainable forest plantation management.

However, when there's a fire, Julie switches to crew-leader mode, grabs her kit bag and revs up one of the Beerburrum plantation's 3500 litre Isuzu 4WD dual cab fire tankers to lead an accredited

**“THERE IS NO GENDER DISTINCTION ON THE FIRE GROUND**

firefighting crew of up to five to the fire ground.

“I've worked for HQP for 10 years and have lived in the area most of my life, so protecting our plantations and my local community from fire is important to me,” says Julie.

“On the fire ground there is no gender distinction, we are all equal contributors. We work together as a team and look out for each other's safety, and everyone respects the chain of command, which is critical when you're a crew leader,” she said.

With 50-60 fires a year on average in the Beerburrum plantation, largely caused by torched cars, arson and campfires, firefighting



**Jeremy Callachor... plenty of opportunities in forest management for women who enjoy varied and challenging work using innovative technology.**

certainly keeps Julie and the company's other accredited fire fighters busy.

“The great people I work with, getting out into the field and knowing my contribution is valued by HQP and the

community, are the best things about my job,” Julie said.

“I'd recommend this kind of work to any woman who likes working outdoors; the gender balance in forest management is changing and women are encouraged and supported.”

On International Women's Day, HQP will show its recognition and appreciation for the contribution of women such as Julie, at work and at home, by hosting a series of celebratory morning teas at its offices throughout Queensland.

**On the cover: Julie Langridge... permit administration officer by day at HQPlantations and fire-fighting crew leader and tanker driver when required.**

## Storm brewing over cheap furniture imports

A STORM is brewing over the federal government's procurement policies within the furnishing sector, with members of the Australasian Furnishing Association pushing for reform.

It seems that the AFA may have 'hit a nerve', with the issue spilling over into other areas of manufacturing.

The AFA is seeking a review of Victorian procurement and manufacturing policies, and the peak national body is

poised to take its concerns to all states and to Canberra.

The association says that in spite of the government's best intentions to support local manufacturers, there is, in reality, an endemic disregard for adherence to procurement rules, specifications of Australian standards of safety and quality and the Victorian Local Jobs First Policy.

Complaints from school principals about substitution of approved school furniture



**Patrizia Torelli... substitutes 'tip of the iceberg'.**

for cheaper, non-compliant products has been passed on to the AFA.

“This is just the 'tip of the iceberg' as far as substitution of Australian manufactured products is concerned,” says AFA CEO Patrizia Torelli.

“In the case of Victorian schools, specified classroom furnishings have been 'swapped-out' for inferior quality imported product that does not meet Australian standards of quality or safety.”

AFA members say they are continually frustrated by their designs being blatantly copied in countries like China and product imported into Australia that is non-compliant with safety standards.

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**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/](http://www.danaevents.co.nz/2021napier/) or contact Conference Organiser Julie Bell [admin@dana.co.nz](mailto: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](http://www.timberqueensland.com.au/events) or email [admin@timberqueensland.com.au](mailto:admin@timberqueensland.com.au)

[timberqueensland.com.au](http://timberqueensland.com.au)

**JUNE**

**16-18: TABMA National Conference – Oaks Cypress Lakes Resort, Hunter Valley, NSW.** Contact Alicia Oelkers at [alicia@tabma.com.au](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:n.scott@hardwareaustralia.com.au)

**SEPTEMBER**

**1: Australian Forest Products Association Gala Dinner and Symposium – Parliament House, Canberra, ACT.** For further information see: [www.ausfpa.com.au](http://www.ausfpa.com.au)

**4: TABMA QLD Awards Dinner – Rydges South Bank, Brisbane, QLD.** 6.00pm start. Contact Alicia Oelkers at [alicia@tabma.com.au](mailto: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](mailto:n.scott@hardwareaustralia.com.au)

**17: Western Australia**

**Industry Awards – Beaumonde on the Point, Perth, WA.** 12:00pm – 3:30pm. Contact Natalie Scott at [n.scott@hardwareaustralia.com.au](mailto:n.scott@hardwareaustralia.com.au)

**OCTOBER**

**TBA: TABMA NSW Awards Dinner – Sydney, NSW.** Contact Alicia Oelkers at [alicia@tabma.com.au](mailto: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](http://www.forestry.org.au) or phone (03) 9695 8940.

# Koala 'extinction' claim brings plan to expand national parks

NSW Environment Minister Matt Kean said action was needed to save the koalas after as many as 5000 died in the bushfires earlier in the year. He says with the population shrinking to an estimated 15,000 there are concerns koalas may become extinct.

The forest products industry has said expanding national parks, and the Great Koala National Park idea,

would do nothing to protect koalas; rather it would destroy the North Coast's forest industries which employed around 4000 people and contributed hundreds of millions of dollars to the region's economy.

A state government study of koala populations in north-east forests published last year found up to 10 times the rate of koala occupancy than previously estimated, and

that timber harvesting has no impact on koala numbers.

The NSW Farmers Association's conservation and resource management chair Bronwyn Petrie said the focus should be on addressing other causes of the decline in koala populations.

She said volunteer firefighters, many of them farmers, witnessed koalas unable to escape the extreme

bushfires last summer because of the intensity of the flames, and said hazard reduction burning could alleviate that.

The association called for the NSW Nationals and Liberal Party to work together for a sensible solution that both effectively protects koalas as well as allows producers to appropriately manage their land.



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## EVENTS LISTS MAY CHANGE DUE TO CORONAVIRUS TRAVEL, SOCIAL DISTANCING AND OTHER RESTRICTIONS. PLEASE CHECK THE RELEVANT WEBSITES FOR UPDATES.

### MARCH

#### 8-10: European Forest Products Industry Conference – VIRTUAL EVENT.

Fastmarkets RISI. Pulp, paper and packaging forecasts and panel discussions - Understand the key market changes impacting the European supply chain and beyond. For more information see: [www.risiinfo.com/events/](http://www.risiinfo.com/events/)

**9-11: Dubai WoodShow – Prague, Czechia** The Dubai WoodShow is the premier destination for wood specialists. It is the region's only dedicated business-to-business meeting place for the wood, wood accessories and woodworking machinery industry. For further information see: [www.woodshowglobal.com/dubai/#section3](http://www.woodshowglobal.com/dubai/#section3)

**22-23: International Conference on Forest Science, Ecology and Management (ICFSEM) – Dubai World Trade Centre, Dubai.** World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology. For further information see: <https://waset.org/forest-science-ecology-and-management-conference-in-march-2021-in-prague>

### APRIL

#### 1-4: International Conference on Agriculture, forestry, Biotechnology and Food Science (ICAFBFS) – Bali, Indonesia.

The key intention of ICAFBFS is to provide opportunity for the global participants to share their ideas and experience. This event will also help the delegates to establish research or business relations as well as to find international linkage for future collaborations. For further information see: [www.allconferencealert.com/event-detail.html?ev\\_id=522856](http://www.allconferencealert.com/event-detail.html?ev_id=522856)

### MAY

#### 5-8: Forestry – Bridge to the Future – University of Forestry, Sofia, Bulgaria (To be held in a hybrid format.

Participants will have the choice of attending in person or virtually). For further information see: <https://conf2020.forestry-ideas.info/>

**24-25: International Conference on Forestry Science and Silviculture (ICFSS) – London, UK.** World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology. For further information see: <https://waset.org/>

[org/forestry-science-and-silviculture-conference-in-may-2021-in-london](http://org/forestry-science-and-silviculture-conference-in-may-2021-in-london)

**24-28: XV World Forestry Congress – Seoul, South Korea.** 15th World Forestry Congress. The theme will be: Building a green, healthy and resilient future with forests. For further information see: <https://wfc2021korea.org/online/notice.html?act=view&aid=40>

### JUNE

**15-16: Carbon Forestry Conference – Rotorua, New Zealand.** Changes to legislation in relation to climate change and emissions trading, including carbon farming investment opportunities. For further information see: <https://carbonforestry.events/>

**29-1: WoodEX for Africa – Gallagher Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa.** Long established as the gateway to Africa's timber trade, WoodEX for Africa 2021 will be the ultimate machinery, tools and supplies gathering in Africa. Held in conjunction with the 2nd Deck & Flooring Expo and co-located with Africa's biggest construction expo, African Construction Expo. For further information see: <https://woodexforafrica.com/>

### JULY

**2-4: Foire De Libramont 2021 – Libramont Exhibition & Congress, Rue des Aubépines, 50 B-6800 Libramont, Belgium.** The Libramont agricultural, forestry and agri-food fair is a huge outdoor exhibition that offers a showcase for the rural world in all its many shapes and forms (machinery, livestock breeding, forestry, the agri-food industry, horticulture, study, and R&D). For further information see: <http://www.libramont-exhibition.com/>

**23-26: The International Forest Festival – Feanodock National Forest, Leicestershire, UK.** Music, forests, art and ideas. For further information see: <https://timberfestival.org.uk/>

### AUGUST

**9-12: World Conference on Timber Engineering – Santiago, Chile.** Uruguay XXI will host as part of its strategy to promote investments in the forestry and

wood sector. This is the first time this event is held in South America and will be hosted by the Chilean capital. The main topics that this conference will cover are sustainable forests for timber production, wood products and connections, wood engineering and architecture, policy, implementation and management, education, promotion and future trends. For further information see: [www.uruguayxxi.gub.uy/en/events/article/145/](http://www.uruguayxxi.gub.uy/en/events/article/145/)

**16-19: 20th Commonwealth Forestry Conference – VIRTUAL EVENT.** An informal forum for foresters, and all those with an interest in the forestry sector to exchange knowledge and experience. It is organized by the Standing Committee on Commonwealth Forestry and covers general aspects of forest management and governance and has a focus on the changing priorities of the forestry sector. For further information see: <https://cfc2021.ubc.ca/>

**30-31: International Conference on Forest Aesthetics and Site Preparation – Australian Museum Sydney, Australia.** World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology. For further information see: <https://waset.org/forest-aesthetics-and-site-preparation-conference-in-august-2021-in-sydney>

### SEPTEMBER

**22-24: Natural resources, green technology and sustainable development GREEN2020 – Zagreb, Croatia.** Now rescheduled from last year. For further information see: <https://www.sumins.hr/green2020/>

**27-1: LIGNA.21 Making more out of wood – Hannover, Germany.** For further information see: <https://www.ligna.de/en/>

### OCTOBER

**22-24: International Conference on Forest Biodiversity and Sustainability (ICFBS) – Dubrovnik, Croatia.** World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology. For further information see: <https://waset.org/forest-biodiversity-and-sustainability-conference-in-october-2022-in-dubrovnik>

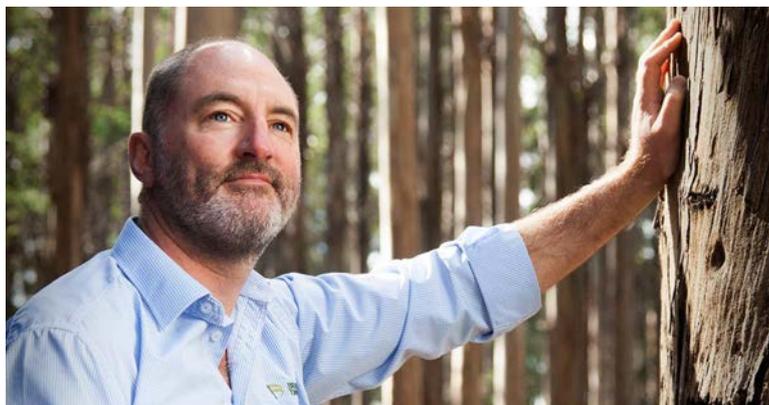
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# Where is the environmental sense in attacking our legitimate forests?

## Enough is enough: extremist thugs are threatening our jobs and families

SHAWN BRITTON

AS managing director of Britton Timbers, Tasmania's longest-running family-owned and operated timber processing business in the state, I have seen my fair share of protest activity – and I have to admit to being a little battle weary.



**Shawn Britton... extremists should be condemned by all sides of politics.**

With protestors locked on to the sawmill at McKay Timber's yards at Bridgewater, Hobart, as I write this letter I feel for the employees and managers who are trying to resolve the situation.

[McKay Timber is a major manufacturer and supplier of timber to Tasmanian, Australia mainland and international markets].

It really is time that Tasmania's said enough is enough to this madness. Last week, Planet Ark's Make it Wood Campaign weighed in on the debate around sustainable forestry in Tasmania. It was a welcome perspective for the state's timber processors who have been under attack now for many years.

The clear message from one of the world's most trusted environmental organisations is that we need to increase the use of responsibly-sourced wood as a building material, not reduce it, because as a low

emission substitute for other materials, timber will help us tackle climate change.

The Planet Ark support followed the Federal Court of Australia ruling last month that Tasmania's RFA is valid and the court dismissed the Bob Brown Foundation's case against Tasmanian forestry. The world's leading climate scientists and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change have also weighed in. Their fourth assessment report states: "A sustainable forest management strategy aimed at maintaining or increasing forest carbon stocks, while producing an annual sustained yield of timber, fibre or energy from the forest, will generate the largest sustained mitigation benefit".

Still not sure? What about the Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) an international non-profit, non-governmental organisation that promotes sustainable forest management through independent third-party

verification and certifies our forestry as sustainable.

So, the world's leading forest certification body, the world's leading scientists, the country's leading legal minds and one of the world's leading environmental organisations all agree.

What's more, eight years ago when we signed the Tasmanian peace deal in good faith with environmental activists and NGOs, they agreed too.

**“WE SIGNED A PEACE DEAL IN GOOD FAITH WITH ACTIVISTS**

I condemn the actions of the extremist radicals from the Bob Brown Foundation who have endangered the lives of Tasmanians by locking onto the sawmill of McKay Timbers at Bridgewater and I implore the rest of Tasmania to do the same.

The misguided 'fly-in' protestors employed and funded through the tax-free federal loopholes of

the Bob Brown charity are not only endangering life but stopping a legitimate business from producing quality timber products that are required for Australia's built environment.

The extremists are misguided; without Tasmania's

sustainable native hardwood industry, Australia would need to import more than \$100 million of timber product from overseas annually.

Where is the environmental sense in that?

Tasmanian timber has been used in building, construction and internal fit-out for more than 200 years and apart from importing timbers from countries with forest practices that are nowhere near the standard of Tasmania, the only alternative is plastic or steel products, often imported from China.

Again, where is the environmental sense in that?

These protestors are nothing but radical extremist thugs who should be condemned by all sides of politics. They are going from business to business across Tasmania, terrorising our employees, issuing death threats to our managers, endangering lives and crippling economic activity

Cont P 10

From P 9

at a time following Covid when we can least afford it. Our 114-year-old timber processing businesses at Smithton and Somerset are at real risk of now being invaded by these thugs and while we have the support of our local community who would stand with us and condemn these protestors,

**“EMPLOYING SECURITY 24/7 TO PROTECT THE WORKPLACE**



**More madness... protestors block operations at McKay Timber this week.**

we now have no alternative but to employ 24/7 security to keep our workplace safe and our business operating.

We have previously been targeted by these protestors while trying to selectively harvest two truckloads of very high quality special timbers and, as a business, we had no support from the workplace regulator who failed in a duty to protect or prosecute basic breaches of worksafe laws, so we understand the pain McKay Timbers is going through.

## Scholarships finance attendance at IFA conference



THE IFA/AFG is offering financial support for members who are private forest growers or young professionals and students to attend the national conference in October through two scholarships.

Applications close on April 30.

The conference – Your Forests, Our Future – will be held in Launceston from October 11 to 14.

The scholarship provided by the Institute of Foresters of Australia and Australian Forest Growers will provide funding to cover registration for eligible

applicants and a grant to assist with related travel and accommodation costs when participants are travelling more than 100 km to attend the conference.

Up to 15 scholarships include complimentary conference registration (valued up to \$785), plus a \$500 cash grant to assist with transport and accommodation expenses for people living over 100 km from Launceston.

This amount is payable on receipt of tax receipt for transport and/or accommodation expenses.

(Bookings must be paid for and claimed before June 1, 2021).

Financial support to Australian farmers and family forest growers to attend the conference will be through the Growers Reserve Fund, which offers a scholarship pool of up to \$10,000 to be divided among successful applicants.

The scholarship will be applied to each successful applicant’s conference registration (conference registration valued at \$795).

If there is funding available and the successful applicant will travel over 150 km to

participate in the conference, the scholarship can be used to offset travel expenses such as flights, transfers, airport parking, with 50% payable on announcement and the balance payable once a final report and proof of conference-related expenses has been received.

The scholarship will be capped at up to \$1500 for each successful applicant.

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# Eucalypts: wood-supply catchments seen as basis for hardwood industry

## New Zealand initiative rolls out first generation of hybrid stock

MICHAEL SMITH

WHEN we last spoke with Paul Millen, project manager of the New Zealand Dryland Forests Initiative, the organisation was gearing up for a significant milestone in its efforts to develop a sustainable industry based on ground-durable eucalypts.

This year the NZDFI will roll out the first generation of genetically-improved 'Xylogene' nursery stock, the result of 12 years' R&D by its tree-breeding team, supported by the Marlborough Research Centre, propagation specialist Proseed and the University of Canterbury's School of Forestry.

Paul Millen says it's all part of a national strategy "to establish 12 regional wood-supply catchments based on centrally located future wood processing sites".

The NZDFI is looking at a 30-year investment in planting programs at a sufficient scale (some 5000 ha in each catchment), so processing is economically viable. Catchments will require good transport connections, "including links to a port given the potential for exporting surplus logs and durable timber products".

Mr Millen adds that the NZDFI envisages



**Gordon Williams, Pamu's forestry manager, at the Kapiro site.**

local landowners for fencing and outdoor construction.

Among the studies investigating regional catchments is a report produced for the Hawke's Bay Regional Council. It demonstrates that the northern Hawke's Bay could benefit significantly from planting durable hardwood forests for a small or medium processing operation and associated remanufacturing activities.

With further detailed analysis under way in the region, and in the Wairarapa, it's estimated that proposed planting targets for both catchments "would require less than 2.3% of the total potential land identified".

On its formation in 2008, the NZDFI's initial strategy was to develop ground-durable eucalypt species especially suited to drought-prone, mainly eastern regions of both islands.

Mr Millen says the Avery trial in the Marlborough region (planted in 2011) is one of the NZDFI's driest sites with regular summer droughts and an average annual rainfall of 638 mm.

He notes that interim results of the trial indicate 21% of the surviving trees were classed as unmeasurable, with some growing in mallee form – "common in eucalypt species from very dry areas of Australia".



**Paul Millen (right) and trial host Warwick Lissaman make a video at the Lissaman's site at Marlborough.**

growers outside the target catchments could utilise the services of an upskilled, small-scale mobile sawmilling sector using the processed timber on-farm or selling it to

“STRATEGY TO ESTABLISH 12 REGIONAL CATCHMENTS”

Cont P 10

From P 9

“The variable growth noted at Avery’s reflects a combination of genetic and site influences ... with best results occurring in the sheltered gullies and mid slopes,” says Mr Millen.

“By 2014 we had already widened the scope of our research when we planted new site trials ... and then again in 2018. The latter included the trial at Kapiro (Landcorp/Pamu) in Northland on high-fertility sites where the average annual rainfall is 1600 mm.

“We used a range of seed lots including *E. bosistoana*, *E. globoidea* and *E. quadrangulata*. When the

**“BEST RESULTS OCCURRING IN SHELTERED GULLIES**



Forest tube system for newly-potted cuttings at Proseed.

trial was assessed in late November – with the trees just over two years of age – data analysis revealed that early growth of all species was the most productive recorded in any NZDFI trial of this age. Some trees were over 8 m in height.

“I was in Northland recently to check further Landcorp sites where we plan to plant two new trials this year, along with another seven or eight other sites throughout the North Island and at the top of the South Island.”

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# An amazing commodity but are we slicing the timber cake too thinly?

## Proper treatment of wood is not complicated ... but it does take effort

IT has saddened me for a long time that timber seems just a 'commodity product'.

I'm a true believer of course, but timber is amazing and while some might think otherwise, the price we pay for timber doesn't reflect its characteristics. In my opinion it is too darn cheap.

I accept that we are all fighting for a slice of the cake but this means a race to the bottom when it doesn't have to be that way.

Purchasers push suppliers to keep their timber prices down and if possible push them down further. This applies to preservative-treated wood as much as any other timber product.

A long time ago when I was visiting mills in North Queensland, one mill owner commented that he was turning silver ash into tile battens. When asked why on earth he would do that he (quite correctly) commented, "I have to pay wages at the end of the week – I have to keep product rolling out the gate."

Proper treatment of wood is not complicated ... but it does take effort and time. Keeping product 'rolling out the gate' puts constant pressure on timber treaters to trim waste, save money where they can – and, unfortunately, cut



corners. By cutting corners I mean treating product that is too wet, squeezing solution strength to as low as possible, and doing the same to treatment cycles.

Cutting corners often results in premature failure and turning the user away from timber as the building product of choice. It's true there is a lot of treated wood out there performing perfectly adequately. But there is also material that fails too soon. I see reports of poor performance regularly coming across my desk.

Specifications in the Australian standard for wood preservation are not perfect. Standards are a living document that need to be



- 1/ *Let's not cut the timber cake too thin.*
- 2/ *There is a lot of treated wood out there ...performing perfectly quite adequately.*

important part in ensuring the end user gets a fit-for-purpose product.

There is, however, a major flaw with the current industry system. There is no external

policing to ensure that treated timber is produced correctly. Sure there are various levels of quality assurance throughout the timber treatment industry but the customer doesn't know who is doing a good job or indeed who is doing any quality assurance at all.

There used to be legislation in both Queensland and New South Wales where inspectors had the authority to randomly sample treated product in the mill or in the market place. Inspectors didn't do a perfect job but they were out there and there was some control. This is now gone and I have a real problem with the term 'Industry self-regulation'.

Don't get me wrong, there are a lot of good guys out there doing the right thing. But there are also many places that could do with improvement – to put it politely.

The world of imported wood is a whole different ball game.

### JACK'S RANT



With **JACK NORTON**  
Secretary, TPAA

updated all the time as new technologies emerge and as restrictions are put in place for certain formulations.

Even so, specification documents such as the Australian standard are necessary and play an

# Who will be singed as wood-burning markets gets hotter in New Zealand?

## Global dairy giant moves from coal to fibre for renewable energy

DENNIS NEILSON

THE competition for pulp-logs, lower grade sawlogs and woodchip is starting to heat up in New Zealand.

Global dairy giant and exporter Fonterra seems to be firming up plans to convert most or all of its coal burning power boilers – used for milk drying into powder and for other industrial uses – to renewable energy ...and with wood fibre.

Fonterra has six dairy factories throughout New Zealand, including two of the world's largest milk-drying facilities at Lichfield in the North Island and Darfield in the South Island. At the peak of the milking season, Fonterra processes 80 million litres of milk a day – 40 million in the morning and another 40 million in the evening.

Fonterra has many old, and some fairly new coal fired boilers, and also gas boilers for milk drying and other processing energy.

In line with the NZ Climate Commission's targets for carbon emission reductions, Fonterra plans to phase out coal by 2037, but it could be sooner.

The company is focusing on coal conversion to renewables before gas conversion, as the transition from coal is twice as effective in reducing emissions.



**Fonterra Cooperative, responsible for about 30% of the world's dairy exports, is converting its coal-burning power burners to renewable energy using wood fibre.**

Fonterra has already signed a contract to use wood pellets supplied by Natures Flame's plant at Taupo to feed its Te Awamutu dairy factory. We understand this 48,000 tonnes a year contract has underwritten the Natures Flames expansion project to lift annual wood pellet production from 40,000 to 80,000 tpy.

At 17-18 gigajoules a tonne\*, wood pellet efficiency is close to the efficiency of New Zealand coal at 18-19, (hard black Australian coal can rate at 25), but the use of woodchips is more of a challenge as their green thermal efficiency is only around 7 gig/t.

However, with increasing carbon emission financial penalties (at likely increasing

carbon prices), Fonterra is actively investigating the use of 'dried' logs or woodchips (down to 10-30% depending on the quality of coal it uses which it replaces). One source suggests its demand could total 800,000 GMT per annum in the South Island alone, with more required in the North Island

Fonterra's 'ability to pay' (different from its 'willingness to pay') to be better off than continuing to burn coal with carbon emission penalties means that potentially it could afford to pay more than existing pulp mills pay for sawmill woodchips, and to

**“ FONTERRA SIGNS CONTRACT TO USE WOOD PELLETS**

pay log export prices for most or all of the lower grades of logs, and possibly start eating into the benchmark A Grade log export pool. But this is unlikely.

However, in addition to Fonterra, a number of big independent Chinese and French-owned dairy factories are operating in New Zealand, and they will all be under the same spotlight as Fonterra regarding carbon emissions for their boilers. We are aware of various companies trying to corner the market for residues to feed these factories in future.

So, the 'singe' may be restricted to lower log export grades. But we expect the big pulp mills in the North Island will also be looking sideways at their sawmill residue woodchip supplies and talking to Fonterra and other dairy factory owners in 2021.

With sawmills now receiving ex-bin prices in real terms for woodchips from pulp mills around only 50% of what they received 25 years ago, and new entrants into the market for sawmill residues and for lower grade logs, this will be a welcome respite for both the sawmilling and forest-owning sectors.

(\*1 gigajoule = 0.0341 tonnes of coal equivalent).

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# Blackbutt, a tree of the slopes, that dominates our coastal forest stands

## Signature eucalypt acknowledged for biodiversity and scenic appeal

IN retrospect, I am surprised I haven't written about blackbutt (*Eucalyptus pilularis*) before now given its prominence in northern coastal forests and to the hardwood timber industry in NSW and southern Queensland.

North of Sydney and up into southern Queensland the forests are dominated by some of the best-known Australian native trees, such as ironbark, spotted gum, tallowwood and blackbutt.

These signature eucalypt forests of eastern Australia are acknowledged for their variety, biodiversity and scenic appeal, imprinting an Australian identity in the minds of locals and visitors alike.

Blackbutt and spotted gum continue to be common all the way north, as do Sydney blue gum, rose gum, red mahogany and flooded gum. Other species such as turpentine, brush box and tallowwood are also present, but not as widespread.



**Blackbutt dominates the scene over considerable areas in the sub-tropical climate of northern NSW reaching as high as 70 m.**



**Wide board blackbutt flooring ... more recently a timber recognised for its decorative attributes.**

Blackbutt is common in coastal NSW from south of Bega near the Victorian border northwards into south eastern Queensland as far as Fraser Island. It is a stand-out

climate of northern NSW.

Blackbutt reaches as high as 70 m with a characteristically open, spreading canopy and a clear trunk up to 30 m or even 40 m. Its diameter ranges from 1 m to more than 2 m. Crowns tend to be open and typically maintain a healthy condition to an advanced age.

Blackbutt's whitish smooth-barked crown catches the eye of northbound travellers by road and rail. Blackbutt has a wide range in terms of altitude, from sea level to 600 m, and climate, from temperate to sub-tropical. Typically, it is a tree of the slopes in hilly or mountainous country.

Blackbutt is one of the most important hardwoods in eastern Australia and is the principal species sawn in coastal NSW and south eastern Queensland. It is used in a wide range of applications and in house construction and although not of high durability has been used for poles, posts and sleepers. More recently it has found premium applications for its decorative attributes, including in flooring and furniture making.

For more tree stories go to: [www.talkingtrees.com.au](http://www.talkingtrees.com.au)

### TALKING TREES



With **JOHN HALKETT**

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feature of northern coastal forests, and dominates the scene over considerable areas in the subtropical



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# On the road again: connecting with industry after long nation-wide pandemic lock-downs

WITH state borders now looking like they are going to stay open and the Covid pandemic more or less under control, enews is venturing out of its bunker and hitting the road once again.

An early expedition to Sydney gave Brisbane-based editor Jim Bowden an opportunity to spend some time with co-publisher John Halkett to review the year ahead, and to again engage face-to-face with industry friends in the Big Smoke – unmasked! . .

Jim looks forward to attending a range of trade and industry events now re-scheduled following 'pandemic postponements' in 2020.

"We pride ourselves on our

ability to generate original editorial through interaction with the industry and via our various columnists," Jim said.

John added: "Positive feedback from the industry has encouraged us to keep improving our information and intelligence gathering to keep enews at the forefront as the forest industry's longest-serving digital weekly."

While in Sydney Jim caught up with good-humoured TABMA CEO David Little.

Before an update on TABMA's expanded operations



*On a roll... breakfast on the go for Jim Bowden and John Halkett at Sydney's Fitzroy Gardens markets at Potts Point.*

and planned events post-pandemic, an approaching Saint David's Day (March 1) cultivated conversation around their Welsh heritages.

Jim was born in Rhondda Cynon Taf, a fifth generation Welshman, and English-born David's mother was from the Seven Sisters ward of Neath Port Talbot in South Wales.

Jim and David, a Rugby Union player in his youth, both recall the awesome effect of thousands of Welsh voices singing Land of My Fathers during a grand final at Cardiff Arms Park.

Today David (Daffyd) is kicking some goals of

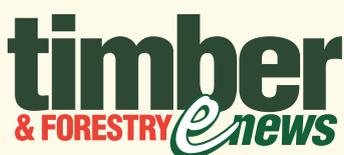
his own, particularly TABMA Australia's first national conference, which will be held in the Hunter Valley in June and will celebrate the organisation's 80th year.

"This will be the industry's national 'circuit-breaker' after the Covid lock-downs," David said.

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# MG remains a badge of auto excellence

"THE MG you are driving when you're not driving an MG," snorted my aviator friend who has re-built an iconic 1950s open-top MG TC from parts shipped from England.

To be fair though, nothing can take away the popularity and satisfaction of the MG ZST the compact SUV carrying the born-again British brand annexed by two Chinese companies after the collapse in 2005 of MG Rover, the last British-owned mainstream automaker.

Chinese auto engineering ingenuity has kept the ZST among the top 10 brands in Australia recording 10,000 sales in 2020.

MG vehicles are designed between the Longbridge and Shanghai facilities in the UK and China, respectively, and then manufactured in China.

The new MG ZST will sit alongside the incumbent ZS with a redesigned gloss-black



1/ MG ZST... growing in popularity as a competitively-priced compact SUV.

2/ Orson Whiels gets familiar once more with an MG TC rebuilt by aviator Arthur Morris in Brisbane. The writer fondly recalls driving his own TC to Mount Panorama, Bathurst, in 1962. Arguably the most famous and cherished MG sports cars were the iconic T series Midgets produced by the UK manufacturer from 1936 to 1955, which included TA, TB, TC, TD and TF models. The T series' greatest post-war success in Australia was unquestionably Bill Murray's victory in the 1947 Australian Grand Prix at Mount Panorama. Murray's victory in a stripped-down MG TC was a thriller; he only took the lead on the last lap in a 38-lap 241-km race..



grille and gloss-black accents, such as the mirror caps. The all-new sporty front and rear bumpers round out the exterior design, matched with front fog lamps, front and rear smoked LED headlights with 21 LED lighting units at the front and eight LED units at the rear.

The screen is loaded with Apple CarPlay, Android Auto and satellite navigation. In fact, it controls virtually

everything in the car.

Two USB points have been built in the rear cabin, providing connectivity to all passengers, while up front the driver's cabin receives two USB ports in the centre console (one for connectivity), plus a high-mounted USB conveniently positioned in the rear view mirror casing.

But beneath the cosmetic changes, ZST bring a new

engine, cutting-edge safety equipment, structural rigidity – and a compelling price of \$28,490 in a highly competitive segment.

Powered by a 1.3-litre turbo engine with automatic transmission, the ZST bumps performance with a 40% increase in power over the 1.0L turbo engine delivering up to 115kW and 230Nm of torque with a top-speed of 185 km/h.

Fuel efficiency has also improved, thanks to a punchier powertrain featuring lightweight alloy materials and widespread gears to deliver 7.1L/100km.

New to the ZS range, the ZST features MG Motor's acclaimed driver safety technology known as MG Pilot.

Coupled with a seven-year unlimited kilometre warranty and seven-year roadside assist package, the new ZST offers indubitable value in a fiercely competitive market.

Servicing is available nationally through MG's established dealer network.

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