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COVER STORY P10



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New Midway Ltd chief brings strong background in international business

THE newly-appointed managing director and CEO of Midway Ltd Tony McKenna brings more than 20 years' experience in the corporate finance sector to Australia's largest processor and exporter of wood fibre.

He replaces Tony Price in the position who will continue to run the business until Mr McKenna is on board.

Mr Price has been with Midway since 2015 and was former managing director of Australian Bluegum Plantations.

Since 2016, Tony McKenna has held the role of managing director and CEO of Ruyi Australia Group, a subsidiary of Ruyi Group, a Chinese multinational company which is rapidly becoming the world's largest vertically-integrated fashion enterprise.

Ruyi Australia owns and manages Ruyi's business operations including Cubbie Station, Australia's largest cotton farm with ginning, trading and solar power development, and the Lempriere global wool



Tony McKenna



Tony Price



Greg McCormack

business.

Mr McKenna has a passion for the whole investment process from identifying and executing acquisitions through strategic management to ultimate divestment. He has a strong background in international business, operating in countries including China, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Hong Kong and Japan.

He holds a Chartered Financial Analyst designation and is MBA qualified.

Midway produces and exports hardwood and softwood woodchips to Asia for the manufacture of pulp, paper and other associated products. The company processes and ships

woodchips out of Queensland, Northern Territory and Victoria, where it operates two wood fibre mills in Geelong. It also holds a 51% stake in the Victorian-based South West Fibre Pty Ltd which processes and exports blue gum woodchips.

Subsidiary company Plantation Management Partners Pty Ltd provides plantation management services in Melville Island, Cambodia and Laos.

Midway Logistics, based in Bunbury, WA, provides a range of forestry services to

“PASSION FOR STRATEGIC INVESTMENT

domestic and international export markets.

Midway chairman Greg McCormack said Tony McKenna had the right combination of operational and investment experience to lead the company to a new phase of growth.

“Mr McKenna's extensive international experience in delivering growth strategies and major investment projects will directly assist Midway with its future growth plans including leveraging our core businesses, expanding in complementary opportunities and investing in emerging technologies,” Mr McCormack said.

Midway says the new appointment follows an extensive selection process involving external and internal candidates.

Tony Price holds a Bachelor of Science (Forestry) and a Post Graduate Diploma in Business Management. He has held a number of senior management positions in the hardwood plantation sector and is currently chairman of Forestworks Ltd.



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Industry has responsibility for ‘claims of compliance’ on all structural timber

TIMBER producers, manufacturers, treaters, fabricators, wholesalers and merchants are reminded of the information they must provide when producing, treating or supplying structural timber products.

Timber Queensland’s strategic relations manager Clarissa Brandt said the industry was proud of its record as a responsible supplier of high quality, fit-for-purpose structural timber products.

“Given there is a broad supply chain including from imports, there are reports of some timber products being used that have not been properly graded or marked,” Mrs Brandt said.

“This has prompted the release of a Building Industry Advisory Note explaining how to check structural timber building products have the correct claim of compliance.

“By law, builders and certifiers must check that any structural timber product used on a job complies with Queensland’s non-conforming building product (NCBP) regulations.”

Timber Queensland’s Advisory to the Building Industry - Structural Timber Product Identification and Traceability in Queensland provides examples of the brands, labels, stamps or marks required to enable a



product to claim compliance. Typically, this includes compliance against relevant Australian standards, code mark certification or via a performance solution.

“Builders and certifiers should check the claim of compliance. If it’s not correct they should not purchase the product, or return the delivery to the supplier,” Mrs Brandt said.

“They must also notify the Queensland Building and Construction Commission (QBCC) of a suspected non-conforming building product. Failure to do so is a specific offence under NCBP law.”

Timber Queensland has produced an Advisory to the Timber Industry – Structural Timber Product Identification and Traceability in Queensland which provides examples of Australian

timber products are also provided. Mrs Brandt said the timber industry must keep accurate records of the claim of compliance. “Due diligence must be implemented across the supply chain to ensure there is evidence that products are conforming,” she said. “Take photos, keep dockets, invoices, Form 15’s and maintain files.”

Timber Queensland reminds the industry that

- 1/ A broad supply chain including from imports.
- 2 Clarissa Brandt... builders and certifiers should check claims of compliance.

standards requirements for identification of structural timber products and preservative treated timber. Examples of brands or markings for CodeMark

keep dockets, invoices, Form 15’s and maintain files.”

Cont P 4

QUEENSLAND PROUD OF ITS RECORD AS RESPONSIBLE SUPPLIER

COVID-19 ANNOUNCEMENT:
THE SYMPOSIUM IS NOW AN INTERACTIVE VIRTUAL EVENT, OFFERED ONLINE EXCLUSIVELY



Australian Forest Products Association

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NATIONAL FOREST INDUSTRIES SYMPOSIUM



THE HON. JONNO DUNIHAM
Assistant Minister for Forestry
KEYNOTE SPEAKER



AKHIL ABRAHAM
Head of Climate Diplomacy at the British High Commission
UK Forest and Fibre Industries contribution towards Net Zero by 2050.



GINA CASTELAIN
Director, Wik Timber
The journey towards sustainable management of their timber resources.



DEREK NIGHBOR
CEO Forest Products Association of Canada
Working to maintain social licence whilst intersecting with caribou and grizzly bears.



DAVID BRAND
CEO New Forests
How Net Zero climate positions will impact tree growing in Australia.



RIC SINCLAIR
Managing Director of Forest & Wood Products Australia
Converting emissions from ASX Top 50 to commercial forestry.



SANDRA TOSTAR
Lead Biomaterials Scientist for Volvo
Volvo's race to biomaterials and the track to wood-fibre in our cars.



DENITA WAWN
CEO Master Builders Australia
The vital role of timber for housing.

AND THE AWARDING OF THE NATIONAL FOREST INDUSTRY AWARDS

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Closure of China's major Ningbo Port latest to snarl global shipping supplies

SHIPMENTS of timber and building materials disrupted by the global Covid chaos have not been helped by high jinks at one of China's major container terminals.

Ningbo-Zhoushan Port has remained shut a week after operations were suspended from a single Covid-19 case, with dozens of ships lining up to load cargo for western markets ahead of the year-end shopping season.

The Wall Street Journal says the congestion at Meishan terminal, which isn't expected

to resume full operations before the end of the month, is spreading to other ports such as Shanghai and Hong Kong as big operators divert ships away from Ningbo.

The cascading effect will lead to crowding at ports along the Asia-to-Europe and trans-Pacific routes that could further slow the flow of goods. It will also hit cargo owners from giant retailers like Walmart and Amazon, which will have to deal with late



Operations suspended indefinitely at critical Chinese terminal servicing North America and Europe

exports such as timber and building components, furniture, home goods and auto parts headed to markets in the US and Europe. The Meishan terminal is one of the biggest among seven container terminals at Ningbo, moving more than 7 million containers a year.

In June, China shut down Yantian, a container port in Shenzhen, after more than

a dozen Covid-19 infections among workers at the port. In March, a blockage in the Suez Canal led to delayed delivery of goods and worsened the container shortage.

Zhang Jin, a sales manager at LumberLink, a New Zealand timber supplier, said export volume to China has declined sharply during the pandemic because furniture producers in China had less appetite for raw materials

Cont P 6

deliveries and higher transport costs as they work to restock ahead of the holidays.

"We are currently looking at delays of up to two weeks in cargo deliveries," says Nils Haupt, a spokesman for German shipping container giant Hapag-Lloyd AG.

"We've diverted four ships, but there is a race to berth in other ports and they are also congested."

Ningbo is the world's third-largest container port and a big gateway for Chinese

From P 3

NCBP law requires builders to provide homeowners with product information to ensure continued conformance and fitness for purpose, including maintenance requirements.

"There is an onus on the

timber industry to make this information available to their customers and supply chain partners," Mrs Brandt said. "Protect yourself – provide product instructions and information."

To assist with this Timber Queensland provides members access to a number of technical data sheets that provide guidance and recommendations on installation, use and maintenance.

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DUE DILIGENCE A 'MUST' ACROSS SUPPLY CHAIN

XLam CLT natural, healthy choice for pre-fab firm's workplace environment

MODULAR building company Fabprefab has decked out its NSW central coast warehouse with XLam's Responsible Wood-certified CLT product to form the structural material of the floor, walls, and roof – all while using it to provide a mezzanine level for the building.

Fabprefab's building product choice reflects the value of XLam CLT application and the increased demand to build using sustainably-sourced solutions.

Locally grown and manufactured, the timber meets the Australian standard for Sustainable Forest Management.

XLam Australia's technical sales engineer for NSW Sean Bull explains the advantage of certification: "XLam Australia has implemented Responsible Wood chain-of-custody certification to support responsible and sustainable forest management in Australia. This includes ensuring all manufacturing sites are chain-of-custody certified.



1/ XLam's CLT flooring system.

2/ Sean Bull... all manufacturing sites are chain-of-custody certified.

Fabprefab assembles modules and fitout at its Somersby warehouse using XLam CLT as the structural material for floors, walls and roofs.

"To create a comfortable and sustainable office that reflects the materials and values we use in our prefabrication business we wanted a sustainable product that creates a healthy environment so CLT was the natural choice," Fabprefab construction manager Ed Callanan said.

Sean Bull talks with Fabprefab about the project.

XLam: Why did you choose XLam CLT to build the office areas?

Fabprefab: To create a comfortable and sustainable office that reflects the materials and values we use in our prefabrication business. CLT is a very sustainable product that creates a healthy workplace environment. The speed in which CLT can be assembled provides increased efficiencies of production, ensuring we meet client demand in an improved timeframe compared to conventional construction methods.

XLam: Utilising XLam CLT,

how fast was the office construction and fitout?

Fabprefab: With the ability of XLam to provide large format, full-height CTL panels in ground

and first-floor CLT installation along with associated structural steel, three people were able to finish the job in one day.

XLam: What is the feedback from the workers in the space?

Fabprefab: Everyone loves the new healthy environment saying they enjoy the space, the look, the smell and the feel of CLT.

XLam: What other advantages has the use of XLam CLT provided?

Fabprefab: Our clients are able to experience a 'mass timber space' – a 'first' for many of them – who reacted extremely positively. CLT offcuts were repurposed and have been used to make the office furniture, including upholstered couches, coffee hub and boardroom table.



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AUSTimber machinery show cancelled

Numerous challenges including bushfires and Covid-19

IT is with great sadness and disappointment that a decision has been reached to cancel AUSTimber 2020-21. [The event was scheduled for November 10-13 at Gormandale in eastern Victoria].

Like many events over the past 18 months, AusTimber has faced numerous challenges, including two reschedules in 2020 resulting from the Black Summer bushfires and then at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Over the past few months, AusTimber recommenced planning and significant preparation work has taken place for the November show. However, over the past weeks, we have seen the continual worsening of the Covid-19 situation from the Delta strain and government lockdown measures across Australia which demonstrates the unpredictability of delivering an event in this environment.

Recently some exhibitors communicated their concerns and provided notification of their intent to change

their exhibiting arrangements at the AUSTimber 2020-21 show in November, including no live demonstrations occurring during the show and significantly limiting their overall participation. The reasons cited included additional costs, planning and logistics required amid growing concerns of the pandemic and the associated restrictions across Australia.

The health, safety and wellbeing of everyone delivering and attending the AUSTimber show have always been paramount. Many options have been assessed on how the event could still be delivered and have been exhausted – particularly recognising the important contribution AUSTimber makes to the industry and the Gippsland region, impacted first by bushfires and now by the pandemic.

Unfortunately, the



AUSTimber 2020-21 will not go ahead.

compounding costs of deferring the show on two prior occasions combined with the continued uncertain outlook resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic have meant it is not financially feasible or possible to reschedule the show again, and therefore the show must be cancelled.

Austimber Events Pty Ltd (AEPL) has organised the AUSTimber show since 2014 on a not-for-profit basis. Regrettably, having absorbed the costs associated with two prior deferrals of AUSTimber 2020-21, AEPL is not in a financial position to meet the claims of exhibitors,

partners, suppliers and ticketholders resulting from the cancellation of the event.

The board of AEPL has therefore regrettably decided to appoint Worrells Solvency and Forensic Accountants to undertake a creditors voluntary winding

up. Worrells will issue a formal communication to creditors in the near future. Inquiries may be directed to Matt Waterhouse (matt.waterhouse@worrells.net.au).

In a separate comment, AFPA CEO Ross Hampton said: "We are bitterly disappointed that AUSTimber 2020/21 has been cancelled but entirely understand how difficult this was for the organisers who tried so hard to work around the Covid-induced difficulties.

"We know all the work that has gone into this event over the years to showcase our industries."

From P 4

due to delayed shipping.

A growing number of their Chinese clients' warehouses are filled with finished goods they can't ship out as containers and shipping costs keep surging.

Shipments to many southeast Asian countries, such as Vietnam, have also slowed in recent weeks as the Delta variant triggers local governments to limit production capacity at factories.

"About 10% of the global

container capacity is stacked on ships stuck outside congested ports," said Lars Jensen, chief executive of Denmark-based Vespucci Maritime. "We are in peak season prior to the year-end holidays and we are dealing with a serious capacity crunch."

The backlog has stretched across the Pacific Ocean to the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, which together handle about a third of all containers coming into the US.

Thirty-seven container

ships were anchored outside the two ports this week, according to the Marine Exchange of Southern California, the highest number since February, when an armada of 40 vessels were waiting to dock. In normal times, there are none.

The lack of capacity is pushing big American retailers to charter their own ships rather than pay freight rates that have quadrupled since the start of the year.

Daily freight rates for sailings from China to the US West Coast are at \$US16,425

a container this week compared with \$3886 at the start of the year, according to the Shanghai Containerised Freight Index. Rates from Asia to Europe are at \$14,038 from \$5,662 in January.

"We are making record profits, but also screamed and yelled at by customers because of the high cost and delays," Hapag-Lloyd's Nils Haupt said.

"We are the first to return to normalcy, but we don't see it happening before early next year," he said.

SEPTEMBER

1: Australian Forest Products Association Gala Dinner and Symposium – Parliament House, Canberra, ACT. For further information see: www.ausfpa.com.au

1: National Forest Industries Symposium virtual event – ONLINE EVENT. Keynote Akhil Abraham, head of climate diplomacy, British High Commission, on the UK's road to net-zero with the help of forestry and timber. Organised by AFPA. Tickets //conlog.eventsair.com/afpa2021/online-registration

10: Tasmanian Timber Awards – Launceston, TAS. Celebration of excellence and best practice within the state's timber industry. Winners announced at a gala dinner at Albert Hall. Contacts: Phone 0439 336 511. Email naomi.

will@tffpn.com.au. Visit www.tffpn.com.au

15: Materials and Embodied Carbon Leaders Alliance event. – ONLINE EVENT. Working group chair report on progress to achieve agreed objectives, outputs and the next steps. Speakers: Steve Mitchell, principal consultant, Thinkstep-ANZ, Caryn Streeter, architect with Kirk Studio in Brisbane, and Jeremy Mansfield OAM, sustainability manager (Queensland and NT) with Lendlease. Two-part session 1 pm - 3.30 pm Registration at <https://utsmeet.zoom.us/join/91234567890> Contact Monica Richter, senior manager, Low Carbon Futures. For further details contact mecla@wwf.org.au

OCTOBER

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.

NOVEMBER

10-13: AUSTimber 2021 – Gormandale in eastern Victoria between Yarram and Traralgon. CANCELLED. See page 6.

14-19: 2021 Gottstein Trust Understanding Wood Science Course – Albury, NSW. November 14-15 based in Albury with field trips to northern Victoria. November 16-19: Guest lectures and field trip, then relocate by coach

to Canberra for three days including a laboratory day and guest lectures at ANU, and a formal course dinner celebrating 50th Anniversary of the trust. Detailed information, registration and the draft program: <https://gottsteintrust.org/grants-courses/understanding-wood-science-course>

16-17: Frame Australia Timber Offsite Construction – Crown Promenade Melbourne, VIC. New global 'hybrid' format will retain avital face to face element. Choose from a selection of half-day and full-day programs. Virtual delegates can register for just one or more conference sessions. For further information and registration visit the website www.timberoffsiteconstruction.com



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AUGUST

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

17-21: Prowood Ghent – Flanders Expo, Maaltekouter 1, 9051 Ghent, East Flanders, Flanders, Belgium. For further information see: www.tradefairdates.com

[com/Prowood-M9728/Ghent.html](http://www.tradefairdates.com/Prowood-M9728/Ghent.html)

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>

26-29: Woodworking Minsk – Sports Complex, Pobeditelej 20/2 Minsk, Belarus. International exhibition of woodworking and furniture production. For further information see: www.tradefairdates.com/Woodworking-M3361/Minsk.html

JANUARY 2022

28-29: International Conference on Forest Resources Accounting and Economics – Australia World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology, Sydney, Australia. Forest industry accounting, methodological and issues and environmental accounting for forestry. For further information see; <https://waset.org/forest-resources-accounting-and-economics-conference-in-january-2022-in-sydney>

[accounting-and-economics-conference-in-january-2022-in-sydney](https://www.tradefairdates.com/Accounting-and-economics-conference-in-january-2022-in-sydney)

MAY 2022

23-24: International Forest Business Conference – Sheraton Sopot Hotel, Poland. A two-day conference on megatrends that shape responsible forest and wood industry investments for climate action. The conference aims to bring together leading forest management organizations (TIMOs), investors interested in forest assets and carbon offsets (e.g., public and corporate pension funds, wealth managers and private banks, sovereign wealth funds, foundations and endowments) and sustainable wood industry representatives in order to exchange and share experiences and ideas about challenges and opportunities for forest sector as a natural climate solution. The main theme of the conference is New Forest Business Frontiers. Register at www.fba-events.com or contact karolina@forest-analytics.com

• Please send events to John Halkett: johnh@timberandforestrynews.com

Agriculture visa embraces forest workers

AFPA has welcomed the federal government's inclusion of the forestry sector under the new Australian Agriculture Visa.

The visa is being established to build on successful existing Pacific worker schemes and will respond to workforce shortages across the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors.

In a monumental commitment, the federal government has delivered on the National Farmers Federation's long-called-for Agriculture-specific Visa (Ag Visa) to provide real long-term workforce relief to Australian farmers.

"The NFF has been unrelenting in its call to government for the introduction of an Agriculture-



specific Visa to give farmers access to the workforce they need," NFF president Fiona Simson said.

"Thanks to the leadership and commitment of Agriculture Minister David Littleproud NFF's calls have been answered," Ms Simson said.

"This is a significant step towards solving the farm sector's enduring workforce



crisis with a bespoke visa designed to meet the industry's many and varied skill needs," she said.

The Ag Visa will widen the recruitment opportunities for an uncapped number of low to highly skilled workers from ASEAN countries. Negotiations are well under way to extend the visa to other countries. The visa will be operational from September 30.

- 1/ Forestry sector included in new Australia Agriculture Visa.
- 2/ Fiona Simson... significant step towards solving an enduring workforce crisis.

Ms Simson said the onus was now on state and territory governments and their chief health officers to approve quarantine arrangements to safely house incoming foreign workers.

"We recognise the development of joint state, territory and commonwealth quarantine facilities such as the Bladin Village in the Northern Territory, where workers will quarantine before heading to Western Australia to help with this year's forecast record grain harvest," she said.

"We hope to see more collaborations like this in the very near future."



2021 GREEN TRIANGLE TIMBER INDUSTRY AWARDS

Nominate and celebrate someone who deserves to be recognised for their contribution to the Timber Industry in 2021. To view the new nominations categories and criteria, visit www.gttia.com

KEY DATES 2021

JUNE 10	Nominations Open
AUGUST 15	Nominations Close
SEPTEMBER	Judging Process
OCTOBER 29	Green Triangle Timber Industry Awards

2021 NOMINATIONS OPEN JUNE 10-AUG 15



Designers threw them a curved ball and family slammed it for home run

Sydney workshop filling market gap with innovative timber bending concepts

JIM BOWDEN

“THE mass timber market is on a trajectory that is only going to continue and it is a very exciting time to be part of the industry,” says Eva Dellow who with her husband has launched an innovative ‘curved wood’ business in Sydney.

Eva and Truett Dellow started their small business journey launching Mezzaluna Joinery in 2016 doing custom jobs such as timber furniture and bespoke pieces for the events, hospitality and visual merchandising industries.

Experiments with various timber-shaping methods, such as steam bending and glulam, ignited further interest and intrigue into the capabilities of timber.

After recognising a gap in the market for a business to concentrate on curved timber the couple launched Curvwood in 2019.

“We always wanted to operate in a niche market and solve problems that few could or were willing to take on so when we were approached to manufacture a curved-wood structure we knew it was a job we were capable of doing and so we took the challenge head on,” Eva said.

Glulam was the best solution for the project. Ultimately, a deep drive and desire to solve problems by being “creative solutionists”, coupled with a passion for all things timber led Eva and Truett to launch Curvwood and focus on the production



Timber playpod... glulam fabrication was used to create curved wooden structures and beams for a sustainable and spectacular design solution. Photo: Steve Brown Photography

of glulam, specialising in curved structures.

Curvwood has strong family links to the building, timber and hardware trade – Eva’s father industry veteran Ron Gattone is one of the directors. He is well-known as an award-winning builder and as a director of companies associated with Swadling’s Timber and Hardware. Up until 2019 he successfully operated and managed one of the group’s timber and hardware stores, including an associated joinery shop.

Curvwood has a fully-equipped workshop kitted out with first-class machinery. As a team with advanced skills and knowledge of joinery and

laminated timber fabrication, they have achieved creative results with unique and impressive curves and free shapes that go beyond the standard capability of timber.

“We collaborate directly with architects, artists, builders and designers to bring their inspired timber designs to life,” Eva said.

“While glulam is our core focus, it might not always be the right solution for a project so we have the ability to create all sorts of timber styles and configurations,

from curved to straight, using various techniques.”

Eva says the demand for specified glulam timber is growing and this will only continue to increase as architects, designers and artists forge ahead with sustainable, renewable, regenerative and environmentally-friendly concepts.

Early next year, Curvwood will add a German-built, state-of-the-art finger jointer to production facilities with further planned investment in European wood manufacturing machinery to enhance efficiency and capacity along with more staff appointments.

“WE ALWAYS WANTED TO OPERATE IN A NICHE MARKET

Cont P 11



1/ The process... cutting and gluing thin layers of timber together to create the forms and shapes for special projects. (Steve Brown Photography)
 2/ Finger-jointing to connect shorter timber pieces into vast, continuous lengths for delivery pre-fit for easy installation.

From P 10

The company is excited about one of its more complex projects – a play pod with more than 88 pieces. The main S-shaped curved beams were 6 m long with a cross-sectional size of 110 mm x 150 mm. Some of the pod’s design used double curves.

“This was our first complex curved job and producing the

“CURVED STRUCTURES CREATE A POWERFUL IMPACT”

beams and battens was a steep and welcome learning curve,” Eva said.

“Initially we weren’t set-up to manufacture the job in terms of machinery and systems but we took it on anyway, having complete faith that our multi-disciplinary team could rise to the challenge.

“One of the toughest parts of the job was the time frame we had. It was tight and we did what it took to deliver on time, to specification and with the highest of quality.”

Eva added: “Curved structures are more challenging to make and the end result definitely creates a powerful impact. Much

more thought, consideration and man hours are needed to produce a curved design.

“In the past, architects and designers have had to look outside Australia for curved timber. The cost also plays a part. If a straight glulam member takes so many hours to manufacture, a curved member of the same size might take 10 times more to manufacture.

“In saying that, we believe architects want to include curves in their designs and we are already seeing that shift.

“We started Curwood knowing we were stepping into an area that required education and advice on

what’s possible when it comes to curving wood. We believe we will be seeing more and more curved timber designs coming to life.

“There is already a significant shift in the construction sector to using laminated and mass timber materials on a large scale and almost every new building we are seeing has curves as a main feature.”

On the cover: Creative solutionists... directors of Curwood in Sydney Ron Gattone and Eva and Truett Dellow have collaborated directly with architects, artists, builders and designers to bring their inspired timber designs to life. Photo Sophie Brown Photography.



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Cause for optimism as plant nurseries face new production challenges in NZ

Funding and accompanying tax advantages create an uneven playing field

Following up on last week's interview with nurseryman Mark Dean, we look further at some of the issues confronting New Zealand's native plant nursery industry.

THE Climate Change Commission says a comprehensive native afforestation programme needs to start now to remove greenhouse gas emissions beyond 2050.

The commission's recommendation that 300,000 ha of new native forests be planted between 2021 and 2035 is a game-changer for plant nurseries.

As previously mentioned, production costs/plant prices, a lack of mechanisation and the requirements of eco-sourcing are significant issues facing the industry.

Mark Dean says the current business model is also a major stumbling block to increasing production.

"There are too many nurseries that have been established for what I would term 'non-commercial' reasons, such as work schemes and local environmental projects," Mr Dean said.

“NO SYSTEM OF NURSERY REGISTRATION FOR SMALLER GROWERS”



"Many are set up using public money and produce plants at little or no cost, and often of inferior quality."

This funding and the accompanying tax advantages create an uneven playing field for commercial producers, who are commonly small businesses that struggle to access finance.

Mr Dean notes that investment in developing a skilled workforce is also needed ... "to help drive innovation and growth. The attitude that horticulture is for those who are not

to increase professionalism. Also, with the ever-present threat of biosecurity incursions, the industry must have a system in place to be able to trace every grower in the event of a problem."

Mr Dean says registration must go hand in hand with a code of best

practice or a national plant standard.

Many overseas countries have legislated standards for nursery production. [The Canadian standard runs to hundreds of pages]. They set out the minimum quality nurseries must achieve before a plant can be sold.

"Here we have no such thing," Mr Dean said, "although one or two companies have written their own simple diagrammatic standards for both quality control and marketing purposes.

"We still see diseased plants and different-sized plants being supplied for large-scale jobs."

Finally, Mr Dean says nurseries supplying the plantation pine industry do so at scale and therefore at a lower unit cost than most native nurseries, which

1/ Bay of Plenty nursery... grasses and reeds for wetland restoration, plus various native tree species (pittosporum, totara, kauri and kahikatea).

2/ Mark Dean... too many nurseries have been established for 'non-commercial' reasons."

ACROSS THE DITCH



With MICHAEL SMITH

academically inclined needs to be quickly dispelled, especially within our secondary schools."

He adds that New Zealand has no system of nursery registration to help identify the smaller growers. "Registration would ensure improved plant quality, and be an incentive

From P 12

generally grow a wide range of species.

“To reduce cost and increase volume we need to specialise,” he said. “For example, there are opportunities for a grower to produce just manuka, or only native timber trees. However, eco-sourcing requirements limit the ability of native plant nurseries to specialise.”

Meantime, a survey conducted by New Zealand Plant Producers Incorporated

suggests there is some cause for optimism. It determined that the native plant nursery industry has the capacity “to increase native tree production, but long lead times mean achieving this growth will need planning and co-operation”.

The survey noted that the One Billion Trees planting program requires a sustained annual growth of 14%, based on current production. NZPPI believes the industry can sustainably grow at about 7.5% a year.

Greater growth will place undesirable stresses on individual businesses, with debt, reduced profitability, and skills shortages.

The organisation says trees account for 27% of native seedling production – the rest being grasses, flaxes and shrubs.

“TO REDUCE COST AND INCREASE VOLUME WE NEED TO SPECIALISE”

Tree targets could be met by reducing production of non-tree species, but this is unlikely given the continued demand for riparian, revegetation, and other non-tree plantings.

The survey concluded that achieving the desired growth will require government support for private businesses, organisations and training agencies – and recognition of the significant contribution that small-to-medium-size nurseries make to native tree production in all regions.

ABS: record quarter for detached housing construction

FIGURES released by the ABS this week show the value of work on detached houses surged in the June quarter to the highest level on record.

HIA says this elevated volume of work is occurring across all regions.

The national economy is benefiting from this and the boom is expected to continue well into 2022. This will support employment across the sector.

“HomeBuilder and low interest rates have been a key driver of the record volume of detached home

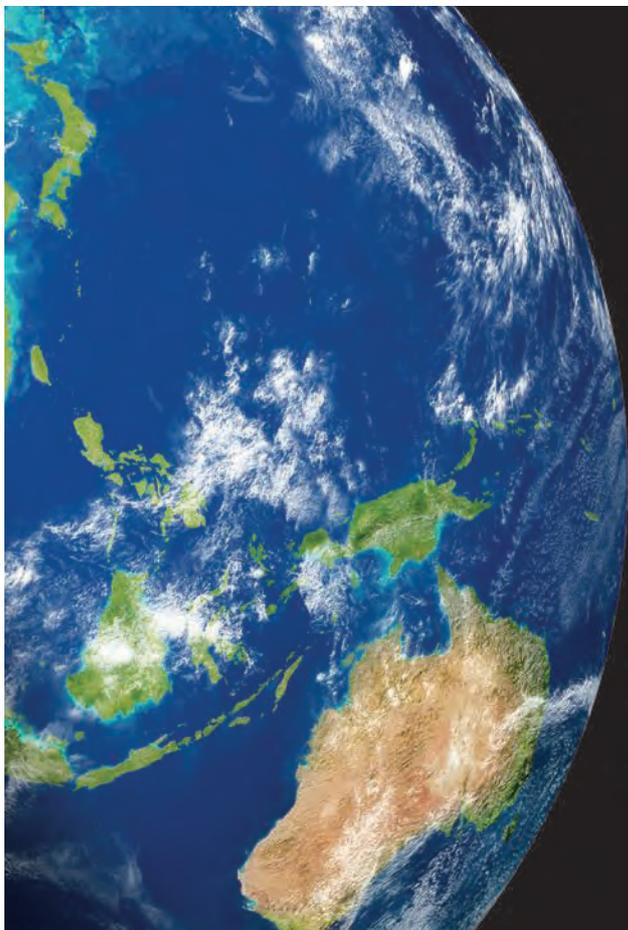
commencements,” says HIA economist Angela Lillicrap.

“This demand for housing is also coming from a shift in the location of the population and a move to lower density housing,” she said.

“The average number of people per house has been

falling since the 1980s and Covid may have accelerated this trend.”

Ms Lillicrap said fewer homes were reaching completion in the normal construction timeframes as the industry was pushed with access to labour and material shortages.



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Tea leaves and green shoots pointing to better prospects for our plantations

Investing in forestry assets a key ingredient of AXA's sustainability goals

DO tea leaves at the bottom of a mug show a more promising alignment, or are green shoots starting to emerge?

Look at it anyway you like, but there is some encouraging, emerging optimism for the future of the plantation-based industry in Australia. So, good news after the trauma and devastation of the 2019-2020 bushfires, coupled with zilch new plantation establishment investment for a decade or longer.

Investment house AXA has taken 'ownership' of 24,000 ha of pine plantations across the Victoria-South Australia border in a \$775 million deal with US fund manager Global Forest Partners. This deal is considered to be the biggest timber transaction in the country for well over a decade.

This acquisition is the first investment in Australian forestry for AXA, which manages almost 60,000 ha of plantations across France, Ireland and Finland. The deal illustrates AXA's appetite

**“BIGGEST
TIMBER
DEAL IN
WELL OVER
A DECADE**



Global investor confidence... positive sign that the plantation industry is back on the menu for investors.

for sustainability-themed investments as institutional investors worldwide align their portfolios to climate change sensitive issues.

Investing in forestry assets is a key ingredient of the group's sustainability goals. The Australian plantation resource now under AXA's control is one of the largest in the Green Triangle region, with a mixed-age portfolio of radiata pine plantations. The transaction is the biggest in the timber industry since the South Australian government sold its harvesting rights to state-owned plantations for \$670 million to OneFortyOne in 2012.

This investment and the confidence of a global investor has got to be a positive and encouraging sign that the plantation industry is back on the menu for sophisticated investors. This initiative is also supported by the forestry sector currently attracting attention from analysts and

for expanded industry activity on the home front.

JP Morgan has noted that local timber supplies have been impacted by the 2019-2020 bushfires that resulted in significant damage to softwood plantations and that the post-fire timber salvage spike in production has now washed through the market.

TRUNK LINES



With CHERYL FORREST

investment advisors.

Very interestingly, JP Morgan's senior research analyst who specialises in the building materials industry, has providing investment advice to Australia's largest institutional investors in relation to the timber sector.

The JP Morgan advice notes that timber imports are currently experiencing difficulties in the current global building and construction frenzy and building supply challenges. This advice sees opportunities

Like others, JP Morgan suggested that domestic sawmilling could assist the Australia market demand by improving the utilisation of available logs; redirecting logs to domestic sawmills that might previously have been exported, assisted by investment in strengthened local logistics, and making better use of domestic-sourced hardwood timber to replace some imported engineered wood products.

I reckon collectively these initiatives are promising signs for the future of the plantation-based industry and should, hopefully, encourage investors and forest owners to start to see the commercial wisdom of getting a lot more trees in the ground ... but there's still work to be done.

What do you think? That's me done for the month see you next month.

Cheryl

The MARKET Leader...



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Paul Millen named Forester of the Year

PROJECT manager with the New Zealand Dryland Forests Initiative Paul Millen was awarded Forester of the Year at the NZ Institute of Forestry conference in Masterton last week.

Mr Millen has managed the initiative since its inception in 2008 and is involved in all aspects of research and development work.

The initiative's vision is to develop sustainable durable hardwood industries based on 60,000 ha of eucalypt forests to be established in 12 regional wood-supply catchments by 2050.

"In the past 13 years we have developed a robust, internationally-recognised research program and have made considerable progress in selecting and improving durable eucalypts," Paul said.

"Our research includes site-

species matching, silviculture and growth modelling, wood quality, products and markets, and tree health," he said.

More than \$9 million from both private and public funds has been invested in the program, not including the contribution by many landowners across northern and eastern regions of New Zealand who host the extensive trial network.

"In 2020 we were awarded a \$536,000 grant from the MPI One Billion Trees Partnership Fund to assist with accelerating the propagation of improved nursery stock



NZ Forestry Minister Stuart Nash (right) presents the NZIF Forester of the Year Award to Paul Millen.

with more than 300,000 trees to be planted this spring.

"Our select eucalypt species are renowned for their adaptability to drought, are very fast-growing, and produce strong, naturally durable hardwood timber,"

Paul Millen said. "This timber remains sound in outdoor conditions for many decades without chemical treatment."

Delegates at the Masterton conference cast votes for the best student posters.

The competition attracted entries from Toi Oromia Institute of Technology in Rotorua, and the School of Forestry at the University of Canterbury. All three prizes presented by Andrew McEwen ONZM went to second-year Diploma in Forest Management students at Toi Oromia – Dallas Collier for 'Money lost through production breakage' \$800 first prize; Kamal Chaudhary for 'Comparison and valuation of Pigeon Valley standard regime vs the a fire-affected regime' \$500 second prize; and Michael Walmsley for 'Hovermap consistency analysis' \$200 third prize.

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AFPA symposium: UK's path to net-zero

THE head of climate diplomacy at the British High Commission in Canberra will discuss the UK's road to net-zero with the help of forestry and timber at the National Forest Industries Symposium.

The Australian Forest Products Association has secured Akhil Abraham as a key presenter for the totally virtual event on September 1.

The symposium will feature a range of key presenters with Mr Abraham joining the lead biomaterials scientist for Volvo Sandra Tostar who will speak about the car maker's race for wood-fibre in new vehicles as well as the Forestry Products Association of Canada CEO Derek Nighbor who will discuss social licence issues ahead of the Canadian election on September 20.



Akhil Abraham



Sandra Tostar



Gina Castelain



Derek Nighbor

Presenters include Senator Jonno Duniham, federal Assistant Minister for Forestry; David Brand, NewForests CEO; Ric Sinclair, managing director FWPA; Denita Wawn, CEO, Master Builders Australia; and Gina Castelain, director, Wik Timber.

AFPA CEO Ross Hampton says if the world wants to reduce carbon emissions, sustainable forestry will need

to be a central part of the solution.

"Mr Abraham agrees our industries are integral to the cause, so it will be fascinating to witness his address," Mr Hampton said.

"In the lead up to COP26 in Glasgow in November, the role of different nations and different sectors in achieving lower greenhouse gas emissions is a topic of

discussion around the globe and Mr Abraham will provide insights to the UK's approach."

Mr Hampton said then UK was an international innovator in forest industries, from farm forestry, to bioenergy, to innovative use of timber in construction and Australia had an opportunity to learn from them.

Link to tickets can be found on events page, P 7.

Science Week celebrates role of forest management

THE Institute of Foresters of Australia and Australian Forest Growers are celebrating the role that forest science plays in ensuring a healthy and resilient future for Australian society and the environment for National Science Week this month.

IFA-AFG CEO Jacquie Martin highlighted the benefits of forest

management underpinned by data and research, paying tribute to the membership's forest scientists.

"Science is at the core of effective forest management and at the core of what IFA-AFG's members do looking after all land tenures including state forests, national parks and private forests," Ms Martin said.

"Sustainable forestry – the science and craft of creating, managing, conserving, using and caring for forests - ensures all values of forests can be supported and enhanced, ultimately ensuring a resilient and healthy future for Australian society and the environment.

"Robust scientific inquiry and civil debate is vital to progress in any field of

endeavour, and forestry is no different."

Ms Martin said the benefits of evidence-based forest management were far-reaching and include maintaining and improving biodiversity, addressing climate change, carbon sequestration, supporting a circular economy and managing fire risk.

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HEAD OFFICE

Timber & Forestry e-news
PO Box 69, Potts Point, NSW 1335,
Australia
Phone | +61 (0) 417 421 187

PUBLISHERS

John Halkett | +61 (0) 417 421 187
johnh@timberandforestryenews.com
Dennis Neilson | +64 (0) 7 349 2764
dennisn@timberandforestryenews.com

MANAGING EDITOR

Jim Bowden | +61 (0) 401 312 087
cancon@bigpond.net.au
PO Box 330, Hamilton Central QLD
4007, Australia

ADVERTISING

John Halkett | +61 (0) 417 421 187
johnh@timberandforestryenews.com
advertising@timberandforestryenews.com

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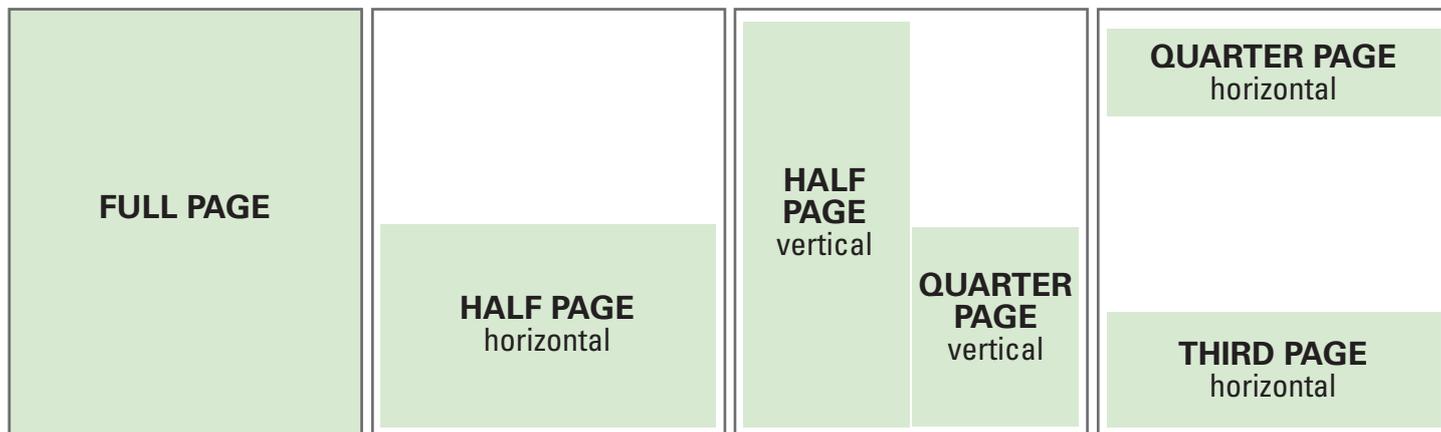
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