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COVER STORY P4

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# \$500,000 grant for researchers to develop DNA for timber supply chain verification

RESEARCHERS at the University of Adelaide in partnership with InterpreData and DoubleHelix Tracking Technologies, Singapore, have been awarded a \$500,000 federal grant from the Global Innovation Linkages Program to develop scientific origin verification tools for global timber supply chains.

Illegal logging is a major contributor to the global deforestation crisis. While government legislation can assist in preventing the importation of illegally logged wood, one of the biggest challenges lies in identifying the source of origin of timber.

“The research team will develop genetic markers, similar to DNA fingerprinting, for species of interest including, birch, ash, sandalwood and food items,” said Dr Arif Malik, postdoctoral researcher and lab manager for the Advanced DNA, Identification and Forensic Facility at the University



**Dr Arif Malik... research team will develop genetic markers, similar to DNA fingerprinting.**

of Adelaide’s School of Biological Sciences.

The project aims to enhance the development and application of scientific traceability tools for key timber, oil and food products, and to use this information, combined with that from public databases, to develop an online portal for supply chain verification and certification checks.

All samples will be sent to ADIFF for analysis and traceability. The facility is one of two laboratories globally that have this capability.

The DNA genetic markers



**Professor Andy Lowe... tools would be combined into an online portal.**

will be used in combination with a system to retrieve geographical data from repositories such as the Global Timber Tracking Network and other public databases.

**“UNIVERSITY TO DEVELOP SYSTEM OF BARCODING**

Along with an online interface incorporating supply chain mapping documenting the origin of materials used commercially

across different companies, suppliers, and individuals within a supply chain.

A system of barcoding will also be developed for local species as a means of further differentiating between timber species and providing independently verified evidence to support product claims of origin, species and legality for shipments of timber.

Professor Andy Lowe, project lead from the University of Adelaide, said the tools would be combined into an online portal that had the potential for commercialisation of a screening service to prove timber species and provenance origin.

“If we can commercialise the process and make it more accessible, we could reduce the risk of importation of timber from illegal sources by providing consumers with verifiable confirmation of where timber products were sourced,” he said.



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# Parkside devastated by sudden decision to close native hardwood sector in WA

A QUEENSLAND-based sawmiller, one of the biggest investors in the hardwood industry in Western Australia, has been “devastated” by a state government decision to end the native forest sector by 2024.

The Parkside Group entered the WA timber industry in late 2019 with the purchase of the sawmilling assets of Brickworks Building Products, so far investing \$54.4 million and employing more than 160 employees to re-establish Greenbushes as a specialist karri sawmill and Nannup as a specialist jarrah sawmill.

The Manjimup site has been rebuilt as a specialist processing centre with the world’s latest technology and will be operational in four weeks.

“Over the last two years, the Parkside Group have been encouraged by the Premier, Minister and local mayors to continue development of the business into a world-class milling centre,” Parkside director Robert Tapiolas said.

“The Parkside Board subsequently approved additional capital improvements to the WA businesses which would see a total investment of \$103.2 million with a requested contribution of \$25.8 million from the Western Australian government.

“The outcome would have meant 720 full-time jobs and an internationally competitive business in state’s south west supporting local communities.”

Mr Tapiolas reminded the state government that if Parkside Group had not proceeded with the purchase, then Brickworks was going to



2 make all remaining employees redundant and close the businesses.

He said the announcement by the Minister on September 8 to end native forest harvesting came as a complete surprise; it had devastated the Parkside Group, its employees, contractors and timber communities.

**“DECISION DRIVEN BY POLITICS NOT SCIENCE”**

The Parkside Group will continue operating business as usual as the company awaits further details from the WA government.

1/ Government’s end to native forest harvesting in Western Australia a painful blow to timber businesses.  
 2 Robert Tapiolas... the outcome of Parkside’s investment in WA would have meant 720 full-time jobs and an internationally competitive business in the state’s south west.

Forest Industries Federation WA executive director Melissa Haslam said the \$50 million Just Transition Plan

offered by the government as compensation was miniscule compared to the level of

Cont P 6

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# Apprentice numbers at critical level: wood machinists are on verge of declassification

AS the timber industry continues to evolve and develop, education has become one of the strongest pillars in the arsenal of many large operations. The ever-growing connection between innovation and education in this industry means for many companies trained staff are the key to future success.

“But despite its significance, apprenticeship numbers in this trade have decreased to a critical level over the last decade,” says Craig Honeyman, managing director of Stirling Machinery a supplier of high quality machining solutions for the solid timber industries across Australia and New Zealand.

Stirling Machinery is part of



**Ring testing a grinding wheel during a training session ... Julian Presize and Liam Field of Sculpform get the good oil from Craig Honeyman, Stirling Machinery (centre).**

the Accurate Group founded by Mr Honeyman in 2001.

“Apprentice numbers are so low, it is now under government review for declassification and removal

of funding,” Mr Honeyman said.

“However, the true needs within the industry are contradictory to these numbers,” he said.

“The wood machining trade has always been an integral part of manufacturing in the timber industry. A cornerstone discipline in training programs across Australia and New Zealand, the education of wood machinists is largely industry-based with many apprentices entering training programs through the companies they are employed by.”

Mr Honeyman said qualified wood machinists were currently listed on the National Skills Needs List, with many key industry stakeholders desperate for skilled personnel to join their operation.

Apprentices in this

**“CORNERSTONE DISCIPLINE IN TRAINING PROGRAMS**

discipline are currently eligible for employer incentives under the Australian Apprenticeships Incentives Program.

Craig Honeyman, recently attended a committee meeting where options being considered were outlined:

- Complete removal of wood machining as a trade in years to come.

- Amalgamation of wood machining with the cabinet-making apprenticeship.
- Retention of wood machining as a stand-alone trade

“Options one and two will see significant repercussions for the timber industry now and into the future,” Mr Honeyman said.

He added: “The Australian timber industry has unlimited potential. However, skilled operators are a crucial part of that success. I believe in the future of our industry and need the industry’s support to help retain this critical trade.”

Mr Honeyman is working to gather information from stakeholders throughout the industry, outlining their commitment to apprenticeships to present back to the committee.

“Numbers are critical to keeping wood machining as a stand-alone trade, so if you have engaged an apprentice this year or plan to in the



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# New appointment brings a focus on forest industry's potential in mine rehabilitation

QUEENSLAND'S forest and timber industry has recognised the potential for mine rehabilitation to deliver environmental and economic benefits in regional communities and congratulates James Purtill as the state's inaugural mine rehabilitation commissioner appointed by the state government.

Timber Queensland CEO Mick Stephens said he looked forward to briefing Mr Purtill on the role that productive forestry could play in mine site rehabilitation to deliver multiple outcomes.

"Where feasible on suitable sites, rehabilitation using productive forestry can deliver multiple benefits in terms of regional jobs and economic development, enhancing future wood and timber supplies and restoring



1/ **Leading global miner Anglo American and Komatsu, the leading provider of heavy equipment, technology and services for the mining, construction and forestry industries, have announced a new mine rehabilitation partnership that will see more than 9000 trees planted at Anglo American's Dawson coal mine in central Queensland's Bowen Basin..**



2/ **James Purtill... inaugural mine rehabilitation commissioner.**

degraded landscapes with improved environmental outcomes," Mr Stephens said.

"Given we have members with extensive experience in revegetation, forestry, soil management, the carbon sector and disturbed

land remediation for mine rehabilitation, we would be happy to assist with any future consultations between the forestry sector and the mining industry," he said.

Mr Stephens said that incorporating productive

forestry activities in mine rehabilitation projects could deliver incentives for sustainable outcomes.

"Given the future value of the wood resources to land managers and local communities, there is a real commercial driver to manage these sites over the longer-term," he said.

"Mine rehabilitation activities may also be eligible to create carbon credits where mines elect to establish trees as a remediation strategy over and above the requirements of their Environmental Authority.

"These opportunities can be a 'win-win' for the mining sector and the timber industry, in terms of providing additional wood resources while at the same time as providing environmental services.

From P 4

future, please complete the Wood Machining Apprenticeship Support form. [Register your support at [stirlingmachinery.com.au/](http://stirlingmachinery.com.au/)

register-wood-machining-apprentices/]

"Once the future of the wood machining trade is secured, Mr Honeyman says the next step will be to review the curriculum to ensure

that the skills apprentices learn are reflective of the new technologies and advancements the industry is making.

"However, reaching this goal is dependent on first

saving wood machining as a trade," he added.

**On the cover: Training session with Craig Honeyman of Stirling Machinery (left) and Kierryn Murphy from Coffs Harbour Hardwoods.**



Ballarat Region Treegrowers, a recipient of the 2020 Responsible Wood Small Grants Program.

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# \$15m federal investment alleviates crisis in timber supply to safeguard tradies, builders

THE federal government's \$15 million investment to alleviate the acute timber shortage will safeguard the viability of builder and tradie businesses around the country.

"The government's intervention will result in the supply of enough new timber to support the construction of 10,000 new homes and sighs of relief from builders, tradies and their clients," Denita Wawn, CEO of Master Builders Australia, said.

"This comes at a crucial time for thousands of builders and tradies whose viability is threatened by a surge in the price of timber and chronic delays of up to three months to access the timber needed

to construct new homes and renovations," Mrs Wawn said.

"Subsidising the transport of salvaged timber from plantations on bushfire ravaged Kangaroo Island to timber mills with immediate capacity in South Australia and other states is elegant in its practicality.

"This move will underpin the continued success of the HomeBuilder Scheme that is fulfilling the dreams of first home ownership for thousands of people and playing a major role in accelerating economic recovery as we begin to look to the future beyond Covid lockdowns."

Mrs Wawn said supporting



1/ **Denita Wawn... this comes at a crucial time for thousands of builders.**

2/ **Sue Grau... decision will boost much needed timber supply for homes.**

jobs and businesses in communities ravaged by the fires and reeling from economic impact of the pandemic was also a big win which an alliance of Master Builders and the Australian Forest Products Association helped bring about.

Meanwhile, the Australian Forest Products Association NSW has welcomed the state government's move to divert timber supplies from export to the domestic market. This will see the equivalent of up to 20,000 house frames of softwood log exports impacted by the China trade embargo stay in Australia.

"While it's not a long-term solution for Australia's timber shortage, this is a critical and welcome move," AFPA NSW CEO Sue Grau said.

"The industry is always supportive of increasing supply for domestic processors so more timber framing can be supplied to the housing market," she said.

From P 3

investment in the sector.

The Australian Forest Products Association condemned the decision saying it was driven by politics not science.

CEO Ross Hampton said Western Australia was using less than one tree in 1000 for forest products in a completely sustainable way, ensuring any tree used

was replaced by careful regeneration.

"Internationally the world is increasingly turning to sustainably sourced tree-fibre to replace plastics and to construct carbon storing timber buildings," Mr Hampton said.

"The world needs more certified, environmentally careful forestry, such as occurs in WA, not less."

Mr Hampton said the WA

government had cynically attempted to cloak the devastating impact this decision will have on timber supply for the state by also announcing at the same time a \$350 million fund to expand plantations.

"AFPA has been pleading for plantation growth for years, repeatedly pointing to the shortage in softwood for house framing and roof trusses," he said.

"This announcement of a renewed investment in more softwood trees is therefore very welcome. However, the state government must be honest with West Australians. The trees planted in plantations do not provide the hardwood timbers used for floors, stairs and windows. That timber will have to be imported in future years. There is no surplus in eastern states so it will mostly come from overseas."



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## IFA/AFG National Hybrid Conference

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**SEPTEMBER**

**TBA: 22nd Australian Timber Design Award.** Entries now closed. More than 90 submissions this year. Judging of People's Choice Awards starts late September. Last year was a virtual event. Traditional awards dinner will be held if Covid restrictions allow. More details and venue to be announced. Contact info@tdansw.asn.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](http://www.forestry.org.au) or phone (03) 9695 8940.

**NOVEMBER**

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**APRIL 2022**

**NB. REVISED DATE 3-8: Gottstein Trust Understanding Wood**

**Science Course – Sunday evening, April 3, 2022, in Albury, NSW, for the field trip component, ending on Friday, April 8, in Canberra.** The course is fully booked and a wait list is operating on a first-in-first-served basis. Delivered in partnership with the ANU, the course timing prior to next Easter matches up with the semester break. The course program can be downloaded at [www.gottsteintrust.org](http://www.gottsteintrust.org)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2021 GLOBAL

**EVENTS LISTS MAY CHANGE DUE TO CORONAVIRUS. PLEASE CHECK THE RELEVANT WEBSITES FOR UPDATES.**

**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/>

**27-28: LIGNA Innovation conference – ONLINE EVENT – Hannover, Germany.** Streamed live from Hannover Exhibition Centre from 9 am to 6 pm on both days. Registrations for digital participation now open: [www.ligna.de/en/for-visitors/tickets/index-2](http://www.ligna.de/en/for-visitors/tickets/index-2)

**OCTOBER**

**17-21: Prowood Ghent – Flanders Expo, Maaltekouter 1, 9051 Ghent, East Flanders, Flanders, Belgium.** For further information see: [www.tradefairdates.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, Pobeditelei 20/2 Minsk, Belarus.** International exhibition of woodworking and furniture production. For further information see: [www.tradefairdates.com/Woodworking-M3361/Minsk.html](http://www.tradefairdates.com/Woodworking-M3361/Minsk.html)

**OCTOBER-NOVEMBER**

**31/10-12/11: 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties – Glasgow, UK.** The COP26 summit will bring parties together to accelerate action towards the goals of the Paris Agreement and the

UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. The UK is committed to working with all countries and joining forces with civil society, companies and people on the frontline of climate change to inspire climate action ahead of COP26.

**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>

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# Logmeter one of the most robust, reliable truckload scanning systems on the market

## Big opportunity opens for forest industry: savings for growers, processors

IN recent years, leading companies in the forestry sector have been incorporating cutting-edge technologies in their supply chain, specifically in their fibre measurement processes.

Dr. Mauricio Acuna, senior research fellow in forest operations at the University of the Sunshine Coast, has been investigating the performance of sensor technology in systems for automated measurements of truckloads for about five years.

Dr Acuna discusses his research in this Q&A presentation.

**According to your research, what are the main features of these systems?**

**Mauricio Acuna:** These systems can scan full truckloads or measure logs on trucks using different sensors such as laser scanners, stereoscopic cameras, and RGB cameras, providing quick solid volume estimates and biometric information of the logs (e.g. length, diameter).

The LOGMETER is one of the systems I have studied; it has been developed by Chilean company Woodtech (www.woodtechms.com). In Australia, this system has been deployed to the Surrey Hills chip mill owned by Forico in Tasmania,



Several other units of the LOGMETER system have been deployed globally over the last 15 years, being one of the most mature, robust, and reliable truckloads scanning systems on the market. The Surrey Hills chip mill unit is the first one of this type in Australasia.

**Can you tell us more about the study conducted in Australia this year and the main findings you obtained?**

**Mauricio Acuna:** With a

which will result in more accurate measurements and better solid volume predictions, and ultimately in better economic returns to Forico and the haulage contractors

*From an economic point of view, what conclusions can be drawn from the study?*

**Mauricio Acuna:** We were able to confirm that automated systems for the measurement of truckloads can save big money for forest growers and processors, representing a

**1/ Logmeter... accurate measurements and better solid volume predictions, and ultimately better economic returns.**

**2/ Dr Mauricio Acuna... these systems can scan full truckloads or measure logs on trucks using different sensors such as laser scanners.**

team of researchers at the University of the Sunshine Coast we collected data from the LOGMETER deployed at the Surrey Hills chip mill early this year. We were able to confirm that the level of accuracy of the solid volume predictions reported by the system, with errors that lied within 5% in comparison to manual and photogrammetric measurements. The results from our trials have also been used to calibrate and validate the volumetric models,

big opportunity for the forest industry in Australia and New Zealand. Among other benefits, they allow a smooth and quick reception of trucks at mills, improve production planning and logistics, reduced log handling costs, log damage, and accidents, and provide better information of the forest resource. In conjunction with moisture control management, they can also reduce truck movements on road networks, with the consequent reduction in fuel consumption and GHG emissions (up to 20% according to our calculations).

**“ CUTTING-EDGE SENSOR TECHNOLOGY IN THE SUPPLY CHAIN ”**

Cont P 10



*"Logmeter was the critical piece of infrastructure that we needed", FORICO.*

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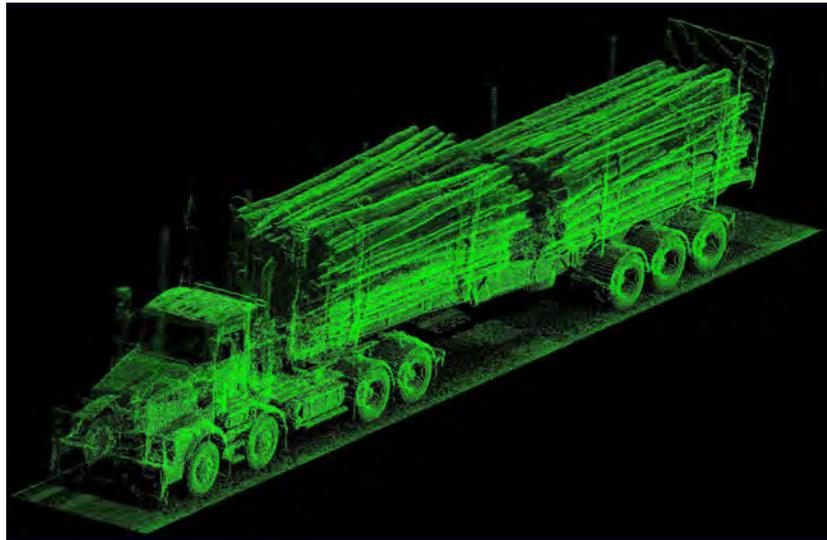
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From P 8

*For a successful implementation, which considerations must be taken into account for a company that decides to adopt an automated volumetric system such as the LOGMETER?*

**Mauricio Acuna:** The deployment of automated systems for the measurements of truckloads and transition from a trading system based on weight to one based on volume must



**Logmeter systems can scan full truckloads or measure logs on trucks using different sensors such as laser scanners, stereoscopic cameras, and RGB cameras, providing quick solid volume estimates and biometric information of the logs.**

“PROVIDING BETTER INFORMATION ON FOREST RESOURCE”

be planned carefully by forest growers and processors since they may represent a big organisational and

cultural change to haulage contractors and other parties in the supply chain.

To be accepted and

successfully implemented, a trading and payment system based on volumetric measurements must be well understood by all supply chain parties, and the benefits must be articulated to all of them. If all these aspects are considered carefully, the benefits associated with automated systems for the measurements of truckloads will largely outweigh their investment and deployment costs.

## Autonomous forestry harvesting and log movement a step closer

THE idea of a machine being able to autonomously harvest and move logs may seem like a far-fetched idea that is decades away, but autonomous forestry machinery may be closer than we think.

Canada’s FPIInnovations has developed an autonomous log loader capable of detecting and handling logs.

The project is part of FPIInnovations’ Forestry 4.0 initiative, through which new technology is being developed and tested to help address three main challenges: the labour shortage facing the forest industry; inadequate connectivity in remote forestry operations; and the extremely variable operating environments.

Forestry manager at FPIInnovations Sylvain Volpé said the main goal behind the development was to address the first challenge of labour shortage.

“Recruiting new operators



**Research autonomous log loader... able to detect a single log on the ground, grab it and put it in the trailer.**

in the industry is difficult,” Mr Volpé said.

“The average age is quite high, so transferring the skillsets is difficult. We’re looking at how we can start to automate some functions in the supply chain to make the job easier, and then eventually, as we evolve with the technology, make it fully automated.”

This project, funded by Natural Resources Canada’s transformative technology program and Quebec’s

Ministry of Forests, also addresses: improved operation safety, increasing productivity and reducing costs.

Technical lead on the project Patrick Levesque: “We bought a trailer with a Palm 4.7 crane and built a control centre to remotely

control it. Rather than using a skidder or forwarder, we chose to develop the technology on the trailer and crane because; “we needed a lab-scale, simple piece of equipment.”

The crane was modified; manual valves were changed to electronic ones and sensors were added to provide feedback to the control centre.

“On every joint, we put a rotary encoder that measures the angle between two links, so we can measure the angular distance and the speed,” Mr Levesque.

The team developed vision and control algorithms that decode information from the sensors so the machine knows where to move and can detect logs on the ground.

So far, the autonomous log loader has been able to successfully detect a single log on the ground, grab it and put it in the trailer.

“CAPABLE OF DETECTING AND HANDLING LOGS”

# Big River, government help train workers at a 'bittersweet' time for NSW operations

AROUND 50 timber mill workers at Wagga Wagga in the NSW Riverina region who were about to lose their jobs with the relocation of the Big River sawmill have received free training and a personal skills matching service through the state government's JobTrainer program.

The workers, some of whom have been employed at the mill for more than 30 years, are ready to re-enter the Wagga Wagga workforce, following Big River's consolidation of its operations in northern NSW.

Deputy Premier John Barilaro said Big River Industries had received \$10 million as part of the government's Bushfire Industry Recovery Package in the aftermath of the 2019-20 bushfires.

**“MAKING SURE STAFF ARE MATCHED TO OTHER JOBS**

“Following the devastating bushfires, these funds helped Big River relocate and expand its existing operations in Grafton,” Mr Barilaro said.

“Now, through the JobTrainer program, we are retraining those who didn't take part in the company's move north, to support local industries in need of skilled workers.”

Mr Barilaro said people in the region had been severely impacted by not only the bushfires, but the pandemic that has followed.

Maintenance manager at Big River Damien Periera said it was a bittersweet time for workers.

“Ultimately, the log supply was in danger and there was not enough to make the mill viable, but Training Services NSW has been invaluable in making sure our staff are



**John Barilaro... supporting the need for skilled workers.**

matched to other jobs,” Mr Periera said.

“That is a big relief for any business going through a similar situation in these circumstances. It's great to know there is government support available to help people land on their feet.”

Meanwhile, timber retailers in western Sydney have been forced to turn away major customers due to an ongoing timber shortage.

Kemps Creek timber yard operator Michael Furfaro

said the shortage could have a huge impact on her business.

“If the lack of timber stock is allowed to continue we will see the closure of businesses, loss of jobs, increased debt and further financial hardship,” he said.

NSW Labor is calling for government action to prevent an economic catastrophe as retailers across western Sydney struggle to supply construction timbers to major building companies.

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-19 recession.

“The Government needs to step in here and provide a solution. This industry is crucial to our economic recovery, but they've been left swinging in the breeze,” Ms Catley said.



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# Malaysia gearing for increased demand for certified, sustainable wood products

Delayed building projects will be pumping up momentum as the pandemic eases

SECOND of a two-part dialogue between ROGER CHIN, chief operations officer, Malaysian Timber Council, and JIM BOWDEN, managing editor, Timber&Forestry enews.

**Timber&Forestry enews:**  
*How do you see the market's response to Malaysian and other tropical timbers in the next few years? What factors will influence the response of the market in the future?*

**Roger Chin:** There will be an increase in demand for certified and sustainably acquired timbers and timber products from major importers in Europe as well as other developed economies and Malaysia will need to cater to this.

This trend will intensify as timber is increasingly recognised for its contribution towards economy and green living in the form of low carbon and low emission building material.

As Europe is pioneering the region via the European Green Deal and with others following suit, we foresee that there will be growth pockets for the trade of sustainable timber products globally in the next five to 10 years. This is where the opportunity lies for Malaysia ... to market its certified sustainable timber products to be used as carbon neutral or a sink compared to



**1/ It was at in the state forest in Perak, the fourth largest of Malaysia's 13 states, that we saw how deep the responsibility of forest management has been planted. State forestry officers openly showed their passion and responsibility for the forests explaining the benefits of selective harvesting and the growth rates of various species.**

**2/ Roger Chin... Covid-19 has brought many challenges which include disruptions in the supply chain, slowing of global and domestic demand, cash-flow management, increase in freight charges and increase in raw material costs.**



pandemic, the industry at a global level is going through an economic slowdown.

Despite this slowdown, we are seeing a steep rise in timber prices, due to the supply shortages. For instance, the US housing boom has driven timber prices up by more than 200% at one point. The massive price hike had made the American market an attractive

destination for many, including tropical timber suppliers.

The delayed building projects around the world is expected to be pumping up momentum once the pandemic situation eases. Demand for building materials would be on the rise. Timber, as one of the most environmentally friendly building material, is expected to be in demand.

The expected growth of the housing and construction sector will not only have a positive impact on building materials, but it will also bring about positive growth for products such as mouldings, claddings, wall panelling, flooring, windows and doors. The furniture sector will also see a rise with the interior furnishing segment being boosted.

Malaysia, one of the largest exporters of tropical timber products, has exports to more than 160 countries. Malaysian timber products are highly regarded due to their high quality, supply reliability as well as the access of sustainable and certified timber products. Malaysian timber-based manufacturers also have the capacity and capability to produce products from the conceptualisation and design stages to manufacturing them while complying with international standards.

**“HOUSING, CONSTRUCTION WILL HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON BUILDING MATERIALS”**

other conventional building materials such as concrete and steel.

In the past five years, the export of Malaysian timber products to the international market has maintained its momentum at \$AUD7.6 billion. However, due to the



# 2021 GALA EVENT POSTPONED TO EARLY 2022

With the health and safety of our attendees in mind, the GTTIA committee have made the decision to postpone the awards gala evening.

The event will be rescheduled to early 2022 and we are looking forward to celebrating the award winners and showcasing the industry's innovative, sustainable, and environmentally friendly practices within the region.

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# Covid calamity: AUSTimber another victim of lockdowns, Green Triangle still on agenda

## Reinforcing the unpredictability of delivering industry events during pandemic

I MUST say it's a bloody shame and an absolute tragedy for the forest industry more broadly that the flagship AUSTimber event that was to be held in Traralgon, Vic, in November had to be cancelled.

Not surprising I guess, but a real shame after all the effort of Dionne Olsen and her team having firstly re-scheduled the event following the 2019-20 bushfires, and then again after Covid in 2020. I am sure we would have thought that we would have been well clear of the effects of the virus by November this year, but the Delta strain had other ideas.

I understand that AUSTimber had completed significant preparations directed at a November show. However, over past weeks there has been a continual worsening of the Covid situation from the Delta strain and government lockdown measures across Australia only reinforce the unpredictability of delivering an event under the current circumstances.

Unfortunately, the compounding costs of

**“A DOUBLE TRAGEDY FOR EVENT ORGANISERS**



deferring the show on two prior occasions combined with the continuing uncertain outlook resulting from the pandemic have meant that it was just financially impossible to re-schedule the event yet again, and therefore cancellation was the only option.

So, after significant and tenacious effort, AUSTimber has unfortunately gone into administration. A double tragedy for organisers and for those exhibitors and others who have contributed so much time and funding.

Because of the significance of this event to the broader forest industry, it is very likely

are still dealing with Covid and getting to the required vaccination levels to allow travel and gatherings to resume to some level of normality.

Gaylene says that re-scheduling the awards event to early 2022 will provide time for the current Covid situation to stabilise. Also, the organising committee recognises that sponsors, attendees and nominees from Victoria are significantly impacted by current government-imposed restrictions and to continue forward and hold the event in their absence would undermine the event's primary purpose of uniting industry people and celebrating the outstanding achievements of award nominees and winners.

Gaylene added that the committee is looking forward to announcing a revised event date and is continuing with plans to once again to hold an extremely successful evening celebrating award winners and showcasing the industry's innovative, sustainable, and environmentally friendly practices within the Green Triangle region.

Timber&Forestry enews is a gold sponsor of the awards and is looking forward to joining with others across the industry at the Barn in Mount Gambier next year.

Frock up ladies and get out those black ties lads!

Catch you again next month.

**Cheryl**

- 1/ Covid-19... dismantling events.
- 2/ Gaylene Newton... looking forward to announcing a revised event date.

### TRUNK LINES



With **CHERYL FORREST**

that we will see others pick up the event in a couple of years' time. We sincerely hope so.

But on a slightly brighter note ... Gaylene Newton and her team organising the Green Triangle Timber Industry Awards remain optimistic that the event will go ahead. Wisely, I think they have decided to postpone the event from October 29 until early next year. A prudent move given that we

# The MARKET Leader...



## Komatsu 875 & 895

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

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

- New transmission system for greater traction and control.
- Improved crane performance with a large bunk area.
- Introducing Maxifleet to provide the ultimate service and production tool.
- New electric engine hood and new access panels for much improved serviceability
- Stylish and modern cab with central locking and remote key.

The latest Komatsu forwarders have been taken to another level in lifting the overall standards for forwarding which make them the best in their class.

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From P 12

**T&FN: What has been the impact of Covid-19 on the timber sector in Malaysia and its regions? Has there been any shortage of supply to fill demand from construction industries; have there been any closures of manufacturing facilities; or has this sector been exempt from Covid lockdowns?**

**RC:** The Covid-19 pandemic has brought about many challenges which include disruptions in the supply chain, slowing of global and domestic demand, cash-flow management, increase in

freight charges and increase in raw material cost. The pandemic also caused port congestion globally where timber supplies from and to Malaysia were delayed due to the unavailability of empty containers. This is

on top of the skyrocketing container shipment charges globally which ate into the profit margin of exporters.

MTC, together with various public and private sector organisations, played a key role in facilitating the smooth operation of the timber sector during the Movement Control Order (MCO) implemented in 2020, by channelling feedback from the industry players to the relevant ministries.

Surveys and consultation sessions were conducted with the timber industry members to formulate recommendations to the relevant stakeholders for policy matters and special assistance for businesses during the pandemic.

In June this year, Malaysia had gone into a Full Lockdown Movement Control Order (FMCO) due to spikes in the number of new active Covid-19 cases nationwide. Only essential economic and service sectors listed by the National Security Council were allowed to operate during Phase 1 of the lockdown. As for the timber and furniture sector, only activities in the furniture

sub-sector and supply of wood products to facilitate hospitals and other medical-related matters were allowed to operate.

With these restrictions in place, the forest and timber products sector lost about \$US14 million daily in June this year.

However, by mid-August, all timber-based sectors, which were deemed non-essential services,

were allowed to operate at certain capacities depending on the number of workers fully vaccinated.

MTC has allocated \$AUD450,000 (RM1.3 million) to help expedite mass vaccination among workers from the timber-based sector through an industrial vaccination program.

**SPECIAL ASSISTANCE FOR BUSINESS DURING THE PANDEMIC**

Various engagement programs with the stakeholders and publicity campaign domestically have created awareness on sustainable forest management practices which has been a critical component in the Malaysian timber industry. It also convinces that timber harvested from sustainably managed forests helps address climate change, reducing the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere as the carbon is imprisoned in the wood.



**The expected growth of the housing and construction sector will have a positive impact on Malaysian building materials such as mouldings, claddings, wall panelling, flooring and windows with the furnishing segment well placed to enjoy this growth.**

# Come back to Sorento: European luxury

ANNA Maria Alberghetti's Torna a Sorrento is a favourite version of the song.

Was Italian Ernesto De Curtis thinking about a woman or a car when he composed it ... in 1902? Could be either ... the Stefanini-Martina, thought to be the foundation of the Italian car industry, was named after a woman.

Kia Australia's reply to the meaning of the Sorento badge was simple: "No idea"

Since Sorrento on the Bay of Naples is the best known globally, and Kia is definitely a global company, it would stand to reason that it's the Italian Sorrento and the song that Kia was referencing.

Nonetheless, Kia's 3.5 litre FWD seven-seat eight-speed Sorento Sport+ embraces all the luxurious features of European design which will continue under new vice-president of interior design Jochen Paesen who moves to Korea after spending most of his career at BMW.

The Sorento Sport+ puts the focus firmly on family and luxury. It's more spacious and more versatile with class-leading innovations wrapped in finely



1/ **Kia Sorento Sport+... focus is firmly on family and luxury.**  
2/ **Inside Sorento... Nappa leather seats and 12-speaker audio system.**



tailored style.

The Sorento is not only the most high-tech Kia car ever made, it also leads the way in larger SUV design with a new interpretation of the unmistakable 'tiger nose' grille. The wider shape organically wraps around integrated LED headlights on each side.

A sharper, more assertive appearance is complemented by a wider lower air intake, book ended by wing-shaped air curtains to channel air around the car.

The Sport+ is the penultimate Sorento, slotting above the Sport but below the range-topping GT-Line at a drive away price of \$56,690 (excluding optional extras). Add \$3000 for the diesel/all-wheel drive powertrain.

Back to the interior ...

quilted Nappa leather seats (heated and ventilated), a quiet mode and driver intercom and a powerful 12-speaker Bose audio system delivering an immersive sound to all three rows.

Safety features include autonomous emergency braking with pedestrian and cyclist detection (they're still everywhere), blind-spot and lane-keep assist, rear cross-traffic assist, adaptive cruise control, front and rear parking sensors, driver attention alert, and front, front-side and curtain airbags, including a front-centre airbag.

There's plenty of storage; a hands-free power automatic tailgate reveals 187 L of cargo space behind the third-row seats, increasing to

6.6 L when the third row is folded flat, or an enormous 2011 L when the second row is folded flat.

The Sorento has a second pair of eyes. Activating the turn signal, wide-angle surround view monitors show live footage of other vehicles in your blind spots on a 12.3 in. instrument cluster.

Combined fuel consumption is rated at 9.7 L/100 km.

The range will soon be joined by Kia hybrid and plug-in hybrid models, both with turbocharged four-cylinder petrol engines and electrified running gear.

Over to you Maria: "Come back to Sorrento/ But please don't leave me, don't give me this torment/ Come back to Sorrento/ Make me live"

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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  
dennison@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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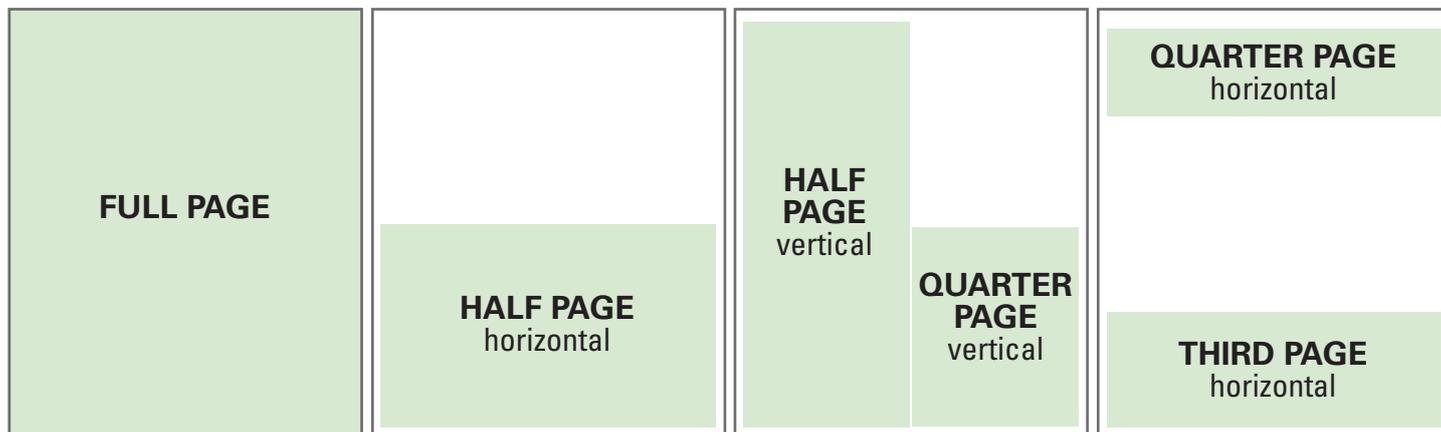
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**QUARTER PAGE: \$180**

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Horizontal • 63mmH x 190mmW

**THIRD PAGE: \$215**

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**PAGE 1 Front cover strip: Contract booking**

Horizontal • 30mmH x 190mmW

**PAGE 1 Front cover module: Contract booking**

Horizontal • 45mmH x 49.5mmW

**PAGE 2 below story: Contract booking**

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### WHO TO CONTACT

**Media releases:** Jim Bowden e: [cancon@bigpond.net.au](mailto:cancon@bigpond.net.au) | **Display ad bookings:** e: [advertising@timberandforestryenews.com](mailto:advertising@timberandforestryenews.com)

**Accounts:** e: [johnh@timberandforestryenews.com](mailto:johnh@timberandforestryenews.com) | **Subscribe:** [www.timberandforestryenews.com](http://www.timberandforestryenews.com)