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COVER STORY P7



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Murray Valley timber catchment region holds ‘great potential’ for forestry plantation growth

A viable solution to shoring up future timber supply for housing and construction

THE Murray Valley timber catchment holds great potential for forestry plantation growth and offers a viable solution to shoring up future timber supply for housing and construction following the Black Summer bushfires, according to a professional forum held in the region last month.

Forestry Australia, an independent association of forestry scientists, professionals and growers, convened the forum to discuss how best to maintain and expand forest-based industries in northeast Victoria and the southwest slopes region of NSW.

Some 50 people attended from across the plantation industry, including growers, contractors and large timber processors. The forum



Participants in the Forestry Australia forum inspect replanting after fires in the Myrtleford area.

considered land access, processing capacity and key risks for the sector in this region.

Participants also took part in a field trip to forests in the Myrtleford area for a first-hand look at replanting after the fires, the complexities of salvage harvesting and innovations in harvesting steep slopes that improve environmental outcomes while reducing costs.

Chair of Forestry Australia’s Victorian division Professor

Rod Keenan said the forum highlighted the great potential for plantation growth in the Murray Valley.

“The plantation-based timber industry within the region directly provides an estimated \$540 million a year in value-adding (contribution

“FIELD TRIP A FIRST-HAND LOOK AT NEW PLANTING

to gross regional product). These industries are already major contributors to the economy and communities of northeast Victoria, and they offer significant potential for growth,” he said.

“Growing national and global demand for wood products presents one such opportunity,” Professor Keenan said.

“However, expansion of the sector is currently limited by availability of timber resources.

“No new plantations have been established in the region for nearly 30 years and wildfires, including the 2019-20 Black Summer fires, have impacted on short-term wood supply capacity.”

In order to capitalise on the opportunities in the Murray Valley and counteract the threats, the forum put forward a number recommendations for action by the industry and Victorian and local governments:

Cont P 6



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NZ logs to China: fortune cookie crumbles

After an all-time high, exporters were expecting a buoyant second half (and into 2022) ... then the curtain came down

DENNIS NEILSON

IT is widely understood that the fortunes of the New Zealand forest industry sector are closely intertwined with its huge log exports to China.

This actually started back in 1985, but spluttered and even stopped, or was very modest after that for some decades to come.

It finally came to life after the 2008 financial crisis when the Chinese government directed almost a \$trillion into its construction industry to stave off the crisis ... which, unlike the rest of the world, it did.

Apart from mostly short-term corrections because of seasonal or occasional market reversals, or with major new entrants, generally this industry has since continued on an upwards direction both in volume and prices.

The market stumbled in 2017-2020 as the massive spruce pine beetle and wind damage in Europe decimated spruce forests there, and created a huge new market in China for dead spruce logs from mainly Germany and the Czech Republic.

Log exports from Europe to

“SUDDEN, SAVAGE REDUCTION IN CRF LOG PRICES



New Zealand logs ready for shipment to China... but at what cost and what return?

China accelerated from less than 500,000 cub m in 2017, to 8 million cub m in 2019 and 15 million cub m in 2020, which was close to the NZ total of 16 million cub m.

A new and growing container-based log market from the US South to China has also taken some of the shine off the market for New Zealand logs. The region's log exports to China increased five-fold from less than 50,000 cub m in January 2020 to almost 250,000 cub m in August last year.

But, even with these distractions, by mid-2021 NZ log demand and prices were at all-time highs, and the industry was looking forward to a buoyant second half and into 2022.

Then the curtain came down.

This was a result of a combination of unprecedented disruptions and price increases of shipping (on going but

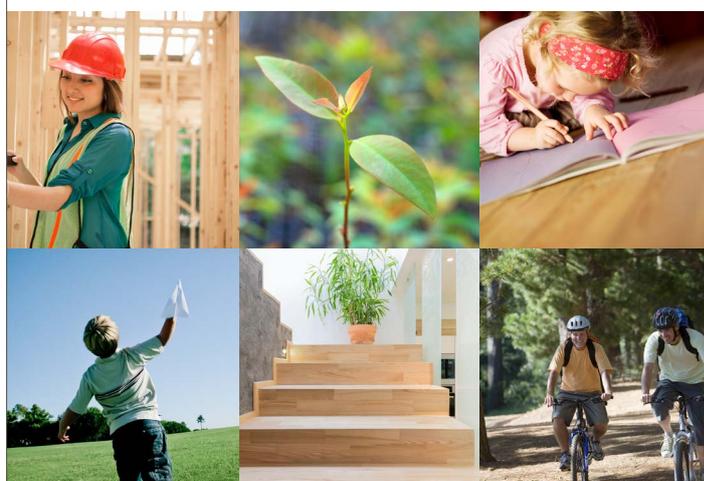
demand for logs and sawn timber in China.

China's demand reduction has in turn mostly been because of Covid-related disruptions – to demand itself, and also to electricity supply to sawmills, this coupled with the construction market suffering as a result of financial crises in several major Chinese construction companies. Most notable of these is the crisis befalling the biggest – Evergrande Construction.

Evergrande informed the Hong Kong Stock Exchange

Cont P 10

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Australian Forest Products Association

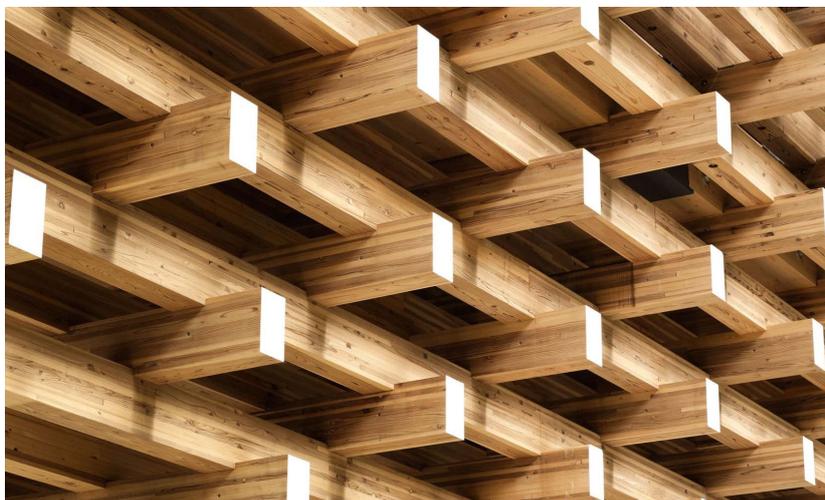
It's a numbers game for structural timber... so better times ahead for trade data tragics?

A greater insight into the structural products servicing the home building market

IT'S not often one can get excited about a 10-digit HS code but today is such a day.

The HS codes are the detailed harmonised product references that categorise the various wood and articles of wood which we import and the tariffs which apply.

In previous times, when tariffs were much higher and there was greater variability in the rates levied the classification of products was critical in determining the



Structural products such as LVL, glulam, CLT or I-beams have no clear product category.

import charges to be paid. Successfully 'splitting hairs' on which product code a

more vital.

The information on sawn timber imports is very detailed while the information available for many of the engineered structural products which are increasingly present in our market is more limited. For instance, structural products such as LVL, glulam, CLT or I-beams presently have no clear product category. Understanding these products involves educated guess work drawing on guidance

from importers and assessing countries of origin.

Interestingly, as can be seen in the graphs (page 13), the categories where these products are thought to be classified have exploded during the Covid building boom.

HIGHER THINKING



With **JIM HOUGHTON**

particular import might be cleared through customs under could save thousands of dollars on a shipment.

These days with a lower, flatter tariff structure where the maximum charge is only 5% and in some cases free, the financial difference between product classifications is not so significant. However, in understanding the market and how imports complement our local processing capacity the information generated from these codes could not be

“CLARITY IS ON IT'S WAY WITH REVIEW OF THE HS SYSTEM

The numbers 4412.99.99.42 is a grouping under the plywood category which is simply described as 'other'. By deduction this is thought to cover coniferous CLT and LVL in sheet/blank form.

As at September year-end volumes were 116,263 cub m which are similar record levels to those experienced in the last housing cycle in

Cont P 13



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Industry friends celebrate the festive season under a 'living tree' in parliamentary annexe

AROUND 80 members of Queensland's Parliamentary Friends of the Forest and Timber Industry and invited industry stakeholders celebrated the start of the festive season last Wednesday with the traditional unveiling a 'living' Christmas tree in Brisbane's Parliamentary Annexe.

Grown in Stanthorpe on Queensland's Granite Belt, the radiata tree (*Pinus radiata*) is the most common form of Christmas tree. It was adorned with locally-grown and processed hoop pine plywood decorations in the shape of a tree, signifying the growth of the state's \$3.8 billion timber industry and the 25,000 jobs it supports.

Timber Queensland's strategic relations and communications manager Clarissa Brandt said the custom of bringing a tree indoors for decoration and to brighten spirits was a long-standing tradition around the world.

"In the 16th century, the decoration of trees at Christmas time started in



At the festive forest celebration in Brisbane, from left, James Hyne, Hyne Timber, Greg Leach, AgForce, Steve Koch, Lonza, Mihai Daian, Queensland Regional Forestry Hubs, Clarissa Brandt, Timber Queensland, Katie Fowden, Hyne Timber, Jason Ross, Responsible Wood, Hulton King, NQ Regional Forestry Hub, Telia Pauchet, Timber Queensland, Kerry Fullarton, South East and Central Queensland Regional Forestry Hub, Sarah Porter-Dix, Timber Queensland, Beth Welden, ForestLearning, and Simon Dorries, Responsible Wood.

Germany with gingerbread, nuts and apples. A century later, decorations such as gold leaf, paper decorations and candles paved the way for the tinsel and electric lights we use today," Mrs Brandt said.

"These historical influences continue and we are pleased to donate a live pine Christmas tree for parliamentarians and visitors alike as they enter the building," she said.

Of all of Queensland's natural resources, forests and timber were one of the most visible and abundant to the state's early development. By 1901, the number of sawmills exceeded the number of meat, butter, sugar, leather and flour factories.

“INDUSTRY IS THE GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING”

"This track record continues. With 52.5 million ha of native forests and around 200,000 ha of plantations, Queensland has the largest forested area in the country and timber is the state's third largest agricultural processing industry by value," Mrs Brandt said.

"We acknowledge the support of the Speaker of the Queensland Parliament Curtis Pitt and the Parliamentary Friends co-chairs Bruce Saunders, MP Maryborough, and Tony Perrett, MP Gympie, in promoting the tradition of a live tree in parliament ... a reminder of the significant role of forests to the state's economic future."

Mrs Brandt said the forest and timber industry was a truly renewable industry worth celebrating.

"Every five minutes in Queensland we grow enough plantation softwood to build another timber-framed home," she said.

"Our industry is indeed the gift that keeps on giving to Queensland."



Nature Glenelg Trust, a recipient of the 2020 Responsible Wood Community Grants Program.

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Responsible Wood would like to congratulate the recipients of the 2021/2022 Community Grants Program.

Responsible Wood 

RW/1-10-1

Five community groups across Australia benefit from Responsible Wood 2021-22 grants program

FIVE community groups have been awarded Responsible Wood grants for the 2021-22 program.

The grants, announced this week, are awarded for collaborative community-based projects – activities or events that connect communities to certified forests.

The program supports local communities to connect with nearby Responsible Wood certified forests by contributing to projects that have been designed by the community in their local area.

Announcing the successful recipients, community grants project manager Megan Graham reflected on the quality of applications.

“In total, we received 18 applications with every



Megan Graham... praise for number, quality and creativity of grant applications.

state represented – a 50% increase both in total and value of applicants from last year.

“We are truly pleased with the number, quality, and creativity of applications from across Australia.”

Applications were assessed by an expert panel including Dr Hans Drielsma, chair, Responsible Wood, David Rowlinson, ‘Make It Wood’ campaign manager with Planet Ark and Lou Coutts, external relations manager

with HVP Plantations.

Community projects were: Planting Seeds – the installation of nesting boxes in NSW primary schools as part of the B&B Highway’s bed and breakfast for birds, bees and biodiversity program; Friends of the Heysen Trail – restoration of Rossiter’s Hut, a 19th century shepherd’s hut on a 1200 km hiking trail; Gippsland Forestry Hub – a forestry career pathway program working

with the local education sector and employment agencies to train, up-skill and promote opportunities for employment; Human Projectile MTB Club – installation of bespoke timber furniture in the Fix Creek Bike Park in the Adelaide Hills; and Green Skills – improvement to the farm forestry and wetland site at Denmark, WA.

Responsible Wood will feature successful individual projects in the coming months. The program runs again next year, with the application period from September 1 to October 31.

CONNECTING WITH CERTIFIED FORESTS

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From P 2

- Build on the participants’ vision for the sector to be recognised as the lead industry in the region with more plantations and trees on farms with a greater diversity of ownership.
- Communicate the value of the industry for employment and for regional and national economies,

SALVAGE PROCESS HAS CREATED NEW LEVELS OF COOPERATION

the risks under business as usual, and opportunities to expand the sector contribution in NE Victoria.

- Support innovation to increase efficiency and maximise value from all parts of harvested trees and products.
- Develop new tree-growing partnerships and relationships with local farmers.
- Improve transparency for harvest and haulage costs and mill-gate log prices.
- Nurture the next generation of industry participants through training, skills and mentoring.



Professor Rod Keenan... great potential for forest growth in the Murray Valley.

- State and federal governments to provide policy, incentives and planning to support the vision.

Professor Keenan said the sector had demonstrated considerable resilience following the Black Summer fires, with plantation managers, harvesters, haulers and processors working together to salvage and process an estimated 3.5 million tonnes timber from about 47 000 ha of burnt plantation over the last 18 months.

This salvage process has created new levels of cooperation, new log standards and new market opportunities, in the face of the loss of major export markets.

JANUARY 2022

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

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

JUNE 2022

NB. REVISED DATE 13: AFPA gala dinner. –TBA. POSTPONED EVENT. www.ausfpa.com.au

NB. REVISED DATE

21-22: Frame Australia Timber Offsite Construction –Crown Promenade Melbourne, VIC. New global 'hybrid' format. 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

OneFortyOne's free Christmas tree tradition continues

THE team at OneFortyOne, a trans-Tasman sustainable forest grower and timber products company, is giving away Christmas trees again this year, spreading some festive cheer with what has become a local tradition.

Silviculture forester Adrian Lynch says the radiata pines will be thinned from the OneFortyOne estate and available for the community to collect at the Glencoe Nursery and depots at Mount Gambier, Nangwarry, and Mount Burr.

"This is my first year helping out with the Christmas trees, but OneFortyOne has given away hundreds over the years," Adrian said.

"The trees are thinned from different parts of our



Spreading festive cheer... the OneFortyOne team Bella Walker, establishment forester, Taylah Martin, harvesting forester, and Sheryl Vickery, planning forester.

estate, and while they're not the kind for building houses, they're perfect for bringing home to the family to decorate."

Trees will be available

from 8 am on December 9 and 10 on a first-come-first-served served basis at the OneFortyOne nursery and depots.

"I haven't always had a real

tree at Christmas, but I will this year," Adrian said.

"I'm looking forward to sharing that with my family and being a part of the joy we hope to bring to others who collect a tree."

If you're planning on picking up a free tree, remember to follow all safety signage at pickup locations, and ensure you can safely and legally secure your tree on the ride home. And please be Covid safe by maintaining physical distancing and using the sanitisers provided.

On the cover: Getting in the festive spirit, Bella Walker, OneFortyOne establishment forester, tries her hand at decorating a Christmas tree before trees are thinned from different parts of the company's estate and given away to the general public.

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Find-A-Pest: biosecurity systems play crucial role in sustaining health of NZ primary sector

‘No matter the border defenses, something will make it through at some point’

NEW Zealand has one of the world’s strongest biosecurity systems, backed by the natural advantage of isolation.

We invest heavily in the system because of our economic reliance on primary industries, which are at significant risk from new pests and diseases.

With that in mind, Timber&Forestry enews talked with Dr Steve Pawson, senior lecturer at the University of Canterbury, and project lead of Find-A-Pest – a new app in the country’s biosecurity arsenal.

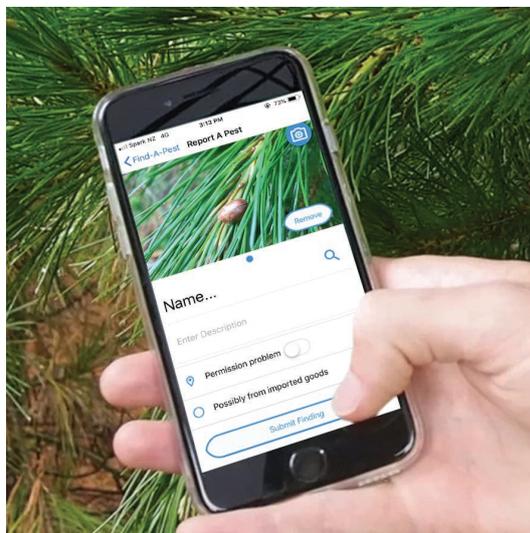
Dr Pawson’s research interests include forest entomology, invasive species, biosecurity and biodiversity – and often involve the use of new technologies for active surveillance, response and eradication.

He says we have to accept that trade (and tourism when it returns) always comes with risk. “No matter the border defenses, something will make it through at some point. But early detection increases the number of tools available to deal with the problem, and dramatically increases the chances of eradicating it.”

“TRADE AND TOURISM ALWAYS COMES WITH RISK”



Dr Steve Pawson... early detection increases the number of tools available to deal with biosecurity issues.



The Find-A-Pest app can be used by anyone, anywhere to contribute to the database of pest knowledge in New Zealand.

Dr Pawson and Dr Jon Sullivan (ecology lecturer at Lincoln University) conceived the idea of Find-A-Pest as a collaborative network of people helping to improve biosecurity surveillance. Both had worked with ‘citizen science’ initiatives and knew the potential of inviting people to contribute observations and identifications to help strengthen the biosecurity system.

Previously, reporting existing pests, or new pests entering at our borders, was fragmented. “The main pathway for general surveillance reporting was to contact the Ministry for Primary Industries. There were a few apps and web forms for individual species, but no simple, co-ordinated method for clear identification and collection of data.

“The idea of Find-A-Pest was to create a single point of entry that would be accessible to everyone, regardless of industry or region. By harnessing the collective mahi [work] of citizen scientists

ACROSS THE DITCH

With MICHAEL SMITH

we’re able to develop an in-depth database of up-to-date information on pests and diseases, and their spread and concentration across New Zealand.”

The initial project was developed at Scion (in collaboration with Lincoln University), with funding received from the Biological Heritage National Science Challenges, and regional councils via the Environlink Fund. Early commercial support came from the Forest Owners Association, Zespri, Kiwifruit Vine Health, and Biosecurity New Zealand.

Feedback from a five-month trial – undertaken in cooperation with the plantation forestry and kiwifruit industries, and three local government agencies – informed further development of the app.

Dr Pawson says Find-A-Pest (available on both the Android and Apple platforms) has its own database and front end, but uses a very close association with the iNaturalist NZ platform.

“We’re able to manage users and their observations, and make use of iNaturalist NZ’s small army of volunteer identifiers,” he said.

The app is now set to play a crucial role in maintaining the health of New Zealand’s horticultural industries, and its natural and production forests. “There are a few high-profile things that we’re worried about – for example, pine processionary moths, bark beetles, and pathogens like pine pitch canker and western gall rust,” Dr Pawson sad.

Cont P 9

Libby Coker is on a personal crusade to create a job-winning timber manufacturing strategy

LABOR MP Libby Coker is on a "personal mission" to create a national timber manufacturing strategy – in a win for jobs and the environment – if she is re-elected to federal parliament.

Faced with a timber shortage gripping the nation, Ms Coker, who represents Corangamite in western Victoria, said a federal task force was needed to develop capability in Australia to grow and mill a high proportion of its timber.

"If re-elected, I will make it my personal mission to develop a national environmentally sustainable plantation and timber manufacturing strategy, which addresses supply chain issues," Mr Coker said in a Geelong Advertiser report.

"We just need the right initiatives, the will and determination to get it done," she said.

In the interim, Ms Coker wants Australia's timber plantations to be expanded, noting the cost of some new homes had risen by \$28,000 in



1/ Governments need to tackle supply chain issues.
2/ Libby Coker... tackling the timber shortage.

six months, partly due to rising timber prices.

Ms Coker said the ripple effect of the national timber crisis had caused job losses and slowdowns for builders and tradespeople.

"According to industry experts we are seeing the unfolding of a timber train wreck, which will only get worse over the next 12-24 months, and see a lot of home buyers, subcontractors and tradespeople left stranded and losing thousands," she said.

In September, the federal government said it would spend \$15.1 million to help

brown marmorated stink bug.

"Clearly we do need to be concerned about them, but we also need people to understand there's a huge number of other things out there," he said.

Find-A-Pest's region and sector-based fact sheets will help people to understand existing pest species in their area, and to notice when something novel may appear.

• *Next week we talk further with Dr Pawson about biosecurity, monocultures v polycultures, and native forest health.*

address timber shortage for residential construction. Housing Minister Michael Sokar said the funding would provide "vital materials for 10,000 new homes to be built"

Ms Coker said Geelong-



based Timbertruss, which was among the country's largest roof truss and wall frame manufacturers, was operating at 60% capacity due to the shortage. Timbertruss imports about 45 semi-trailers of timber every month from Europe.

But business manager Steve Collier reported that timber from overseas was costing between 85% to 125% more and this was inevitably being passed on to the client, and leading to a concerning increase in the cost of housing.

Ms Coker added: "It dumbfounds me Australia, with our enormous land area, is not self-sufficient with well-planned, environmentally sustainable plantations."



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From P 8

"However, recent work by Dr Rebecca Turner from Scion indicates that we have to be very careful about our 'current threats'. She determined that in the period 2000-2017 we had just over 71,000 interceptions at the border. Almost half were identified to a species level ... and 47% have only ever been seen once."

Dr Pawson says we shouldn't just focus on lists of expected arrivals – so-called poster-child threats like the

From P 3

this week that it will possibly never be able to pay back its monstrous \$US300 billion debt – and with Goldman Sachs suggesting it might have an addition \$156 billion in “hidden” debt.

This week creditors are demanding \$260 million in repayments. Next Monday is D Day for Evergrande.

What has this all meant to the NZ forest owners, log exporters; and importantly to the large NZ harvest contracting and servicing sectors?

Firstly shipping costs almost trebling from \$25 per JAS cub m in early 2020 to \$70-\$75 in Q3 2021, with additional demurrage charges which increased total shipping costs up to \$80 on occasions.

Fortunately, the shipping cost escalation has reversed and recent settlements have been back to \$US35 – although the effect of these will take some time to filter through.

The reduction in CRF log prices in a short time have been savage – down from around \$190 per JAS cub m landed China port at their peak in June-July, down to



Unfinished business... crisis befalls China's biggest builder Evergrande Construction.

\$154, then to \$140 ... and we hear to \$132.50 recently.

We hear this latest CFR price has the mouths of some forest owners and ‘other’ exporters gasping like goldfish out of water.

At-wharf gate prices in NZD per JAS cub m3 have fallen from around \$160 in June-July at major ports (for the ‘standard’ A Grade Short log grade) to \$80 or even to \$70 in some minor ports. This is less than harvesting and transport across large areas of New Zealand’s more remote forests, so harvesting has ceased.

China log stocks are still very high but stable, and demand conditions may not recover until after Chinese

New Year in February 2021.

The result in the short term?

Harvest and transport crews largely servicing the buoyant NZ domestic wood processing industry are still working through December, but with some crews on reduced target quotas.

But crews in mainly smaller woodlots, or in regions with small or no domestic processing, are suffering seriously. Many are taking long Christmas breaks, and/or crews are looking at other work like construction. Some long-standing crew owners have decided to hang up their boots permanently, which means crew layoffs.

In late November, a

survey by the NZ Forest Owners Association and the Forest Industry Contractors Association indicated that 35% of the sector are fortunate to be on business-as-usual while the other 65% are on reduced volumes and variations of shut down from set finish dates to extra time off over the Christmas break. Alarming, those on reduced volumes indicated they were between 20-40% down with little idea when that would improve.

However, like Australia, New Zealand is desperately short of agriculture and horticulture workers, as we head into the fruit picking season, and the NZ Forest Contractors Association (FICA) is looking to work with the government to take advantage of subsidised work-switching programs.

As with all major downturns, there are clarion calls for New Zealand to become less reliant on China log exports – once and for all.

However, like the Australian iron ore companies, this is easier said than done. And if China’s log demand picks up in Q2 2022 (or before), all will probably be forgiven, and forgotten ... at least until next time.

Seed to structure: Timberlink’s new engineered wood brand

TIMBERLINK Australia has unveiled the new brand for their forthcoming engineered wood products building solutions range – NeXTimber by Timberlink.

NeXTimber will manufacture CLT and glulam products, providing an Australian-made renewable and carbon-positive timber building solution for commercial, residential, and public projects.

Backed by a \$63 million capital investment, the

NeXTimber range will be manufactured on Australia’s first combined world-scale softwoods CLT and GLT manufacturing line, within a purpose-built manufacturing plant constructed adjacent to Timberlink’s state-of-the-art timber manufacturing facility in Tarpeena, SA.

CEO Ian Tyson said NeXTimber placed Timberlink at the forefront of integrated forestry and softwood processing in Australia.

The NeXTimber range



will be manufactured on Timberlink’s Tarpeena site, the timber sourced from local certified pine plantations.

The plantations, like Timberlink, are under the ownership of funds managed by New Forests.

“This connection from seed to structure will give NeXTimber customers a unique level of supply

certainty,” Mr Tyson said.

“Currently around half of all of Australia’s engineered timber is being imported and the demand for this is expected to rapidly grow in the next decade.” he said.

A total of 27 full-time permanent jobs will be created when the facility opens in 2023, rising to 50 at full output. A significant number of additional jobs are also being created during the construction phase.

Gottstein donations building career pathways

AS the Gottstein Trust's 50th anniversary year draws to a close, the industry's education fund shows grants totalling \$1.4 million have been awarded to 192 applicants to further their careers.

The annual funding appeal is again under way and chair Suzette Weeding says the esteem held for the trust is reflected in the strong response from prominent industry donors.

"Tree Alliance and Fifth Estate were welcomed as new sponsor category donors this year," Ms Weeding said.

"They join fund renewals by Hurford Hardwood, Pentarch,

“\$1.4 MILLION AWARDED TO 192 APPLICANTS”

Forest and Wood Products Australia, Wesbeam, Forico, Hyne Timber, VicForests, the Australian Forest Products Association, HQP, AKD Softwoods, Porta and the Tasmanian committee of the Australian Forest Products Association."

Trustees hope all prior donors will reconfirm their contributions. All Gottstein donors receive prominent recognition at www.gottsteintrust.org

"Regular donations enable all trust fund activities to be maintained regardless of the prevailing investment and interest rate climate," Ms Weeding added.

The trust has written to all existing donors and an appeal letter of invitation is going out to potential new donors.

Three people were



Suzette Weeding... esteem held for trust is reflected in industry donors.

successful in the 2021 award round – Jason Ross from Responsible Wood and Euan Scott from Forestry Corporation NSW received Gottstein fellowships and university student Oliver Andrews received a Gottstein scholarship.

Donor fee categories

for 2021 are unchanged – patron level is \$2000 and sponsor level is \$1000 to \$1500. Both categories get discounts for two Australian-based personnel to attend the respected week-long Gottstein courses.

The \$500 supporter donor level is well suited to small firms and individuals. Ms Weeding especially thanked Dr Kevin Harding, vice president of Forestry Australia, for his personal donor support.

Donations to the trust at team@gottsteintrust.org or phone Helen Murray on 0419 991 424.

The next Gottstein Understanding Wood Science Course is running in April next year with the Understanding Forest Science Course in 2023.

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A POWERFUL LEGACY A BOLD VISION



From P 4

mid-2018. However, because of the grouping of these products it is difficult to really know what is LVL and what might be CLT.

The other area where these products are covered has a more useful description but is still limited in the information which can be discerned.

This product which includes glulam, LVL beams and I-beams was a record \$150 million for the year ending September 2021. However, as this covers a number of structural products and is only reported as a dollar value, it remains very opaque.

The good news for trade data tragnics – and I know there are some of you out there – is that clarity is on its way. From January 1, 2022, the periodic review of the HS

HS 4412.99.99.42 OTHER OTHER; CONIFEROUS, INC LVL, CLT

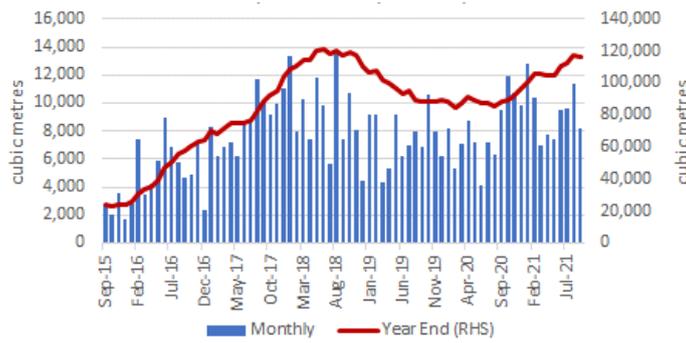


Chart: HireThinking Pty Ltd Source: ABARES/ABS

HS 4418.60.00.31 BUILDER'S JOINERY WOODEN POSTS AND BEAMS

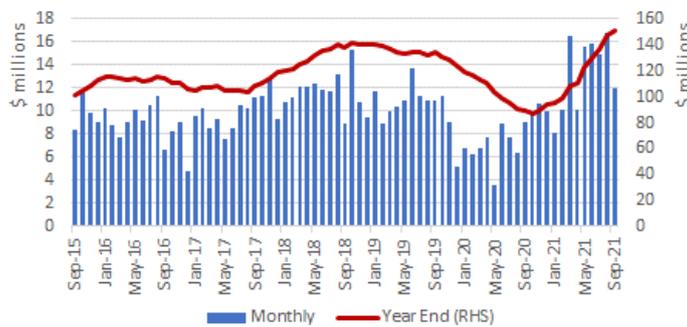


Chart: HireThinking Pty Ltd Source: ABARES/ABS

system will be implemented. The latest update to the HS codes will see the introduction of a specific LVL code (4412.4) and under 'builder's joinery' a specific engineered structural timber products code (4418.8) which will cover separately glulam (4418.81.00.51), CLT (4418.82.00.52) and I-beams (4418.83.00.33).

This reflects the increasing global trade in these products and once a time series is established the data will provide more insight into the structural products servicing the home building market.

The only downside is the 'informed guesses' we previously made on these products may need to be revised!

• *Jim Houghton is a timber industry consultant. Email jim@hirethinking.com.au*

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Lignum vitae: hardest, heaviest wood that powered ships and empowered physicians

INDIGENOUS to the Caribbean and the northern coast of South America, notably Venezuela, *Lignum vitae*, is notable for its ostentatious beauty with a heart of iron and is the national flower of Jamaica.

The tree, also called guayacan or guaiacum, are of the genus *Guaiaecum* and derives its name from its medicinal uses.

Lignum vitae resin has been used to treat a variety of medical conditions. With its silky feel and its exotic vanilla fragrance there are rumours of its use by the indigenous Arawak people to treat venereal disease, causing physicians in the early 16th century to ascribe to its special powers, calling it the 'wood of life'.

In the 1520s, the powdered wood and resin commanded an extortionate price – far beyond its likely efficacy – for treating syphilis. Often alarmingly combined with mercury, it was used until the 19th century.

With its unusual branching near the ground, *Lignum vitae* is a popular street tree often trained into a neat inverted



pyramid. Rare old specimens are at home in the dry lowland forests of Central America and the Caribbean and can be marvellously crooked, and given the chance might live for 1000 years.

Lignum vitae puts on a terrific show with shiny, evergreen, paddle-shaped compound leaves and bark that flakes to reveal multi-coloured mottling. Profuse and long lasting pretty blue or lavender blossoms densely adorn the foliage. As they age the blossoms fade to white and the tree shivers with variegated colour.

- 1/ *The tree of life... Lignum vitae, given the chance, might live for 1000 years.*
- 2/ *Lignum vitae ... Jamaica's national flower.*

material with an extraordinary combination of strength, toughness and density.

Because of *Lignum vitae*'s strength and durability, it has been used for auctioneers' gavels and croquet mallets, mortars and pestles, heavyweight bales for stormy weather cricket and for British policeman's impressively hefty truncheons.

Its resinous oiliness causes its surface to be self-lubricating. Throughout the golden age of steam these qualities made *Lignum vitae* essential for the bearings of the propeller shaft that powered the world's biggest ships.

Lignum vitae wood was widely used in water-lubricated shaft bearings for ships and hydro-electric power plants up until the 1960s. According to the San Francisco Maritime National Park Association website, the shaft bearings on the WWII submarine USS Pampanito were made of *Lignum vitae*.

The aft main shaft strut bearings for the USS Nautilus, the world's first nuclear-powered submarine, were also made from *Lignum vitae* wood.

TALKING TREES



With **JOHN HALKETT**

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The most astounding aspect of the tree is its wood which is possibly the hardest and among the heaviest in the world. It is far too dense to float in water.

The wood has been an important export product to Europe since the beginning of the 16th century. The wood was once very important for applications requiring a

“ BEAUTIFUL TREE WITH A HEART OF IRON ”



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ANU's \$60m tax saving on forests closure claim based on 'flawed economics': SETA

MEMBERS of the South East Timber Association are "deeply disturbed" by an economic analysis released last week by the ANU and consultancy firm Frontier Economics.

The report, co-authored by ANU law professor Andrew Macintosh, advocates for an immediate halt to all native forest harvesting on state forests in Eden and Southern Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) areas.

"This move would strip \$100 million in forest product sales out of south coast economies each year," SETA secretary Peter Rutherford said.

"The authors claim that over the next 30 years NSW taxpayers will be more than \$60 million better off. A major flaw in the report shows about \$80 million of the economic benefit arises each year from avoided harvest, haul and processing costs."

Mr Rutherford says this \$80 million has been accounted for in the cost-benefit analysis as a saving to tax payers. These operations are an expense paid for by timber processors, out of the \$100 million in revenue that flows from the sale of forest products.



ANU report advocates an immediate halt to all native forest harvesting on state forests in Eden and Southern Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) areas. Photo: Forestry Commission of NSW

"What are claimed to be avoided costs, are actually income that will be stripped from regional families, businesses and economies," Mr Rutherford said.

The report goes on to state that avoided carbon emissions associated with logging, provide significant benefit to society.

"Aside from errors in the detail of the calculations, there is a major sticking point, with the \$18 to \$22 million revenue that is supposed to arise from carbon trading," Mr Rutherford says.

"Currently, there is no legal basis for this form of carbon trading. In Australia the only type of forest that is currently eligible for carbon trading is defined as 'reforestation'. This is land previously cleared but now converted back to tree production.

"None of the carbon funds

will actually come into local communities. The third and minor revenue contribution is tourism revenue generated from recreation, which cannot occur in active logging sites.

"The specific venture is a proposed mountain biking development. The report fails to mention that more than 1.9 million ha of state forest is not subject to active timber harvesting in any year and up 7.3 million ha of parks that are available for mountain biking and other recreational pursuits."

Mr Rutherford points out a major omission from the report. He says as the

“MOVE WOULD STRIP \$100M FROM PRODUCT SALES AND REGIONAL ECONOMY

state forests would no longer be generating any revenue, management of the 415,000 ha of state forest in the Eden and southern RFA areas would have to be fully funded by taxpayers. Latest figures show the taxpayer contribution to managing national parks is \$50 per hectare higher than for state forests. The cessation of harvesting would deliver an

annual additional burden on taxpayers of \$20.75 million or \$622.5 million (not inflated) over the 30-year analysis period.

Mr Rutherford says the contents of the report are a clear example why academics and economists should not be allowed anywhere near decision-making processes for small to medium-sized regional businesses.

"The content of this report is misleading," he said. "The ANU must explain why a law professor is using the ANU logo and website to promote his anti-native forest harvesting views."

Professor Macintosh was asked via email to specify the source of the funding for this report. To date, he has not responded.

Contact admin@southeasttimberassociation.com

Job Vacancy



Timber Treatment Technician / Customer Services Role

Koppers Performance Chemicals (KPC) is a global leader in timber preservative technology and the supply of products to the timber preservative industry. We are a dedicated team providing wood preservatives, engineering services, and marketing services to our customers.

Providing market leading service, products, and quality, we are seeking a talented all rounder to provide additional technical support to our customers as well as further assist in the extensive development work which we undertake.

It is envisaged that the successful candidate will be located at our Moolap / Geelong facility in Victoria though there is some flexibility to allow this position to be filled by a person working in another region of Victoria. The successful candidate should possess the following attributes:

- It is desirable (though not essential) that the candidate will have work experience in wood products or forestry related areas with a preference for this experience to be in timber preservation
- Formal qualifications in a science or engineering based discipline will also be looked upon favourably
- The ability to form good working relationships with customers at all levels
- Be creative, independent and motivated.
- Willingness to travel (mainly within Victoria and some interstate)
- Good written and verbal communication skills.
- Good general IT skills

To succeed in this role, you must be able to work autonomously within the structure of a small professional team to help reach key performance targets. You will also be able to work as part of a larger international team sharing information and collaborating on projects.

You will enjoy working in an environment that encourages teamwork, transparency, innovation, and excellence. Training will be provided to the right candidate.

If you believe that you are the person for the job, and you are ready to join the Koppers team, please submit your written application and **resume by 17th December 2021** to:

General Manager

Koppers Performance Chemicals Australia

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Applicants must possess a suitable visa for working in Australia.

Tariffs 'a lousy way to treat a trading partner'

LINGERING supply chain problems, increased cost of materials and labour shortages are putting upward pressure on house prices in the US, which are 20% higher than they were a year ago.

With housing affordability threatened, American home builders are asking the Biden administration to temporarily lift tariffs on building materials such as lumber and steel from China and Canada.

In recent years, duties on Canadian softwood lumber have been on a ride, rising to 10.2% in 2017 and then coming back down to 8.9% in 2020.

However, in May this year the US was taking steps to substantially increase tariffs on Canadian softwood lumber imports once again. In late November, the Commerce Department announced that the average tariff will double, back up to 17.9%.

These tariffs act as a tax on American homes, driving up costs for builders (and hence buyers) and exacerbating price volatility. In addition, volatile lumber prices skyrocketed this past year, adding almost \$US36,000 to the cost of a new single-family home. Factor in supply chain issues, and it's no surprise home-building has slowed.

Ultimately, these duties benefit only American lumber producers, who seek to protect their market share. For decades, they have



Michel Kelly-Gagnon... tariffs are a lousy way to treat a trading partners.

accused Canadian producers of taking advantage of the US by "dumping" low-priced lumber. Canadian lumber producers, however, have been cleared of this charge every time by international trade arbiters.

Michel Kelly-Gagnon of the Montreal Economic Institute says lobbyists are good at getting what they want ... "but tariffs are a lousy way to treat any trading partner, much less a close friend and ally."

He says, moreover, jacking up duties on Canadian lumber will result in thousands of job losses in both countries, whether it's American home builders or Canadian sawmill workers.

The US International Trade Commission has found that Canadian lumber imports are not a threat to the American industry, so there's no justification for slapping duties on them.

"These individuals should not be put out of work just to line the pockets of US lumber producers – especially now, when both economies are grappling with the economic effects of Covid-19," he said.

TARIFFS DRIVE UP COSTS FOR HOME BUILDERS

The long and short of it: horses for courses

HONEY, I shrunk the van.

We headed off in two vehicles in recent weeks – Toyota's capacious LWB HiAce diesel van and the diminutive micro-car the Kia Picanto GT-Line.

Opposites attract.

The HiAce van is 5.3 m long and about 2 m high; the Picanto 3.5m in length and 1.4 m high. A true example of horses for courses.

We put the van to good use straight away, packing four cases of very expensive morocco-bound volumes of Shakespeare's 37 plays, a moth-eaten Santa suit and a stuffed moose's head. Don't ask. But my friend greatly appreciated the transport of the last vestiges of his father's estate. They all told a story.

The HiAce comes with more comfort and much more technology – and improved safety measures to protect the driver and passenger (only a two seater – it is a cargo-carrier) as well as the payload.

The LWB diesel is now more economical than the previous equivalent diesel by 0.5/100 km combined driving and fits up to 6.2 cub m of cargo.

Toyota's improved 2.8L turbo diesel brings a smoother more powerful workhorse. The driver now sits behind the



Toyota LWB HiAce diesel van... more comfort and much more technology.

engine bay, rather than on top, giving a quieter cabin with less vibration – and more stability all round.

Standard configuration covers things like a one-piece lift-up tailgate at the rear and dual sliding doors at both sides.

Australia's most popular by far range of delivery vehicles and service vans starts from

\$39,740 (plus on-roads) for the cheapest petrol manual to \$45,240 for the diesel LWB automatic.

*** **

Australians who want a small, zippy town car need go no further than Kia's Picanto GT-line which has stormed the micro-car market with mid-life facelift tweaks on the exterior, new technology and powertrains.



Kia Picanto GT-Line has stormed the micro-car market in Australia.

Exterior updates include restyled headlights and grille and front and rear bumpers. Inside, a premium steering wheel, alloy pedals, height-adjustable front seatbelts and a handful of different interior and seat trimmings set the GT-Line apart.

Interior updates also include a 4.2-in. instrument panel and 8-in. infotainment system with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto supports. Interior updates include new upholstery and different colour trim options.

The engine has also been updated with revised fuel injection and engine management to improve fuel economy as well as a five-speed automatic gearbox to replace the older four-speed job. New safety and driver assist technology features lane-keeping assist and an emergency stop signal, automatically turning on the car's hazard lights on sudden braking.

The turbo three-cylinder makes 74 kW at 4500 rpm and 172 Nm at 1500–4000 rpm using a claimed 4.8 litres per 100 km on the combined cycle.

Ownership is covered with Kia's a seven-year capped-price servicing program.

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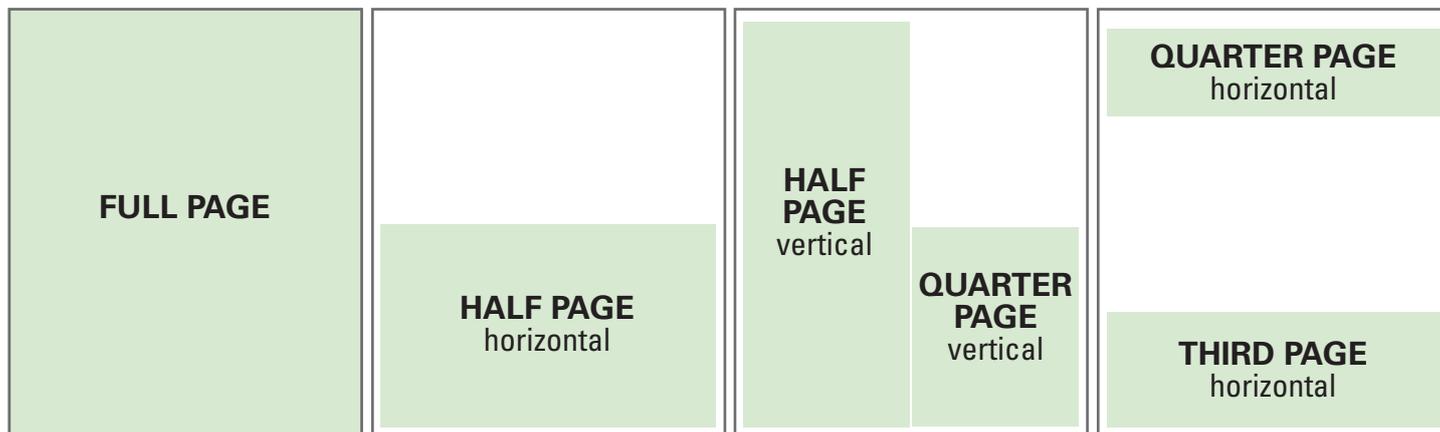
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