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COVER STORY P 8



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Murray Watt takes 'forestry' in Labor's ministry shuffle as new government commits to promises

Julie Collins still makes industry 'cut' as she moves from agriculture to critical housing ministry

JIM BOWDEN

FORESTS, politically speaking, are back on the front page.

Industry has welcomed the return of 'forestry' to the agricultural portfolio and is ready to work closely with Queensland senator Murray Watt who has been elevated to the Albanese cabinet as Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

A Gold Coast lawyer and judge's associate, Senator Watt, 49, is regarded as part of Anthony Albanese's inner circle and has been a senator for Queensland since the 2016 federal election.

He was Labor's shadow minister for Northern Australia and Queensland Resources but maintains

“INDUSTRY WORKING WITH GOVERNMENT TO IMPLEMENT FOREST AGENDA”



1/ **Anthony Albanese... committed to implement ambitious forest policy agenda.**

2/ **Murray Watt... passionate advocate for regional Australia.**

Emergency Management.

Mr Albanese has shifted several ministries in and out of cabinet and has given former Shadow Minister for Agriculture Julie Collins responsibility for housing and small business. She was well across forestry issues in her previous role and many were comfortable that she might retain agriculture. But she still has a strong forest products connection in

housing, an industry running critically short of building materials which will worsen if native forests are locked up in Victoria and Western Australia.

Another cabinet post important to forestry is Tanya Plibersek's move to the challenging Environment and Water ministry after losing the education portfolio when Labor's shadow environment minister Terri Butler lost her

seat of Griffith to the Greens. Also, Kristy McBain, who takes Regional Development has been a strong advocate for forest industries in her electorate of Eden Monaro.

Albanese's first cabinet, sworn in on Wednesday, includes a record 10 women among the 23 members. Projections are that Labor has won the seat of Gilmore in NSW, taking the government to 77 seats in the House of Representatives.

The Coalition will have 58 seats in the 47th parliament, the Greens have won four seats, and there are 12 other crossbenchers.

Peak industry body Australian Forest Products Association has welcomed the new Albanese government ministry "with a mandate to turbo-charge the One Billion Trees goal to tackle climate change and secure Australia's future timber and fibre needs".

Cont P 4



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Spirit of reconciliation: HQP builds a stronger, lasting relationships with traditional custodians

First Nations Engagement Framework outlines plantation grower's commitment to meaningful discussion

RECONCILIATION is about strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-indigenous peoples, for the benefit of all Australians.

The theme of this year's Reconciliation Week from May 27 to June 3 is 'Be Brave. Make Change', which is what HQP Plantations aims to do with its First Nations Engagement Framework.

With 300,000 ha under management and 20 known First Nation Groups with Country where their plantations grow throughout Queensland, HQP has a genuine desire to build stronger, long-lasting relationships with the traditional custodians.

The First Nations Engagement Framework outlines the plantation grower's commitment to consistent and meaningful engagements as well as sharing of knowledge and information about their operations and matters of importance with the local First Nations Groups.

The draft framework was developed by a team from HQP with Mark Annandale from Landroc Consulting and four First Nations representatives, including Tolita Dolzan, a Cobble Cobble descendant and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educator.

Ms Dolzan said the framework was a starting point for positive relationship building between HQP and the local First Nations.

"The group involved with developing the framework



Norman Barney, a proud Butchulla man and founder of BIIG (Butchulla Indigenous Industries Group), connected with HQP several years ago to discuss opportunities for Butchulla people to work with the forest grower culminating in a commercial agreement for the provision of custodial, forest management and silvicultural services. Pictured working on silviculture practices at HQP's Tuan plantation are Kelly Nolan, Conrad Barney and Kaile Clarke.

did so with a genuine vision to understand and respect our culture while improving communication, working relationships and protection of Country," Ms Dolzan said.

"HQP recognises the significance of places and connections to Country are inseparable from our people, but also individual for every First Nations Group.

"This document was created with true intent to do things in 'proper and respectful ways' and provides a foundation for HQP and the local First Nations Groups to build on potential opportunities that are balanced and sustainable for future generations."

Stephanie Hunt, HQP's community engagement facilitator, led the development of the framework.

"For HQP and our people, the framework seeks to increase awareness, provide guidelines to support

a culturally appropriate way," Ms Hunt said.

"For First Nation Groups, the framework provides a pathway for a growing relationship and genuine opportunities for collaboration with HQP, including providing the contacts to do so.

"It's a hands-on document and includes sections on guiding principles, who engages, when we engage, and how we engage."

HQP has now invited three First Nation Groups its works closely with in different areas of the state to provide feedback on the framework in June before it is finalised and presented more widely.

informed discussion and build on our capability to engage in

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From P 2

CEO Ross Hampton said the industry looked forward to working with the Albanese government to implement an ambitious forestry policy agenda Labor took to the election to deliver more than \$300 million in new investment to grow and innovate the sector.

During the election campaign, federal Labor matched the Coalition's pledge to deliver \$100 million for a National Institute for Forest Products Innovation to be headquartered in Launceston; \$86 million in grants to support the

“LABOR COMMITTED TO \$10M FOR SKILLS AND TRAINING”



Julie Collins



Tanya Plibersek



Kirsty McBain

establishment costs of new timber plantations; and \$112.9 million in innovation grants for timber processors to make the most of our existing resource and create new manufacturing jobs

“On top of this, Labor also committed \$10 million for skills and training programs for our sector, and backed native forestry jobs with a commitment to no more forest lock-ups,” Mr Hampton affirmed.

“We look forward to working with the new

government to realise the full potential of our renewable forest industries,” he said.

AFPA congratulated Senator Watt's appointment. “He has been a passionate advocate for regional Australia and primary industries and we look forward to working with him on implementing these important initiatives.”

AFPA also thanked former Shadow Minister for Agriculture Julie Collins for her leadership in the portfolio, and is pleased that she will retain a key interest in the

timber and forestry sector in her role of Housing Minister.

“The Albanese government was elected with a mandate to reach Australia's goal to plant one billion timber plantation trees by 2030 in order to boost domestic timber supply and harness the climate change mitigation opportunities our industries offer,” Ross Hampton said.

“AFPA congratulates the new Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Senator Murray Watt, who has been a passionate advocate for regional Australia and primary industries in his previous role of Shadow Minister for Northern Australia, and we look forward to working with Minister Watt on implementing these important initiatives.”



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Welcome minister: and a few state-specific issues also need your attention

THE Queensland timber industry has welcomed the Albanese government announcement of the new ministry which is tasked with implementing an ambitious plan for growth in the regions and boosting further development of the industry.

Chief executive officer Mick Stephens said the industry was looking forward to the implementation of the plan and the opportunities it presented for getting more trees into the ground and generating greater value from the extensive area of native forest resources in the state.

“During the election there was strong bipartisan support for a plan to grow the timber industry, which can



Mick Stephens... the North has large untapped potential.

help tackle climate change, provide much needed timber supply and support local manufacturing and regional jobs,” Mr Stephens said.

“We are particularly pleased to congratulate the new Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Senator Murray Watt, who has been a passionate advocate for regional Australia and the north.

Cont P 11

Expanding Indonesian timber exports to Australia was on the agenda at Sydney Building Expo 2022

IN the lead up to Sydney Build 2022 there have been ongoing discussions between Indonesian export promotion specialists and the Australian Timber Importers Federation to explore further options to develop and expand both the hardwood and softwood timber product export trade to Australia.

ATIF general manager John Halkett said the discussions were productive and had assumed additional urgency given current timber supply chain challenges.

“Likely reductions to timber product imports from Europe, plus the proposed closure of native forest base hardwood timber production operations in Western Australia and Victoria were identified as providing opportunities for Indonesian timber suppliers to assist in making up some of the shortfall and supporting Australia’s building and construction industries,” Mr Halkett said.

“ATIF has strong relationships with Indonesian trade associations and is planning to re-establish these



1

1/ Indonesian meranti... 'in the supply-gap mix' for Indonesian timber trade.



2

2/ Didi Sumedi... opportunities in Australia for Indonesian exporters.



3

3/ John Halkett... strong relationships with Indonesian trade associations.

links now that travel is once again possible.”

Both parties at Sydney meetings agreed to maintain a close working relationship for mutual benefit and will work towards the prospects of expanding the trade of Indonesian timber products into the Australian market.

Indonesian had a strong presence at the Sydney Build 2022 Expo with the Indonesian pavilion housing eight Indonesian export companies offering quality building materials.

Visitors were able to meet with Indonesian exporters, see samples of products and discuss business opportunities.

According to available FAO figures, Indonesia has around 91 million ha of forested land, which constitutes 53% of the total land area. The southeast Asian country has

“ATIF PLANS TO RE-ESTABLISH TRADE LINKS

three categories of forests – conservation forests, protection forests and production forests. More than half of the Indonesian forest area is production forest and 87% is owned by the state.

Indonesia is one of the world’s largest exporters of tropical timber products ranging from plywood,

pulp and paper to furniture and handicrafts.

Commonly harvested species include meranti, keruing, kapur, mersawa and Teak (from plantations). Biggest export product is plywood, followed by sawnwood, industrial roundwood and, in less proportion, veneer.

According to the FLEGT Independent market monitor, the top three export destinations of Indonesia last year were China, the US and Japan.

White-eared Honeyeater
(Photo Birdlife Australia)

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Responsible Wood would like to congratulate the 2021 PF Olsen Australia and Birdlife Australia NSW Softwood Plantation Pilot Surveys.

Gathering celebrates 40th anniversary of Dongmen eucalypt project in China, now covering 6 million ha

Nursery produces over 30 million plants a year, mostly from a pollination program started in 1987

JIM BOWDEN

LAST month at the Southport Yacht Club a small group gathered for a lunch to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the first resident team's departure from the old Brisbane international airport for Hong Kong and then to work on the Dongmen State Forest Farm Eucalypt Afforestation Project in China.



1/ Celebrating the 40th anniversary of the first resident team going to the Dongmen project... Dick Pegg, his wife Haijia Li, Rod Stevens and his wife Helen Lancaster (far right) with Pat and Heidi Mannion at the Southport Yacht Club.

2/ Flash back... back row, from left, Gerry Shea, Brian Schaumburg, Keith Jennings, Ted Mannion, Peter Hawkins and Fred Donohue (the first three and Peter Hawkins were farewelling the group). Front row: Michelle, Heidi and Pat Mannion; Margaret and Ian Drew. Dick Pegg and Rod Stevens.

3/ Inspecting project results in 2015... Mo Qiping (Chinese head technician), Wei ju (Chinese project manager) and Dick Pegg, inspecting 26-year-old hybrids.



The project was located at Dongmen Forest Farm to the south of Nanning, the capital of Guangxi in south China. The project ran from 1981 to 1989 and was managed by the Queensland Department of Forestry on behalf of AusAID. The goal of the project was "to develop wood production through the development of fast-growing species in southern China".

There were always three Australian staff resident in China for the duration of the project. Well-known Queensland foresters Ted Mannion (1982-85 and 1988-89) and Keith Gould (1985-88) were resident team leaders. The foresters were Rod Stevens, Dave Jermyn and Don McGuire and the technicians Ian Drew, Roy Henderson and Lester Perkins.

There were 18 specialists involved on a short-term basis; those with a high level of input included John Simpson (soils and nutrition), Garth Nikles (tree breeding), Kevin Harding

(wood quality), Paul Milham (laboratory), Chris Bragg (computing) and Stu Rumballe (machinery).

The Australian project director was Dick Pegg who was also a member of the feasibility study team that designed the project in 1981. The Queensland Department of Forestry provided the bulk of Australian staff from its officers.

In 1981, there were 400,000 ha of eucalypt plantation in China. Today the area is almost 6 million ha – more than 80% of which is planted with Dongmen hybrid clones. The most productive are the hybrids of *Eucalyptus urophylla* (which comes from Indonesia) and *E. grandis*. But there are also a few good clones of *E. urophylla* and *E. tereticornis*. The latter are mainly used in the more coastal areas where

the soil is sandier than further north and typhoons are more frequent.

The rotation age in 1981 was 15 years or more with an MAI of 8-10 m³/ha/a. Today the rotation is 6-8 years with an average MAI of about 25m³/ha/a.

The annual cut of eucalypt wood in China is now in excess of 65 million m³/a... and increasing.

The total value of output from eucalypt plantation forestry today is in excess of \$200 billion/a. The Australian cost of the Dongmen project was \$6.3 million and the

Chinese cost RMB6.4 million.

The Dongmen nursery produces more than 30 million plants each year, mostly from six clones which derive from a controlled pollination program in 1987.

Several of the younger foresters who worked on the project have become professors while most of the older brigade has retired.

The long-lasting achievements of the Dongmen project are well recognised and appreciated in China. Over time, there were numerous visitors to the project, including the Australian Ambassador to Beijing Hugh Dunn, himself a Queensland, and the Queensland Premier Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen. It was planned to have a 40th anniversary celebration later this year in China but under the current virus pandemic, this is now unlikely.

Guangxi's location, in mountainous terrain in the far south of China bordering Vietnam and the South China Sea, placed it on the frontier of Chinese civilization throughout much of Chinese history.

“ TOTAL VALUE OF PLANTATIONS NOW IN EXCESS OF \$200BN ANNUALLY ”

JUNE

3: WFTN Qld strategic planning workshop – Hugh Hamilton Room, Construction Training Centre, Salisbury, QLD and via Zoom. 8-11 am. Setting priorities and agenda for progressing meaningful change for women in the forest and timber industries. Contact sarah@timberqueensland.com.au

10: Third time lucky! GTTIA Awards – Mount Gambier, SA. The GTTIA committee confirms the awards gala event will be held on June 10 at The Barn, Mount Gambier SA. Tickets on sale April 25 and for purchase online. Email: info@gttia.com

14: AFPA-Timber Queensland dinner – Rydges Southbank, Brisbane, QLD. Starts 6 pm. First national forest industries event in the new federal

parliamentary term. Tickets at <https://events.humanitix.com/afpa-quarterly-meetings-june-2022-including-the-afpa-and-timber-queensland-forest-industries-dinner>

16: Timber Queensland R&D field day – Brisbane, QLD. 8 am-2 pm. Showcase of current R&D from Queensland's three major research centres and their partners. Visit www.timberqueensland.com.au/events

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

JULY

10-15: 65th The Society of Wood Science and Technology annual meeting – Salt/Peppers Mantra complex, Kingscliffe, NSW. SWST activities include publishing wood and fibre science and accrediting undergraduate wood science programs in North American, South America, Asia and Europe. Registration open at www.swst.org

SEPTEMBER

11-16: Gottstein Trust Understanding Wood Science Course – Sunday evening, September 11, 2022, in Albury, NSW, for the field trip component, ending on Friday, September 16, 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 program can be downloaded at www.gottsteintrust.org

OCTOBER

20-22: Forestry Australia Symposium – Albury, NSW. Leading, adapting and reimagining: the future of forestry. Available in person or online www.forestryconference.com.au/

26-28: DANA-Ginkgo Global Woodchip and Biomass Trade Conference – Marriott Singapore Tang Plaza Hotel, Singapore. Focus on woodchips and biomass. (Venue to be advised). Website live and early bird registrations now open. Visit <https://danaevents.co.nz/2022singapore> Contact conference organiser Mariela Ferrari marielaferriari@gmail.com

Forestry Australia webinar looks at forestry biodiversity, wildlife research

FORESTRY Australia has announced two key speakers for its forest biodiversity and wildlife research webinar on June 8 – DPI principal research scientists Dr Brad Law and Dr Leroy Gonsalves.

The webinar runs from 12.30 pm to 1.30 pm.

Dr Law will provide an overview on the recent koala research by NSW DPI. The research has been multi-faceted and has developed new acoustic-based surveys that have proved effective in

detecting male koala bellows in the breeding season.

Dr Gonsalves will put the question, How does fauna respond to mechanical forest fuel reduction and burning?

Australia is the most bushfire-prone continent. Several treatment options are available to land managers seeking to reduce fire risk, including prescribed burning and mechanical thinning, both of which can change fire hazard by reducing fuels. This may be dependent on the



Dr Brad Law



Dr Leroy Gonsalves

combination of both on habitat structural complexity as well as direct responses of birds, bats and ground mammals on the north coast of NSW.

Webinar chair is Matt de Jongh, sustainability manager, Responsible Wood.

Registrations (inc. GST) are \$10 Forestry Australia members; \$40 non-members; free or student members. Visit www.forestry.org.au or phone (03 7065 4250). Email: admin@forestry.org.au

extent to which residues are removed following mechanical treatment and fire weather conditions.

Dr Gonsalves will report on the short-term effects of thinning, burning and a

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IRG and cross section of industry has created a national set of standards for forest contractors

Working with key stakeholders and members on benefits and opportunities across the supply chain

THE concept brainstormed across the whiteboard had been attempted before. The difference this time around was everyone involved knew what was being proposed would need to be recognised by industry nationally to succeed.

Securing funding and bringing together the right people was the focus for Stacey Gardiner, Nick Roberts and Nick Milham in 2018 as they set about turning their brainstorming into a project that would develop and pilot a national certification for forest contracting businesses, and training to support the leaders of these businesses.

"We were already working with key stakeholders and AFCA members to look at the benefits and opportunities across the supply chain for certifying forest contracting businesses," reflected Stacey Gardiner, formerly of Australian Forest Contractors Association.

"The emphasis for me was around developing and formalising business management practices, which we believed would contribute to further strengthening risk management and contribute to auditing consistency for businesses," Stacey said.

The work that was being undertaken by the forest industry was already being noticed by Nick Milham,



Taking part in a ForestFit training session are Matthew and Christopher Mangan, Jennifer Ferguson and Harrison Phillips.

NSW Department of Primary Industries.

"DPI were seeking opportunities to improve environmental outcomes," says Nick.

"When Stacey, Nick (Roberts) and I were working on the concept we knew the success of the project relied heavily on it being led by industry and while that was my main focus, I knew it would need to encompass more than just the environment."

With the NSW government showing its support for the future of their forest industry and the industry nationally by funding the ForestFit project, it was now time for industry to take the lead. Representatives from forest growers, contracting businesses, processors, industry associations and existing industry certification

bodies volunteered their time and expertise.

"The inaugural meeting of the industry reference group was in December 2019," says Dionne Olsen, ForestFit project manager.

"The time and commitment that everyone has contributed throughout the process has been significant, particularly considering the added challenges such as bushfires and Covid," Dionne said.

"The outcomes that have been achieved are a result of full supply-chain engagement for the entirety of the multi-year project."

The time commitment was lengthy, though did not seem to be a deterrent as Malcolm Hatcher, Midway explains: "We were looking at the bigger picture when we expressed our interest in participating on the IRG. As a grower and processor we spend considerable time undertaking internal and external audits. We could see the benefit of streamlining these processes for our business and our contractors. The project's core focus to

deliver national outcomes was really important to us."

Leveraging the connections and experience of member organisations internationally who have developed similar programs was a great starting place to understand what could work in Australia.

Michael Clancy of GJ Groves says, "Establishing a set of agreed national standards for the industry provides a clear path forward as we adapt to more complex and demanding business process changes, reporting and compliance requirements."

The diversity of knowledge and adaptability required for business owners, leaders and emerging leaders became the focus of the ForestFit Training Program. The IRG wanted to ensure the training provided practical guidance, both strategic and operational, to improve business, safety and environmental outcomes.

IRG members worked closely for months reviewing draft after draft of training materials to ensure they were contextualised to meet the needs of the industry and were applicable for small to medium sized businesses.

"One of the reasons it was successful was the continuous opportunities to express your point of view, as part of

“WE WERE LOOKING AT THE BIGGER PICTURE”

Certification leader supports Aussie-made campaign

FOLLOWING the success of the first Australian Made Week in 2021, Responsible Wood is excited about supporting the initiative again this year as a campaign associate.

Running from June 6 to 12, the campaign promises to be bigger and better than ever, and will focus on encouraging consumers to actively seek locally Australian-made and grown products both during the week and into the future.

According to recent Roy Morgan research, if every household spent an additional \$10 a week on Australian-made products it would inject an extra \$5 billion into the economy each year and create up to 11,000 new jobs.

As custodian of the Australian standards for Sustainable Forest Management (AS / NZS 4708) and Chain of Custody for



Forest Products (AS 4707), Responsible Wood is strongly aligned to the campaign.

To support the campaign, Responsible Wood has updated its brand manual and logo use toolkits which can be used by certificate holders to demonstrate the origin of their products.

The new brand manual includes a new supporting statement, 'Sustainably Grown, Australian Made',

which can be used by certificate holders as a graphic stamp or a pre-set type text. It is imperative that they are used with the primary trademark and one trademark variant as seen in the manual on the RW website.

"Responsible Wood

INITIATIVE SUPPORTS JOBS, AND ECONOMY

certification is used right across the Australian forest products value chain and demonstrates to customers and buyers that timber and paper-based products are grown in sustainably-managed forests and manufactured, retailed and sold through Australian businesses," marketing and communication officer Jason Ross said.

"The campaign is asking its licensees and partners to get involved in supporting and celebrating the thousands of local makers and growers around the country."

To find out more about the campaign get in touch with Australian Made digital account manager Jackie Fuller at jackie.fuller@australianmade.com.au

• See notice, Page 11.

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Construction costs through the roof, but Australia set to build two of the world's tallest timber towers

EIGHT of the world's 139 timber towers are located in Australia, but there are some large-scale and impressive projects in the works.

Australia's desire for carbon-negative buildings continues to grow, despite the 25% increase in the cost of timber over the past two years and an ongoing timber shortage that continues to constrain the country's construction industry's ability to build.

Research from the Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat shows there are 66 timber towers higher than eight stories completed globally, with another 73 either proposed or under construction. The height of timber towers has tripled in the past 10 years.

The world's tallest timber tower has been pitched for Perth, tipping out tech giant Atlassian's approved Sydney timber hybrid tower. Grange Development recently filed plans for a \$350-million, 50-storey timber hybrid residential tower of 245 apartments. At almost 183



1/ The \$350 million 50-storey mass timber hybrid tower proposed for Perth.

2/ James Dibble... mass timber construction and fabrication methods make them a viable option..



m, the development – to be known as C6 – would be the tallest timber building in the world, outreaching Atlassian's approved Sydney tower by three meters.

The building will also be topped with a 500 sq m edible garden, dining and entertainment space and 1600 sq m of communal wellness amenity.

Designed by architecture firm Elenberg Fraser, the tower will be built from cross-laminated timber or glulam.

Grange Development's managing director James Dibble said that the rapidly-shifting climate was the main driver behind the carbon-negative building proposed for Perth. "The built environment is one of the three major drivers of catastrophic climate change, alongside transport and agriculture," Mr Dibble said.

"Timber as a building material has been around for centuries, but only recently has mass timber construction

and fabrication methods made it a viable option in masse.

"[The proposal] represents the future of what is possible, except we will deliver it now."

Embodied carbon accounts for around 20% to 25% of a typical building's total carbon footprint over its lifetime, according to the Green Building Council of Australia. But embodied emissions are hard to eliminate because some of our most common building materials – notably concrete and steel – require process heat and chemical reactions that can't be easily decarbonised.

The development industry is turning to alternative materials such as mass timber to reduce the amount of concrete and steel in buildings.

Post-construction, Grange Development has committed to sharing its C6 research, design and construction documentation as a call to arms for other developers to take up, evolve and develop the building methodology.

(With extracts from Forest Economic Advisors)



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10 TIMBER & FORESTRY E-NEWS | ISSUE 709 | June 2, 2022

New project to TRIGger more farm tree plantings

AN exciting new forestry project has been launched to support the integration of more trees on farms in Victoria – helping the state achieve its net zero carbon goals by 2050.

Overseen by Forestry Australia, the Trials Review, Information and Genetics (TRIG) Project aims to improve information pathways to assist the

expansion of farm forestry in Victoria.

TRIG project steering committee chair Dr Kevin Harding said the project aimed to build on Victoria’s history of farm forestry to help the state reach carbon targets and expand the productive farm-tree estate.

“Victoria has a proud legacy of extensive farm forestry trials and research



Dr Kevin Harding... Victoria has a proud legacy of extensive farm forestry trials.

established during the 1980s through to the early 2000s,” Dr Harding said.

“The TRIG project intends to build on this history to empower and enable the next

generation of farm foresters to harness the remarkable carbon sequestering power of trees to reach net zero goals.

“It will also diversify products and income streams from farms making them more resilient enterprises.”

Dr Harding said well-managed farm forestry sequestered enough carbon

Cont P 12

From P 4

“We acknowledge his previous role as Shadow Minister for Northern Australia, which will put him in great stead to support the industry in Queensland and across the north, which in many respects has large untapped potential.”

Mr Stephens said while the industry welcomed the

significant forest industry policy announcements of more than \$300 million in initiatives around research and development, innovation grants for timber processing and skills and training, there were a few state specific issues that would also need attention.

These included the need for tighter controls on non-

compliant native log exports that were eroding the ability to grow the local hardwood processing sector and jobs, an imperative to remove the so-called water rule in the Emissions Reduction Fund which was stifling any new plantation investment in Queensland, and an urgent need to look at appropriate commonwealth assistance measures for processors

affected by the recent extended wet weather and flooding in southeast Queensland and northern NSW.

“We look forward to working with the new minister, and plan to meet with him as soon as possible to brief him on the issues and exciting opportunities ahead in Queensland.”

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Responsible Wood certified Axiom Lighting and Axis Design, a licensee of Fine Timber Tasmania showcasing Sassafras lampshade.
Photo: Ian Hewitt.

Responsible Wood
RW/1-10-1

From P 8

group discussions and individually, on every aspect of the training and certification development," explains Ian Reid, Austimber Harvesting.

"The feedback was always valued, and it never felt like what was presented was cursory even though there were times that we ended up with a different result than what was proposed ... which is to be expected when developing something new."

Expert regulatory input was provided by the NSW Environmental Protection Authority, NSW Local Land Services and NSW DPI's Plantation Regulation Unit. Training Services NSW contributed its expertise in vocational training.

With the successful completion of a training pilot in June 2021, it was time for the IRG to turn their attention to developing the certification.

"Getting the criteria right for the standards so

“GETTING THE CRITERIA RIGHT FOR STANDARDS TAKES TIME



1/ Out on site for a ForestFit training program are Paul Reid and Berrak Bektas.
2/ Austimber Harvesting duo Jennifer Ferguson and Ian Reid.



that it is credible without being onerous takes time, particularly when striving for consensus," explains Simon Dorries, CEO, Responsible Wood.

However, the process of creating these standards would have been considered onerous by some, particularly during the word by word walkthroughs of the criteria.

"It took a fair amount of time during the past couple of years," says Chris Mangan, Mangan Logging and Haulage. "But it was worth it to ensure we have a set of national standards that reflect how serious we are about our work and businesses."

Recognition of the professionalism of forest contracting businesses is

what kept business owner Melissa Hayward of HR Forestry contributing to the development of ForestFit. "ForestFit certification is another way for us to demonstrate and reinforce to industry the amount of expertise, knowledge and experience that underpins forest contracting business operations and drives our decision making and continuous improvement," says Melissa.

ForestFit certification has been further strengthened by achieving Deemed-to-Comply status with Responsible Wood. This process will be finalised with the JAS-ANZ endorsement of ForestFit.

"We are very excited about the tangible and practical

outcomes of ForestFit for recognising the good systems and professional practices of forest contracting businesses and to drive improvement," says Simon Dorries.

The multi-year work of the IRG will be celebrated with the national launch of ForestFit on 14 June 2022.

IRG MEMBERS

- Anthony Bate, C3 Forestry;
- Campbell Sanderson, Forest Corp NSW;
- Chris Mangan, Mangan Haulage

- Pty Ltd;
- Damian Paull, FSC Australia and New Zealand;
- Ian Reid, Austimber Harvesting and Haulage;
- Malcolm Hatcher, Midway Limited;
- Melissa Hayward, HR Forestry;
- Michael Clancy, G and J Groves;
- Simon Dorries, Responsible Wood;
- Stefan Jensen, FSC Australia and New Zealand;
- Steve Dobbyns, Jamax Forest Solutions,
- Tracey Mills, FEDC.

On the cover: Enjoying the ForestFit training program are Matthew Mangan of Mangan Logging and Haulage and Jennifer Ferguson, Austimber Harvesting

From P 11

to partly or even completely offset farm greenhouse gas emissions. This was by far the cheapest option for removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, plus it created rural and regional jobs and provides diversified

farm income.

Funding from the TRIG Project will support a review that will revisit previous trials to identify priority sites to target for enhancement and data collection. It will also identify plantings that have performed well to inform how landholders can get better

growing trees for their land.

The project will assess high quality plantings and make recommendations about establishing seed production areas to supply improved seed for farmers. These datasets and reports, along with advice, will be made publicly available in mid-2023.

The TRIG Project was designed in consultation with Farm Forest Growers Victoria with \$503,750 of funding provided by the federal government and delivered via the Victorian government's Department of Jobs Precincts and Regions.

OneFortyOne photo entries connect to our forests

LAUNCHED on International Day of Forests in March, the OneFortyOne Forest Photo Competition received more than 150 entries from students from across the Limestone Coast and Western Victoria.

Entries were brought to a panel of judges and top honours were given to Year 10 student Raine Scott and Year 6 student Matilda Neale.

Green Triangle external affairs manager Charlene Riley said based on the inspiring entries received last year, OneFortyOne again asked students to share stories with their photos.

“We loved the stories students sent in last year,” Charlene said. “So we asked students again this year to send in their best photos and share with us how they



1/ **Raine Scott – Year 10.**
2/ **Matilda Neale – Year 6.**



connect to the forest, and we were impressed with the response.”

Student connections with the forest ranged from adventuring among plantations with family, to connecting with trees as they too have limbs and need water and air to live.

Secondary school category

winner Raine Scott said the connection to the forest was through a feeling of freedom.

“I connect to the freedom of exploring the forest and discovering new perspectives on the things I take for granted,” Raine said.

“I’m a mountain biker and an outdoor person so I love the forest and I will continue

to create adventures with my family.”

Matilda Neale loves going for bush walks through the local forest with her family and connecting with nature.

“It’s so quiet and peaceful. The smell of the pines on a rainy day or the sun setting on the horizon always takes my breath away. It doesn’t matter what time of the day or night it is, there are always new things to see and discover.

“I love seeing all the different types of plants and wildlife that call our local forest home.”

This year’s theme was forests and sustainable production and consumption.

Photo entries and stories will be shared over the coming months on the OneFortyOne Facebook page.

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ForestVR expands to showcase students how they can make a world of difference in industry careers

A technology-rich way of engaging schools on forestry and wood without leaving the classroom

BETH WELDEN

NEW resources were launched during Careers Week 2022 in May that allow school students of all ages to glimpse a virtual day in the life of a different people working in forestry and wood, without leaving the classroom.

ForestLearning's hugely successful ForestVR technology has expanded with three new engaging, immersive and educational virtual reality experiences, focusing on careers.

The forestry industry directly employs about 80,000 people who contribute to sustainable forest management in a variety of ways. ForestVR's Careers in Forests and Wood series will transport students virtually into Australia's forest and wood products industry to discover some of the people who work there and the many different and rewarding careers the industry has to offer.

The original ForestVR toolkit, launched in 2019, was designed through extensive consultation with teachers and the forestry industry, with the goal of educating students on the renewable cycle of productive forests to create wood products like timber and paper in a new way.

With the onset of restrictions on excursions and work experience programs around Australian schools due to Covid-19, ForestVR provides a timely solution to geographical



A day in the life of ... Kayla Austen of AKD.

access problems, while also overcoming the safety issues associated with visits to physical forests and timber processing facilities.

The Careers in Forests and Wood virtual reality tools will give students a first-hand insight into what three different careers in forestry and wood processing involve.

Experience a day in the life of environmental forester and ecologist Jack Carter of Australian Bluegum Plantations as he carries out wildlife surveys, native forest regeneration and the building and installing of nesting hollows. This work is conducted with a view to ensuring hardwood plantation forests, and all the timber

products sourced from them, remain among the most sustainable in the world.

And get to know forester Courtney Pink of SFM Asset Management who works to grow and produce timber, while sustainably managing and protecting the environment, including trees, plants and animals, waterways, and Indigenous Australian cultural sites.

Students will also meet wood processing cadet Kayla Austen of AKD Softwoods as she undertakes a wide range of exciting work opportunities

“EXPERIENCING A DAY IN THE LIFE OF FORESTERS

throughout her cadetship that exposes her to nearly every aspect of the business. Learn how she is using these experiences to refine her practical skills and knowledge and develop her future long-term career in wood processing.

Additional new ForestVR experiences will also launch in June with the world-first Forest Science Explorers series, developed for primary school students to visit four of Australia's unique forest types in 360-deg. and compare their adaptations to their local environment – the wet eucalypt forests of Tasmania, cypress pine forests of western Queensland and NSW, the dry eucalypt forests of eastern Australia and the jarrah forests of Western Australia.

The final new ForestVR series, Agroforestry: Trees at Work on the Farm, will allow high school students to pay an immersive visit to three farms around Australia that are successfully incorporating trees into their farming landscapes to achieve a range of economic, social and environmental benefits.

This theme will be of particular interest to teachers looking to showcase achievable and sustainable practices that could help Australia become carbon neutral by 2050.

The latest suite of VR experiences represents

Cont P 16



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Population growing but where will people live?

VICTORIA'S regional population is set to grow by 47% by 2056, and in metropolitan Melbourne by a staggering 84%. The city would swell to a population of 9 million people in the coming 34 years, according to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

"We welcome growth in the region and in metropolitan areas such as Melbourne and Geelong, but before the government gets too excited about the projected growth, we invite them to consider the main issue – how we are going to house this population," questions Deb Kerr, CEO of the Victorian Forest Products Association.

"Timber is in such high demand already, and that is



We need more timber for more homes.

not about to magically change in the foreseeable future," Ms Kerr said.

"Firstly, where will the timber come from to satisfy future housing demand? We need to heavily invest in plantations now to grow the homes of the future.

"The Victorian softwood estate has remained static since the early 1990s. That is at odds with new house

builds that have increased by 66% since 1984, while the softwood estate, which is critical to construction, increased by only 23% over the same timeframe. This trend is only going to intensify.

"Secondly, what do we want to build with? We urge the government to implement wood encouragement policies in the built environment and

in new homes. Prioritising locally, sustainably grown timber means a far superior carbon footprint compared to substitute building materials."

Ms Kerr said more trees in the ground meant more carbon captured from the atmosphere, timber security for future generations, and provided a renewable building material.

"Now is the time to make it happen," she said.

Meanwhile, detached house approvals continue to be elevated compared to pre-Covid levels and new work entering the pipeline will keep builders busy throughout 2023. The ABS says detached house approvals increased by 1.4% in the three months to April 2022 to be 16.8% higher than the same three months in 2019.

Renovations activity also remains elevated; the value of approvals jumped by 6.6% in April to be up over the last 18 months by 42.6% on pre-pandemic levels.

From P 14

a significant expansion to ForestVR, and is testament to the popularity of ForestVR among Australian teachers.

Teachers across Australia have told us how they have found ForestVR to be a technology-



1/ Jack Carter... out and about with a camera in the bluegum plantations.

2/ Courtney Pink of SFM Asset Management... a day in the nursery.



TEACHERS LOOKING TO SHOWCASE SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

rich and highly effective way of engaging school students by allowing them to visit places they wouldn't normally have the opportunity to

access during a school field trip.

With this latest suit of experiences, we hope

to provide even more meaningful educational opportunities, aligned to the Australian Curriculum, that educate students on a range of new topics and themes such as adaptations, biomes, sustainability, renewable resources, solutions for climate change, and careers.

• **Beth Welden is ForestLearning program manager.**

Spreading the forest sustainability message in WA

SUSTAINABILITY manager for Responsible Wood Matt de Jongh has spent a week in Western Australia which included the role of guest speaker at the Leschenhault Timber Industry Dinner at Bunbury.

Mr de Jongh spoke about the Responsible Wood Forest certification scheme, sustainable forest management and active and adaptive forest management, including the importance of Traditional Owners and their culture and knowledge in forest management.

“I was made feel very welcome at the event and it was a privilege to speak and meet with so many people who are passionate about sustainable forest management, from a diverse range of backgrounds,” Mr de Jongh said.

He also spent time in Albany with PF Olsen who have supported one of the recipients of the Community Small Grants Program upgrade to the Denmark Wetland Centre and Farm Forestry Site at Denmark Agricultural College.



1/ Forest Products Commission WA staff Jaron Creasey and Justine West and Responsible Wood sustainability manager Matt de Jongh inspect sustainably managed pine plantations.

2/ Justine West and Matt de Jongh with a Xanthorrhoea (grass tree) that is several hundred years old.



The project has allowed an upgrade to the wetland centre an farm forestry site, as well as increasing the awareness and understanding of farm forestry within the local community.

“This was a wonderful opportunity to meet with the recipients and see first-hand how the program is progressing,” Mr de Jongh said.

“The students were very enthusiastic about the results of the project and have a new appreciation of the value of

“STUDENTS HAVE NEW APPRECIATION OF THE VALUE OF TREES ON FARMS

trees on farms.”

In May, PF Olsen became the first Responsible Wood certificate holder to be audited under the new AS / NZS 4708.

Audited by BSI Group, the Australia-NZ standard (AS / NZS 4708), along with the Australian standard for chain of custody for forest products (AS / NZS 4707) are key components of the RW certification scheme.

While in Bunbury Mr de Jongh held a workshop on the new updated and revised AS/NZS 4708:2021 Sustainable Forest Management Standard at Bunbury hosted by WA Plantation Resources and attended by RW sustainable forest management and chain of custody certificate holders, including Leschenhault Catchment Council representatives.

Mr de Jongh will continue to hold workshops throughout Australia and New Zealand over coming months. Holder of a Bachelor of Science (Forestry) ANU, he will also chair the Forestry Australia biodiversity webinar on June 8. Details, Page 7.

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Forest protestors who risk life and limb hunted out

THE Andrews Labor government is ensuring Victorians are safe at work, with protestors engaging in dangerous activity to face stronger penalties when putting the safety and wellbeing of forestry workers at risk.

Introduced to parliament on May 24, the Sustainable Forests Timber Amendment (Timber Harvesting Safety Zones) Bill 2022 will modernise enforcement measures to better deter dangerous protest activities within timber harvesting safety zones. These zones are small and restricted areas where forestry activities are being undertaken.

Protestors who illegally enter these zones and dangerously interfere with workers or their machinery



Dangerous protest activities feel strong arm of the law.

will be subject to stronger penalties including maximum fines of more than \$21,000 or 12-months imprisonment.

PVC and metal pipes, which can be used in dangerous protest activities, will be added to the prohibited items

list meaning they potentially attract extra fines if used to hinder or obstruct timber harvesting operations.

To prevent repeated safety risks across multiple safety zones, authorised officers will be able to issue banning

notices. They will be given additional powers to search containers, bags and vehicles for prohibited items.

This Bill will bring the Sustainable Forests (Timber) Act 2004 in line with other similar pieces of legislation such as the Wildlife Act 1975

Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas said every Victorian had the right to be safe at work.

“Protests are becoming increasingly dangerous, particularly for workers, which is why this legislation will support them to get on with their job and minimise disruption to the industry,” she said.

“We respect the right to protest safely but we want to make sure workers go home to their families each day.”

Snap to it.

The Responsible Wood 2022 Photo Contest is now open. Entries close June 5, 2022.

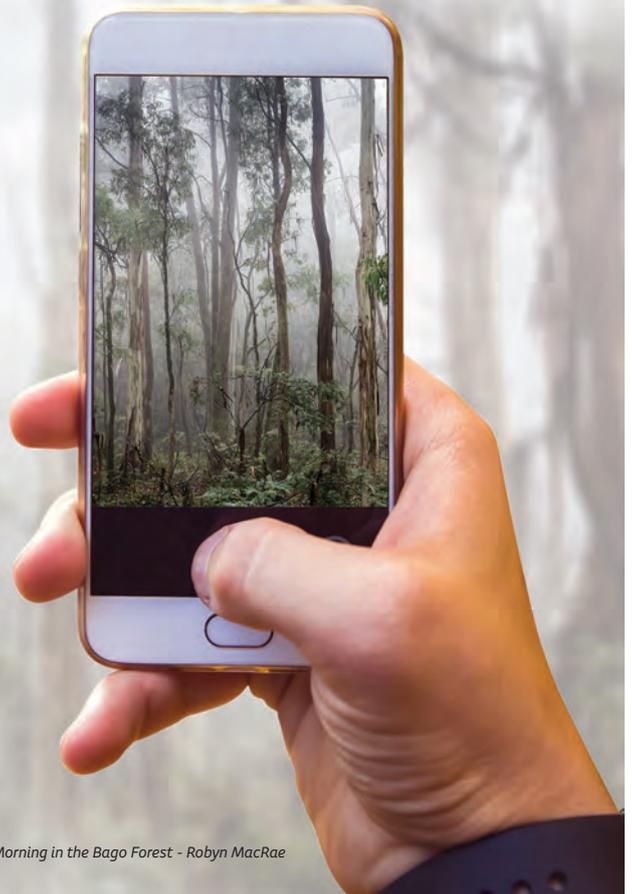
We are inviting professional and amateur photographers to submit their best photos showcasing your local forest.* Responsible Wood is offering a cash prize of \$1000 for the winning photo. The top three photos will compete in the international 2022 PEFC Photographer of the Year Award!

Upload your photo(s) to Instagram using **#rwphotocontest22** – and that’s it!

* Photos must be taken from a Responsible Wood certified forest. For more information visit responsiblewood.org.au



Photo: Early Morning in the Bago Forest - Robyn MacRae



It's cherry blossom time for Toyota's 'light' Yaris

"WHAT colour today, Dom? Seems like pink," we ventured.

"Nope. It's cherry blossom, if you please," responded the custodian of all cars motoring writers collect for road tests. Like stallions in a stable, he knows the pedigree and performance of every one of them.

The 2022 Toyota Yaris Ascent Sport is a front-wheel drive five-door hatchback, this one painted pink by the manufacturer to perhaps pay homage to the Cherry Blossom Festival now in full wondrous bloom in Japan's springtime.

But the cherry tree (*Prunus serrulata*) is fruitless, so no pickings for the many thousands of festival picnics that spring up under them. Gallons of Japanese rice sake consumed during the festival are some consolation it seems.

"This one's a manual," says the nuts and bolts man.

"Ah so, Dom-san. Suteki!" The way I like to drive. Many die-hard car enthusiasts love stick shifts, mainly because they're much more fun to



1/ **Toyota Yaris Ascent Sport... maximum score for safety.**
2/ **Inside Yaris Ascent Sport... with stick shift a joy to drive.**



drive. There is a level of control and involvement with manuals that makes shifting so much more engaging than automatic transmissions.

The once-beloved manual transmission has joined the drum brake, the flathead engine and the rumble seat as an automotive relic. In the US, manuals have slipped to a mere 16.9% of the market.

There was a happy day when all automobiles were controlled by manual transmission. American cars, with their larger displacements and torquier engines (thanks to cheap gas), ran on three forward gears, whereas smaller, lighter European brands favoured four.

I digress. The Ascent Sport marks the low-cost way into the Yaris family, costing \$22,130 for manual

transmission and \$23,630 for a CVT automatic. Both are powered by a 1.5-litre, three-cylinder engine which will produce 86 kW and 145 Nm, with electrification not available on this grade.

The new Yaris scores the maximum five-star ANCAP safety rating thanks to eight airbags (including two front centre, the only car in this segment to get them) and the usual collection of braking and traction aids.

Then you move to Toyota's pre-collision safety system with AEB pedestrian and cyclist detection, active cruise control, intersection turn

assistance and lane trace assist.

Outside, you get 15-in. wheels, halogen headlamps, LED DRLs and tail lights and rear fog lamps. Inside, it's fabric seats, manual air-con, a USB charge point and a 12v power outlet, 7-in. touch screen with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto and a six-speaker stereo and DAB+ radio.

Yaris, built in Japan, is regarded as a 'light sports car' at up 1084 kg with fuel consumption 3.3 to 5.4L/100 km.

Returning the Yaris we collected the \$95,000 fifth-generation Toyota Supra Base 3.0L turbo automatic coupe, powered by the new BMW Z4 engine no less.

Nice, very nice. But not my cup of rice. (*Review in a later edition*).

“ASCENT SPORT THE LOW-COST WAY INTO THE YARIS FAMILY”

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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@timberandforestrye-news.com
Dennis Neilson | +64 (0) 7 349 2764
dennisn@timberandforestrye-news.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@timberandforestrye-news.com
advertising@timberandforestrye-news.com

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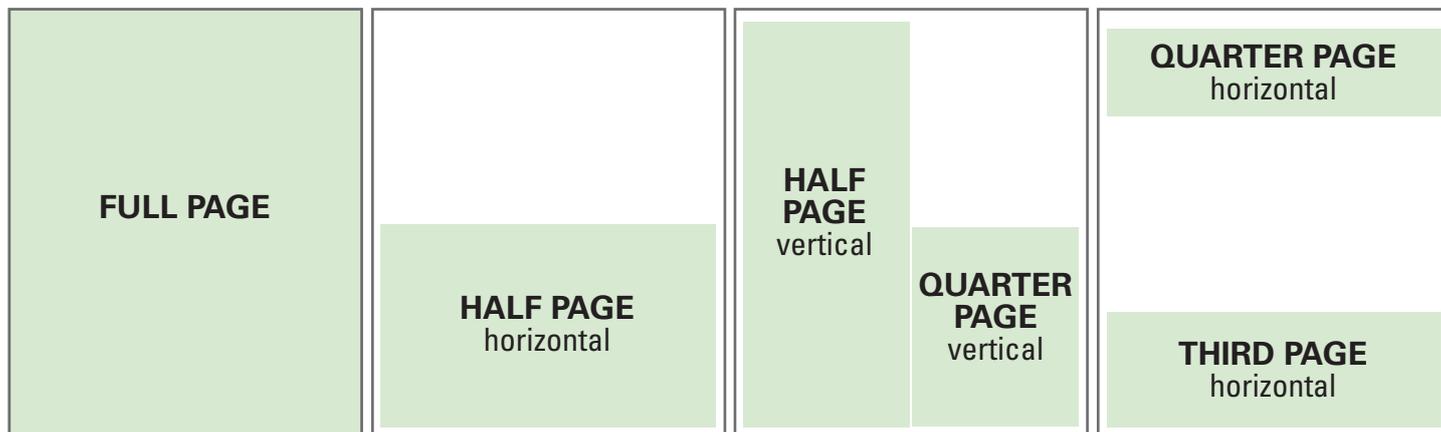
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WHO TO CONTACT

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

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