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New year sees new positions at New Forests

COVER STORY P 3



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Wooden pallet imports growing

AUSTRALIA'S imports of wooden pallets were valued at AUD4.34 million year-ending September 2022, 22.3% higher than a year earlier.

Unfortunately, Australia has long been on the cusp of a productivity-sapping shortage of wooden pallets. Stressed supply chains have been hoarding pallets, some of the 'pool' or 'system' companies – think of Chep and Loscam – appear to have under-estimated demand and pallet hoarding and all-the-while, timber supply is currently worse for pallets and other packaging than for any other purpose.

Australia's imports of wooden pallets were valued at AUD4.34 million year-ended September 2022, 22.3% higher than a year earlier. In September, the value of imports was the second highest ever recorded – AUD 0.7 million – continuing a run of very strong growth.

Growth in the value of imported wooden pallets is unsurprising. It is thought that



Wooden pallet imports climbing ... growth in the value of imported wooden pallets is unsurprising given the timber supply circumstances in Australia.

this is due to four main drivers.

First, the shortage of sawn softwood timber has all end-uses under pressure. Second, the continued decline of access to native forests to provide hardwood timber required for pallets has never been worse, and third, the impact of the floods across Australia has reduced timber supply significantly, over recent months.

The fourth reason appears pandemic disruption related. After being short of shipping containers and pallets at different points in the pandemic, supply-chain managers have shifted their approach from 'just-in-time' to 'just-in-case'. The hoarding of

pallets is now a factor in the supply chain and it does not appear to have been predicted.

The graph above shows the monthly value of imported wooden pallets climbing across the pandemic, peaking in September 2022.

The recent surge in imports commenced in early 2022, as floods caused havoc across the Australian eastern seaboard. It points to just how tight supply has been – and will be in the future.

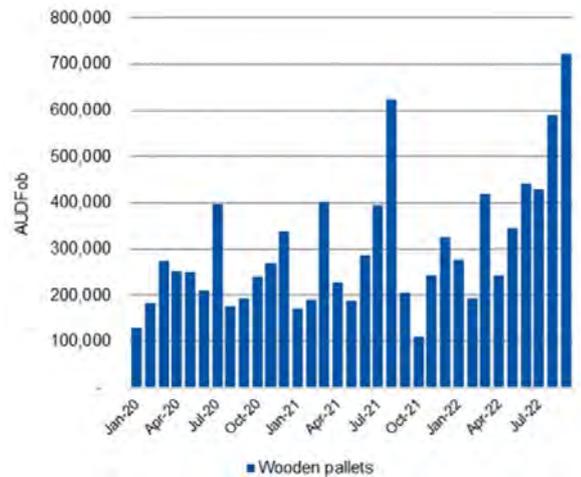
Arising from continued demand for sawn structural timber products and the 'short' in the supply of all materials across the pandemic, there has simply been no timber

available to meet pressing demand.

The impact of successive closures of access to native forests across Australia also cannot be ignored when considering rising imports of pallets or other wooden packaging materials like crates and cases.

New Zealand is the main supplier of wooden pallets to Australia. However, the big growth in pallet imports came from diverse sources – China, Germany, and a stack of 'other' increased dramatically as countries of origin over the most recent year.

Source: Adopted from: Forest and Wood Products StatisticsCount 83



Monthly Australian Timber Pallet Imports: January 2020 to September 2022 Source: ABS and IndustryEdge



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New Forests appoints Mark Rogers as Chief Executive Officer

NEW Forests has announced the appointment of Mark Rogers to the role of chief executive officer, replacing David Brand who will take on a new role as chair of New Forests.

Mark will commence his new role on 3 April 2023, while working closely with David Brand over the first quarter of 2023 to ensure a smooth transition.

Mark joined New Forests in 2016 as managing director, Australia, New Zealand and took on the additional responsibility for the United States as senior managing director in 2019, overseeing the investments and business lines in those regions managing teams across acquisitions, operations and investment analytics. During his time at New Forests, Mark has overseen strong investment performance and assets under management have grown from approximately A\$3 billion to almost A\$10 billion today.

Prior to New Forests, Mark held senior leadership roles across other real asset companies where he was responsible for businesses and teams including acquisitions, distribution, project development and finance.

In addition to Mr Brand's role as chair, he will work on strategic growth opportunities for New Forests, looking at new markets and new opportunities for the business in support of New Forests' senior executive team. He

will continue to chair New Forests' investment committees and remain as Chair of New Forests until June 2025.

"Mark is a proven, strategic leader who has a deep understanding of our business, our culture and our vision, making him the ideal candidate to lead New Forests into its next stage of growth. He has demonstrated an outstanding track record across our Australia, New Zealand and United States businesses with a vision to see investment in land use and forestry as key to the transition to a sustainable future," David Brand said.

"After 17 years at the helm of New Forests, it is time for me to step down from the CEO role and do what I love doing most and that is looking at strategic growth opportunities in new markets and new geographies.

"I'm immensely proud of what we've achieved growing from a handful of people in 2005 to over 100 staff in five countries, across 1.1 million hectares and \$10 billion in assets under management," he said.

Incoming chief executive officer Mark Rogers commented said he is honoured to take on the role of CEO.

"I look forward to continuing to cement our reputation as leaders in the



Mark Rogers has previously held the position of Managing Director and has been with New Forests since 2016

new shareholders Mitsui and Nomura providing growth capital and access to a global distribution platform, it's an exciting time for New Forests.

"I wish to thank David for his vision, innovation, and creating a culture of passionate, purpose-driven individuals," he said.

New Forests will undertake a search process for Mark's

replacement and will confirm any interim arrangements in due course.

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On the cover: Mark Rogers will replace David Brand as CEO of New Forests with Brand moving to a chair position.

Timber framing, the obvious building choice to tackle climate change

Timber framing has the lowest embodied carbon, and stores carbon for the long term

JOHN HALKETT

It is clear that the timber industry plays a critical role in tackling climate change, especially when houses are constructed using timber framing – the resource that not only has the lowest embodied carbon but stores carbon for the long term.

While innovation means that the impact of energy-intensive building materials production is continually



Timber framing can last for hundreds of years, and of course continues to store carbon for its life.

reducing, nothing beats building with sustainable and

renewable timber framing.

Quite literally growing on trees, timber production requires minimal manufacturing and has the lowest embodied energy of all mainstream building materials. This means that the entire production process of the timber in framing – from planting and harvesting to manufacturing, transportation, and installation – uses the least amount of energy, resulting in up to ten times fewer carbon emissions than other building products.

In addition, new technologies and innovations are increasing timber yields from every log and decreasing waste. And even after installation, timber framing’s natural insulating properties mean households use less

energy when it comes to heating and cooling, reducing emissions further.

It’s not just timber framing’s low embodied energy that makes it the go-to product for climate-conscious builders, fabricators, architects, engineers, and homeowners, but also its incredible carbon storage properties. Both factors make the timber in framing carbon positive, which means its production process, from sapling to installation, removes more carbon than it emits.

Trees naturally remove greenhouse gases from the atmosphere, capturing the carbon and storing it for the life of the timber. In Australia alone, sustainable forests form a network that removes around 57 million tonnes of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere each year, offsetting the entire amount of carbon Australian manufacturing companies emit in a year.

Timber framing can last for hundreds of years, and of course, continues to store carbon for its life. Research by the NSW Department of Primary Industries concludes that in Australia, an estimated 94 million tonnes of carbon is stored in timber products.

For further information see Timber Framing Collective at: <https://timberframingcollective.com.au/>

John Halkett is the managing director of ATIF and co-publisher of Timber & Forestry eNews.

“ THIS WAS A GREAT INITIATIVE FROM FORESTRY AUSTRALIA

Australian construction costs hit new high, but signs of easing emerge

CORELOGIC'S Cordell Construction Cost Index (CCCI) ended the year at a new high, climbing 11.9% over the 2022 calendar year, the largest annual increase on record, excluding the period impacted by the introduction of the GST.

The figure was significantly higher than the 7.3% figure recorded over the 12 months to December 2021, however the quarterly growth rate of 1.9% shows a dramatic easing in the index following September's quarterly increase of 4.7%.

CoreLogic construction cost estimation manager, John Bennett said the most recent quarterly figures reflected the post-COVID operating period, which was being hampered by rising rates and high inflation.

"The industry has been through a very challenging 18 months to two years, with extreme periods of volatility in pricing due to restricted domestic supply chains, material and labour shortages," Mr Bennett said.

"Although the annual CCCI remains high, on a quarterly basis there's been an easing in residential construction costs. This reflects a pullback from



Despite a record increase, construction costs are expected to begin to ease through 2023.

consumers, and builders and will eventually flow through to suppliers, as projects are delayed or put on hold in the current economic environment."

Mr Bennett said it was the lowest quarterly increase in the index since December 2021, and although there had been an improvement when compared to the runaway September figures, the quarterly rate of growth remained higher than the five-year average (1.4%).

"The biggest contributors currently are volatile timber prices, with fluctuations in structural timber costs and

general increases to timber products. Prices for metal products such as gutters, lintels and fixings, used for roofing and structural purposes continue to increase, and concrete values also remain unstable," he said.

"Petrol rises are affecting cartage and delivery costs, notably concrete, however larger items such as rainwater tanks are also affected. Gravel, aggregates and fill have increased, possibly affected by the rise in petrol prices, while increasing costs for appliances and fittings have also been noticed."

The quarterly index change

ranged from a low of 1.7% in South Australia and 1.8% in New South Wales to a high of 2.0% in Western Australia and Queensland.

Mr Bennett doesn't expect 2023 costs to continue to grow at the same rapid pace as they have done in the past 18 months as consumers, builders and suppliers proceed with caution against a backdrop of rising rates and inflationary pressures.

CoreLogic research director Tim Lawless noted dwelling approval figures had dropped by 41% since moving through historic highs in March 2021, and despite a substantial pipeline of residential construction work still to be completed, the drop off in consents will have helped reduce some of the pressure on the industry.

Although there remains a shortage of labour, the opening of borders and arrival of skilled workers is also expected to eventually flow through to the construction industry.

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Redevelopment to commence on Forestry building in Hobart

CONSTRUCTION is now underway on the restoration and redevelopment of the Forestry building in Hobart after the project was approved by the City of Hobart in May 2022.

Formerly the headquarters for Forestry Tasmania, the iconic domed building has been vacant for several years following Forestry Tasmania vacating the premises in 2017.

The University of Tasmania (UTAS) purchased the site in 2018 as part of its Southern Campus

Transformation, and engaged Woods Bagot to lead the design of the redevelopment.



The glass dome was added by architect Robert Morris-Nunn in the 1990s during his restoration.

on Melville Street comprises two original 1930s warehouses with a 22-metre-diameter glass dome originally designed by Circa Morris-Nunn Chua Architects in 1997. During the redevelopment, Woods Bagot will be reinstating the urban forest that was previously housed beneath the glass dome.

“Seeing the building fall into disuse was really sad,” said Robert Morris-Nunn.

“It’s been truly amazing for the building to become part of



The aerial shot shows the impressive, iconic dome.

Following its renewal, the building will become home to university’s College of Business and Economics and the Law School, as well as administrative offices. Once completed, it will house 300 staff and provide contemporary, accessible facilities to support 3,000 students.

The heritage-listed building

the University and to know that it will be renovated, the forest replanted, and the space filled with students and given back the life it should have had.”

The university’s vice-chancellor Professor Rufus Black said the university is “proud” to restore an important piece of Hobart’s architecture while making a significant investment in education facilities for staff and future students.

Works on the Forestry building are expected to take two years to complete, with staff and students forecast to use the building in 2025.

Source: Architecture Au

“IT’S BEEN TRULY AMAZING FOR THE BUILDING TO BECOME PART OF THE UNIVERSITY



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JANUARY

30-31: International Conference on Agricultural and Forestry Engineering – Sydney, NSW.

The International Research Conference is a federated organization dedicated to bringing together a significant number of diverse scholarly events for presentation within the conference program.

Events will run over a span of time during the conference depending on the number and length of the presentations. With its high quality, it provides an exceptional value for students, academics and industry researchers. Visit: <https://waset.org/agricultural-and-forestry-engineering-conference-in-january-2023-in-sydney>

FEBRUARY

6-7: International Conference on Forest Biology and Dendrology – Melbourne, VIC. International Conference on Forest Biology and Dendrology aims to bring together leading academic

scientists, researchers and research scholars to exchange and share their experiences and research results on all aspects of Forest Biology and Dendrology. It also provides a premier interdisciplinary platform for researchers, practitioners and educators to present and discuss the most recent innovations, trends, and concerns as well as practical challenges encountered and solutions adopted in the fields of Forest Biology and Dendrology. Visit: <https://waset.org/forest-biology-and-dendrology-conference-in-february-2023-in-melbourne>

7-8: 6th European Biomass Trade and Power Summit – Copenhagen.

On site and virtual. Attractive economics and spreads for wood pellet burn across Europe has boosted biomass demand, despite record high pellet prices. High power demand and a rebound in carbon prices has been the catalyst but a shortage of wood pellet supply will likely reduce industrial

wood pellet consumption in Europe. Visit www.cmtevents.com/aboutevent.aspx?ev=230202& or email huiyan@cmtsp.com.sg

APRIL

25-26: Institute of Chartered Foresters National Conference 2023: Connecting Trees, Farmers and Foresters – ONLINE EVENT.

Exploring how to integrate trees into the farmed landscapes and build relationships between farming and forestry. For further information see: <https://www.charteredforesters.org/event/national-conference-2023-connecting-trees-farmers-and-foresters>.

MAY

18-19: The Forest Industry Engineering Association – Melbourne.

Woodtech would be showcasing new innovations, new products and new equipment to improve local sawmilling, wood manufacturing and wood panel company's operating efficiencies - and profitability.

For bookings: <https://www.eventalways.com/woodtech>

25-26: National TABMA Australia Conference – Hunter Valley, NSW. For any queries contact events@tamba.com.au. For bookings: <https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing/993638>

AUGUST

29-30: Timber & Forestry enews Australian Timber Supply Crisis Summit – Melbourne. Early warning alert. For any queries relating to the conference, please contact CORP COMM. Email: info@corp-comm.com.au Phone: +61 3 5977 0244

OCTOBER

15-19: ANZIF Conference: Embracing our natural capital: The science, technology, and art of managing forests for all values – Twin Towns Conference Centre, Coolangatta, Queensland. Further details from Forestry Australia at: <https://www.forestry.org.au/>



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Forestry efforts a top priority for those concerned about climate crisis

Forest restoration maximises carbon capture, safeguards biodiversity, and creates sustainable jobs

AROUND the world, forestry teams are hard at work restoring species-rich ecosystems that sequester carbon. Supporting them should be a top priority for anyone concerned about the climate crisis.

When it's done right, forest restoration can not only maximise carbon capture – it can also safeguard biodiversity and create sustainable jobs and opportunities for indigenous people and local communities.

Although the global momentum is shifting, to grow real forests, teams on the ground need real support, and we have an unprecedented opportunity to provide that support in 2023.

Last November, leaders at the COP27 climate conference in Egypt emerged with a landmark agreement aimed at protecting nature. Delegates from 26 countries formed a Forest and Climate Leaders' Partnership (FCLP) dedicated to halting and reversing forest loss. The partnership aims to



Forestry teams need access to the best equipment and training for it if they are going to be able to turn the tide against deforest.

mobilise funding, incentivise forest conservation and invest in initiatives led by indigenous peoples and local communities. The energy continued in COP15, where global leaders adopted the landmark Global Biodiversity Framework, committing to protect and restore our planet's ecosystems.

Now it's time to translate that commitment into practical action. By providing tools, training, and resources to

forestry teams on the ground. The FCLP partnership is intended to mobilise public and private finance for forests. To make this commitment meaningful, forestry teams

need immediate, practical access to funding, especially during the difficult start-up phase of restoration projects

Though governments, corporations and other organisations have committed billions of dollars to forest restoration, few funds are available for project start-up costs, which begin long before a single tree is planted. Today, 95% of teams simply don't have enough funding.

Several innovations in forest finance can help to unlock the large flows of private capital needed to drive mass-scale reforestation. Bringing more trust and transparency to the high-risk early phases of a restoration project can create a pathway for private capital to support new forestry project start-up costs, helping to scale up the industry.

Demand for nature-based carbon credits is on the rise. Carbon credits purchased as

“FOREST RESTORATION CAN MAXIMISE CARBON CAPTURE AND SAFEGUARD BIODIVERSITY”

Cont P 9



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From P 8

part of corporate sustainability plans can finance forests and accelerate biodiverse restoration. Ideally, before receiving verification, projects should be required to incorporate biodiversity with native species. The growing energy around the nature positive movement as well as rising interest in biodiversity credits could help drive real ecosystem restoration

Forestry teams are highly knowledgeable about local ecosystems, but they're often less familiar with technology tools that can help scale restoration projects quickly, and 70% of projects don't have the technology they need to capture field data and monitor and report on progress.

Teams need software support. Such tools are particularly important in the early stages of a project when tracking can greatly reduce risk and increase investment opportunities. Unblocking access to this crucial technology and training will be essential to making

reforestation commitments a reality this year.

The bottlenecks facing forestry teams are daunting, but they're also surmountable. The world is already heading in the right direction. More public and private funding and partnerships like the FCLP can help focus global efforts, as well as improve seed infrastructure and access to carbon markets.

The World Economic Forum's platform to connect and mobilise the global reforestation community also has an important role to play in bringing together stakeholders from all sectors to collectively address these restoration challenges and facilitate new partnerships to scale action in 2023

As we watch the climate and biodiversity crises deepen, we must remember that all of our futures hinge in large part on forestry teams around the world, who can turn climate pledges into real forests. Addressing their biggest barriers should be our first priority in the coming year.

Calls for canopy cover in Melbourne

LOCALS in Melbourne's western suburbs are calling for more tree cover after it was revealed the suburbs have the lowest tree canopy in the city and is needing more shade on its footpaths.

Experts say the issue is linked to harmful "heat islands" and poorer health outcomes for residents in the areas.

Banyule Mayor Peter Castaldo has said his council is determined to close the cap aiming for 45% of council footpaths to be covered by canopies by 2040.

Bundoora resident Ronda Hunter has lived in the suburb for three years, and said walking in the area was a challenge in the summer.



Suburbs in Melbourne west are scorching with limited canopy cover

Ben Rossiter from Victoria Walks said all levels of government should invest in planting trees around footpaths to encourage walking.

"We need to prioritise tree planting particularly routes to school, routes to public transport and to local shops," he said told the ABC.

HQPlantations appoints new Chief Executive Officer

FOLLOWING an extensive domestic and international executive search, HQPlantations Board of Directors have announced the appointment of Jason Wilson as the new Chief Executive Officer following previous CEO Jeremy Callachor's resignation late last year and departure in December for family reasons.

"Jeremy's leadership saw HQPlantations successfully navigate the Covid-19 pandemic, the cessation of log exports to China, the 2019/20 bushfires, and unprecedented periods of extreme wet weather and flooding," said company Chairman Tom Sarno.

An experienced CEO and

senior executive, incoming CEO Mr Wilson holds extensive experience in the forest and timber industry both in Australia and New Zealand, most recently as the head of Te Uru Rākau – New Zealand Forest Service in the role of Deputy Director-General at the Ministry for Primary Industries. While there, he leads the partnership between the government, industry



Mr Wilson holds extensive experience in the forest and timber industry.

and the merger and acquisition of businesses to achieve growth potential both domestically and internationally."

Mr Wilson holds a Bachelor of Commerce and Management from Lincoln University New Zealand, a Master of Enterprise from the Melbourne Business School, and more recently completed the Senior Executive Program at Stanford

University in California.

"Expected to join the business in April 2023, Jason is already looking forward to taking the opportunity to spend time with HQPlantations employees, customers, and contractors during his early weeks to start building positive relationships and grow our partnerships for mutual benefit," Mr Sarno said.

Until Mr Wilson's commencement, HQPlantations will continue to be led by Interim CEO, Bill McCallum. Mr McCallum successfully led Manulife Forest Management (NZ) prior to taking on the role of Managing Director for Manulife Investment Management Timberland and Agriculture Australia where he served as a Director of HQPlantations and other timber and agricultural investments in Australia and New Zealand.

and the workforce, and Māori to strengthen New Zealand's forestry and wood processing supply chain.

"The Board is confident that Jason's highest levels of integrity, strategic thinking, experience, and talent make him the best person to lead HQPlantations strategic direction and deliver upon the goals we all share," said Mr Sarno.

"With over 25 years of industry experience, Jason has succeeded as a senior leader across a range of markets and roles including developing engineered wood product businesses, leading the strategic redevelopment of large timber manufacturing facilities,

“ JASON BRINGS 25 YEARS OF INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE TO THE ROLE

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Meet the supplier - Vida Wood Australia

VIDA is a global supplier of manufactured products from sustainable Swedish forests. Production is mainly focused on structural timber for several global markets. Eighty percent of our sawn wood products are exported to Europe, USA, Australia, Africa, and Asia. Sawn wood products are managed through our sales company, Vida Wood, which has sales offices in several countries. One of these sales offices is Vida Wood Australia.

Vida Wood Australia's head office is in Brisbane, Queensland where we operate in a 12,000m² warehouse that combines all sales and logistics. It is from this point in Australia that we coordinate every single one of our sales and logistics transactions across the entire Australian Eastern seaboard. Vida Wood Australia also has a third-party



The team has a 'can-do' attitude which is their biggest asset.

logistics set-up in Melbourne where we hold stocks and serve our market in Victoria.

Managing Director of Vida Wood Australia, Kurt Schrammel, built the distribution company Vida

Wood Australia from nothing. He is extremely proud of the footprint that has been created for Vida in Australia since its inception in January 2015.

"It was such a great privilege to build a distribution

company from the ground up on the other side of the planet. Vida's product range and management have been of great support in making this

Cont P 12

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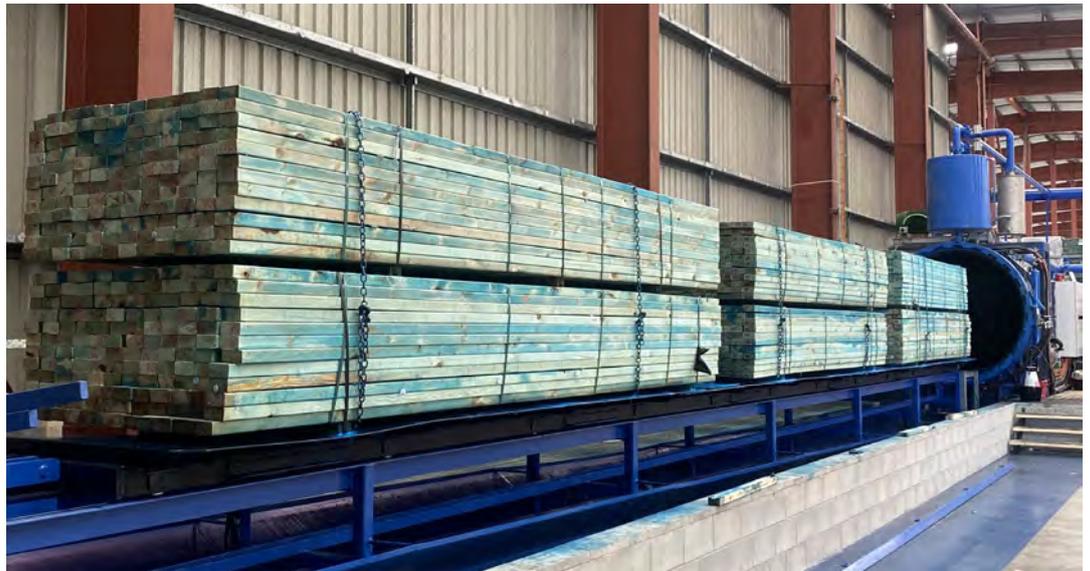
project, which is now a force in Australia, a true success story," says Kurt Schrammel.

One of the biggest challenges when working for a company from the other side of the globe is managing the time difference meticulously while balancing the challenges of logistics along with lead times. Traditionally, under normal circumstances, any product that is shipped from Sweden to Australia has a lead time of 2-3 months, which means forward thinking is paramount for businesses.

Kurt, along with his Operations Director Ian Brett and Sales Director Jacinta Colley, are supported by their team of 13 employees in Brisbane who handle the entire supply chain – from direct ordering from our mills to customs clearance, container unloading, warehousing, and deliveries to customers.

At Vida Wood Australia we have a sophisticated distribution system in place – from breaking packs into smaller units to trimming and pressure treatment. Our model

“THERE IS NO DOUBT WE ARE A GROWING FORCE IN THIS MARKET”



Vida has a sophisticated distribution system in place – from breaking packs into smaller units to trimming and pressure treatment.



Vida Wood is located in Brisbane and distributes across the eastern seaboard.

serves customers in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide, and manages direct container shipments to Perth, WA. Australia is a vast country with long distances between its metropolitan areas, but we manage this well.

In our Brisbane warehouse, we have a docking/trimming saw which gives us flexibility for DTL requirements for fabricators. This is complimented with a 13-metre T2 pressure treatment plant which enables us to add value

and control our inventory levels. Over the last 24 months, we have also started to integrate our North American products from Canfor into our portfolio, which has meant we have started to build a combined brand.

“Besides being able to work with timber and interact with many different nationalities, the very best thing about my job is all the Vida people. We have a great team of people working for Vida in all countries and it is fun to collaborate and achieve our goals together.”

The team in Australia has a “can-do” attitude and our people are certainly our biggest asset. There is no doubt we are a growing force in this market.”



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Timbeter in the running for digital award

TIMBETER from Estonia has been officially unveiled as one of the top 9 nominees to DIGITALEUROPE's Future Unicorn Award 2023, the annual prize recognising the most promising European technology scale-ups.

The winner will be announced on 8 March at Masters of Digital, DIGITALEUROPE's annual flagship conference, by Mariya Gabriel, European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth.

"Being one of the Future Unicorn Award 2023 nominees is great recognition to our team," Anna-Greta Tsahkna, CEO of Timbeter said.

"Working with organizations across all continents proves that our solution solves



Timbeter's digital solution is changing the forestry sector by enabling sustainable forest management.

universal challenges related to transparency, traceability, efficiency, and accountability in the forestry sector.

"The one thing we owe our success to is our dedication to R&D and the trust of our investors for seeing a long-term perspective. It is fascinating to witness how the

regulators and very traditional forest industry is slowly indicating interest in more transparent, traceable, and accurate forest information," she continued.

"Climate policy is an important driver here. We strongly believe that digital transformation and

harnessing innovative technology in the forestry industry is 100% required for a more sustainable future."

"Today, only 12% of the world's unicorns are European," Cecilia Bonefeld-Dahl, director-general of DIGITALEUROPE, said.

"This is far from enough, at a time when Europe seeks to assert its global competitive edge. This year's impressive shortlist of the most brilliant scale-ups represents critical sectors from energy & green tech to cyber security.

Cont P 15

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Golf balls, ocean cables and dental work ... a wonder tree latex

DURING the second half of the nineteenth century, the gutta-percha tree changed the world.

Gutta-percha is a tree of the genus *Palauquium*. The name refers to the rigid, naturally biologically inert, resilient, electrically nonconductive, thermoplastic latex derived from the tree. "Gutta-percha" comes from the tree's name in Malay *getah* that translates as "latex". Percha or perca is an older name for Sumatra. In Australia, gutta-percha is a common name for *Excoecaria parvifolia* trees which have an aromatic, heavy, dark-brown timber.

Native to Sumatra, Borneo and the Malay peninsula, gutta-percha is a rainforest species attaining a height of 30 metres, with a trunk diameter of up to a metre. The leaves are shiny green and smooth on the upper surface, downy and bronzed underneath and crowded at the tips of branches.

In sun and air, the latex of gutta-percha coagulates into a pinkish, inert, waterproof material. Unlike other kinds of latex, gutta-percha is tough, not brittle, nor is it elastic like rubber. However, when heated to 65-70°C, it becomes flexible and can be moulded easily, retaining its shape as it cools.

Indigenous people had been using gutta-percha latex to mould tools and machete handles for centuries. When in 1843, a British surgeon sent samples to London the latex

of gutta-percha quickly established itself as a modern wonder material. It was promoted for its unbreakable kitchenware, and a wide range of other applications.

The best golf balls of the first half of the nineteenth century had been laboriously made



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1/ Unlike other kinds of latex, when heated gutta-percha latex becomes flexible and can be moulded easily, retaining its shape as it cools.

2/ Gutta-percha is the thermoplastic filling material heated and compressed into the tooth's canal, then sealed with adhesive cement.

from stitched leather and feathers. Gutta-percha golf balls, or 'gutties', were a great improvement. 'Gutties' lasted for 50 years, until an even better ball was made using threads of rubber.

However, a use for gutta-percha latex was discovered that was far more important than golf balls. The electric telegraph had recently been invented, but international communications across oceans were restricted because electricity and water don't mix. Enter gutta-percha,



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telegraph cable was laid thanks to gutta-percha latex coating insulation.

That wasn't so good for gutta-percha trees, and rather than laboriously tapping latex whole trees were cut down to extract latex quickly. Millions of trees were felled to satisfy the

insatiable demand for cable installation. Eventually natural forests were cleared and plantations established, but the depletion of such a strategic, renewable resource caused widespread anxiety.

Subsequent regulations ensured that, rather than using a whole tree trunk, latex could be extracted only from leaves, which were harvested, shredded and the latex extracted. This enabled gutta-percha to remain the insulator on which international communications depended. It was replaced only gradually after 1933, when polyethylene was synthesized.

The only routine and widespread use of gutta-percha today is by dentists, who have yet to find a better filler for root-canal work. Gutta-percha is the thermoplastic filling material heated and compressed into the tooth's canal, then sealed with adhesive cement.

TALKING TREES



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resistant to salt water and an excellent electrical insulator.

Werner von Siemens invented a way of coating copper wires seamlessly with gutta-percha latex. After much trial and error, the production and laying of reliable cables eventually became routine. In 1876 the British Empire was linked from London to New Zealand, and by the end of the nineteenth century more than 400,000 kilometres of



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From P 13

"They clearly reflect Europe's most burning challenges and the power of European innovators to deliver solutions. Yet, the road to a truly empowering innovation ecosystem remains very bumpy.

"While the US and China invest over 3.58% and 1.34% of GDP respectively in scale-ups, Europe's 0.53% is obviously not enough.

"In addition, many European innovators suffer from barriers between EU countries, which stop them from scaling quickly enough. This should be top of mind as we celebrate the 30th anniversary of the EU's single market next year," she said.

The Future Unicorn Award

is a chance to show why European unicorns matter.

Running for the sixth year in a row, the Future Unicorn Award celebrates scale-ups from across Europe that have the potential to become the bloc's future tech giants.

The Award is a great opportunity to showcase aspiring European scale-ups that have the potential to become future unicorns (that is, scale-ups valued

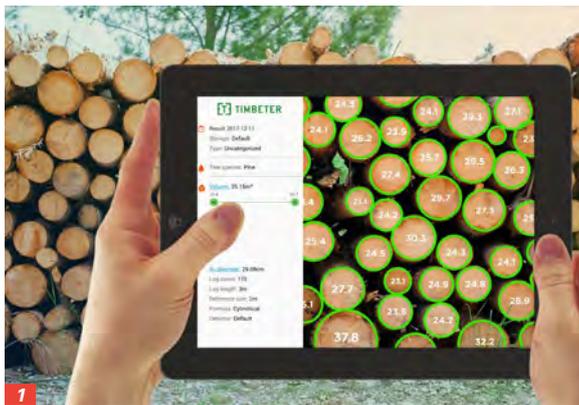
at over one billion dollars), highlighting that Europe has what it takes to become a digital leader.

As for Timbeter, it provides accurate AI measurement and data management solutions for transforming forestry. Timbeter's digital solution is

“ THIS IS GREAT RECOGNITION TO OUR TEAM ”

changing the forestry sector by enabling sustainable forest management, increasing the safety of employees, maximizing the value of each log, helping to optimize logistics, and guaranteeing fair trades. Also, it helps with monitoring and controlling the timber supply chain, supporting governments and law enforcement agencies to prevent illegal logging

and keep a better overview of the volumes harvested.



1/ **Timbeter's digital solution is changing the forestry sector by enabling sustainable forest management.**
 2/ **The awards recognises the most promising European technology scale-ups.**

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20 days to go ... make the move to the Biosecurity Portal now

APPROVED arrangements, custom brokers, manned depots, freight forwarders, and clients with low volumes of import inspection requests can book and manage their inspection request bookings using the Biosecurity Portal.

According to the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, for these clients, from Wednesday 1 February 2023, the current email channel will no longer be an option to request an inspection booking or make changes to bookings.

However, the department says it is critical that you have transitioned to using the Portal for all bookings before 1 February 2023.

From the start of next

month, the Biosecurity Portal will be the only way for most clients to book cargo import inspections with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (the department).

The portal is a streamlined process for booking import inspections that gives clients full control of requests including changes and cancellations.

This will result in the current email booking method no longer being supported from midnight on Tuesday, 31 January 2023 for most request for inspection bookings.

However there are some who will not be affected.

"If you are a client who currently utilises the



The inspection booking process will change from February 1, 2023.

Biosecurity Portal to solely lodge and manage requests for import inspections, there is no change," a spokesperson for the department said.

"Clients, where inspections are supported through bulk bookings such as high-volume specialist operators (HSVO) and specific inspections

including virtual visual label inspections, plant export inspections and requests submitted with an airway bill, are not impacted.

"For clients requesting these types of inspection bookings the current email request process

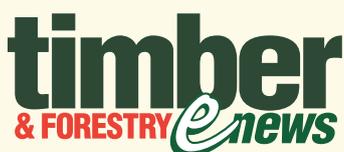
will continue until the portal can support."

Support to make the move to the Biosecurity Portal can be found on the departments website or by contacting the department at: <https://www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity-trade/import/online-services/biosecurity-portal>

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Timber supply chains expecting disruptions as monsoonal rain hits North Queensland

FORESTRY, agriculture, and supply chains are expected to be affected as heavy rain and flooding impacts areas of North Queensland.

Communities and freight have been cut off as a heavy monsoon front sits over the tropics bringing drenching rain.

It's another blow for timber and building suppliers who continue to battle ongoing supply chain issues.

Trucking companies have once again been forced to pull up with major highways and arterials closed due to the wet weather.

"At the moment we simply can't get supplies and goods in and out of far north Queensland," a spokesperson from the truckers association said.

"It's impossible for us to move freight, goods, and building supplies through the region."

Additionally, there are concerns for crops and infrastructure.

According to the Bureau of



1/ Heavy flooding is impacting roads and transport across North Queensland.



2/ There has been widespread flooding at Goorganga in the Whitsundays.

Meteorology, the heavy rain is consistent with a monsoonal pattern for the region.

"It's not unheard of for this part of Queensland," a spokesperson from the Bureau of Meteorology.

Showers and thunderstorms are expected to continue across the tropical north, with heavy rain focused between Ayr and St Lawrence in Queensland.

A Severe Weather Warning is current for Heavy Rainfall that will cause flash and riverine flooding for coastal areas between Ayr and St

Lawrence, and adjacent inland areas.

Minor, Moderate and Major Flood Warnings are current for multiple river systems across Queensland, and further warnings are likely in coming days.

Major Flood Warnings are current for the Don River and Pioneer River.

According to the Bureau of Meteorology, daily rainfall totals are likely to exceed 200 mm, with isolated totals up to 400 mm possible.

Many roads are closed across Queensland, including the Bruce Highway in multiple sections which continue to impact the supply and delivery of timber.

In the five days to 9am Monday (AEST), many

locations have had 500 to 700 mm of rainfall with the highest totals including:

- 704mm at Mount Jukes, Qld
- 702mm at Upper Finch Hatton alert (483mm in 48 hours), Qld
- 663mm at Jubilee Pocket alert (554mm in 48 hours), Qld
- In the 24 hours to 9am Monday (AEST), the highest falls in Queensland include:
 - 392mm at Jubilee Pocket, Qld
 - 378mm at Peter Faust Dam, Qld
 - 318mm at Dittmer, Qld

More broadly over Queensland, Northern Territory and Western Australia, showers and thunderstorms are possible each day, which may produce flash flooding and localised disruptions.

“WE SIMPLY CAN'T GET GOODS IN AND OUT

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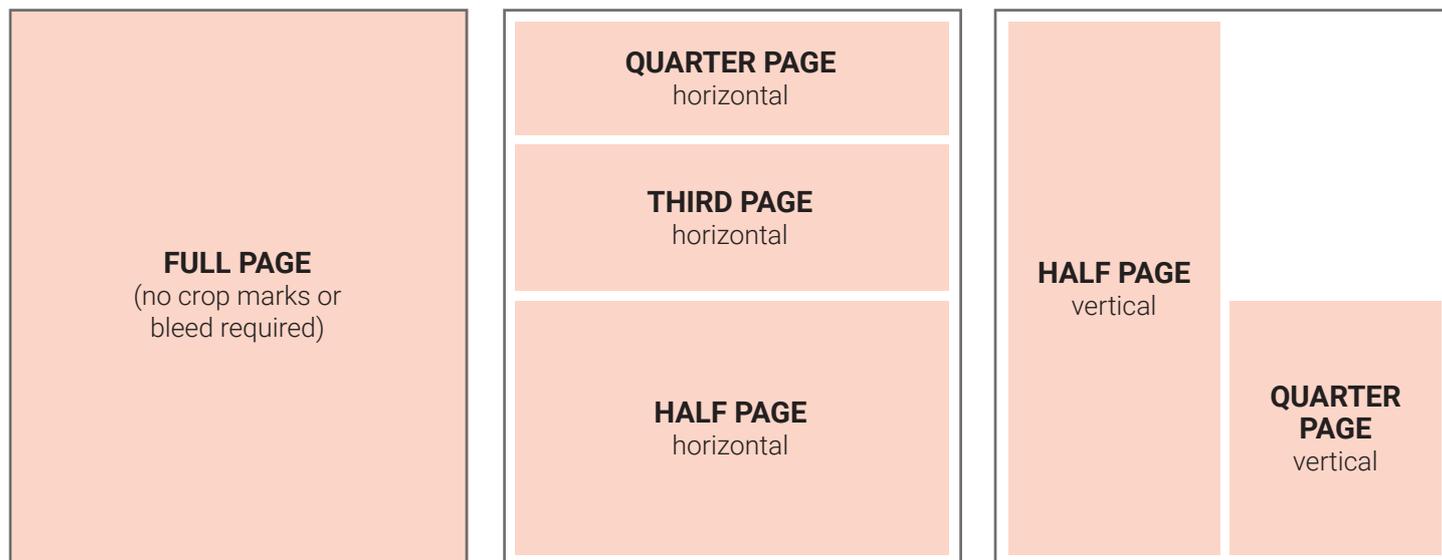
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