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Tasmanian plantation hardwoods remain in the spotlight

COVER STORY P 5



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Responsible Forestry praises ForestrySA

RESPONSIBLE Wood says they were privileged to see some of the outstanding members making a positive impact on the environment in South Australia following a recent visit.

A highlight of the trip they say was a meeting with ForestrySA, South Australia's esteemed home-grown plantation and community forest manager.

During the visit, Matt de Jongh, sustainability manager, witnessed the commendable efforts of ForestrySA in community-focused responsible forestry practices. Among the many remarkable examples he encountered were the TreeClimb at Kuitpo Forest, an innovative eco-adventure that offers visitors a unique perspective of the forest canopy, and the brand-new off-grid, sustainable cabin accommodations managed by the Australian-owned operator, CABN, nestled within the heart of Kuitpo Forest. These initiatives exemplify a commitment to environmental

stewardship and sustainable tourism.

Additionally, Matt had the opportunity to explore an essential koala feedstock plantation and a protected site dedicated to preserving nationally endangered orchids. These initiatives demonstrate ForestrySA's dedication to conserving biodiversity and ensuring the preservation of critical ecosystems.

ForestrySA was one of the initial organisations to have earned the Responsible Wood certification for sustainable forest management, setting an exemplary standard for other businesses in the field. The company has integrated sustainable practices across their estate, effectively

managing the commercial, environmental, social, and cultural aspects of their forests and operations.

With about 10,000 hectares of plantation pine in the Mount Lofty Ranges, plus about 4,000 hectares of native forest in reserve and over 16,000 hectares of plantation pine in the Limestone Coast ForestrySA plays a pivotal role in maintaining a healthy ecosystem. Notably, the company takes great pride in facilitating public access to these plantations and native forests, inviting the community to partake in various recreational activities while fostering an understanding of responsible forest management.

Matt expressed his admiration for ForestrySA's endeavours.

"It's inspiring to see a company that places equal emphasis on environmental protection and community engagement," he said.

"ForestrySA has set an excellent example for others in the industry to follow."

Denise Little, administration manager at ForestrySA, also shared her passion for sustainable forestry practices, saying, "Being a part of ForestrySA has been a fulfilling experience. We are committed to not only safeguarding our forests but also creating opportunities for the public to connect with nature responsibly."



1/ The visit included a koala feedstock plantation.



2/ ForestrySA was praised for placing equal emphasis on environmental protection and community engagement.



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\$5M in funding for ARC training centre in plant biosecurity

FOREST & Wood Products Australia (FWPA) has shared the Australian Government's recent announcement of \$5M in funding for a new Australian Research Council (ARC) Training Centre in Plant Biosecurity.

The funding is part of \$64M in funding being awarded to eight ARC Industrial Transformation Training Centres and five new ARC Industrial Transformation Research Hubs. This is a key initiative to mentor and train Australia's next generation of research professionals, and to support partnerships between universities and industry that will generate real-world outcomes that are vital to Australia's economic growth.

The ARC Training Centre in Plant Biosecurity will launch an innovative training program for future leaders, with a cohort of graduates innovating in the areas of novel diagnostic technologies, data-driven decision platforms, and addressing barriers to biosecurity adoption. This suite of graduates and technologies will transform the plant biosecurity sector to protect Australia's \$5.7 trillion natural and productive ecosystems.

"This research is of key importance especially for our grower members, as biosecurity is a critical part of Australia's efforts to prevent, respond to, and recover from pests and diseases that impact and threaten the forestry industry" said FWPA Forest Research Manager Jodie Mason.

"Our grower members identified forest health and



The \$5 million centre will commence training in 2024

biosecurity expertise as an area of critical importance for capacity building. True to their vision, the growers collectively contributed \$250,000 to the Centre to fund two PhD students to work on industry biosecurity challenges with industry. It's really pleasing to now see this initiative supported through the ARC funding."

The ARC Training Centre will help meet the emerging needs of plant biosecurity by partnering with Research and Development Corporations (RDCs), including FWPA, industry representatives, Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments, and research and technology organisations to train a new generation of biosecurity leaders and innovators.

"This great initiative helps to prepare our industry for the biosecurity challenges of the future and shows a proactive and collaborative approach to improving industry capacity and productivity," said Dr Phil Lacy, chair of Forest Health and Biosecurity (FH&B).

The Australian Forest Products Association's (AFPA) FH&B sub-committee

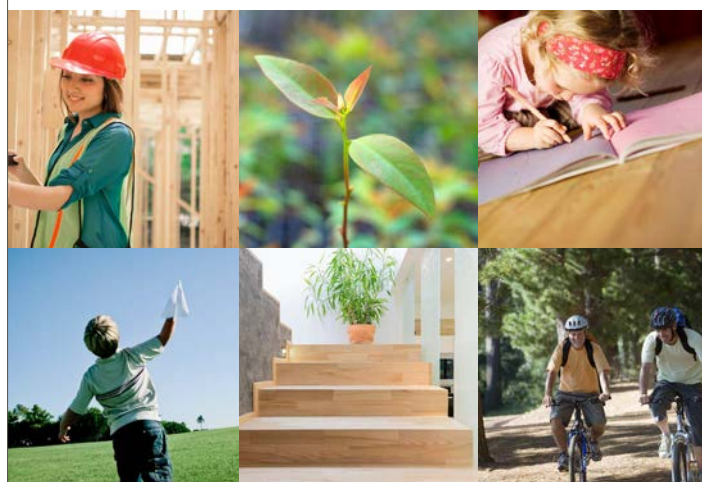
provides policy, technical and operational advice to the plantation forest sector on all matters related to biosecurity or forest health.

The ARC Training Centre will commence in 2024 and is

led by The Australian National University in collaboration with James Cook University, the University of Canberra and with over 20 partners from across industry and government.

"ARC Training Centres provide PhD and early career researcher training for industries vital to Australia's future. Plant biosecurity is critical to Australia's primary production and natural ecosystems, and ANU is delighted to be collaborating with partners across government, academia and industry towards a shared vision." Professor Keith Nugent, ANU Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation).

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Tasmanian plantation hardwood utilisation debate

John Halkett, Publisher

READERS will be very well aware that the hardwood timber industry across the country is under real pressure – exacerbated by the unconscionable decision of the Victorian Andrews government to shut down the native forest-based hardwood industry this year with its detrimental impacts on forestry and timber product manufacturing across the state. Add to this unfortunate reality is the pending closure of the hardwood industry in Western Australia.

So really challenging times for the entire hardwood sector, including in Tasmania



Tasmanian hardwood plantations ... at the centre of polarised advocacy.

where the situation has not been assisted by polarised, pecuniary advocacy by different and competing sectors in the industry.

Timber & Forestry eNews

has received a number of representations over the past week from several recognised, well-respected individuals in the Tasmanian forestry sector voicing concerns about the current public dispute between sawmills represented by Terry Edwards and representatives of other sawmilling and wood processing companies.

Director of Miller Grove and former managing director of Midway Tony Price said he was disappointed that claims in the article published in eNews last week were not substantiated in advance.

National Business Development Manager and Director Australian Sustainable Hardwoods (ASH) Daniel Wright says the published article was outdated. "It is loaded

with misinformation, is factually untrue and damaging to both companies listed. It is also bad for the timber industry in general."

"Selfish, ill-intentioned lobbyist campaigns such as this one cannot be allowed to trump the greater good of the industry or journalistic code of ethics – to seek truth and provide a fair and comprehensive account of events and issues," he said.

The article published last week on behalf of a grouping of ten Tasmanian sawmills publicly called on the Tasmanian Government to commit to their security through access to the Tasmanian hardwood plantation resource.

The spokesperson for the group Terry Edwards alleged that the resource was specifically established to secure the future of those mills after successive lockups of Tasmanian State-owned forests.

So, in the interests of fairness and balance, following the publication of last week's article quoting Terry Edwards, this week we are publishing an article provided by Vince Hurley, Director, Western Junction Sawmill.

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On-island high value manufacturing gives the best return to Tasmanians

THE recent media campaign against Western Junction Sawmill contains false, misleading, and exaggerated allegations including attributing footage of logs on wharves that have nothing to do with Western Junction Sawmill, according to director Vince Hurley. They are designed to create a negative perception and public outrage against the company and encourage political intervention in the upcoming Expressions of Interest process announced by Sustainable Timber Tasmania.

Western Junction Sawmill changed ownership in 2021 and is investing in high-value manufacturing at its Tasmanian facility with enormous benefit to Tasmanians. These benefits include the ability to maximize the value of both low- and high-grade sawlogs ensuring



Australian Sustainable Hardwoods (ASH) sawmill and manufacturing facility, Heyfield, Victoria.

the best return to Tasmanians, more employment per sawlog and higher-paid jobs.

High value manufactured products also have a large climate change benefit as they store carbon for very long periods of time compared to lower value products. Mr Hurley said Western Junction Sawmill only employs Tasmanians and only engages Tasmanian contractors. High value manufacturing ensures Tasmanians receive the highest return for their sawlogs. This

includes all the people of Tasmania through returns to Sustainable Timber Tasmania, owned by the Tasmanian Government. Sustainable Timber Tasmania is then not forced to choose the lowest price harvest and haul contractors and Tasmanian timber workers can be both paid more and progress to higher-paid jobs. Importantly private forest and plantation growers benefit through the increase in market price for sawlogs. Sustainable Timber Tasmania's Expressions of

Interest process will include the allocation of hardwood plantation resources available from 2025 to 2035. Mr Hurley says Western Junction Sawmill's objective is to purchase the types of products it is currently purchasing from Sustainable Timber Tasmania and the same overall volume. Terry Edwards is running this

campaign of false and misleading allegations on behalf of wealthy sawmill owners whose sawmills are at Smithton, Huon Valley and Bridgewater. Some of the wealthy sawmill owners are Victorian residents and two have significant processing facilities in Victoria. Their campaign to politically lockout Western Junction Sawmill from the Expressions of Interest process is not about volume.

Cont P 6

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From P 5

The campaign's objective is to self-servingly influence competition and price. The wealthy sawmill owners have had many years to invest in high-value manufacturing in Tasmania and provide Tasmanians the best return but have failed to do so in any significant way. They have reverted to their previously successful method of political influence and media campaign using their former seasoned lobbyist. The Expressions of Interest Process can address concerns of company ownership, account for previous investments and enable Tasmanians to receive the best return by using the following mandatory

“ FALSE, MISLEADING, AND EXAGGERATED ALLEGATIONS



An expression of interest process will include the allocation of hardwood plantation resources available from 2025 to 2035.

requirements applicable to all participants:

- Must not have any government or non-government organisation ownership or affiliation.
- Must have a current Contract of Sale with Sustainable Timber Tasmania.
- Must have plans to invest in on-island high-value manufacturing in Tasmania and with the plant to be in

place by June 2027, the end of the current sawlog contract period. Small sawmills should be exempt from this process and continue to receive their native sawlog supply.

The Expressions of Interest applications should be assessed by an independent probity auditor to ensure facts determine the outcome and not self-interest or opinions expressed in the media. The Expressions of Interest can provide a masterplan to ensure there is investment in Tasmania and Tasmanians can optimise the value of their forest and plantation estate to help fund the health, housing and education resources they require.

On the cover: Vince Hurley, director of Western Junction Sawmill says recent comments have been designed to create a negative perception and public outrage.

Head-turning construction underway in Tasmania

A MULTI-STOREY construction is turning industry heads in Launceston's CBD with the building made almost entirely from timber.

The 28-metre-high structure is going up fast, in fact, a lot faster than ones made from traditional building products like steel and concrete.

"The speed of construction has been the biggest eye-opener for us," Fairbrother's build manager Marcus Perkins said.

It is one of only a handful of engineered mass timber buildings under construction across Australia.

The seven-level design is distinct in the landscape with five of the levels built with huge, engineered timber beams that stand out on the skyline.

"We are getting requests for tours every week, from architects, clients, industry groups, builders, engineers, everyone," Mr Perkins said.

The seventh level has an engineered timber floor and ceiling made from hardwood mass timber produced in Tasmania.



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29-30: Timber & Forestry News Australian Timber Supply Summit – Melbourne.

For any queries relating to the conference, please contact: info@corp-comm.com.au

27-3 SEPT: Malaysian Timber Council Trade and Marketing Mission to Australia – Melbourne & Brisbane.

Including visits to Melbourne and Brisbane. To participate and for further information contact John Halkett at john.halkett@forestlands.com.au or 0417 421 187

SEPTEMBER

9: Women in Forest & Timber Network Charity Cocktail Fundraiser – Rose Room, Brisbane.

3:00 pm to 6:00 pm. Annual charity cocktail fundraiser in support of the Brisbane Domestic Violence Service (BDVS). For further information and sponsorship opportunities contact Jacinta. Colley@vidawood.com

11-12: Timber Off-Site Construction Conference – Crown Promenade Melbourne.

The theme for 2023 is “Timber & Technology – The

Zero Carbon Future”. For more information visit www.timberoffsiteconstruction.com

OCTOBER

2-6: 30th Session of the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission (APFC – Hyatt Regency Sydney Hotel.

Formulation of forest policy and to review and coordinate its implementation on the regional scale; to exchange information and advice on suitable practices and action in regard to technical problems. Further details fwww.fao.org/events/detail/apfc-30/

11-12: 71st International Softwood Conference – Hilton Vienna Park Hotel Vienna.

The conference will offer the opportunity to scrutinize trends in the timber market focusing on facts and figures showing softwood production as well as consumption. Further more info visit https://isc2023.com/

15-19: ANZIF Conference – Twin Towns Conference Centre, Coolangatta, Qld.

The Theme for 2023 is “Embracing Our Natural Capital: the science, technology and art of managing forests for all values”. Further info from: www.forestry.org.au/

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Kevin Peachey takes on new role for FWPA & WoodSolutions

EXCITING ventures are on the horizon for the WoodSolutions program, starting with introducing the newly appointed Head of Built Environment Programs at Forest & Wood Products Australia (FWPA) and WoodSolutions Program lead, Kevin Peachey.

You will recognise Kevin from his previous role as the Statistics and Economics Manager at FWPA. He formerly worked with Australian Forest Products Association, Timber Towns Victoria, and the National Timber Councils Association. He brings a great passion and understanding of forest and wood products and is enthusiastic to lead the WoodSolutions Team. He will



Kevin was appointed Head of Built Environment Programs at Forest & Wood Products Australia.

also continue in his role as Chair of the FWPA Resilient Timber Homes Program.

"Kevin has been a great asset to FWPA since he joined in 2021," said CEO

Andrew Leighton.

"He has grown the Statistics and Economics Program at FWPA by facilitating collaboration within the industry and increasing

opportunities for our FWPA members. He has managed the development of several key FWPA reports that have increased the industry's understanding of complex and changing Australian and international market dynamics."

In his role as Statistics and Economics Manager at FWPA, Kevin successfully increased the participation of companies in FWPA's industry statistics aggregation program. He also played an integral role in the development of the Softwood industry's best practice Timber Market Index.

"I look forward to working with all stakeholders involved

Cont P 9

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From P 8

in project development, design, and construction within the built environment through my new role in the WoodSolutions Program," Kevin said.

Hitting the ground running, Kevin is excited to announce the 6-month advisory role of Karl-Heinz Weiss director of Weiss Insights, a respected industry consultant known for his pioneering work in engineered timber for the design and construction sector in the UK, Europe, and Australia.

Kevin and Karl-Heinz will work closely together to evaluate and further develop the WoodSolutions Program's strategy and objectives. They will be diving straight into consultation with the design and build industry, stakeholders, and FWPA members.

"I am excited to support the WoodSolutions team as they develop the strategic framework to build on their significant existing achievements, developing the plan and pathway for further success ... at a time when timber is experiencing a renewed focus as a low carbon solution across the sector," said Karl-Heinz.

"WoodSolutions connects design and build specifiers with invaluable practical information to successfully utilise timber

in their projects and we are excited to see what this new collaboration will bring for the program."

WoodSolutions has been around for more than 12 years and has been a consistently growing source of information and resources for the design and build industry. The program is known for its ability to pivot and deliver for the needs of its users. During COVID, the team worked to bring their popular Continuing Professional Development presentations to an online, accessible format with remarkable success.

Recently, WoodSolutions brought back its popular international study tour attended by building professionals from across Australia. Touring timber buildings and innovative building material plants across Norway and Sweden, Kevin experienced firsthand how the WoodSolutions team works to promote timber innovation and how it is reshaping the future of construction.

"Our goal is to collaborate with our FWPA members and industry to determine the activities that will meet their needs. We aim to further advance the WoodSolutions mission to provide reliable and comprehensive information to facilitate informed decision-making about using wood and wood products in the built environment," Kevin concluded.

Bushfire wreaks havoc across Portugal

PORTUGAL is the latest country to experience a ferocious bushfire with more than 1,000 firefighters battling a recent blaze. The fire has destroyed 7,000 hectares (17,000 acres) of land and slightly injured 11 people. Temperatures were above 40 degrees Celsius in some regions of Portugal and authorities said wildfire risks would remain "very high

or at maximum level across the entire country" over the coming days.

Around 7,000 hectares were destroyed in the district of Castelo Branco in the centre of the country but the commander of the firefighting operation, Jose Guilherme, said the potential risk from the blaze could be as high as "more than 20,000 hectares."

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Regional forestry group seeks a nuanced approach to land use

JAMES Powrie, Acting CEO of the Hawkes Bay Forestry Group (HBFG), says the six months of record rainfall that culminated in the devastation that followed Cyclone Gabrielle has taken a huge toll in Hawkes Bay.

He adds that the region needs a nuanced approach to land use and site-specific treatment of the risks and impacts from debris and sediment. And he acknowledges there is work to do to restore the industry's social licence.

"We need to reflect on the difficult environment we deal with in the steeper Hawkes Bay hill country and its unique challenges. Our region has some very erosion-prone areas due to its geology, slope, historic native forest removal, tectonic activity, and cyclical weather patterns," Powrie said.

Powrie also notes the critical role that mature relationships with local and central governments will play in fostering enduring change.

"In Hawkes Bay, we have a pulp mill to process poorer quality logs in the region and a wood-fired power facility that processes forest residues. As an industry, we need central government to help us create an environment for investments like this."

In light of the complex land use issues faced by the region (and, in particular, the Wairoa district), the HBFG commissioned an independent, evidence-based survey using



1

- 1/ **Removal of woody debris has extended to multiple zones across affected floodplains and foreshore.**
- 2/ **James Powrie, HBFG Acting CEO, believes catchment constraints should not be prescriptive.**

satellite imagery, drone photography and ground surveys – based on defensible forest waste assessment methods – to distinguish woody debris species and source. Scion is continuing this work in the district, using the aligned methodology.

"Results determined that woody debris showing evidence of harvest activity was only 4.6% of the total by volume. For context, note that fence post material from pastoral farms or orchards made up 1.8%."

"Responses to Gabrielle should build on the mature relationship and science-based methods that HBFG members have fostered with the regional council since the early 1990s

“RESPONSES SHOULD BUILD ON RELATIONSHIP AND METHODS



2

when formal and collaborative environmental process improvement was first pursued at pace."

He adds that no silver bullet will immediately solve the problem of woody debris and sediment ... but group members are undertaking voluntary actions and working with other land users to guide future remedial work subsequent to weather events.

"Member companies are reviewing the staging of harvest events over time – although this practice was already underway in a number of forests before Gabrielle."

Powrie says the HBFG is also determining the resilience of forest infrastructure – culvert, bridge and crossing design, fish passage and protection measures, including

engineered slash traps and live debris traps. Regardless of upstream vegetation types, they all failed due to geology and weather.

Further, he says a fulsome review of land use must be carried out as a matter of priority. It needs to incorporate the views of all land users and should be based on scientific fact.

"HBFG members do not support coupe and adjacency constraints without essential, nuanced attention to conditions, and pragmatism, at a fine scale. This is because tree stands remaining in the ground significantly longer would likely result in a range of unintended economic and environmental impacts.

"Specifically, smaller coupes are mathematically bound to result in more wind-exposed perimeters per area of forest – which is then subject to windthrow, and the resulting loss of wood and sediment to water. This would be a potentially severe and perverse outcome.

"Additionally, trees remaining in the ground (even marginally beyond normal rotation length) may increase the risk of wide-scale failure on highly erodible sites due to increased total mass on slopes.

"To reduce the risk of slopes eroding at scale, and for the forestry industry to remain viable, we recommend catchment constraints should not be prescriptive. Instead, they should be informed by 'site-specific risk assessments' and detailed operational planning that reflect the unique characteristics of individual forestry blocks/estates."

Fire threatens famous Californian Joshua Tree

U2 ONCE wrote an album inspired by the impressive Joshua Tree however, now, the Californian delight is being damaged by vicious wildfires.

Reuters has reported that the largest wildfire in California so far this year has burned precious Joshua trees, a prominent cultural symbol once vital for indigenous people to weave into baskets and sandals and still an important part of the Mojave Desert ecosystem.

"The York Fire has burned around 94,000 acres (38,000 hectares) near the California-Nevada border and was 34% contained as of Thursday," Calfire said.

"The fire has damaged a diverse ecosystem and killed an unknown number of Joshua trees."

The Mojave National Preserve has been scorched

by the fire, however, thankfully to date flames have not entered the Joshua Tree National Park, which is about 60 miles (100 km) away and receives about 3 million visitors a year.

"There is obviously tremendous damage to the landscape. ... It's sort of a torched moonscape appearance," said Mike Gauthier, superintendent of the Mojave National Preserve. "Some of them (Joshua trees) will completely be ravaged. Joshua Tree isn't the most durable species, so it'll die."

The National Park Service said the York fire was the largest in the area since records began.

The trees are protected by



1/ Fire in the Mojave desert has destroyed an unknown number of Joshua Trees.

Photo: Irfan Khan / Los Angeles Times.

2/ The Joshua Tree rose to fame following the success of the U2 Album of the same name.



the state of California and have captured public imagination, in part because of their sharply pointed leaves and hairy bark. Many observers have remarked on their resemblance to the fictional Truffula trees in the 1971 Dr. Seuss book "The Lorax."

Known scientifically as *Yucca brevifolia*, they are a member of the Agave family, according to the National Park Service.

"A lot of people connect

with them when they see them. They have a very special habitat, so I think it's special when folks get to interact with them," said Sasha Travaglio, a spokesperson for Joshua Tree National Park.

The tree gained international fame thanks to the 1987 U2 album which, according to the band, represented all of the things most of U2's contemporaries renounced: earnestness, austerity, and introspection.

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Global warming supported by tree ring research

NEW research by the Dendrosciences research group based on tree rings has revealed the current warm temperatures are 'unprecedented' for this period.

The 1,200 year-long time series was reported by researchers by the Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research WSL in the scientific journal Nature.

The Middle Ages and the centuries that followed were not only turbulent socially but also climatically. Not only was there a "Little Ice Age," but also its opposite: the "Medieval climate anomaly," during which it may have been unusually warm. The latter can clearly be seen in reconstructed temperatures from annual tree rings. In fact, reconstructed Medieval temperatures are often portrayed as higher than today's temperatures.



Research included subfossil wood from trees preserved in mountains.

Photo: phys.org

This has long been a puzzle because there is no known physical explanation for such exceptional Medieval warmth. Climate models are therefore unable to simulate it and instead show only moderately warm temperatures for the Medieval climate anomaly.

"Previous reconstructions

are based on the width or density of the annual tree rings," Georg von Arx from the Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research WSL told Phys.org.

"Both are very much dependent on temperature, but sometimes other factors play a role in how wide or dense a tree ring gets."

Together with other researchers, the head of the Dendrosciences research group has created a new reconstruction based on a particularly precise method to extract temperature information from trees. In contrast to previous work, the new results lead to the same conclusion as the climate models: the Medieval climate anomaly was cooler than previously thought, at least in Scandinavia, where the wood studied originated.

Today's warming

is thus likely outside the range of natural fluctuations in temperatures over the past 1,200 years, the researchers conclude.

The study involved a new method optimized at WSL to directly measure the cell wall thickness of the wood cells in the annual tree rings.

"Each individual cell in each tree ring records climatic information under which it was formed. By analyzing hundreds, sometimes thousands of cells per ring, extraordinary pure climate information can be obtained," explains the first author of the study and WSL researcher Jesper Björklund.

For their new time series, the researchers measured the cell walls of 50 million cells. These come from 188 living and dead Swedish and Finnish Scots pines (*Pinus sylvestris*), whose annual rings together cover a period of 1,170 years.

Based on these measurements, the researchers then reconstructed the summer temperatures in this region and compared them both with model simulations of the regional climate and with previous reconstructions based on the density of the annual rings.

According to the report, the result was clear, the temperatures of the models and the new time series align.

"Instead, both show that the current warming is unprecedented, at least in the past millennium and emphasize the role of greenhouse gas emissions on Scandinavian temperature variability," says Björklund.

Source: Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research WSL via phys.org



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Two Week Extension

Nominations Now Closing
 August 20th



Don't miss this opportunity to nominate and celebrate someone who deserves to be recognised for their contribution to the Timber Industry in 2023.

To view the Nominations categories and criteria, visit www.gttia.com via the QR code.

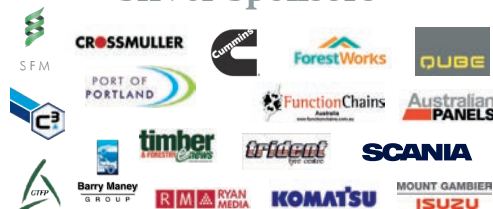


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The tree from the ‘great cypress swamps’ of America

BALD cypress can grow up to a height of 50 metres in southeastern USA from Florida to Delaware, Illinois and eastern Texas in freshwater swamps and low-lying river banks.

The bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*) is native to the southeastern United States of America. Hardy and tough, this tree adapts to a wide range of soil types, whether wet, salty, dry, or swampy.

Bald cypresses are long-lived and slow-growing. A young bald cypress is symmetrical and pyramidal. As it matures, it develops a coarse wide-spreading crown. Its tapering trunk is usually 30 metres tall and a metre in diameter.

The bald cypress is as renowned in popular lore as it is among botanists and tree lovers. Who has not been impressed by film sequences shot in the gloomy ‘great cypress swamps’ of Florida or Louisiana? Such swamps are dominated by this tree species, one of only two in the *Taxodium* genus. It is unusual, but not unique amongst conifers in being deciduous.

Very small leaves are attached in two comb-like rows to delicate branchlets. In the autumn the branchlets and leaves turn shades of gold to deep russet, then are shed.



The bald cypress is as renowned in popular lore as it is among botanists and tree lovers.

The bald cypress can grow up to a height of 50 metres in southeastern USA from Florida to Delaware, Illinois and eastern Texas in freshwater swamps and low-lying river banks often in quite deep water. The bald cypress was designated the official state tree of Louisiana in 1963.

The reddish-brown bark of bald cypress weathers to an ashy grey. A tree growing in wet soil is strongly buttressed about the base, and its horizontal roots often send conical woody projections called ‘knees’ above the waterline. The presumed function of the knees is still poorly understood; they may help oxygenate the roots or provide support in the soft muddy soil.

The flat needle like leaves

in aerosols of salt water. It does well in acid, neutral and alkaline soils across the full range of light sandy, medium loamy, and heavy clay soils. It can also grow in saline soils. It can tolerate atmospheric pollution.

The tallest known bald cypress specimen, near Williamsburg, Virginia is 45 metres tall, and the stoutest known, in the Real County near Leakey, Texas, has a circumference of 12 metres.

The National Champion bald cypress is in the Cat Island Nation Wildlife Refuge, near St. Francisville, Louisiana, and it is 30 metres tall, 17 metres in circumference, and is estimated to be approximately 1,500 years old. The National Champion bald cypress is recognised as the largest member of its species in the country.

The oldest known living specimen, found along the Black River in North Carolina, is at least 2,630 years old, rendering it the oldest living tree in eastern North America.

‘Big Dan’ is one of the oldest living specimens and is found near High Springs, Florida at Camp Kulaqua. It is estimated to be 2,700 years old. It is growing in the Hornsby Spring swamp and is more than 35 feet in circumference.

TALKING TREES



With **JOHN HALKETT**

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are arranged alternately in two ranks along small twigs. Although trees are deciduous, the leaves can persist year-round in warm climates. The seed cones are green and globular and are typically no larger than 3.5 cm in diameter.

The bald cypress grows in full sunlight to partial shade. It is moderately able to grow



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2023 Australian Timber Supply Summit

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• 29 & 30 August, 2023 - Crown Promenade, Melbourne VIC Australia

Timber & Forestry e-news and DANA NZ collaboration invites you to the 2023 Australian Timber Supply Summit, the leading Australian Conference for Sustainable Forestry Companies, Hard & Softwood Suppliers, Sawmill Companies, Timber & Truss Manufacturers, Builders, Architects and Industry Consultancy Groups.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- **Keynote Address: David Gardner** – Chief Investment Officer, Forestry of London, UK based Fund Manager, Gresham House – *Climate Change and The Role of Forestry in Global Decarbonisation*
- **Housing Industry Chief Economist** – *Are the Australian Construction & Building Industries Increasingly Reliant on Timber Imports?*
- **Statistics & Economics Manager of Forest Wood Products Association, Kevin Peachy** – *Future Market Dynamics & Supply Chain Implications*
- **Chair of Timber Merchants Australia, Peter Alexander** – *The Role of Timber Merchants Australia, it's Position and Concerns on Supply*
- **Managing Director of SFM Agribusiness, Andrew Morgan** – *Australian Historical Present & Predicted Domestic Softwood Supply*
- **Director of Indufor Australia, Andrew Morton** – *Australian Historical Present & Predicted Domestic Hardwood Supply*
- **CEO of Engineered Wood Products Association Australasia, Gavin Matthew** – *The Need for EWP's Supporting the Supply Gap*
- **Communications Director of Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA), Joe Prevedello** – *AFPA's role in Boosting the Forestry Estate, Timber & Wood Fibre Supply*
- **Global Timber Supply Experts and International Speakers from Europe, UK, New Zealand, China, & Malaysia** – *Opportunities to supply the Australian Solidwood Sector and the Future of the Timber Supply Chain*

FIELD TRIP

On day two of the conference, we invite guests to join the Timber & Truss Field Trip to Geelong to visit frame & roof truss manufacturing plant **Big River Group**, who recently won the best frame and truss operation in the country! The second stop is to the woodchip processing & export facility **Midway**, a pioneer and major woodchip exporter to North Asia from Geelong and several other Australian ports.

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Wine not? Australia urges China to remove all trade restrictions

THERE'S hope for increased trade relations with China following the lifting of barley tariffs.

Beijing introduced 80.5 per cent tariffs on barley and tariffs of up to 200 per cent on wine in 2020 during a diplomatic dispute after Australia called for an inquiry into the origins of COVID-19.

In May this year, China lifted its yearslong ban on Australian timber imports, signalling the easing in tensions between the two countries this has now been followed by barley. The tariff was removed after a review by China's commerce ministry.

At the peak of diplomatic tensions, Beijing slapped import tariffs on several Australian exports from wine and red meat to lobsters and timber.

Managing director of Tamburlaine Organic Wines Mark Davidson said the barley backdown was a good indication of what will happen to the restoration of the wine trade, but warned recovery to the sector would not be swift.

"We know how important and valuable the [Chinese] market was, but I think people will be wary to put too many eggs in that basket straightaway," he said.

National Farmers Federation chief executive Tony Mahar said the barley

call was an excellent sign that wine blockages would come to an end.

"We're delighted barley has come off, and we'd love to see wine next and the resumption of mutually beneficial trade," he said.

"It's been really significant disruption for [winemakers]. They are our largest customer for our farming base. The distortions in the market have had a really significant ripple across the agriculture community."

Commentator for Reuters, Clyde Russel said the bans were "bad judgement for China.

"The calculation seemingly made by Beijing was that it could pressure Australia by ending the trade in coal and barley, as well as some more minor products because these were commodities that could be secured easily from alternate suppliers," Russell said.

"That calculation was only



1



2

1/ Trade sanctions on the timber industry were lifted earlier this year and have recently been followed by barley.
2/ Wine remains one of the key products that continue to have tariffs imposed by China.



Mark Davidson from the Hunter Valley's Tamburlaine is hopeful the wine industry is the next to be welcomed back by China.
Photo: Wine Australia

partially correct insofar as China was able to buy more coal from Indonesia, Russia and the United States.

"But the disruption to Asia's seaborne coal flows resulted in prices being shifted higher, especially for Indonesian and Russian cargoes

"This in turn boosted the price of Australian grades as well, meaning that as Australia's exports to China

plummeted to effectively zero, shipments to countries like India and Vietnam increased, resulting in no loss of export volumes."

When Beijing ended its unofficial ban on Australian coal, it took a little while for the trade to resume, but it has

since recovered to levels close to prior to the ban being imposed.

Foreign affairs minister Penny Wong said the government was "confident" in a positive outcome for the wine industry.

"We have been clear that we expect a similar process to be followed to remove the duties on Australian wine," she said in a statement.

"The Australian government's approach has been to cooperate with China where we can, disagree where we must and engage in our national interest. The outcome on barley reflects that approach."

“SEEKING RESUMPTION OF MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL TRADE”

UK Timber imports bounce back

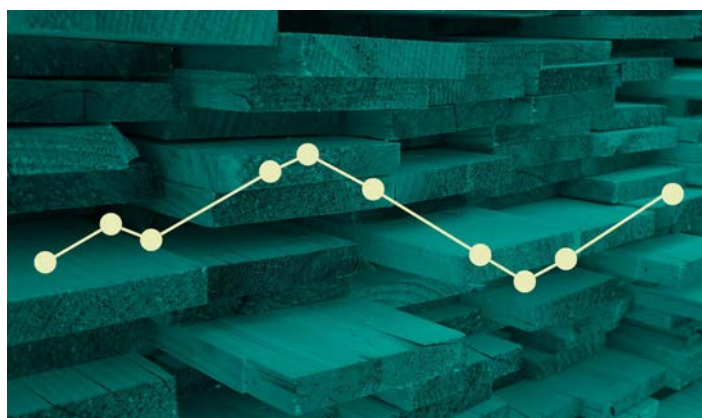
MAY was the best month for timber imports in 2023, with volume growth seen across all major product categories according to TDUK.

May import volumes of softwood, hardwood, plywood, particleboard, and engineered wood products were higher than in any of the preceding months of 2023.

Softwood imports have proved particularly buoyant, with volumes in May 8% higher than the 2023 average.

Overall volumes, however, remain below 2022 levels. Total import volume in the first five months of 2023 was 378,000m³ lower, or 8% less than over the same period in 2022.

In the long term, monthly variations appear to be stabilising following three years of dramatic fluctuation.



The May import levels were higher than the 2023 average.

TDUK head of technical and trade, Nick Boulton, said:

“The overall economic picture for the UK is gloomy,

with sticky inflation and high interest rates reducing confidence in the construction sector.

“This is seen in the latest CPA forecast, with crucial timber demand driving sectors like private housing and RMI predicted to decline by 19% and 11% respectively, likely returning to growth in 2024.

“IMPORT PATTERNS ARE BUCKING THE DOWNWARD TREND

“However, in 2023, timber import patterns seem to be bucking these downward trends, with volumes witnessing growth in four of the five months so far this year. May even saw growth across all the major import categories something we certainly would not have predicted at the beginning of the year.

“It also appears the dramatic peaks and troughs of 2020-2022 have subsided. Monthly variations now seem steadier and more similar to the pre-covid years.

“Though the overall economic outlook is undeniably negative, these latest figures suggest there is room for some cautious positivity heading into Q3.”

US and Canada team up to protect Oak

A BINATIONAL collaborative project is exploring environmental factors that affect the northward expansion of oak wilt, a fatal tree disease spread by sap beetles.

Researchers from Michigan Technological University and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry in Canada are working to contain the spread of oak wilt. The fungal disease is

currently found in 24 states and can decimate both forest and urban plantings, killing otherwise healthy trees. In addition to landscape blight, it impacts wildlife habitat and the timber industry.

The northern limit of the disease reaches the 46th parallel in Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota. The line hasn't moved much since it was observed in the 1980s, but climate change

is expected to impact the boundary in years to come as environmental conditions change. Project collaborators are particularly concerned about the establishment of oak wilt along the U.S.-Canada border and into Canada.

“We have oak trees and the beetle species (in Michigan's Upper Peninsula), but the disease had not reached northern oaks in New York, Canada and

elsewhere,” said Bal.

The collaborators are now conducting beetle identification training and leading joint presentations, and will be working together on future research papers.

“This could reduce the burden on industry and become more scientifically appropriate for areas farther north,” said Bal.

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