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COVER STORY P2

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Gippsland Plantation Investment Program looks like a snag

VICTORIA has been hit with several blows this year from the state government. One of those was in May when the Labor state government pulled forward the end of native logging in Victorian forests. There were many promises made in an attempt to 'help' those whose entire life would be turned upside down. One of the promises the government has made was to plant trees in plantations to help offset the loss of production materials as we headed toward a 2030 goal to end native logging. The promise was labelled the Gippsland Plantation Investment Program (GPIP).

There are several issues with the GPIP:

1. The government program was set to plant 30 million trees over the following decade. According to the 2017-2018 budget 30 million trees could be planted for a cost of \$110 million (\$3.67 per tree). However, when the government stuck a deal with HVP it changed without a public announcement. The GPIP is now set to actually deliver 16 million trees for the cost of \$120 million (\$7.50 per



The government's program will deliver 16 million trees at a cost of \$120 million over the next decade. Image: ABC News: Richard Willingham

tree). This is more than double the cost per tree and just over half of what the government originally promised. The reasoning provided was that costs have changed since the original plans were signed off.

2. The Hancock Victorian Plantations (HVP) won the contract to run the planting project. At the start of the program, to plant 16 million trees in a decade HVP would need to average 1.6 million trees per year. There are approximately 240 working days each year (364 minus weekends and 4 weeks for

PTO each year). So, to achieve the 1.6 million trees average per year HVP needed to be planting a minimum of 6,667 trees per working day. In their first year they planted just 4,000 trees. This is an average of 17 trees per working day. If HVP wants to still meet the 2030 goal they will need to be averaging 2.6 million

trees per year which works out to approximately 10,834 trees per working day.

The average per day was already so high when the project began and has now almost doubled. These numbers are not promising and do not shed much hope for the target to actually be achieved by the target date.

However, HVP's General Manager of business development, Dean Turner, is confident that HVP can still reach the target. Turner stated, "We'll be scaling up over the next one to two years [and] the area we acquire and plant each year will increase so that we get to a level that will ensure by the end of the 10-year period we'll have 14,450 hectares planted."

Another hurdle that HVP faces is not currently having the land for the plantations.

“ THIS IS MORE THAN DOUBLE THE COST PER TREE ”

Cont P 3



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HVP still needs to acquire the land itself, but they are planning for all the plantations to be within 100km of Latrobe Valley in order to keep the transportation costs down. Turner shared that, "Some of the land we will acquire through purchasing freehold land, some of the plantations will be planted on land that we lease from other parties, and some of those plantations will be achieved through farm forestry agreements with private landowners."

These plantations will be thinned after 12 years of growth depending on how they are progressing, but the plantations will not be ready to harvest for 25 years.

3. Representatives from the timber industry such as Tim Lester, General Manager at the Australia Forest Contractors Association, are continually saying that programs like this one will not save the towns and the workers from the looming closure of the native timber industry. The Victorian government advertised the GPIIP would provide 2,000 jobs, a mix of new and existing roles. Tim Lester said the work would only come in dribs and drabs, "There may be some short-term pieces around building access to roads and potentially some land preparation stuff, [but] there is basically nothing in this for



1/ **Garry Squires says there are doubts planting target will be met.**

Image: ABC Gippsland: Zoe Ferguson

2/ **Danny O'Brien says the government has failed to look after timber workers.**

Image: Supplied

the contracting community," Lester said.

The GPIIP plantations are 25 years away from being harvested, this program was supposed to be a key project in the transition of Victoria from sustainable native logging to plantation and private logging only. Timber workers are concerned that the work available from the plantations is decades away.

Tim Lester continued to share his thoughts saying, "Victoria has given up a value-adding local industry ... forestry is a sustainable resource, which can be well managed and well regulated... The government is not respectful of industry and industry's role here, and of the individuals and people involved."

The timber industry is

happy to have government commitment to helping put more trees in the ground, but the GPIIP plantations cannot provide an immediate and effective replacement for native forests. They are not a solution to today's issues. The fact that the government believes this is the solution shows that they do not truly understand the industry and how it works.

Danny O'Brien the Nationals MP for Gippsland South criticised the government for continually making promises and not delivering. "It's particularly the case with the timber industry where the government has made all sorts of promises over the years about transition, about supporting timber workers and, in fact, the opposite is true," Danny O'Brien said.

O'Brien continued saying, "We've seen this with the plantations program, just 4,000 trees delivered so far, and they've halved what they said they were going to do and increased the money. The government can't manage money, it can't manage projects, and it can't look after timber workers jobs in Gippsland."

On the cover: Establishing plantations in Victoria will not make up for the complete shut-down of sustainable native logging and the subsequent consequences for towns and workers.

Exciting news: merger of John Cook and Sons into ITI NSW

JANUARY 1 2024, will see John Cook and Sons merging into ITI NSW. This merger is a strategic decision, born from the realisation that the business and products have become so closely aligned. Merging John Cook and sons into ITI will put both in a better position to offer their customers:

- Enhanced services: with

combined expertise and resources, they will offer a wide range of products and improved services.

- Greater efficiencies: the merger enables them to streamline their processes, ensuring faster and more efficient service delivery.
- A stronger company: together, they will hold a stronger position in the market,

allowing them to better meet the needs and expectations of their customers.

John Cook and Sons has expressed that "Our commitment to providing our customers with exceptional service and products remains our top priority. While our customers will notice improvements and new offerings, our core values, and

dedication to our customers will not change.

We are incredibly excited about this merger and the opportunities it presents. We believe that this change will allow us to serve our customers better, and we look forward to continuing our relationship with each of our customers in this new and improved structure."

Advancing Biodiversity Conservation

Insights from the Malaysian Regional Forest Connectivity & Biodiversity Conference 2023.

IN the heart of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, the Regional Forest Connectivity & Biodiversity Conference 2023 unfolded as a groundbreaking event, bringing together a diverse group of leaders, experts, researchers, and practitioners dedicated to addressing forestry, forest connectivity, and biodiversity challenges across the Southeast Asian (SEA) region.

This pivotal conference, organized by the Improving Connectivity in the Central Forest Spine Landscape Project (IC-CFS), a UNDP/GEF-Government of Malaysia funded initiative, served as a unique platform to foster collaboration among countries in SEA and beyond.



Matt de Jongh (fourth from left) with the Malaysian Timber Certification Council.

One of the key highlights of the conference was a presentation by Matt de Jongh from Responsible Wood. His insights illuminated the positive impacts of forest

certification on biodiversity conservation, emphasizing the vital role that sustainable forest management practices and certification play in promoting environmental

stewardship. Matt de Jongh stated, "Forest certification is a powerful tool for ensuring the responsible management of our precious natural resources. It not only benefits the environment but also contributes significantly to the conservation of biodiversity."

The emphasis on forest certification's role in biodiversity conservation resonated throughout the conference. Matt de Jongh highlighted how certification serves as a beacon for responsible practices, stating, "Certification creates a framework that encourages sustainable forest management, ensuring

Cont P 5

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From P 4

that our forests thrive for generations to come. This, in turn, fosters habitat preservation, crucial for the survival of diverse plant and animal species."

The conference facilitated valuable collaborations, providing an opportunity for Responsible Wood to connect with their Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) counterpart, the Malaysian Timber Certification Council. Matt de Jongh acknowledged this collaboration, saying, "Working hand-in-hand with PEFC Asia-Pacific allows us to amplify our impact. Together, we can promote responsible forestry practices and drive positive change in the region."

Organized by the IC-CFS project, led by the Forestry Department of Peninsular Malaysia, the conference marked a significant milestone in collective efforts to address forestry challenges in the Southeast Asia region. The project focuses on enhancing forest connectivity, conserving

biodiversity, and improving ecosystem services in critical landscapes of the Malaysian Central Forest Spine (CFS) program. Matt de Jongh praised the initiative, stating, "The IC-CFS project is a commendable effort towards

removing barriers and establishing a landscape approach to managing biodiversity. It serves as a model for sustainable practices in the region."

As the conference concluded, the commitment of participants and organizers to collaborate for the greater good of forests and biodiversity shone through. Inspired by the collective

dedication witnessed at the Regional Forest Connectivity & Biodiversity Conference 2023, Matt de Jongh urged, "Let's continue working together to ensure a sustainable future for our planet. Every action we take today contributes to the legacy we leave for future generations."

In conclusion, the conference not only provided a forum for knowledge exchange but also served

as a catalyst for renewed commitment towards fostering biodiversity conservation through responsible forestry practices and certification. The insights shared by Matt de Jongh and the collaborative spirit observed at the conference underscore the importance of collective action in ensuring a harmonious coexistence between humanity and the natural world.



1/ The conference was well attended, and the foyer was bustling as delegates checked in.
2/ Matt de Jongh gave an excellent presentation at the conference.
3/ FYBhg. Dato' Indera Mohd Rizda bin Awang, Director General of Forestry department Peninsular Malaysia (left) and Matt de Jongh.



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Ecologists record the wildlife footprint of the forests

By **MATT DEANS**

FORESTRY Corporation ecologists have commenced the second year of a broad biodiversity monitoring program across the state forests of eastern New South Wales.

This program is complimented by a range of species-specific programs that have been underway for many years. The species these programs are for include the Southern brown bandicoot, Smoky mouse, Giant burrowing frog, Hastings River mouse, large forest owls and several plant species.

These monitoring programs, along with a range of species research questions are currently being undertaken in collaboration with and under the guidance of the Natural Resources Commission to evaluate the effectiveness of the Coastal Integrated Forestry Operations Approval (CIFOA) in protecting wildlife in state forests.

Fauna occupancy monitoring is recording sightings and interactions with wildlife across the forest estate.

This crucial study will



Kiwarra survivors, a mum and bub. Photo: Bronwyn Ellis.

enable researchers to estimate occupancy trends in focal species such as koalas, possums, gliders, hollow-dependant bats, cockatoos, forest owls and ground dwelling mammals including bandicoots, echidnas, and quolls.

Forestry Corporation Senior Ecologist Chris Slade said the monitoring program of biodiversity will see 600 study sites established in East Coast state forests, which will provide

a comprehensive body of data on which to monitor trends over time and answer specific questions.

“The monitoring program has seen the deployment of remote cameras at bait lure stations, sound recorders that record species with identifiable calls as well as sound recorders that pick up ultrasonic calls of echolocating bat species,” Mr Slade said.

“This equipment is deployed for 14-nights at each site, which is generating a vast amount of data that is currently being processed in collaboration with the Forest Science Team of the NSW Department of Primary Industries,” he said.

As part of this work, fauna call recognisers have been developed by the NSW DPI team for koalas, owls, gliders, Grey-headed flying foxes, and some diurnal bird species including the Glossy black-cockatoo with more in development.


These will be used to analyse the extensive call datasets being collected for the monitoring program and can also be used for previously collected recordings.

“The devices will enable us to look at understanding the changes in occupancy over time for a range of species such as large forest owls, ground dwelling mammals and Glossy-black cockatoos. Additional species will be assessed as soon as more recognisers become available along with the image tagging

Cont P 7

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DECEMBER

15: International Conference on Community Forestry and Conservation (ICFC - 23) – Melbourne. The conference provides a premier global platform for exchanging ideas and insights on the latest developments across various fields. Our goal is to offer a competitive venue for industry professionals and academic researchers to showcase and discuss cutting-edge advancements in their respective fields. More details

<https://sairap.org/conf/index.php?id=1871959>

SAVE THE DATES 2024

APRIL 23-24: Planned International Forest Investment Conference – New York City. TBC

MAY 1-2: Sydney Build Expo – Sydney. Sydney Build is the only event in Australia to offer 300+ accredited presentations, 500+ exhibitors and incredible networking opportunities for all of Australia's construction, architecture, engineering and

infrastructure industries.

SEPTEMBER 23: Latin America Forest Investment Conference – Porto Alegre, Brazil.

SEPTEMBER 24-25: International Woodchip and Biomass Trade Conference – Porto Alegre, Brazil.

SEPTEMBER 25-27: Field Trip – Rio Grande do Sul State, Brazil.

OCTOBER 22-23: International Woodchip and Biomass Seminar and Networking Event – Singapore.

SAVE THE DATES 2025

JUNE 22-26: World Conference on Timber Engineering – Brisbane. WCTE is the world's leading scientific forum for the presentation of the latest technical and architectural solutions and innovations in timber construction.

OCTOBER 20-22: International Woodchip and Biomass Seminar and Networking Event – Singapore.

OCTOBER 23-24: Field Trip – Vietnam.

Breaking news: Australian Government signs up to increase the use of timber in buildings by 2030

A full report will be published in text week's issue of T&FN.

From P 6

of all the photos that are being generated by the programs," Mr Slade said.

Sites are surveyed in both spring and autumn to factor in seasonal differences between species.

For example, powerful owls are more vocal in autumn and koalas are more vocal in spring.

Forestry Corporation ecologists carried out the first season surveys in spring last year and autumn this year with spring surveys again being finalised.

Species are currently being

identified and already data has been scanned and validated for koalas, powerful owl, sooty owl, masked owl and sugar gliders for the south coast region.

So far, we are seeing some fantastic images of a range of species including bandicoot mothers with babies in tow, quite a few spotted-tail quoll photos and a range of species popping up on the call recognisers including glossy black cockatoos," Mr Slade said.

"We are establishing an on-track and off-track sampling points to ensure the different habitat components

are sampled to pick up the different species that use the range of habitats in the forest," he said.

The monitoring program has been developed in consultation with experts from universities, other agencies, the Steering Committee chaired by the Natural Resources Commission and following a pilot study in 2021, which assessed the feasibility of remote sampling techniques.

This has led to current design and sampling methodology, now employed across the Coastal IFOA (Integrated Forestry Operations Approval) estate, to provide

data and statistical power to estimate occupancy levels for a variety of species.

This follows another program implemented in the Pilliga State Forest, that has been successfully underway for about 10 years.

The Coastal IFOA, overseen by the Environment Protection Authority, is a comprehensive biodiversity protection model setting out the environmental protection and forest management rules for how Forestry Corporation undertakes native forestry operations.

For more information about Forestry Corporation click here.

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Australian Timber Importers Federation Annual General Meeting a success

2023 HAS seen significant change and activity in the timber importing space, and at ATIF.

ATIF first and foremost extends its gratitude to members for their continued support and participation in the activities of ATIF this year.

As the dynamic landscape of the timber importing industry continues to evolve, ATIF is committed to maintaining active and robust advocacy on behalf of the industry that amplifies the collective voice of members and addresses their ongoing needs and concerns. ATIF reaffirms its commitment to fostering a resilient and thriving timber sector for 2024.

ATIF'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING IN SUMMARY

ATIF hosted its AGM, which saw its largest attendance to date. The AGM was held with hybrid attendance in person, with thanks to Stora Enso Timber for hosting the in-person component at their Derrimut location, and online participation facilitated via

Teams. In summary, the ATIF constitution has been amended to formally permit members to join from other states.

2024 COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

ATIF is excited to announce its new Committee of Management for the 2024 year: Robert Cairns (Independent), Jacinta Colley – Chair (Vida Wood), Simon Evans (Forest One), David Meyer – Deputy Chair (Meyer Timber), Leon Quinn (Tilling Group), Germano Tomassetti (ITI Aust Group), Darrin Wheeler (Stora Enso Timber) & Chris Woodhouse (Woodhouse Timber). In addition to the Committee of Management, the position of Public Officer has also been confirmed as Natalie Reynolds, the Interim General Manager for ATIF. ATIF thanks all nominees for their interest




A well-attended ATIF AGM highlighted the importance of advocating changes in legislation that affect their members.

As established at the AGM, in the coming year, ATIF wishes to prioritise and seize the unique opportunity presented by the sunset of the Illegal Logging Prohibition Regulation 2012 (Cth) and the oncoming amendment of this legislative framework. ATIF sees this as a prime and rare opportunity to advocate for significant changes to be made to the legislation in the interest of promoting fairness and practicality

in joining the Committee and would also like to thank and acknowledge Glyn Davies for his participation as a member of the Committee since joining in 2017.

ACTIVITIES AND ADVOCACY IN 2024

in the requirements of the regulation, balanced against its intended purpose, that being to act against illegal logging. For further information please reach to contact@atif.asn.com



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Forestry powers ahead on road and bridge repairs

FORESTRY Corporation's major program of works repairing flood-damaged roads, bridges and culverts has reached a significant milestone with the 100th construction project recently completed.

Forestry Corporation maintains a state-wide network of 60,000-kilometres of roads and trails.

More than half of the state forest road network is located within areas that were impacted by flooding last year, as extreme weather events damaged between 10,000 and 15,000 kilometres of forest roads.

In response, the NSW Government provided \$60 million in funding, spread over three years from 2022, to complete necessary repair works and ensure the community continues to have access to State forests for the wide range of uses.

Under the Forest Infrastructure and Repair Program (FIRP), Forestry Corporation has worked to

plan and complete a long list of projects in state forests.

Forestry Corporation's Project Supervisor – Forest Infrastructure, Peter Walsh, said more than 100 projects have now been completed under FIRP and



1/ Each of these projects brings an economic boost to the many regions by providing extra work and an increase in supplies.

2/ The FIRP program has seen several bridges built in state forests.

3/ Forestry Corporation is active in maintaining its infrastructure in the state forests.



a further 130 projects are currently in a planning or implementation stage across New South Wales.

Mr Walsh said the massive schedule of works had brought significant benefits to regional economies while restoring road access for visitors to state forests.

"To date, 15 major bridges have been replaced, four major landslips have been repaired, more than 1000 kilometres of roads have been upgraded, 12 quarries have been expanded and 85 crossings repaired," Mr Walsh said.

"Restoring and improving vehicle access to the forest estate has been a major focus for Forestry

Corporation over the past year with these major works creating employment and adding significantly to regional economies.

"A considered approach has been taken to the planning and construction of road, bridge and causeway repairs ahead of the bushfire season to ensure our forestry firefighters have improved access to fire trails and roads that were compromised by flooding."

Key projects on the North Coast, earmarked for completion this December include two causeways in Barcoongere State Forest and the Slaters Road culvert crossing in Wedding Bells State Forest near Coffs Harbour.

On the Mid North Coast, the Blackbutt Road Bridge in the Bulls Ground State Forest near Wauchope is close to completion.

In the Hunter, two bridges on Frying Pan Road in the Chichester State Forest near Gloucester are currently being completed.

On the South Coast, the Clyde Ridge Road at Native Dog Creek in the Flat Rock State Forest near Bateman's Bay is close to being finalised along with three bridges in Nadgee State Forest near Eden, including two bridges on Mountain Road and another bridge on Ireland Timms Road.

Find out more about Forestry Corporation's FIRP projects here.

“ PLANNING AND CONSTRUCTION AHEAD OF THE BUSHFIRE SEASON ENSURES FORESTRY FIREFIGHTERS HAVE IMPROVED ACCESS TO FIRE TRAILS

Production forestry a critical net zero pathway

THE Victorian Government has reiterated its claims to action on climate change and achieving a net-zero future with this week's legislative amendments to update targets and lock in emissions reduction goals.

To achieve these goals the state must embrace and not turn its back on sustainable, renewable and locally-grown timber resources and production forestry, General Manager of the Australian Forest Contractors Association, Tim Lester said.



The 2050 goal of Carbon Net Zero requires us to look at materials and products that are carbon neutral. Image: Shutterstock

benefit for climate and emissions. We can protect and enhance biodiversity and other ecological attributes, and generate income for businesses, families, communities, regions, and the state.

“It’s also not good enough to expect to get our timber from somewhere else. That just puts more pressure onto forests in other parts of the world, where we have no say and are exposed to increasing supply chain risks.

“The Victorian Government recognises the importance of effective forest management with the proposed forest and fire management contracts for harvest operators, although we continue to wait on release of the details. It is critical that the Government give these businesses certainty now and allow contractors to properly plan for the future.

“The transition to a low carbon economy does need a strategic and coordinated approach. It should utilise every local advantage including locally-grown timber resources and an effective wood products sector,” he concluded.

“Victoria has an ambitious infrastructure and building program, all of which relies on carbon intensive materials. Meanwhile, the state’s own high value, high quality, high embedded carbon timber resources have been sidelined,” Mr Lester said.

“The only known pathway with immediate capacity to remove carbon from the atmosphere at scale is photosynthesis, and the only hope we have of reaching national and state emissions reduction targets while maintaining standards of living is to substitute as much current high emissions activity with low emissions alternatives as we possibly can.

“Timber is the ultimate renewable and the perfect resource for a low carbon, high value economy. The IPCC says that a well-regulated, well-managed production forest with a sustained annual yield of timber, fibre or energy will have the greatest mitigation

“GETTING TIMBER FROM ELSEWHERE PUTS MORE PRESSURE ONTO FORESTS IN OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD



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Vic Govt fails to walk the talk ... again

THE new release of support packages for the forest contracting businesses being forced to exit the industry has shown that the Victorian Government has again failed to walk the talk, according to the Australian Forest Contractors Association.

Forest contractors have approached negotiations with the government in good faith and have not been met with a fair and genuine compensation package despite the commitments that were repeatedly made, AFCA General Manager Tim Lester said.

"Former Premier Dan Andrews had said 'we will wrap every support we possibly can around the people, businesses and communities'. That is not evident in this package.

"Former Agriculture Minister Gayle Tierney provided a commitment for fair and genuine business compensation. We are yet to see it.

"Premier Allan said she would meet with us. We are still waiting.

"The package presented today to Harvest and Haulage contractors says paying out a contractual obligation is compensation. It is not.

"Offering these hard-working Victorian business owners 30 cents in the dollar on their existing contracts is not fair, equitable or just when compared to destroying their livelihoods, their futures, forcing them to make their workers redundant, forcing them to take work away from their families and potentially



The Hon. Jacinta Allan, Premier of Victoria, said she would meet with the AFCA yet they are still waiting for this promise to be upheld.

putting them into a position where they could lose the house they live in.

"Contractors have been forced by this Labor government into a situation where they have had to pay insurance and finance on machines that are sitting idle. Where they are carrying the costs of redundancies.

Where they had had to manage the uncertainty and anxiety for themselves, their families, workers and communities.

"This government's decision has taken a heavy financial and emotional toll. Our contractors have invested over a long time to create successful businesses in a sustainable industry, only to be told that their efforts, risk and stress is worth 30 cents in the dollar. It is a slap in the face.

"There are some positive elements in the packages that the government has presented, but trading off the needs of future forest management at the cost of those businesses who have no choice but to exit is just not right," Mr Lester concluded.

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2023 a year of columns

A beautiful walk amongst our beloved trees.

LOOKING back on 2023 and my notes throughout the year it has been a constant battle. I have communicated with Government ministers, their office and several senators across the political divide. My columns have featured issues around:

- Softwood timber supplies.
- Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the further impact on Russian timber imports.
- NSW koala park for a few inner-city seat preference deals.
- Australia's need for more self-reliance and highlighted how China was also manufacturing our own timber forks.
- The introduction of new Federal Environmental Protection & Biodiversity Conservation Act and how this overrides State and Territory rulings.
- Housing shortage, immigration and rising demand.
- Vic state government back flip and native forestry shutdown and dumping of rural communities.
- Carlie Porteous' career move and significant efforts with AFCA.
- Focus on timber supply summit, housing crisis and lack of support from Labour Federal Govt.
- Regional towns and forestry generated infrastructure and economic contributions.
- International relations, native hardwood forests and moving demand off-shore.
- Farmers and Forestry plantations in need of real support.

We have had some great dialogue coupled with some success, but there has also been a lot of lip service and a lack of action. Some polities take the line of least resistance or privately say one thing but then do another along party lines. Politics in Australia!

For my final column this year I would like to focus on something positive and completely different undertaken during the year. I hope you enjoy the brief read, a few special images and it brings a smile to your face.

In late autumn I had the privilege of being invited to join a group of friends on a leisure bushwalk up on the NSW Central Coast. The word leisure refers to a reasonably flat path without too many obstacles. It was a lovely clear day with warm sunshine and just perfect for walking. Along the track we meet others doing the same thing, all with smiles on their faces and you could see the obvious enjoyment being outside amongst the birds, trees, and fresh air. I am so grateful we are not in Covid isolation.

At the first observational area, which wasn't obvious but well worth the detour, we had views of Pearl Beach, and the water was sparkling as the sun seemed to dance across the surface. We were surprised we could see the ocean floor in some places from our vantage point, high up on the hill. Scanning further out we could clearly see Lion Island, across to Palm Beach lighthouse, and down to Careel Bay. The ocean views out over the Pacific seemed endless, uninterrupted with just a sprinkling of sailing boats and a single cargo vessel dotting the horizon.



Our high vantage point... amazing views of Pearl Beach, Palm beach lighthouse and down to Careel Bay.

The second viewing area overlooked the bushland and included what can only be described as a very large cave, about the size of a small house, in the rocky outcrop a long way down below us with no obvious path to reach it. We discussed several possibilities and decided the most likely scenario was birds and animals use it for protection during inclement weather. Well, that was our guess anyway.



1 & 2/ Inaccessible coastlines, hidden caves... all part of this amazing country we call Australia.

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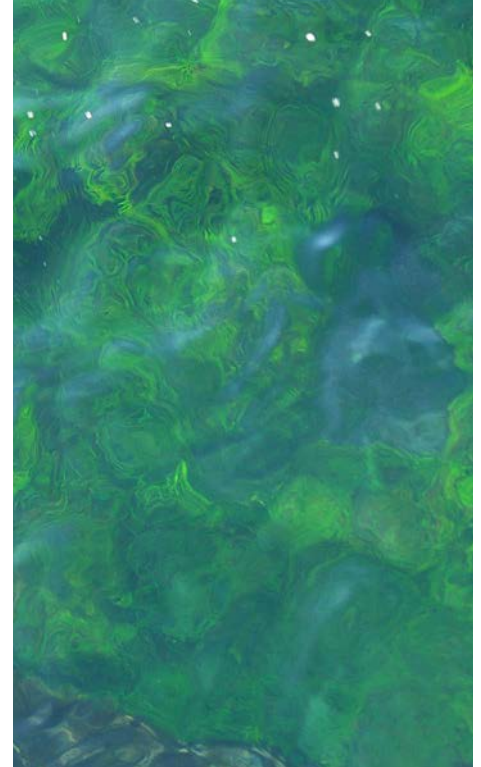
The third and final viewing area was more formal with seats cut from large logs plus a small safety fence providing access close to the edge. The view across to Box Head, back to Ocean beach, down past the Rip bridge, and across Brisbane waters was nothing less than stunning!

We stopped for another look from what we called the 'high point' only to spot two whales enjoying the afternoon too. They were a long way out but still visible. What a magnificent spectacle I hope you can see them in the picture

Later in the afternoon we travelled by car down closer to the water, it was clear, and you can clearly see what is growing beneath, much to the delight of local fish.



1-4/ The most amazing tree, with red branches growing over the top of rocks... the perfect cubby house tree of all time!



Crystal clear waters give away what is often hidden in our coastal waters.

However, the highlight of the walk for me was the most amazing tree, with red branches growing over the top of rocks starting from a small gap, competing for sunlight. Its branches were low, horizontal, strong and perfect for climbing. The sort of tree kids would love to build a cubby house in, if it was in your own backyard. Despite only having a small amount of soil between the large boulders, it was thriving under difficult circumstances and seemed to be saying "look at me, I am here, steadfast, ready to climb and for you to enjoy."

At the end of the day, we finished off looking at a magical sunset with boats glistening in the fading light.

Wishing everyone a beautiful and Merry Christmas and I hope you can spend some quality time with family and friends and hoping you find the time to get outdoors and enjoy what we have, wherever you are. I am looking forward to warm evenings outdoors doing just about anything. All the best for 2024 and will see you on the other side... **Cheryl.**



Special display... two whales frolicking in the bay.



A perfect way to end 2023.

Australian Made Campaign elects first female Chair

THE Board of Australian Made Campaign Ltd (AMCL) - the organisation that administers and promotes the famous Australian Made logo - has appointed a new Chair, Kate Carnell AO.

Kate Carnell succeeds outgoing Chair Alyn Beard, Director of Sydney-based mattress manufacturer A.H. Beard, who retired from the Board after 14 years as a Director.

Kate Carnell, AMCL's first female Chair, is one of Australia's leading senior executives. Kate's past roles include Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman, CEO of the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI), CEO at Beyond Blue and CEO of the Australian Food and Grocery Council. She is also the former CEO of the

Australian General Practice Network and was elected to the ACT Legislative Assembly in 1992, becoming ACT Chief Minister for two terms.

"I am excited and honoured to be elected Chair of the Australian Made Campaign," said Ms Carnell. "My background in business has shown me how important it is to champion organisations that produce their products locally. Australians are looking for Australian Made and Australian Grown products, and the Australian Made logo helps them exercise this preference."

The Board also announced the retirement of AMCL Director Fiona Simson. Outgoing Chair Alyn Beard paid tribute to Ms Simson and thanked her for her 8-year service to the AMCL board.

Mr Beard said, "I would



Kate Carnell AO... the first female Chair to the Australian Made Board.

like to acknowledge the contribution of Fiona, who has been a valued member of the Australian Made Board of Directors for the last eight years. On behalf of the Board and the staff of Australian Made, I would like to thank Fiona for her service and wish her all the best for the future."

Former Senator the Honourable Kim Carr and Technology Leader Kerry Purcell also joined the Board as Directors.

It is an exciting time for the Australian Made Campaign. The Australian Made logo has never been more visible and

prevalent across so many industries. More than 4,500 businesses are currently licensed to use the logo on thousands of products sold here and around the world.

Australian Made Chief Executive Ben Lazzaro said that the strategic direction provided by its Board of Directors had been instrumental to the logo's success.

"AMCL is privileged to have such a strong board of talented individuals with diverse backgrounds. From industry and government to small business and cause-led organisations, together they help set the strategic direction of the Campaign," said Mr Lazzaro. "AMCL's Directors don't get paid a cent for their work - they do it because they are passionate about promoting Australian Made."

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You don't need 'skin in the game' to support native forestry

ANN Thompson from Coffs Harbour, NSW wrote a letter expressing her support for multiple use forests. Thompson is pro continued native forest logging and the many benefits it can bring for NSW. Her letter was followed up by a critique saying she has no skin in the game and no scientific evidence. The News of the Area published her reply where she states that expressing support for one side should not require 'skin in the game' or scientific evidence, it is an opinion. Thompson reveals that she did do research and her husband has plenty of 'skin in the game'. Thompson highlights in her reply to the critic about the importance of supporting the forestry industry right now and the many jobs it provides to NSW towns. We couldn't agree more about the

benefits and importance of multiuse forests that include sustainable logging.

Dear News Of The Area,

I would like to thank Warren Tindall ('Forest extinctions', NOTA 24/11/2023) for his critique of my letter ('In support of multiple-use forests', NOTA 17/11/2023).

I firmly stand by my sentiments and remarks. I didn't realise that apparent credentials such as 'skin in the timber game' or scientific evidence, were pre-requisites for expressing support of native forests and the timber industry. Some of my knowledge of forests has come from numerous field trips, conferences, and journals, but my main source of first-hand information is my husband, a third-generation native forest timber worker.

For over 40 years he worked in all native forest timber types across NSW.

Does that qualify for 'skin in the timber game'?

I'll leave the presentation of scientific evidence about our ecologically sustainable native forests to experts like DPI principal Research Scientist Dr Brad Law and of course, the NSW Forestry Corporation (Dr Law's research findings are on the DPI and NRC websites).

My primary motivation in writing the letter was to point out the many benefits that multiple-use native forests provide; and the jobs and skills along the timber industry supply chain that would be tragically lost if native forest logging is phased out or banned in NSW, as it is in Western Australia and Victoria. An article in last week's NOTA 24/11/2023, 'Veteran sawmill

owner makes impassioned plea to Nambucca Valley Council', highlights the reality of this dire situation.

A recent independent, publicly available, report by Ernst and Young into the economic significance of the NSW hardwood timber industry to the State's economy, reveals that the North East region of NSW supplies almost two thirds of the State's hardwood timber and employs 5,700 people. So, the economic and social impact of ceasing native forest logging is abundantly clear.

The native forest timber industry has served Australia and, particularly, the North East region of NSW, well. It deserves and needs our support at this time, more than ever.

Kind regards,
Ann Thompson Coffs Harbour

Prague Central Station to get a makeover

IN a recent competition to redesign the Prague Central Station in the Czech Republic, Henning Larsen won the coveted position with their open roofed timber design.

Henning Larsen will be partnering with Ramboll, a global engineering company with extensive experience in mass timber engineering. Together they will be building the project known as Nový Hlavák. The design will connect three transit hubs with optimised pedestrian traffic flow and an inviting space that makes it a desirable visiting spot. The design's goal is to promote more eco-friendly



The Prague Central Station concept is not only made of timber but is designed to look like a forest. Image: © Bloomimages

modes of transport and help Prague to meet its low carbon goals.

Whilst the design retains some of the unique features of the original station it will expand the area and add some beautiful new elements to the overall design. The new station will have an open roof timber canopy. The design images make it look like a mass timber forest. Henning Larsen has put a lot of thought and creativity into the design.

"Our commitment goes beyond creating a structure for transportation;

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Indiana State recognises local man's forestry contributions

MICHAEL Forgey has been a resident of Indiana since he graduated from Columbus East high school in 1977.

In 2009 the Forgey family began working to establish a 100-acre plantation for a variety of trees including walnut, black cherry, red oak, white oak, butternut, and American chestnut. The Forgey family began establishing the plantation in partnership with Purdue University's Hardwood Tree Improvement and Regeneration Center (HTIRC). This plantation is now the largest research co-operator with the HTIRC and features trees with improved genetics.

Michael Forgey has previously received two awards, the Distinguished



Michael Forgey and neighbours with the award from Indiana State.

Hoosier which Governor Mitch Daniels presented to Forgey in 2011 and the Rush County Conservation Famer Award Forgey received in 2015.

November 2023 saw Michael Forgey presented a third award called the Sagamore of the Wabash Award. This award recognises and gives tribute

to distinguished service to the state of Indiana and forestry research. Forgey was presented the award but Indiana state representative Bob Cherry and retired State Senator Bob Jackman on behalf of the current state

Governor, Eric Holcomb.

Michael Forgey said, "he and his family are humbled by the recognition and acknowledge the involvement and support of family members, friends, Purdue University, local Agricultural Services (ASCS), and elected officials."

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it's about enhancing daily experiences. Nový hlavák is meticulously designed for super-efficient functionality, ensuring seamless mobility for everyone," said Jacob Kurek, Global Market Director, Henning Larsen.

"The station aims to redefine the very idea of what a daily commute can be, making it not just a journey but an experience that adds value to people's lives," Kurek added.

The design was awarded first place on the 27th of November. It was a joint project between Henning Larsen and Ramboll bringing together the two companies extensive experiences in architectural design and mass timber engineering. This will be one to experience for yourself once it is finished.



1/ Prague Central Station's park view. Image: © Bloomimages

2/ Aerial view of Prague Central Station. Image: © Bloomimages.



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