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Government attempts reversal on timber decline with new plantation grants

COVER STORY P 3

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Claymark expands distribution network with Mortim acquisition

CLAYMARK Group Limited Partnership, New Zealand's largest manufacturer and distributor of premium pine products have expanded their global distribution reach with the purchase of Mortim (Australia) Pty Ltd.

Family-owned and operated, Mortim is a multi-generation wholesale business distributing wood products across Australia from its Melbourne, Adelaide, and Brisbane distribution centres. The acquisition means the Mortim pedigree and established networks are bolstered by the renowned "Ingrained Precision in everything we do" culture brought through the Claymark relationship. In turn it allows Claymark and Mortim to increase their service offering excellence and delivery to the timber manufacturers, merchants, and frame & truss businesses.

Claymark Executive Director Paul Pedersen says welcoming the Mortim team to Claymark will positively affect the Australasian wood products market through creating an integrated supply chain for a large range of wood products.



Claymark is New Zealand's largest manufacturer and distributor of premium pine products.

"It's a truly exciting time within our industry - bringing together the strengths of both businesses allows manufacturing and distribution to be closer than ever before". This is new direction within the Australian wood products sector, and we're well positioned to deliver what the industry needs, says Paul.

Mortim have created an enviable reputation built on integrity and transparency across the Australian timber industry making them the preferred supply partner to many successful timber manufacturers, merchants and frame & truss businesses.

Managing Director Ron Goldschlager says the company had been looking into succession options and was pleased to find a perfect fit in Claymark. We have a

wonderful, dedicated team and many highly valued long term trading partners, so it was essential we found a successor with similar values.

"Claymark's "Ingrained Precision in everything we do" mantra resonates with our core philosophy of trading with integrity and service excellence" says Ron. "Claymark will add additional strength to the Mortim product range and supply chain, so we will be able to even better serve our existing and new customers, now and into the future."

The business will continue to trade as Mortim and retain their valued staff across the business to ensure business as usual as we grow the supply chain with additional and exciting new products.

Independent Hardware Expo hits the Gold Coast

MORE than 2,000 delegates have gathered on the Gold Coast for the annual Independent Hardware Expo. Kicking off last Monday, the three-day event included a number of business sessions, several evening events and the annual Expo. Attendees gathered in the Garden Bar of the Star Casino Monday evening to enjoy welcome drinks as the event officially got underway.

Delegates have taken time out of their businesses across Australia to attend the event which also gives them the opportunity to enjoy some exclusive buyer deals. The event wrapped up on Wednesday night with the National Awards dinner hosted at the convention centre.

A full report will be in next week's issue.



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Australian Government grant program to turn the tide of timber decline

THE Australian Government has a \$74 million Support Plantation Establishment Program designed to provide funding to support new plantation forests in Australia. Dr Jared Greenville, the acting Deputy Secretary of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Policy Group, explained that the goal behind the grants is to increase the domestic timber supply. In particular, the goal is to increase the domestic supply of construction and manufacturing timbers to assist with our national housing and infrastructure.

Australia's current timber supply is in decline, there are predictions that see a decline of 3.4 million cubic metres by 2050. Seeing as Australia is already experiencing timber supply shortages and the banning of native logging in multiple states, this is not going to get any better unless measures are taken now. Action now is essential because timber is a long-haul investment, some trees take 20-30 years to mature, and hardwood can take even longer. If no action is taken Australia will become more and more dependent on foreign imports for our timber needs.

There are also multiple side benefits to the grant, with new plantations there are new jobs created. The grant will be an important investment into rural and regional areas across Australia. The second side benefit is to our national carbon footprint. With Australia looking to reduce our overall footprint and work toward carbon neutrality, timber becomes an even more essential resource for all the



SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS TO DATE

Round Funded	Funding Recipient	Project	Funding	Region
Round 1	Plantation Pine Products Australia Pty Ltd	Softwood - 308 hectares	\$616,000	NSW
Round 1	Tamplin Family Trust	Mixed hardwood - 86 hectares	\$172,000	NSW
Round 1	Tasmanian Carbon Afforestation Sub-Trust	Hardwood - 60 hectares	\$120,000	TAS
Round 1	Napier Family Trust	Softwood - 84 hectares	\$168,000	TAS
Round 1	Plantation Pine Products Australia Pty Ltd	Softwood - 935 hectares	\$1,870,000	NSW
Round 1	A.C Fisher & S.J Fisher	Softwood - 86 hectares	\$172,000	TAS
Round 1	A Biskaps & S.J Biskaps	Hardwood - 46 hectares	\$92,000	QLD

amazing carbon sequestering benefits it holds.

The grant's first round opened in 2023 and round one closed on the 24 January 2024. The grant will span over a total of four years and is for the establishment of new long-rotation softwood and hardwood plantation forests. Successful applicants will be able to run projects for one to three years duration but must complete their projects by 30 June 2027.

There are a few important points to note for those who are successful in their applications:

- The funding is \$2,000 (GST exclusive) per hectare of new long-rotation plantation forest.
- The minimum grant amount

is \$40,000 (GST exclusive).

- There is no maximum grant amount, provided grant funding is available.
- The grants require applicants to provide a co-contribution at least equal to the grant amount.
- The grant applications are open to private industry, First Nations businesses, farm foresters and state and territory government forestry bodies.

With the close of the first round at the end of last month

“ IMPORTANT INVESTMENT INTO RURAL AND REGIONAL AREAS ACROSS AUSTRALIA

a total of \$3.2 million has been awarded to 7 successful applicants so far. However, there is an expectation that another announcement will be made with additional successful applicants from round one. The table above indicates successful applicants so far, the largest grant being awarded to Plantation Pine Products Australia Pty Ltd in New South Wales.

Round two opened last Friday, 9 February and will close on Thursday, 27 June 2024. It is made up of two batches that will split round two in half on 15 April 2024. Round three will closely follow the close of round two.

To apply, or for more information, click here.

Introducing – Forestry NT

“The Forestry Industry Association Northern Territory (FIANT) is an integral organisation which works closely with the Territory’s forestry sector, focusing on the unique challenges and opportunities of the NT.

Founded in 2020, FIANT emerged in response to the growing importance of the forestry sector in the Northern Territory and the need for a unified voice to address industry-specific concerns. The establishment of FIANT enabled the members to successfully apply to the Commonwealth government

for the establishment of the regional forestry hub, the Northern Territory Ord Valley Forestry Hub (NTOVFH).

FIANT serves as an advocate for the interests of its members, representing their concerns at local, regional and national levels.

Through collaboration with government bodies, policymakers, and the industry participants the Association strives to create an enabling environment for the sustainable growth of

Cont P 5



1/ In-field chipping operation on the Tiwi islands.



2/ Ship loading at night – Port Melville, Tiwi islands.

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Australian Forest Products Association

From P 4

the forestry sector. FIANT operates with a multifaceted purpose, addressing the diverse needs and aspirations of the forestry industry including the uniquely significant resource owned by Indigenous traditional owners.

Despite FIANT's short history, the Forest management in the NT has been sustainably practiced through the utilisation of native timbers by Indigenous communities. This has included using the forest resource for tools, ceremonies, and shelter construction. Following European settlement, demand for timber increased and milling became more organised providing ironwood and Eucalyptus species for construction. Northern Cypress (*Callitris intratropica*) grown on the Tiwi Islands was integral to Darwin's rebuild after a tropical cyclone destroyed the city back in 1897. Several other sawmills have operated over the years across the Territory to build infrastructure in remote communities."

EXPLORING THE DIVERSE FORESTRY INDUSTRY IN NORTHERN



1/ East Arnhem mill.
2/ Sandalwood plantation in Kununurra.

TERRITORY

In the realm of Australia's forestry landscape, the Northern Territory's industry stands as a small

yet promising player. The forestry industry in the NT is a rich tapestry of diversity, sustainability and notably, Indigenous stewardship across its

landscape. With expansive plantations covering over 45,000 hectares, this region holds the vision of evolving into a thriving economic force while nurturing local industries, including those led by Indigenous communities. Moreover, the integration of native forests highlights the importance of indigenous stewardship in the industry landscape and signifies the importance of community-driven and culturally embedded forestry practices.

ACACIA DOMINANCE ON THE TIWI ISLANDS

Early forestry initiatives on the Tiwi Islands started with the utilisation of native timbers, and in the 1950s and 60s expanded to plantations driven by the Northern Territory government. Caribbean pine (*Pinus caribaea*) was found to be a promising species and was planted extensively until the trials of *Acacia mangium* in the 1980s lead to the adoption of this species with the commencement of major plantation expansion.

The Tiwi plantations continue to anchor the region's forestry exports, focusing on fast-growing *Acacia* plantations that

Cont P 6

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From P 5

cater to various Asian markets with their woodchip production. The efficiency and scale of production on the Tiwi Islands make it a cornerstone of the Northern Territory's forestry exports. The plantation, wholly owned by the Tiwi people, is the largest Indigenous agriculture venture in northern Australia.

THE RICHNESS OF NATIVE FORESTS IN EAST ARNHAM LAND

The Northern Territory's East Arnhem land is home to a small but significant native forest industry. This industry with an active sawmill supplies construction materials to the local community and offers appearance-grade timber to markets across Australia. Raw materials for the mill come from selective harvesting on traditional owned lands and from area being cleared for mining. The incorporation of native forests into the industry landscape highlights the significant opportunities in local resource utilisation supporting both remote indigenous communities and broader market demands. The traditional owners of the region have aspirations for an expansion of the operation in response to the strong demand for their products.



Cattle grazing amongst the African Mahogany plantation in Douglas Daly.

In the Douglas-Daly region, African mahogany plantations are on the cusp of maturity, signalling the imminent start of harvesting operations. This species, renowned for its quality timber, is poised to significantly contribute to the region's timber output. The prospect of the yield from these plantations generates excitement within

SUSTAINABLE GROWTH AND PROMISING FUTURES

The other significant plantations in the Territory are African mahogany and Indian sandalwood. As these plantations mature, and harvesting operations commence, the forestry industry positions itself as a pivotal contributor to the local economy.

Indian Sandalwood's multi-region presence

Indian sandalwood is cultivated across various regions, including the Douglas-Daly, Katherine and as far as Kununurra in Western Australia. Kununurra currently stands out as a hub where sandalwood

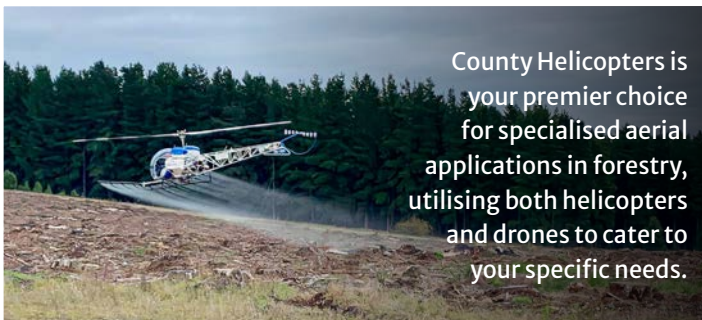
plantations are being actively harvested. The harvested timber undergoes initial processing in Kununurra before being transported to southern Western Australia for oil distillation, preparing it for global export. The beneficial properties of the highly sought after sandalwood oil include its antioxidant properties and calming impact on the mind. It has been used in traditional medicine for centuries and many of its benefits have also been proven by modern science. Sandalwood oil and carvings also have a spiritual significance in many cultures.

AFRICAN MAHOGANY'S ANTICIPATED ARRIVAL

the industry, hinting at the growth and opportunities ahead.

The Northern Territory's forestry industry may be small and young in comparison to other Australian regions, but its potential for growth and contribution to local communities and economy shouldn't be understated. With a firm belief in its future viability, the industry participants continue to foster its development, emphasizing community engagement underpinned by sound environmental stewardship.

Stay tuned for further updates on the forestry landscapes of the Northern Territory as the industry continues to evolve.



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FEBRUARY

28: Modern Tree Breeding – A quiet achiever with huge upside – Webinar. In this webinar Dr Josquin Tibbits will highlight major innovations adopted by tree breeders over the past 25 years and discuss impacts on plantation productivity and quality, as well as look forward to the current innovation space and its potential future impact in the sector. Visit <https://www.forestry.org.au/events-2/>

MARCH

5-6: ABARES Outlook 2024 – Hyatt Hotel Canberra and online. The theme of this hybrid conference is 'Shaping the Future: Opportunities, risks, and resilience' and topics include debt, biosecurity and climate change impacts. The opening session focuses on the national and global economic outlook, including expert speakers from Westpac and the OECD. To register visit https://www.agriculture.gov.au/event/abares-outlook?trk=organization_guest_main-feed-card-text

18-19: FTMA National Conference – Geelong, VIC. The conference is designed to expand members' perspectives by thinking beyond the conventional. Topics covered: understanding future housing scenarios, highlight potential threats to our market position, provide strategies for navigating the industrial environment,

offer advice on defending your business from work cover claims, and shed light on future framing possibilities. Registrations now open at <https://conference.ftmanews.com/register-now/>

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. For more information, visit www.sydneybuildexpo.com

1-2: International Forest Investment Conference – New York City. For more information, visit www.getfea.com

20-21: IV International Forest Business Conference – Sheraton Sopot Hotel, Poland. A two-day conference on megatrends that shape responsible forest and wood industry investments. The conference aims to bring together leading timberland investment management organizations, investors interested in forestry asset class and sustainable wood industry representatives in order to exchange and share experiences and ideas about new forest business frontiers. Register at www.fba-events.com or contact rafal@forest-analytics.com

22-23: Wood Transport &

Logistics 2024 – Rotorua, NZ and online. With an international focus and a rich understanding based in the forestry expertise of New Zealand, this regular conference delivers insights into wood handling and transport innovations, automation, log scheduling and logistics being employed by leading forestry, wood harvesting and log transport companies. Topics include transitions to new electric, hydrogen and diesel-hybrid powered heavy vehicles, including the integration of truck automation and platooning, as well as new innovations in log measurement, scheduling and logistics. For more and to register, visit <https://innovatek.co.nz/event/wood-transport-logistics-2024/>

JUNE

14: NTHA Vic/Tas State Awards. More details to follow. Sponsorship opportunities available. Contact alicia@ntha.com.au

JULY

27: NTHA Qld State Awards. More details to follow. Sponsorship opportunities available. Contact alicia@ntha.com.au

AUGUST

9: NTHA SA State Awards. More details to follow. Sponsorship opportunities available. Contact alicia@ntha.com.au

12-13: Timber Construct

Conference – Rydges, Melbourne. The Timber Offsite Construction Conference and Exhibition has been rebranded as the Timber Construct Conference to encompass the full spectrum of timber building. The conference provides an invaluable forum to address pressing challenges and opportunities influencing timber's role across the built landscape. Technical sessions will cover research updates, emerging products, building code enhancements, and best practice case studies. For more information, visit <https://timberoffsiteconstruction.com>

SEPTEMBER

13: NTHA NSW State Awards. More details to follow. Sponsorship opportunities available. Contact alicia@ntha.com.au

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

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

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

OCTOBER

11: NTHA WA State Awards. More details to follow. Sponsorship opportunities available. Contact alicia@ntha.com.au

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

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The National Regional Housing Summit, Canberra

LAST Friday saw the National Regional Housing Summit 2024 (NRHS) take place. The NRHS brought together local governments, communities, industry representatives, peak body representatives and not-for-profits to tackle the housing challenge. The event was about understanding what the current housing needs are and to collaboratively identify solutions for housing policy and investment architecture. This year the focus was on home ownership, social and affordable housing and rental availability.

The NRHS was hosted by the Regional Australia Institute (RAI), Real Estate Institute of Australia (REIA) and Masters Builders Australia (MBA) at the Old Parliament House in

Canberra. There was 200 delegates on site and 100 who attended the event online.

Representatives from the Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) are some of the many delegates that attended the NRHS on Friday. In the lead up to the event, acting Chief Executive Officer of AFPA, Richard Hyett said that AFPA would be talking about the need for timber to be at the centre of policy development solutions for Australia's housing crisis.

Richard Hyett shared that it is not possible to build the carbon friendly housing Australia needs for the future without timber. He went on to express that the essential nature of timber for this crisis



The increased take up of timber will be important to solve Australia's housing crisis.

is why AFPA sponsored and actively participated in the NRHS summit, to promote the important role of both construction and furnishing timber in new and existing housing.

"Right now, our sector has Aussie grown timber on the shelf ready to go and build the homes of tomorrow, along with the hopes and dreams of many Australians who want a home

to live in that meets their needs, whether they have a growing family or downsizing.

"Furthermore, as the Commonwealth and State governments look to identify how they reduce emissions and meet ambitious climate targets, they need to more closely consider the role of embodied carbon in timber products as a major solution."

The NRHS was another opportunity for AFPA to remind ministers, MPs, Senators, senior public sector administrators and other senior decision makers across the housing construction supply chain, how important the increased take up of timber will be to solve Australia's housing crisis and help Australia fight climate change.

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Aurecon commits to research hub

LAST week's issue of Timber&Forestry eNews Issue 789, headlined the opening of ARC at the University of Queensland. One of the key supporters is Aurecon, a design, engineering and advisory company. Aurecon's purpose is bringing ideas to life, to imagine and co-create with their clients to create a better future for people and the planet.

Aurecon has committed AUD 200,000 in funding and in-kind support as a Principal Partner of the AUD 16.5 million ARC Industrial Transformation Research Hub to Advance Timber for Australia's Future Built Environment, administered by the University of Queensland.

The aim of the hub is to develop the resources, enablers, and drivers to advance timber, as a natural resource, to be the material of choice, leading towards a net zero future for Australia's built environment.

Aurecon is involved in various nodes including Performance of Building Components, Manufacturing Innovation, Towards a Low Carbon and Circular Economy and Building Performance for Occupants.

Aurecon's Major Project Director, Ralph Belperio, who is on the Hub's Executive Board and Hub Partner Investigator, said that Aurecon has identified that timber has a key role to play in decreasing both embodied and operational carbon as we move towards a net-zero future.



The Aurecon team supporting the ARC launch

"Several of the research nodes that the Hub is tackling are directly relevant to the decarbonisation pursuits of many of our key clients," Belperio said.

"We have assembled a team of our most eminent practitioners to focus on each of the relevant nodes that can help guide the research strategies to ensure that the outcomes remain industry focussed and meet the needs of the broader construction community.

"Our significant investment is key to our desire to remain at the forefront of innovation, both in the efficient and effective use of timber in our efforts to decarbonise the built environment, and in our broader drive for more sustainable outcomes".

The research support for the ARC Advance Timber Hub is just one of a number of research and development commitments that Aurecon is currently undertaking, including the development of sustainable alternatives for sand in shotcrete, improving design through AI-assisted stakeholder engagements, and reducing wastage through a circular economy approach to building retrofits.

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Architects use landscape to inspire design

WOOD Marsh, an architecture firm in Melbourne, Victoria, are well known for their bold use of geometry and fluidity in their designs.

Wood Marsh's project named the Peninsula House is garnering attention for its dramatic sculptural design and contrasting palette and material choices. Peninsula House is a new residence in South Melbourne, Victoria. There was several boundaries Wood Marsh had to consider along with the coastline of Australia and the natural landscape of the rural area. Instead of battling against these challenges, Wood Marsh decided to work with them and designed a home that fits in with the surrounding wider landscape.

"Crossing the entry



1/ Peninsula House has a contrasting palette and material design that makes it stand out.
2/ The bending hallways give it a unique and fascinating element.

threshold, a lush, planted atrium defines the building's axial centre, and allows natural light to flood into the interior," said Wood Marsh.

The internal layout of the hallways of the home have been likened to the bending of a snake as it moves along the ground. These bending hallways divide the home up



"The charred battens cloak the building mass allowing it to recede into the rural context as an enigmatic form," said Wood Marsh.

"Internally the thematic quality of darkness continues with black mosaic tiles, black timber battens, blackened brass, and black terrazzo flooring."

As Wood Marsh explained, "Peninsula House

is envisioned in the round, to sit harmoniously in the topography of its site – its raw sculptural language belying its domestic use - an erosional remnant formed by its harsh, exposed coastal setting."

The home contains a recording studio, 5 bedrooms, an office with a dark palette, atrium and a parabolic ceiling in the living areas to provide fantastic acoustics for the owners musical collection.

To see more images of Peninsula House click here.

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SOMETHING TO SAY?

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New oldest forest found in Cairo quarry, New York

THE Gilboa fossil forest was thought to be the oldest forest in the world but that has just been uprooted by the discovery of another fossil forest in the small town of Cairo in the state of New York. Cairo is actually only a 46-minute drive away from the Gilboa fossil forest, it is amazing to see that two such ancient forests are so close to each other.

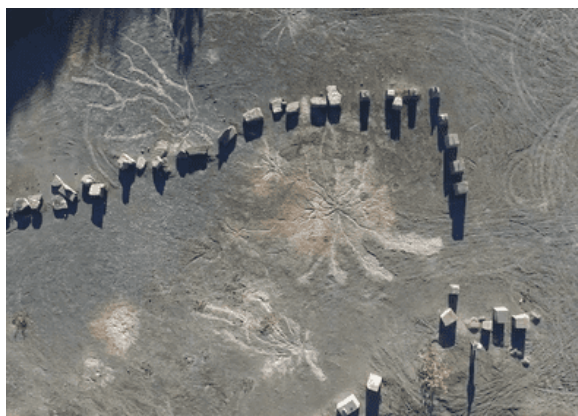
It is suspected that the Cairo forest is 2-3 million years older than the Gilboa forest and may have spanned 400 kilometres heading south from Cairo in New York to Pennsylvania. This new forest discovery was made at the bottom of a sandstone quarry, the retrieval of the sandstone playing a major part in unearthing this incredible find.

This discovery is huge for the scientific community as

it allows them to study early trees and forests to better understand the world we live in.

"In order to really understand how trees began to draw down carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, we need to understand the ecology and habitats of the very earliest forests, and their rooting systems," said Dr Chris Berry from Cardiff University's School of Earth and Ocean Sciences.

"These remarkable findings have allowed us to move away from the generalities of the importance of large plants growing in forests, to the specifics of which plants, in which habitats, in which types



Aerial view of Archaeopteris root system at the Cairo fossil forest. Image: Christopher Berry

of ecology were driving the processes of global change."

There are three types of trees that have been found in the Cairo forest. The Eospermatopteris, a tree that resembles a palm. The root system of this tree was basic and only survived for a couple of years before dying out and leaving space for other trees to

take root in the gap. The second type was Archaeopteris, which is considered a 'true tree' and one of the first to form. Archaeopteris had extensive roots which you can see pictured. These trees grew up to 11 metres tall and whilst they shared a lot of characteristics with trees today,

they reproduced the way that ferns do. Scientists believe it is a sign of the evolution of sporophytes becoming seed bearing plants. The third type was not as easily identified by researchers suspect it may be a Lycopside, otherwise known as a scale tree.

To find out more, click here.

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Wellons Energy Systems

“Renewable energy”, “green power”, “carbon neutral” and “reduced carbon footprint” can all be used to describe the energy and lumber drying systems provided by Wellons.

Wellons is a leader in providing biomass-fired energy systems, timber drying systems, and related products and services to the forest products and other industries. Firmly established and financially sound, we provide our customers with complete services in design, engineering, and manufacturing, as well as installation services and technical assistance.

In addition to conventional timber processing residues the number of possible biomass fuels and fuel mixes utilizing waste “opportunity” fuels for a biomass energy system is large and continues to change and grow. When you

include the variabilities imposed by varying soil and climate conditions for agricultural wastes (like bagasse) and varying feed for animals that results in changing animal waste fuels (like chicken litter), the variability is almost limitless. Wellons biomass-fired energy plant technology embraces this variety.

Wellons offers a range of biomass-fired energy systems including fuel storage and emission equipment, power and cogeneration plants, as well as both batch and continuous timber drying systems. Since incorporating in 1964, Wellons has designed and manufactured more than 370 Biomass Boiler and Energy Systems, over 50 Cogeneration Projects and more than 1,500 Timber Drying Systems



Wellons 15MWt with 1.5MWe Energy System.

(Batch and Continuous units).

While primarily a manufacturer of high-quality energy systems we are also an experienced and capable engineering firm. We place high value on the individual and collective engineering experience to be found in the ranks of Wellons employees and upper management. This contributes to our past and future success.

Headquarters and the main

manufacturing facility is located in Vancouver, Washington. With additional manufacturing facilities in Sherwood, Oregon; Surrey, British Columbia; and Montreal, Quebec, Bangkok, Thailand, Wellons maintains over 20,000m2 of

manufacturing capability. To better serve our customers, Wellons has several sales and support offices located throughout the North America and Australasian. For all Australasian enquiries or support please talk to Keith Robertson, Director of International Business Development at +64 21 509753 or email at keith.robertson@wellons.com

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Forest Economic Advisors

Forest Economic Advisors is pleased to partner with DANA to host the first FEA-DANA International Forest Investment Conference in New York City on May 1–2, 2024. We will be located at The Westin New York at Times Square.

Forests have never before garnered as much attention from investors as they do now. In addition to the returns from managing for timber production, new opportunities are rapidly arising in related markets such as carbon and biomass. The FEA-DANA International Forest Investment Conference is an investor-driven event that offers critical insights and networking opportunities in a growing sector.

This unique conference will be a valuable experience for timberland investors as well as those who are intrigued but need more insight from experts before entering the market. Timberland managers, appraisers, and market participants interested in timberland investment trends and expectations will also benefit. Are you hungry for informative discussions on timberland markets and networking opportunities with industry leaders? This is where you want to be May 1–2, 2024.

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Study finds billions lost due to black summer bushfires

THE University of Sydney (UOS) and the University of Queensland (UOQ) collaborated on a study that looked at the economic impact of the 2019-2020 bushfires in Australia.

The study focused on the tourism industry, but they recognised the impact was far more reaching. The forestry and timber industries are naturally affected by bushfires and are also a significant part of the prevention of them. The researchers from the Universities of Sydney and Queensland through highlighting the depth of damage the fires did, make it so apparent how necessary all our incredible fire fighters are for the prevention of bushfires.

The study below also talks about climate change and the potential future impact to Australia's economy. This just further highlights that the importance the forestry and timber industries are placing on our sustainability practices are not misplaced. As an industry the majority are working hard towards making sure that we are helping our country to work toward carbon neutrality and setting up future generations for continued success in our field.

UOS and UOQ Study: Black summer bushfires wiped \$2.8 billion from tourism supply chain

First input-output analysis of 2019-20 fires found 7300 jobs were lost

A first of its kind study of the 2019-2020 'Black Summer' bushfires in Australia has revealed that the tourism industry nationwide took an immediate hit of \$2.8 billion in total output to its broader



2019-2020 saw bushfires rage across Australia causing much damage to our forest industry. Image: Shutterstock

supply chains and almost 7300 jobs disappeared nationwide.

The fires four years ago triggered widespread tourism shutdowns in many parts of the country in the lead up to the peak Christmas and New Year season, resulting in \$1.7 billion direct losses to the tourism industry, which triggered the larger drop in supply chain output.

"These results are an illustration of what can be expected in the future not only in Australia, but in other nations that are vulnerable to climate-change driven disasters," said Vivienne Reiner, a PhD student with the Centre for Integrated Sustainability Analysis in the Faculty of Science and lead author of the study, published in *Economics of Disasters and Climate Change*.

"It's important to note that our study, which measured tourism's losses through Australian supply chains, did not quantify other economic costs, such as the supply-chain impacts of losses from agriculture or forestry, which were also substantially impacted by the fires," she said.

While the fires had the biggest impact on Australia's

east coast, the impact from tourism losses was national and felt across the economy, the researchers found.

"Tourism is a vital Australian industry. Before the fires that started in 2019, statistics showed that in rural areas 8 percent, or almost one in 12 people, were employed in jobs connected to the tourism industry," Ms Reiner said. "As well, tourism is a top export, with travel services responsible for more export income than natural gas in 2018-19."

Associate Professor Arunima Malik, a co-author who heads the Centre for Integrated Sustainability Analysis and is also affiliated with the Business School, said: "With bushfires increasing compared to other natural disasters and expected to intensify due to climate change, it is important for countries such as Australia to quantify their economic impact as part of routine practice, including supply-chain spill overs."

Co-author Professor Manfred Lenzen, also with ISA in the School of Physics, said: "Although the losses we calculated only represented a

small fraction of the nation's economic output, Australia's reputation as a pristine destination could become permanently damaged under global warming, with fewer people travelling within and to Australia in our peak holiday season."

The research showed varied impact nationwide across the supply chain, including in job losses:

- **New South Wales:** 3171 jobs
- **Victoria:** 1430 jobs
- **Queensland:** 1499 jobs
- **South Australia:** 516 jobs
- **Western Australia:** 479 jobs
- **Tasmania:** 13 jobs
- **Australian Capital Territory:** 110 jobs
- **Northern Territory:** 75 jobs

The researchers warn that the Australian economy could face further losses as the effects from climate change increase.

Ms Reiner said: "As part of the Asia Pacific – the world's most disaster-prone region – Australian tourism has a lot to gain from climate-change mitigation. In terms of responses, studies such as ours also help indicate hotspots in supply chains where rebuilding may be required in communities and industries.

"By including the entire supply chain in our research, using input-output analysis, we calculated total output losses of \$2.8 billion, which is a 61 percent increase on direct damages identified."

Study by The University of Sydney and the University of Queensland. For more information click here.

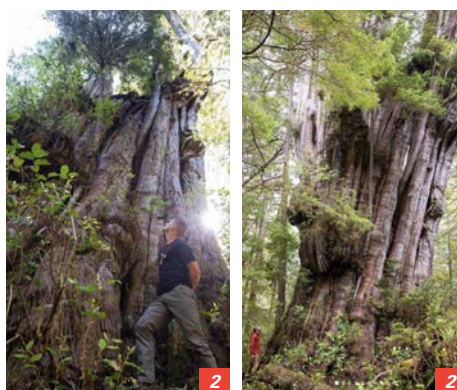
The largest secret... literally

TJ WATT is a photographer and campaigner for the Ancient Forest Alliance (AFA) and he is keeping a gigantic secret. While trekking through some remote forests in Canada TJ Watt discovered one of the most impressive trees, it is red cedar tree which is over 5 metres wide at the base and 46 metres tall. The impressive aspect of this tree is that its trunk gets wider as it goes up. The AFA suspects this tree could have the largest volume of wood in the first 15 metres of its trunk compared to any tree in all of Canada.

This tree was found in an ancient forest on Flores Island which is in the Ahousaht territory. Flores Island is a small island off the western coast of Vancouver Island in Clayoquot Sound, British

Columbia. Flores Island itself is about 155 square kilometres and only contains a small population of approximately 900 people. The residents are predominately members of the Ahousaht nation, and form part of the Nuu-chah-nulth people.

The gigantic tree has been nicknamed 'the wall' or 'ʔiihaq hūmiis', which means 'big red cedar' in the Nuu-chah-nulth language. After TJ Watt first found the tree in 2022,



1/ The heavily forested Flores Island, BC, Canada. Photo: TJ Watt

2/ The red cedar is nicknamed 'the wall' for its sheer size and width.

he returned in 2023 with members of the Maaqutusiis Hahoulthee Stewardship Society Guardians Program (MHSS Stewardship) and Tyson Atleo, the Hereditary Representative of the Ahousaht Nation and Natural Climate Solutions Program Director for Nature United.

The Ahousaht Nation is in negotiations with the British Columbian Government to create new Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas which would cover 80% of the Ahousaht Nation territory including the forest where 'the wall' is hidden.

The exact location of the tree remains an undisclosed secret. If you're ever trekking through the remote Flores Island of Canada, keep your eyes open for this hidden giant!

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Call for the next generation of women and girls in science

AUSTRALIA'S professional association for forest scientists, managers and growers used this year's International Day for Women and Girls in Science as a call for the next generation to join forestry science.

Forestry Australia President Dr Michelle Freeman said Sunday February 11 marked the International Day of Women and Girls in Science.

"Forestry across Australia has so many tremendous women who are at the forefront of the science that underpins the skilful management of our forests and broader environment," Dr Freeman said.

"On February 11 we celebrate all of these women, and we want to encourage the next generation of women and girls to follow in their footsteps too.

"If you ask someone to imagine a typical person who works in forest and fire management, they tend to picture a very narrow stereotype, but the reality is very different. We have incredible scientists across our country doing the most innovative and creative work for the betterment of our environment, community and economy – and that's the definition of career goals.



Dr Tegan Brown from Victoria

"There's so many opportunities for the next generation of women and girls to lead the science in our sector, promoting evidence-based decision making from carbon capture, forest fire management, conservation and renewables and to them I say: do it, you'll love it."

Some of the women from across Forestry Australia have shared their thoughts and experiences on this International Day for Women and Girls in Science:

DR TEGAN BROWN, VICTORIA

"Vegetation is the fuel that burns in grassland and forest fires. In my current role as a Research Scientist for CFA, I use climate models and landscape data to predict future vegetation and fuel types. We will then use these



Molly Marshall from Tasmania

data to predict future fire activity, and model the number and type of fire management resources that Victorian fire agencies will require. Data isn't neutral and is interpreted by scientists through a lens built from context and lived experiences. Having more diverse people contributing to and making decisions in land, forest, and fire management will enhance our organisations and our contribution to communities."

MOLLY MARSHALL, TASMANIA

"I believe that now is the

“ INCREDIBLE SCIENTISTS DOING THE MOST INNOVATIVE AND CREATIVE WORK



Emily Post from New South Wales

perfect opportunity for women to work within the forest, fire and land management sector. Every one of us has and will continue to have an integral role to play in the combat against climate change and our sector provides no better platform to be at the forefront of mitigation, adaptation and resilience."

EMILY POST, NEW SOUTH WALES

"Forestry science is a unique blend of natural, physical, and social sciences; it is a privilege to work in a science that can contribute so much to the wellbeing of people and the planet. Forests and their benefits are so diverse in nature, and I want to encourage the continued diversification of the community of stewards who are working to nurture our vital forest ecosystems."



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Timber pricing: Russia's lumber markets in the wake of events in Ukraine

Part one of two.

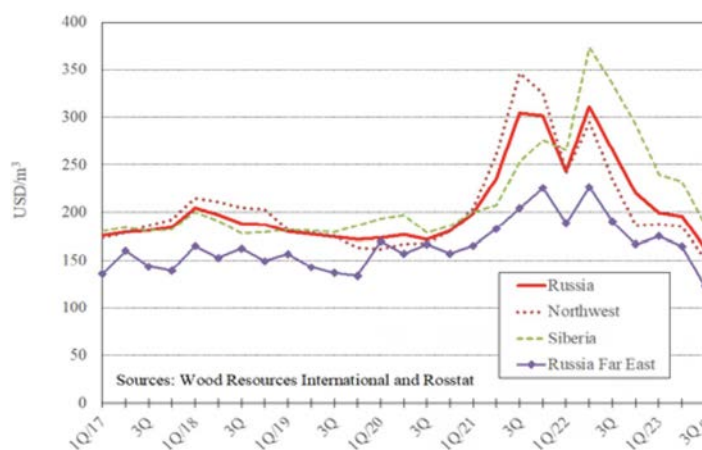
A GREAT many things shifted for Russia in 2022 with the world watching the events unfold in Ukraine. There has been widespread boycotting of Russia and its products throughout Europe, North America and parts of Asia. Australia has also placed sanctions on Russia for certain goods and activities.

In 2020 and 2021 before the events in Ukraine, Russia was the largest exporter of softwoods in the world. Their exports were at a record high point in 2020 of more than 31 million cubic metres. In 2022 that amount dropped to 23 million cubic metres. The projected total for 2023 was even less at 21 million cubic metres. Europe's boycotts cost Russia a drop of 4.6 million cubic metres of exports from 2021 to 2023.

Not only is Russia facing boycotts, but their Chinese market has weakened alongside China's economy weakening. In the aftermath of the boycotts coming into effect, Russia hoped to divert the lumber from the sawmills in the north-western province to China, CIS states, the MENA region and other importing countries in Asia. However, despite these traditionally being solid markets for Russia this hope of diverting lumber did not work out. Not only did the exports to these nations not increase but Russia's traditional markets have actually been in decline for the past two years.

Normally Russia's exports to China and CIS states

RUSSIAN LUMBER EXPORT PRICES



Russian export prices were on the rise in 2021 before the drastic drops across the past two years.

accounts for less than 70% of their exports. However, 2023 saw that percentage rise to 85% of their total exports. This reflects just how much the boycotts are changing Russia's exports. This world leading lumber exporter has lost approximately 25% of its exporting values since its peak in 2021.

Russia is facing domestic market issues as well. The domestic demand for forest products has dropped alongside the boycotts and China's weakened economy making the past couple of years a three-pronged hit to the lumber industry in Russia.

Wood Resources International estimates that the production of lumber in

“RUSSIA WAS THE LARGEST EXPORTER OF SOFTWOODS IN THE WORLD”

Russia has dropped by nearly 20% in only two years. This is a drastic drop and has caused the lumber prices to drop beside the drop in exports and production. In early 2022 Russian lumber was priced at US \$310 per cubic metre. In the third quarter of 2023 the export price had dropped down to nearly half what it was barely a year and half prior. 2023 saw prices of US \$163 per cubic metre. The chart shows the steep decline from what was a promising growth track for Russia in 2021.

With the obvious factor of the European boycott of Russia due to the events in Ukraine, and the lowering demand for wood both domestically and in China, the other main factor is the overall lowering of the Ruble against the US dollar. Combined these factors don't paint a pretty picture for the Russian lumber sector.

Source: Wood Resources International.



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