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National Forest Stewardship Standard revision has commenced

COVER STORY P 2



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Formal approval granted by FSC ANZ

FSC International greenlights revision of forest management standard

FSC ANZ is excited to officially announce the commencement of the revision of the FSC National Forest Stewardship Standard of Australia (the NFSS). This follows the approval granted by FSC International on 26 January 2024.

Expressing enthusiasm for this development, FSC ANZ CEO, Melanie Robertson, states "While the 2018 NFSS has performed well, it is now booked in for a scheduled service to ensure it can continue to support best-practice forest management across all types of forestry in Australia by incorporating contemporary scientific insights and the latest knowledge."

Melanie Robertson explains, "There is a raft of changes introduced by FSC International that will be incorporated into the

revised Standard regarding workers' rights and pesticide use among other topics. Additionally, the revision aims to further bolster the rights of Indigenous Peoples through the introduction of the Indigenous Cultural Landscapes concept."

She continues, "The FSC ANZ Board has also determined that the revised Standard must better support responsible forest management in the face of a changing climate and what is expected to be more frequent and severe bushfires."

THE STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT GROUP

FSC International has also approved the composition of the Standards Development Group appointed by the FSC ANZ Board to draft the revised Standard. Melanie Robertson explains, "This group of experts in their field, with equal representation from economic, environmental, and social stakeholders, serves as the construction site for new and revised requirements. It is within this collaborative forum that revisions to the

Standard are meticulously discussed and drafted." She highlights, "In a testament to the enduring strength of the FSC brand in Australia, we have assembled a Standards Development Group with an incredible breadth of knowledge and experience, representing most facets of forestry in the country. The revision could not be in better hands."

The members of the Standards Development Group are:

Economic chamber

- Carl Richardson (Australian Bluegum Plantations)
- Simon Cook (Forico)
- Tim McBride (HVP)

Environmental chamber

- Associate Professor Grant Wardell-Johnson (individual member)
- Patrick Gardner (The Wilderness Society)
- Sean Cadman (individual member)

Social chamber

- Lorraine Cassin (Australian Manufacturing Workers Union)*
- Professor Mark Brown

(Forestry Australia)

- Tolita Dolzan (individual member)

* This position is now a vacancy and FSC ANZ will be taking EOIs shortly to fill the position.

Facilitating the Standards Development Group and revisions process

- Stefan Jensen (FSC ANZ Policy and Standards Manager)

THE PROCESS

The revision process, which has already commenced, is expected to wrap up in mid-2025. Before its completion, the revised Standard will go through two rounds of public consultation and forest testing. The first round of public consultation is planned to occur in mid-2024 and will be announced through all available channels.

To read more about the revision, click here.

“CONTINUE TO SUPPORT BEST-PRACTICE FOREST MANAGEMENT”

On the cover: The FSC Australia Standards Development Group. From left to right: Mark Brown, Grant Wardell-Johnson, Stefan Jensen, Melanie Robertson, Sean Cadman, Tim McBride, Simon Cook, Tolita Dolzan, Lorraine Cassin and Carl Richardson.

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NZ durable eucalypts ready for commercial-scale development

By MICHAEL SMITH.

NEW Zealand Dryland Forests Innovation (NZDFI) has been working since 2008 on durable eucalypt breeding, research, and development ... with the intention of creating sustainable regional durable hardwood industries in New Zealand.

According to General Manager Paul Millen, NZDFI's vision "is for 60,000 hectares of durable eucalypts to be planted by 2050 in 12 regional wood catchments in northern and eastern New Zealand – creating regional hardwood industries worth up to \$1 billion per annum. This is equivalent to only about 4% of New Zealand's current exotic forest estate.

"Our work aims to develop an integrated agricultural and forestry system with durable eucalypts which will support the bioeconomy and create future export market access. There are also environmental benefits such as supporting domestic emissions reduction objectives and facilitating erosion control and drought resilience for forests and farms."

Mr Millen adds that if all 12 catchments were planted, they would help to diversify the country's wood supply – and annually generate some 360,000 cubic metres of durable hardwood for both the domestic and Australian markets (given that durable eucalypt supplies in Australia are predicted to fall by 40% as logging of native forests ends in more states).

He says that after 15 years the NZDFI is on the cusp of commercialising



1/ **Blenheim workshop: evaluating the potential for a durable hardwood industry in Marlborough.**



2/ **Workshop participants inspect 13-year-old E. bosistoana at NZDFI's Cravens Road trial site near Blenheim.**



Collecting seed from elite trees: Eucalyptus macrorhyncha has proven its adaptability in cold and dry environments.

its research. "Tree breeding and forestry research require intergenerational planning and planting decades ahead of time. Ongoing research is required to maintain progress until the product is adopted commercially.

"A recent downturn in the forest industry has reduced the available forest levy funds directed to research. The next six years are critical to continuing our research and development to ensure our genetically improved seed production meets the growing

demand for durable eucalypt planting."

With that in mind, Shaf van Ballekom, chair of NZDFI, says a separate entity – New Zealand Dryland Forests IP Ltd (NZDFIP Ltd) – was set up to separate commercial activities from the broader focus of NZDFI's research and development programme.

"Our plan is to deliver tree breeding, research, and extension services to new shareholders in a similar way to what the Radiata Pine Breeding Company undertakes for industry.

"Up to 49% of the NZDFIP Ltd shareholding is on offer to forest growers that have the land, capability, and a strategy to diversify by investing in large-scale planting of the elite durable eucalypts now available."

Mr van Ballekom adds that, ultimately, by bringing in new partners, "we hope to establish a long-term wider industry commercial partnership team that can provide new leadership and investment, which is extremely important

when working in forestry timescales".

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CASE STUDY

NZDFI recently hosted a successful workshop (and field trips) in Blenheim – 'Marlborough's Future is Durable' – to present the results of a case study evaluating the potential for a durable hardwood industry in the region.

Mr Millen says the workshop "was a key part of a two-year Sustainable Land Use Management and Climate Change (SLMACC) project funded by the Ministry for Primary Industries, where NZDFI is evaluating how planting durable hardwood forests could contribute to the sustainability of Marlborough's wine industry."

Further, he notes that the research "is providing a market and science-based pathway for developing this novel land use and supply chain". This could improve long-term sustainability and resilience for the local wine industry and generate new investment and employment.

Cont P 7

LIGNA celebrates its 50th Anniversary

THE woodworking community has a milestone birthday coming up: LIGNA will be celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2025. During the height of the oil crisis in 1975 the world's leading trade fair for the woodworking and wood processing industry emerged from Hannover Messe, where it had its home for many years as the continuously growing "Woodworking Machinery Group Show" under the auspices of the then Fachgemeinschaft Holzbearbeitungsmaschinen im VDMA e. V. (Woodworking Machinery Association).

LIGNA's origins date back to 1950, when it was the first "Woodworking Machinery Group Show" at the "German Industrial Trade Fair in



1/ Visitors for the LIGNA event view the display of one of the exhibitors.



2/ A section of the LIGNA event in the 1980s. It was attended by over 1,000 exhibitors by 1985.

Hanover", covering 2,780 square meters. In 1955, the area increased to 8,000 square meters, and by 1965, 22,500 square meters were already occupied.

From May 28 to June 3, 1975, LIGNA celebrated its premiere in Hanover as an independent "International Trade Fair for Machinery and Equipment for the Woodworking Industry". The

event featured 720 exhibitors, with 50 percent from abroad, occupying 60,000 square meters. Since then, LIGNA has evolved into an established and pioneering event within its sector, attracting both exhibitors and visitors. It is widely recognized as a heavyweight in the capital goods industry within the international trade fair context.

The general conditions for LIGNA's anniversary year 2025 are notably challenging. The industry is grappling with economic difficulties such as a decline in orders due to stagnation in the construction sector, diminishing sales, cost pressures, short-time work, a shortage of skilled workers, job cuts, and the

Cont P 5

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From P 4

implementation of new legal regulations for supply chains and the circular economy. Throughout history, LIGNA has been described as a steadfast anchor in tumultuous times, serving as an economic barometer. This resilience was evident in 1985 when, faced with a similar situation, the closing announcement included a quote that resonates with the current state of the industry: "Due to the innovations presented, LIGNA HANNOVER 1985 will have a lasting impact on the sales development of the timber industry in the coming weeks and months. It will become an important pillar of the domestic industry economy, currently weakened by the slowdown in demand in the construction sector."

As stated by the LIGNA organizers, Deutsche Messe AG in Hanover, and VDMA Holzbearbeitungsmaschinen e. V. in Frankfurt am Main, LIGNA continues to embody two key aspects shortly



Complex and innovative machinery is a key feature of the LIGNA events.

before its 50th anniversary: the technological innovative strength of the entire industry and a robust sense of community spirit. In tandem with the exhibiting companies, LIGNA undergoes constant evolution, navigating through crises with courage, shaping progress, and actively contributing to the future.

"LIGNA is a truly unique trade fair. Throughout its five decades, it has consistently succeeded in bringing together all industry topics under one roof while still providing each with its distinct space. The collective enthusiasm of industry participants for innovation and performance is unparalleled. The shared commitment to shaping technological progress and, in turn, ensuring

business growth, stability, and prosperity is what motivates everyone involved. As the organizer, being able to witness and contribute to this spirit fills us with pride to be part of such a remarkable community", says Stephanie Wagner, Head of LIGNA at Deutsche Messe AG.

"The success of German manufacturers of machines and tools for the wood industry would not have been possible without LIGNA. Becoming a world market leader requires being at the forefront of technology and showcasing this leadership on a global scale. I am not aware of any company in our industry that does not consider the next LIGNA date as the most crucial milestone in its innovation calendar.

LIGNA is an inseparable part of our success story," says Dr. Bernhard Dirr, Managing Director of VDMA Woodworking Machinery in Frankfurt am Main.

50 Years of LIGNA History Overview: 1975 to 2025

In the lead up to celebrating 50 years LIGNA prepared a display of its history called "LIGNA – a success story" and summarizes the developments that this world-leading trade fair for the wood processing industry has undergone, and the technological innovations presented from 1975 to 2025. Below is a small selection of the history prepared by LIGNA.

LIGNA 1981

1981 starts with a record attendance by wood professionals, coming from 99 countries to LIGNA, surpassing all expectations. The saying "Anyone involved in wood processing worldwide cannot ignore LIGNA" emerges. Additionally, LIGNA showcases an outdoor area with a vast offering, increasing its international visitor share to 40 percent.

LIGNA 1985

1985, ten years after its separation from HANNOVER MESSE, LIGNA solidifies its

Cont P 6

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From P 5

position in the trade fair market. It grows by an additional 315 exhibitors to a total of 1,045, nearly doubling its number of visitors (around 80,000) and gaining a net area increase of around 22,000 sqm. Exhibitors focus on the technological shift from mass production to small series, influenced by changing consumer behaviour. The first continuous press for wood materials transforms the industry. Microprocessor-controlled machines and equipment become more prevalent on exhibitor stands. On the visitor side, questions about energy costs, noise emissions, and environmental protection influence investment decisions. Encouraged by the positive outcome of LIGNA 1985, exhibitors request larger booth spaces for the next event.

LIGNA 1999

1999 integrates "interHOLZ" into LIGNA, renamed LIGNA plus, with a duration of six days and Finland as the partner country, having recently joined the EU. Due to Finland's accession and other forest-rich countries, the timber industry becomes one of the largest sectors in the EU. The LIGNA portfolio



1/ LIGNA events can see over 80,000 people in attendance making for a packed event.
2/ LIGNA expanded to outdoors to allow for larger machinery displays.



is expanded to include applications for the wood and building material, defining a new focus on machines, materials, manufacturing needs, and products for and from wood. It covers wood construction, interior design, building components, and the timber trade. In preparation for EXPO 2000 in Hannover, a model of the EXPO roof, a free space covering made of wood and measuring 16,000 sqm, is presented at LIGNA.

LIGNA 2003

In 2003, the LIGNA discusses the Waste Wood Ordinance, which came into effect in 2002, regulating wood recycling in Germany. New sorting techniques are developed in the wood material industry, detecting adhering foreign bodies and wood preservatives. The organizers celebrate the premiere of the special exhibition "Energy from Wood", focusing on innovative trends in renewable

energy sources. However, LIGNA faces a challenging situation with an economic downturn, terrorism, and SARS warnings. The German Timber Construction Award is presented for the first time at LIGNA, aiming to promote the use and further development of the resource-efficient, environmentally friendly, and sustainable building material wood. Simultaneously, the German Timber Construction Association celebrates its 100th anniversary at LIGNA.

LIGNA 2015

In 2015, Industry 4.0 enters the wood processing industry. LIGNA aligns its content with the technological advancements of its exhibitors, presenting innovations in integrated

manufacturing in the furniture industry. Additionally, X-ray technology (CT) becomes increasingly important in the wood industry. The first Wood Industry Summit takes place at LIGNA, serving as an international industry meeting point and a combined dialogue and presentation format with international participation from industry, science, and politics. Its goal is to initiate business contacts in particularly growth-oriented markets in the project business sector. The special presentation "Surprisingly versatile" debuts, showcasing the flexibility of machines beyond wood and demonstrating comprehensive material competence in dry-processing manufacturing. The focus is on increased flexibility through woodworking machines that can process plastic and composite materials.

To explore more of LIGNA's history click here.

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MARCH

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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.

From P 3

"We envisage growing durable hardwood forests planted between now and 2050 to generate a sustainable supply of hardwood for processing into multiple

products. In Marlborough, a key market will be naturally durable posts and poles for vineyards – a natural substitute for copper chrome arsenic (CCA) treated radiata pine.

"The timber can easily be

reused or recycled, meaning no hazardous waste goes to landfill, as occurs with CCA-treated pine.

"Other potential products include veneer, solid wood, and biomass for energy."

Alternatively, durable eucalypts are very efficient at sequestering carbon – and can live for hundreds of years as permanent forests in dry conditions, which will become more frequent in the face of climate change.

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Stroke of Aussie genius takes out Shaping Australia awards

FSA FIRECOAT has been awarded the winner of this year's Shaping Australia Awards. Taking out first place under the 'Problem Solver' category it has been recognised for its potential for changing the lives of Australians for the better.

Increasingly, Australia's vulnerability to extreme weather conditions, and the frequency of major bushfires, are creating more serious risks to homes in bushfire prone areas.



Shed with FSA Firecoat paint applied (right) versus shed without in a controlled real burn situation.

"FSA FIRECOAT protects people, structures and the environment from fire and other threats, and has received global certifications for safety and fire-retardancy,"

said Tony Overstead from Flame Security International.

The University of New South Wales' Professor Guan Yeoh and his team have developed the suite

of innovative fire protection products with Flame Security International, which will better safeguard homes and effectively minimise exposure to fire threats.

Professor Yeoh is world renowned in the field of fire safety and his innovations are helping to keep people and property safe.

"The paint was developed and commercialised with our industry partner Flame

Cont P 9

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From P 8

Security International and was partly funded via a \$3 million Cooperative Research Centres Project grant from the Australian Government. It passed stringent Australian standards testing and it is proven to provide increased protection against bushfires in areas prone to extreme fire conditions,” said Professor Yeoh.

That funding has been put to great use. It recruited a number of UNSW professors (including specialist Prof. Guan Yeoh) and a PhD team of researchers to develop products from scratch, including more to come.

“This will make a significant difference not only to the cost of building in affected areas, but also the potential risks to life and property. The paint can be applied as an undercoat to most external and internal surfaces, including brick, existing render, timber, aluminium, steel, concrete and plasterboard. It will last indefinitely as long as the protective layer of paint is maintained. It won’t irritate eyes or skin on contact,” said Tony.

In October 2023 Bunnings commenced sales of the first wave of FSI’s highly certified paints, one of which is the first ever to achieve a BAL-40 rating, the highest rating

any fire retardant paint has achieved in the world.

FSI is about to expand to The United States of America. It will become a tenant at the Berkeley Space Centre (spacecenter.berkeley.edu), a 36-acre innovation centre currently being developed at NASA in Silicon Valley. A major feature of the Space Centre includes the world-first integrated environmental testing, measurement, and certification Reliance Chamber for the most destructive disasters increasingly confronting California, Australia, and the world. The chamber will have the capacity to evaluate technology and its capacity for resistance to earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, and fire.

This strategic partnership signifies a shared vision between FSI and the Disaster Lab, emphasising the critical importance of advancing fire material testing methodologies and best practices for creating and maintaining defensible spaces. By focusing on these areas, the collaboration aims to significantly contribute to the global effort in enhancing community safety, property protection, and environmental conservation in the face of escalating wildfire risks.

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New Indigenous Centre of Excellence design unveiled by WSU

THE Western Sydney University wants to prioritise sharing and preserving the culture of the Indigenous people and have created the Indigenous Strategy 2020-2025 with the goal of achieving this.

Part of the Indigenous Strategy 2020-2025 is a proposed Indigenous Centre of Excellence. The design for this new centre has just been unveiled and it is a winning design. There was a plethora of skilled people working on this design including Sarah Lynn Rees,



1/ **The design has a natural aesthetic, fitting in perfectly with the very nature connected culture of the Indigenous people.** Photo: Western Sydney University



2/ **The mangrove inspired, woven façade is designed to help humans and animals reconnect.** Photo: Western Sydney University

Jackson Clements Burrows, Peter Stutchbury Architecture, Jane Irwin Landscape Architecture, Uncle Dean Kelly, Hill Thalix Architecture and Flux Consultant.

Sarah Lynn Rees shared on the heart of the design and how Indigenous Culture is incorporated into the very design.

“Our design engages with the layered physical and experiential histories of the site to create a proposal that is born from the spatial language of Country and healed through the return of waterway, ecology, and home for non-human kin,” said Sarah.

“Inspired by the form and safety of the mangroves and veiled by a woven like facade, the design acts as a canvas within which human and non-human kin can re-connect. The Indigenous Centre of Excellence will facilitate the practice of caring for Country and the transfer of cultural and academic knowledge, amplifying individual and collective cultural strength for the benefit of all.”

The Indigenous Centre of Excellence will be made out of mass timber which will look stunning. All the materials and suppliers are going to be Country focused and the

clay that will make up the façade will be coming directly from Country. The plan is to landscape the building with only Indigenous plants so that the space remains deeply connected and honouring of Indigenous culture. It will truly be a marvellous statement on the excellence that is found in indigenous culture.

“Deeply connected with Country and Indigenous knowledges, the Indigenous Centre of Excellence will be a transformational space where communities can connect with the university while learning from and celebrating our incredible culture,” said WSU deputy vice-chancellor Indigenous leadership Michelle Trudgett.

Vice-chancellor and president, Barney Glover, added, “This world-class building represents a significant opportunity for us to intensify our engagement with communities and will connect people and place to celebrate tens of thousands of years of Indigenous knowledge and history.”



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HVP appoints Melanie Cook as new CEO

HVP Plantations has this week appointed Melanie Cook as its new CEO, after an extensive search following the retirement of Stephen Ryan in October 2023.

Cook commences the role on 8 April 2024, bringing with her a wealth of experience from a 25-year career with ExxonMobil.

HVP Board Chair Therese Ryan said Cook's appointment was an exciting move, citing her experience and background complement the company's direction.

"We are thrilled to



Melanie Cook...new CEO of HVP Plantations.

welcome Melanie, whose extensive experience, strategic vision and leadership ability makes her

the ideal person to guide HVP Plantations through the evolving landscape of the timber industry," Ms Ryan said.

Cook held many roles at ExxonMobil, highlighted by Chief Operating Officer in Malaysia and President and CEO in Indonesia, before returning to Australia in 2021 where she led her own consultancy business specialising in Leadership and Energy.

Along with her esteemed career, Melanie holds a Bachelor of Engineering,

Chemical Engineering, Chemistry and Mathematics from the University of Melbourne.

Interim CEO Josie Pane will work closely with Melanie to ensure a smooth transition, before resuming her role as CFO.

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Bottlenecks and beehives

How an invasive bee colony defied genetic expectations

By **THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY**

FOR more than a decade, invasive Asian honeybees have defied evolutionary expectations and established a thriving population in North Queensland, much to the annoyance of the honey industry and biosecurity officials.

Research published today in *Current Biology* has shown the species, *Apis cerana*, has overcome what is known as a genetic bottleneck to grow from a single swarm into a population of more than 10,000 colonies over a 10,000 square kilometre area – which is about the size of Greater Sydney.

Co-lead author Dr Rosalyn Gloag from the University of Sydney School of Life and Environmental Sciences said: “Our study of this bee population shows that some species can quickly adjust to new environments despite starting with very low genetic diversity relative to their native-range populations.”

Dr Gloag said that high genetic diversity is generally assumed to be important for a population to quickly adapt to changing environmental conditions, such as when a species is translocated, or experiences rapid environmental change caused by natural or climate change disasters.

“However, we have shown that this invasive population of honeybees has rapidly adapted since its arrival, despite having suffered a steep loss in genetic diversity,” she said.

The research team highlight the importance



Swarm of invasive Asian honeybees in Cairns, North Queensland. Image: Dr Rosalyn Gloag

of this case study for understanding population resilience in general.

“This is even more important as we observe many species dealing with anthropogenic climate change,” Dr Gloag said.

Studying the invasive population in Queensland gave the research team a rare complete genetic timeline of a natural invasion, beginning from soon after the bees arrived.

The arrival of the colony in 2007, likely from Papua New Guinea, was of concern to Australian biosecurity because of the parasites the bees can carry. Ultimately these bees were found not to be carrying the most feared of its parasites, the varroa mite, which has since arrived in Australia by an unknown route, threatening the domestic honey industry.

“We were lucky to have a complete sample timeline of this invasive population thanks to the incredible efforts of the Queensland

Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, which sampled the population extensively during the early years of the incursion as part of an eradication attempt,” Dr Gloag said.

“Although that attempt was unsuccessful, the biological material collected has been incredibly valuable for understanding how these invasions proceed. And that in turn helps us prepare better for future invasions,” she said.

Access to this comprehensive sample set allowed the scientists to re-sequence entire genomes of 118 individual bees collected over 10 years.

“We could essentially observe natural selection acting over time in a

population that started with low genetic diversity,” Dr Gloag said. “From this unique vantage point, we could see that selection was acting on the variation in genomes that had arrived with the handful of original bees. It wasn’t variation that arose later by mutations.

“In other words, some species with very low genetic diversity can adapt very quickly,” she said.

“While this might be bad news for environments coping with newly arrived invasive species, it’s potentially good news for populations that have temporary crashes in the face of climate change or other natural or human-induced disasters, such as bushfires.”

The study was done in collaboration with scientists at York University (Canada), IPB University (Indonesia), Bandung Institute of Technology (Indonesia) and the CSIRO (Australia).

“**UNDERSTANDING HOW THESE INVASIONS PROCEED HELPS US PREPARE BETTER FOR FUTURE INVASIONS**”

Everybody's Home

Funding for homes in indigenous communities.

THERE is a national housing campaign called 'Everybody's Home' which was launched in 2018 by a coalition of housing, homelessness, and welfare organisations with the goal to petition governments to take action and end homelessness. Everybody's Home wants to see more social housing in place, particularly as rental prices skyrocket and more the amount of strain placed on people grows.

The indigenous community is overrepresented in homelessness. At our last census the government noted down how many people were homeless on the census date. Approximately 20% of those who said they were homeless also recorded that they were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. This is an incredibly high percentage when the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make up only a little over 3% of Australia's total population.

The federal government

is taking action in response to this in partnership with the Northern Territory government. The two branches of government will be providing joint funding towards a goal of 2,700 homes over the next 10 years. In addition to these new homes, the government will also be providing funding for improvements to be made to housing in remote homelands.

Everybody's Home spokesperson Maiy Azize expressed that the funding boost to create homes in remote Indigenous communities is a good step forward and most welcome.

"More federal funding to help build hundreds of extra homes in Indigenous



The Federal and NT governments will be building 2,700 homes to help combat homelessness.

"Overcrowded and poor-quality housing has long been a major problem for First Nations communities. The latest Close the Gap data shows increasing the proportion of Indigenous people living in appropriately sized housing has improved but is not on track.

"Secure, decent, affordable

housing is essential to end disadvantage and is the foundation for a good life - it has flow on effects to other outcomes including improved health and education.

"We encourage the federal government to dig deep when it comes to improving the housing for and lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities."

communities is a great step forward, but it can't stop here if we want to close the gap and see an end to overcrowding and homelessness," Ms Azize said.

“ SECURE, DECENT, AFFORDABLE HOUSING IS ESSENTIAL ”



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Giant tree survives multiple ‘mortal wounds’

IN Vietnam there is a golden oak tree that is centuries old. Its age is not the only incredible thing about this tree, however. The tree has survived three 40-60cm deep cuts and is humungous. The tree is estimated to be over 250 years old.

The tree is found in the Kon Pring village, Ngoc Tu Commune in the Central Highlands’ Kon Tum Province of Vietnam. The incredible golden oak tree is under the care and management of the Dak To Forestry Company.

Nguyen Thanh Chung, director of the Dak To Forestry Company explained that the three deep cuts were made over 30 years ago by workers attempting to cut the tree down but they abandoned the attempts as they realised they would not be able to remove the tree from the forest. The

tree still stands firm at 35 metres tall and over 4 metres wide despite the attempt to cut it down. It is three kilometres away from the Kon Pring village and to access it there are two streams and several cliffs that must be traversed.

The tree and the forest are important to the local Xo Dang people who hold that the tree belongs to the forest god and it is forbidden to harm the tree. The Xo Dang people look to the forest god to protect them from natural disasters and will attempt to gain the favour of the forest god by lighting incense around the huge tree. There is a belief that the tree is the ‘lifeblood’ of the village, which makes their desire to protect it apparent.

A Nao, head of the Kon Pring village said, "Late last



A golden oak tree at a forest of Kon Tum Province in the Central Highlands thrives despite deep cuts on its trunk. Photo: Tran Hoa

their agreement covers more than 150 hectares of land. A Nao explained that "The forest is under close protection. If anyone needs wood to build houses, they must seek permission to gather fallen trees. They must not cut down living trees."

The Ngoc Tu Commune is the closest to the tree and has 13 people managing the forest area around the tree and their forest

year residents, authorities, the forestry company, and representatives of six communes signed an agreement to protect the forest in the vicinity of the golden oak,"

The agreement signed by the 6 communes has 60 families helping to take care of the forest and protect it,

protection station. The high amount of people protecting the forest across the forest protection stations helps to run off poachers. The locals joining the authorities on the patrols that are done every 2-3 days helps to identify strangers in the area and protect the forest.

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Let's accelerate Australia's energy transition

AS Australia looks towards net zero carbon, we know that timber plays an important aspect in sequestering carbon and reducing the output in building and infrastructure. However, it will take more than just the timber industry to see this goal achieved.

Engineers Australia and Energy Networks Australia released a statement about their combined efforts to help move Australia towards net zero carbon.

The CEOs of Engineers Australia and Energy Networks Australia believe that their new partnership will play a crucial



Dominique van den Berg CEO of Energy Networks Australia (left) and Romilly Madew AO CEO of Engineers Australia (right) signing the partnership agreement.

role in Australia's transition to renewable energy. The goal for these two key companies is to help equip Australia with the expertise in engineering to make the transition as smooth as possible.

The partnership will be focusing on three key areas, advocacy, competency

development and recognition, and workforce credentialling of Energy Networks Australia member organisations. Their goal is to build competency and the recognition of engineers whilst working together on shared challenges for their sector.

Engineers Australia CEO

Romilly Madew AO says, "Addressing the skills shortage within Australia's energy sector is central to achieving net zero emissions by 2050. The transition to clean energy not only represents a significant shift in how we generate and consume

energy but also necessitates a substantial expansion and enhancement of the workforce capable of driving this change. Our partnership with Energy Networks Australia is an important step towards meeting our engineering skills need."

Energy Networks Australia CEO Dominique van den Berg says, "To meet net zero, we need the right workforce. From powering homes and industry to steering us through the energy transition, engineers are the bedrock of our energy system. The energy transition is now well under way, and we must make collaboration a priority. In partnering with Engineers Australia, we can help ensure that the right skills are available, where they will be needed and at the scale required."

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Why relationships matter

Genuinely making people a focus in your business builds immediate benefits

By **PETER MAGUIRE**

THERE are lots of organisations around who say: “people are our greatest asset” but, when we have a good look inside them, we sometimes struggle to see how that tenet is actually being lived in practice.

It isn't unusual to find that organisations can invest a lot in policies, procedures, surveys and metrics, and individual development and performance management and still not get the cultural and performance outcomes they are looking for.

As much as all of that investment in systems, processes, data, and resources is important, we're also dealing with human beings and, to a significant degree, the return on those investments is dependent on people's ability and engagement to utilise those resources and to collaborate with each other.

Yet it is rare that we find that relationships feature significantly, if at all, in performance or development management processes. If people really are your greatest asset, why is that?

THE SIMPLE REALITY

In any job that I do, there will be people whom I rely on for certain inputs that I need to do my job and there will be other people who rely on me to deliver certain outputs so they can do their jobs.

Anyone who has implemented lean quality systems understands process mapping and internal customer/supplier relationships and how important they are for getting work processes right



1/ Relationships matter in business, so investing in your new recruits sets the workplace up in a positive way.
Image: Sayan Puangkham/shutterstock
2/ Peter Maquire... an expert in workplace relations compliance and high-performance leadership coach.

with minimal waste and optimal efficiency. But those relationships are between human beings, ie the people or teams who are those customers and suppliers.

How effective are you in assuring that the people in those process chains understand their interdependencies, have the training and resources (including time) to play their part and are supportively held accountable for doing that?

WHEN PEOPLE ARRIVE

Whether you call it induction or onboarding or orientation or some other name, that new experience when someone joins your organisation has a profound impact on how quickly the new starter settles in and becomes productive and what they think about the culture of their new workplace



and whether they will be happy there.

Typically, what we see in this entry program is a lot of stuff around rules and administration and compliance and the physical workplace and work processes/ systems and sometimes some stuff around desired organisation culture, values, vision, mission, etc.

There might be someone appointed as a buddy, but we don't often see anything really constructive in key relationships, ie the people this person is going to rely on for stuff and the people who this person is going to rely on to do their stuff.

Given what we have already said about the importance of people, wouldn't it make sense to help the new starter to understand these key relationships and interdependencies as soon as possible?

We recommend including meetings with each of the people that the new starter is going to have a key relationship with and asking that person to answer three questions for the new starter:

- What is their role?
- What do they rely on the new starter for?
- What does the new starter rely on them for?

Just spending a little time up front on properly inducting a new starter into their key relationships can make such a positive difference to them and their development and those relationships – and, of course, on their performance and the realisation of return on investment.

WHY PEOPLE LEAVE

There is a mountain of research out there about why people leave organisations. Gallup says people leave managers, Culture Amp says that may be the case sometimes, but it is more about leadership and development opportunities. Others says that money and recognition are key issues.

I think that, in the main, people leave problematic relationships just as happens in other elements of life. That might be that I don't think that

Cont P 17

From P 16

my manager appreciates or supports me or it might be that I don't see positive leadership that I respect and want to follow. It might be that I have outgrown the organisation, and it isn't able to provide me with the meaning that I need from work or to meet my personal growth needs. Or it could be that there is one or more internal relationships that are negatively affecting me.

There is a lot that we can influence in all of that by investing in relationships with our people and having open and regular conversations with them so that we become aware of how they are feeling and can act to address any issues for them.

Of course, there are occasions when someone just gets an offer that you can't match and they think it is too good to refuse, or they leave for other reasons such

as to start a family or their own business or some other personal endeavour or to retire.

If the relationship is sound, those people will be advocates for you as an employer. Additionally, sometimes people find that 'the grass isn't greener' and 'money isn't everything' and they might just come back if you leave the door open.

There have been a couple of times in my career when, on announcing my resignation, my boss responded: "Why are you leaving? We had big plans for you!" Of course, I didn't know of those plans because they hadn't told me about them, ie they had not invested in the relationship with me.

Don't let that happen with your people.

THE NEW POSITIVE DUTY REGIME

This year we are seeing the introduction of positive duties to eliminate or control

psychosocial hazards and, guess what... a lot of those psychosocial hazards are related to the quality of relationships.

Four of the hazards in the legislation are pretty obvious – "violent and aggressive behaviour", "bullying", "harassment including sexual harassment" and "conflict and poor workplace relationships and interactions".

However, if you explore a number of the other psychosocial hazards, you will find that relationships have a lot to do with the risks associated with the particular hazard – for example, relationships between management and workers or between workers in the same or different businesses or between a company, its people and its customers to name a few.

So, a key part of meeting the new positive duty is to assess relationship risk and put in place appropriate control measures. Of course, engaging your people in that conversation and building positive relationships is actually part of that process and the solution. Investing in relationships is important because relationships matter – to staff engagement and wellbeing, to staff retention, to productivity and for legal compliance.

So why wouldn't you do that?

Peter Maguire is the owner and practice leader of Ridgeline HR, an award winning HRM consulting practice which he founded in 2000. Peter is an acknowledged expert in workplace relations compliance and a high-performance leadership coach with over 40 years' experience in HRM. Ridgeline HR's by-line is Helping PEOPLE in BUSINESS and that is essentially what Peter does – help business people with their people business.



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