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Silvopasture trial looks to improve cattle and forestry outcomes

COVER STORY P 8

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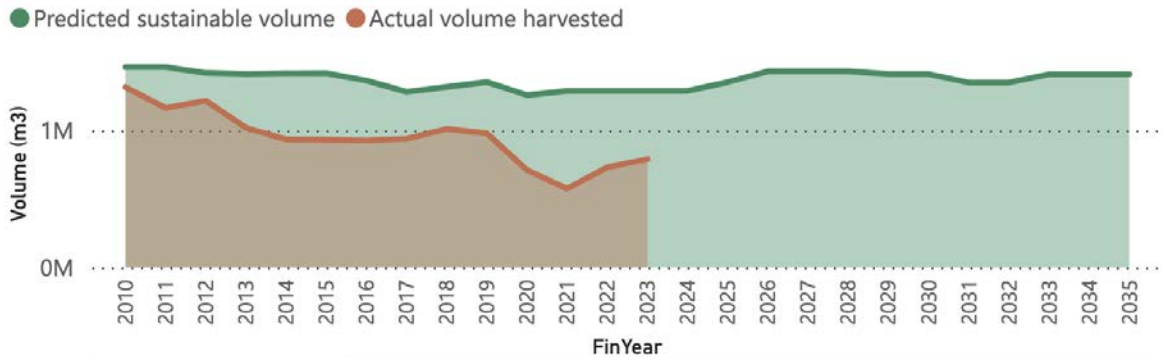
Good news on sustainability

Forestry Corporation of NSW has released its Sustainability Report 2022-23.

As an industry, we have a good news message about our sustainability and importance to the environment as well as the economy. Sadly, that message can be hard to convey to the general public and the mainstream media. Which makes the data contained in the Forestry Corporation of NSW Sustainability Report 2022-23 even more valuable, as it paints a clear picture of a renewable industry delivering wood products that can substantially lower our CO₂ emissions in other sectors.

Forestry Corporation is the largest commercial plantation manager in NSW continually harvesting and replanting approximately 225,000ha of softwood and 34,000ha of hardwood timber. Of the 2 million hectares of state forests – some over a century old – managed by Forestry Corporation, just 1% is harvested for timber products each year.

Hardwood & cypress modelled & actual volumes (m3) harvested on State forests and joint ventures



Hardwood and cypress harvesting levels have been consistently below the predicted sustainable volumes.

The report includes a clickable breakdown of local government areas that prosper through plantation timber production through direct economic benefit and immediate and related employment. The profits from Forestry Corp’s commercial activity offset much of the expense of its management of recreational State Forest areas.

Some of the year’s ecological successes are also flagged, such as the first recorded images of long-footed potoroos in NSW, which were found in the Bondi State Forest.

Wildlife monitoring projects, such as the one that captured

these images, guide forest management plans and current activities and are tied in with wider state ecology research. South Coast forests that were burned during Black Summer are undergoing what the report calls a “small mammal explosion” as they recover.

Forestry Corp’s provision of seedlings for restocking the State Forests and plantations affected by Black Summer



“SOUTH COAST FORESTS ARE UNDERGOING A ‘SMALL MAMMAL EXPLOSION’”

is also included, as well as data showing that coastal native forest regeneration has been performing above the regeneration threshold since the turn of the century.

One interesting piece of data is that hardwood and cypress harvesting in the state has been consistently under the amount modelled as sustainable for over a decade, a conservative trend that began well before the Black Summer fires caused yields to be updated. The report also covers the years of post-fire salvage operations that followed the fires.

To read the full report, click here.

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Heat stress killing Tasmanian trees

Ginger tree syndrome is killing Tasmanian eucalypts and putting forest health at risk.

NOT even a decade ago, most of the world signed onto the Paris Agreement to limit the increase in global surface temperature caused by climate change to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels – ideally, to no more than 1.5.

This month, the planet marked 12 consecutive months at or above 1.5°C over pre-industrial levels. Currently, the global temperature is tracking above records set last year, the hottest year on record – at least, the hottest year so far. And it's proving deadly to many trees.

Sean Tooker, a conservationist and bush regenerator who lives in Tasmania and travels the state planting, has been recording large eucalypts with 'ginger tree syndrome' – a fatal condition where stretches of extremely hot weather cause pockets of kino (gum) to form in the growth rings of trees such as *E. globulus* and *E. viminalis*. At the same time, a lack of water causes shrinkage of the bark and trunk. The kino seeps through the bark, turning the tree ginger. Bark may also peel away in large sections. Tree mortality usually follows within 12 months – even trees that are mildly affected may die from insect attack or disease.

Tooker first raised the alarm



1/ Whole sections of Tasmanian forest including young and mature eucalypts are browning off and dying after extreme heat events in recent years.

2/ Pockets of kino (gum) seep through the bark, staining the tree ginger. Death usually follows within 12 months. Images: Sean Tooker, Twitter



on social media, publishing his photos on Twitter/X late last week, and noting that while a few months ago he was only finding isolated cases, now he was seeing whole forests collapsing. It wasn't just in the southeast of the state, either: Tooker included an image of snow gums on the central plateau showing the familiar kino staining.

Subsequently, he spoke with the ABC's Luke Radford about driving through the Huon Valley, saying, "The afternoon sunlight was really illuminating the forest ... and there were great large patches that really appeared to have just died all together en masse ... saplings right through to old trees."

On a subsequent drive to his brother's property on the Tasman Peninsula, he realised the extent of the problem. "I

was looking at trees I'd seen for decades, big beautiful Tasmanian blue gums, all bleeding," Tooker said.

In the same interview, Dr Tim Wardlaw from the University of Tasmania (formerly Forestry Tasmania's forest pathologist) told Radford that the same problem is affecting trees in wetter parts of the state, which are just as susceptible to heat. While there may be more soil moisture available, high temperature causes air bubbles to form in the tree's xylem, preventing water from moving through the bark and creating kino pockets.

“LARGE PATCHES OF FOREST APPEAR TO HAVE JUST DIED ALL TOGETHER EN MASSE

(To hear the whole interview, click [here](#).)

Eucalypts have not evolved to recover from heat stress. The storage parts of the tree that reshoot after a fire passes are destroyed by prolonged heat.

Tasmanian forests have been impacted this way before, most notably in the 2012-13 summer heat wave, but impacts are wider and more severe this time. Similar issues are being seen in South Australia and Western Australia.

As many of the trees affected are canopy trees, their loss can have destructive effects on the entire forest ecosystem. Impacts on the forest and wood products sector have so far been more limited, but there is a clear need to consider temperature rises when planning future plantation species – as well as an obvious urgency to actually reach Net Zero to minimise future losses.

Most worryingly, we may not have seen the worst of it yet: symptoms often take two to three years to show, meaning the current event is most likely linked to the 2022 summer heatwave and that this year's extreme conditions may not yet have fully impacted.

"I'm staggered by how quickly it crept up on us," said Tooker. "It's hard to comprehend."

New Zealand biofuel worries

NEW Zealand has been looking for ways to deal with forestry waste for some time. Some companies, like OneFortyOne, have turned to biofuel as a way of responsibly using their waste for the good of the environment.

It has been working on responsible use/removal of 'slash' for several years and signed a new five-year agreement with Canterbury Woodchip Supplies earlier this year, supplying undersized log, waste and chip to power CWS's biofuel boilers.

While biofuels do burn their energy sources, they do so in an extremely efficient way, dramatically lowering CO₂ emissions compared to coal and gas and providing a more reliable output than solar or wind that is much faster and



OneFortyOne has invested close to a million dollars into its biofuel project since late 2021.

cheaper to establish than, say, nuclear. So it's no surprise biofuels have become a significant part of New Zealand's future energy plans.

However, as Radio New Zealand reported on Tuesday, there is a sharp decline in NZ forestry plantings this winter, leading to worries this could leave biofuel projects short of

fuel in coming years.

RNZ reports that a Ministry for Primary Industries survey shows forest companies intend planting 51,800 hectares this winter, a 24% drop on 2023, which was already down on predicted figures for that year.

Marcus Musson, a director of forest management

company Forest 360, told RNZ this was concerning because New Zealand needed a long-term stable wood supply and shortfalls now would endanger future construction as well as biofuel supply.

"What we have on the books over the next couple of years is definitely dropping, and it's pretty hard. There's been a lot of foreign investment establishing new forests, but that's waning," said Musson.

"There's a lot of uncertainty with the OIO (Overseas Investment Office) rules and the general negative sentiment. A lot of foreign investors are finding it pretty difficult to want to put funding into New Zealand to establish new forests."

[Click here for the RNZ story.](#)

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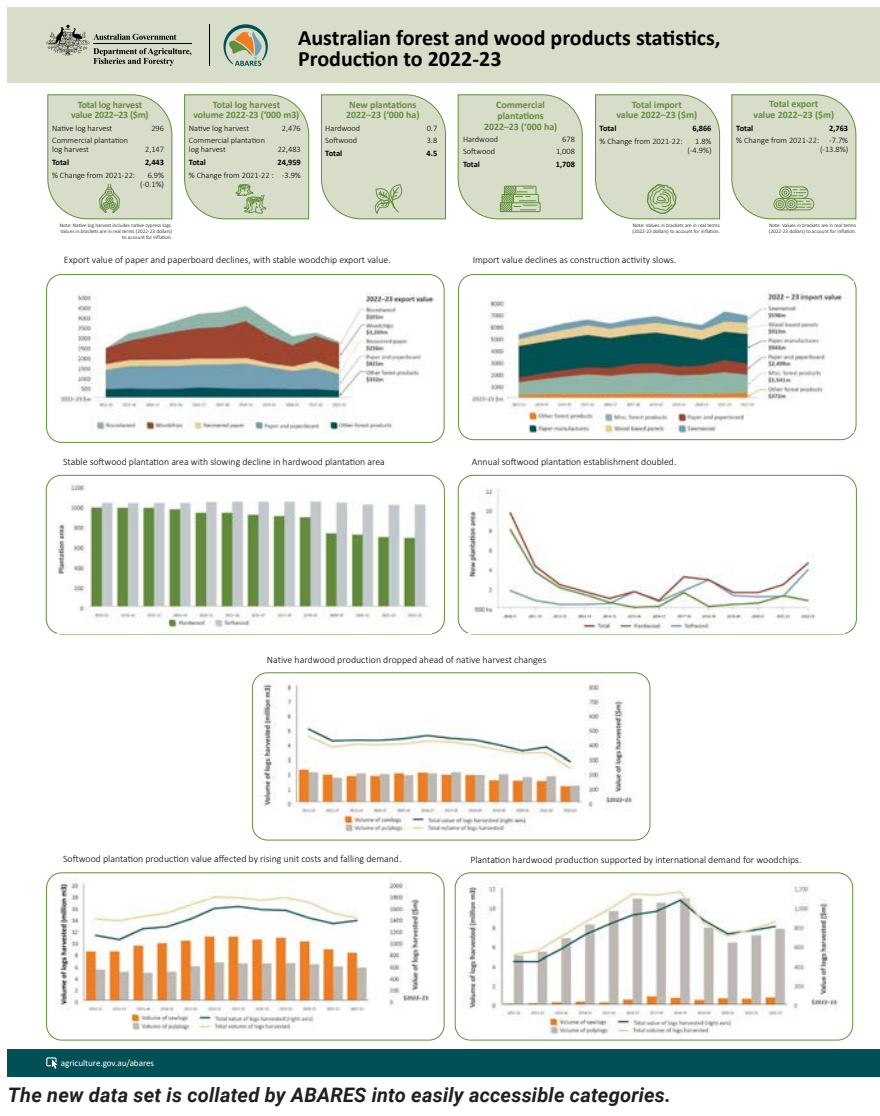
New ABARES stats released

Australian forest and wood product statistics to 2022-23 have been released by the government.

NEW 2022-23 data for key domestic indicators of forestry sector activity such as the value and volume of logs harvested, the performance of the wood product manufacturing sector and changes in Australia's commercial plantation estate have been released by ABARES.

“ PLANTATIONS HAVE GROWN

The results are a mixed bag: in real terms, total log harvest value has remained pretty much unchanged year on year, while total volume has dropped by 3.9%. Plantations have grown, with annual softwood plantation establishment doubling, albeit off a low base. Total import value was down by 4.9% and total



export value by 13.8%. Most of the change in imports related to sawnwoods, while exports saw the largest dips in paper products. China remained our largest trading partner for both imports and exports.

The slowing of construction activity showed up in the data with the import value decline, though it should be noted that levels for both sawnwood and wood-based panels were still at or above pre-HomeBuilder boom levels in this period.

To look through the infographic overview or dig down into the data, click here.

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Australian sandalwood industry sales

ENEWS shared the news of sandalwood producer Quintis failing to sell back in issue 804. Now, things have gone from bad to worse for the Australian sandalwood industry, with the ABC reporting that Canadian-owned Santanol – the country’s other big producer – is also for sale, with the company having determined to get out of the market.

Kimberley and NT land valuer Frank Peacocke told the ABC it was unprecedented to see this amount of sandalwood land up for sale at once. At its peak, the industry covered 13,500 ha of the Tropical North, but no one is looking to buy these trees as ongoing concerns.

“There’s a lot of country particularly left in the Ord and



Quintus's 2020 sandalwood harvest was a promise of better things, but fluctuating world prices has seen Australian operations end.

left in the Territory and just how they’re going to manage the saleability of individual lots remains to be seen,” Peacocke said.

One result that is unlikely is seeing the land remaining in the forestry sector, with cotton and cattle likely

successors, neither of which will bring as many jobs into the region in the short term.

Meanwhile, Quintis has laid off most of its staff in Kununurra and while there is a labour shortage in the area, a concurrent housing shortage means

that workers who moved there for sandalwood jobs are likely to leave, which will have impacts on a variety of services in the community.

The ABC spoke with some of those workers, to read the story, click here.

Globally, sandalwood will continue its up and downs dominated by the Indian market, but Australian investors who were attracted by an unusual forestry product have been left burned, particularly by Quintis, which has not communicated well with shareholders, let alone former staff.

It’s a sad end for a fragrant product, and one that may do reputational damage to specialist international growers.

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JULY

22: WA Field Day - Plantation Forestry - Chowerup Hall, Chowerup, WA 9.30am-4.00pm WAST. Forest Australia's WA branch field day focusing on plantation forestry. Join hosts PF Olsen, discussing topics including ongoing Blue Gum operations, conversion operations between agriculture/blue gum/pine, as well as carbon, conservation, and stewardship. For more info visit <https://www.forestry.org.au/wa-events/>

24: Forestry Australia Webinar - ONLINE ONLY 12.30pm-1.30pm AEST. *Forestry's changing landscape: Economic drivers and considerations for our future.* Featuring Tim Woods and Rob de Fegely. For full details and to register visit <https://www.forestry.org.au/13484-2/>

25-26: AIBS WA Chapter Conference - Crown Perth, Great Eastern Highway, Burswood. While specifically targeted at Australian Institute of Building Surveyors members, the conference will be looking at issues across the built environment from decarbonising construction to legislative updates, insurance and Standards. WoodSolutions is sponsoring Dr David Bylund of TMBR Consult in his presentation: Fire Compliance - NCC 2022 Made Easy with

WoodSolutions. The two-day conference also includes a sundowner for networking on Thursday night.

For full details and to book, go to <https://aibs.com.au/2024-Conferences---Events/WA-Chapter-Conference-2024/ProgramandSpeakers.aspx>

28-2 AUG: Gottstein Understanding Forest Science Course - Sunshine Coast, QLD. The course is open to everyone associated with the timber and forestry products sector in some way. For full details, visit <https://gottsteintrust.org/grants-courses/understanding-forest-science-course>

AUGUST

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

7: WFTN 'Cocktails for Charity' event, 2.00 - 6.00pm - Loft West End, Brisbane. Join us for an afternoon of cocktails and charity to support RizeUp, an organisation dedicated to providing life-changing practical assistance to families affected by domestic and family violence. Tickets on sale soon.

13: NTHA NSW/ACT State Awards - Hilton, Sydney. Join us in celebrating the New South Wales & ACT Timber and Hardware Industry. Nominations open at <https://www.ntha.com.au/events/2024-nswact-state-awards-nominations/> Contact Tahlia at events@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

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

29-31: Forestry Australia's 2024 Symposium - Mercure Ballarat Convention Centre, Golden Point, VIC. Theme: Healthy and resilient forests for our future, will facilitate conversation and collaboration that regardless of land tenure and ownership, healthy and

resilient forests should be the objective for all forest and land managers. The Symposium is a focused three-day gathering, consisting of two days of plenary and concurrent sessions, and a day of Field Trips. The two-day program will feature a range of Keynote and Invited Speakers, who are experts and thought leaders in their field. The Symposium will also feature several social functions, facilitating networking and collaboration in an informal and relaxed environment. For more information, visit <https://www.forestry.org.au/2024-symposium/>

NOVEMBER

13-15: AFCA annual Gala dinner & conference - Launceston, Tas. For more information visit: <https://www.afca.asn.au/Events/afca-2023-conference-photo-gallery>

SAVE THE DATES 2025

MARCH 22: NTHA SA/NT/WA State Awards - National Wine Centre, Adelaide. Join us in celebrating the SA, NT & WA Timber and Hardware Industry. Contact Tahlia at events@ntha.com.au

MAY 30: NTHA QLD State Awards - Brisbane City Hall, Brisbane. Join us in celebrating the New South Wales & ACT Timber and Hardware Industry. Contact Tahlia at events@ntha.com.au

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Silvopasture trials nearing completion

Palm Creek Brahmans has provided invaluable input into Queensland research on mixing cattle and forestry.

By **DONYALE HARRISON**

UP in Hinchinbrook Shire, FNQ, there's a beautiful farm with some of the finest Brahman cattle you've ever seen. For the past three years, it's also been home to a silvopasture trial.

Palm Creek Brahmans belongs to the Chiesa family, who have been farming in the region for three generations. For 20 years, since he was a teenager, Peter Chiesa has been managing a renowned stud with highly sought-after genetics. Wife Mariah helps to run the business, which slaughters its meat locally, minimising animal stress as well as carbon footprint.

The two of them have worked hard to not only care for their herd, but to also regenerate the land they farm for future generations, so this trial fitted seamlessly with the Chiesas' reputation as responsible land managers.

Historically, agriculture and forestry have been painted as either/or scenarios in Australia. Queensland has long been a beef state and a lot of land is devoted to the cattle sector. In recent decades, forestry has had issues finding the area required for plantation expansion. At the same time, climate change has led to more weather extremes that can impact unprotected livestock and erode soils held together only by grazed pasture cover.

Silvopasture, which is a specialised type of agroforestry, could be the answer to all these problems. In silvopastoral systems, grazing animals and trees coexist in a



1/ The cattle are used to grazing in forests, so the trial has not upset their usual paddock rotations.

2/ Palm Creek Brahmans sell genetics as well as meat products, all with a focus on animal welfare. All photos courtesy Palm Creek Brahmans

managed woodland pasture – sometimes natural woods, sometimes plantations. When it comes to cattle, it's a system that has produced healthy animals in parts of Europe – Britain in particular – since Roman times.

In November 2021, the Cooperative Research Centre for Developing Northern Australia, FWPA, Timber Queensland, the

Queensland Department of Agriculture & Fisheries and several other partners including HQPlantations (HQP) began a three-year trial with the Chiesas, looking at the impacts of mixing a commercial pine system with their cattle operation.

Palm Creek Brahmans was a well-considered choice of partner.

"We were already leasing

pine forest [from an adjacent property]," Peter Chiesa told *T&F Enews*. "It allowed us the knowledge of how cattle operate within a plantation situation, whilst also having cattle that understand this setting. The pine forest country doesn't allow itself to be overgrazed without consequences."

That forest, with its mature Caribbean pine crop managed by HQP, was also an ideal setting for the trial. Three scenarios are being evaluated: the first is commercial pine plantation at full tree stocking (approximately 1000 stems per hectare); then a silvopastoral system in pine plantation with timber and livestock production with

30% tree thinning; and, finally, a silvopastoral system in pine plantation with timber and livestock production with 50% tree thinning. Productivity is measured in live weight gain for the cattle (collected by regular measurements using an Optiweigh system) and tree growth data. GPS collars also track the cattle movements.

Cont P 9

From P 8

Timber Queensland says the project will “assess the economic merits of integrated grazing and commercial tree farming systems compared to traditional forestry practices; measure and model the returns from field trials with cattle grazed in widely spaced commercial pine forests; and compare the returns from integrated beef and timber production including carbon sequestration with external data on grazing only activities on cleared farmland”.

The Chiasas have a breeding herd of 500 Brahmans, plus progeny, that have been run over 130 ha of their own property and 580 ha of pine forest. They're used to a rotational grazing system where paddocks are rested so the grass can grow back, but the trial involved a bit of additional input.

“At first, I thought I was just providing cattle to graze,” Peter says. “It turned out to be a bit more work involved, including 9km of fencing the paddocks and running 2km of poly pipe with a tank and three troughs.”

When it came to running the project, however, the support was there from all the partner groups. “Thomas Williams from CQUniversity collected the data for the cattle side,” says Peter.

“He has quietly achieved a lot of work and has committed a lot of time and energy to this project. I communicated with Thomas a lot for the management of the cattle in regards to extracting information and data.

“HQPlantations’ Craig Armstrong and Sean Green were also very good to deal with when it came to day-to-day operations and management of the trial plot, while Nahuel Pachas from the Dept of Forestry took the

measurements of the trees. Support from other partners like Timber Queensland was on par with the above.”

The project aims to deliver financial benefits to both partners. While this trial is taking place within existing forest, a commercial uptake of the system would substantially increase the amount of land available for plantation plantings and those trees would deliver additional income streams to the farmers, both in terms of carbon farming now and timber harvest in the future.

Additional benefits could include improved water and soil conservation (tree cover protects both and generally correlates with higher rainfall in an area) as well as animal health benefits associated with protection from heat, wind and rain and forest benefits from lower resource competition and fire risk reduction through grazing, and the addition of regular casual fertiliser.

Potential difficulties include lowering the number of trees or cattle that could be achieved in a single-use system; possible added costs when changing management practices to dual use; and upfront costs that may have a reasonably long period before they are paid off by profits from timber harvests.

Because the trial design covers multiple scenarios, the results will provide valuable data to investors. Silvopasture is already a working system for multiple farms around Australia that are attracted to the model on sustainability



Peter Chiesa is committed to sustainable farming practices, wanting to ensure his and Mariah's kids inherit a better property and world.

grounds, but at the conclusion of this trial there will be firmer guidance on the cost-benefit analysis. This will be particularly beneficial for larger operations that are owned by private equity firms and multinational corporations, where dollars usually talk louder than the environment.

Earlier this year, Peter spoke with *Queensland Country Life* and told them that this style of farming made sense on their property from a holistic perspective. (Click here for the full story (paywalled).)

“If you want to start doing the full-circle approach looking down the lines of carbon farming, it is an achievable goal,” he said.

“I don't mind a few trees in a paddock providing a bit of shade, especially up north, it gets hot and humid here.”

This week he told me that, so far, everything was tracking as he would expect. “There's been nothing out of the usual; weight gain has been dependant on the stocking rate of the paddocks in terms of both cattle and trees,” Peter says. “Sunlight access is having a noticeable difference on pasture growth, though

that's anecdotal.”

The trial is due to conclude in November this year, with a series of reports expected over coming months and early next year, as well as further trials.

While there will still be issues to work through when it comes to planning the management of young plantations, as well as the challenge of scaling up for bigger properties, silvopasture models may well

promise a productive future partnership between the cattle and forestry sectors. Overall improved environmental outcomes are a key benefit and, at a time when both sectors have been under fire from green lobby groups, the improved social license will be a strong incentive to move to the model, if the costs stack up.

When it comes to costs, the Chiasas flag that there is already assistance available that can help the transition. “There is an RIC (Regional Investment Corp, which is government-backed) loan that allows you to have a 13-year, interest-only loan for forestry investments,” says Peter. However, he notes that continued political dithering around the future of carbon pricing in Australia is less than helpful for investors, saying: “The carbon sector needs more consistent methodologies, providing more certainty and structure to this sector.”

On the cover: Peter and Mariah Chiesa run Palm Creek Brahman and were ideally suited for the silvopasture trial.

FSC delivers EUDR-aligned material

New, voluntary add-ons from FSC will help achieve EUDR compliance.

DESPITE calls from industry and some countries for new EU deforestation regulations (EUDR) to be delayed or modified, the Union is set to stick to the current implementation timetable that sees the new laws come into effect from 30 December this year.

Designed to ensure that products traded to and from the EU bloc do not contribute to deforestation, the new



FSC certification has long shown forests are sustainable but will now assist managers achieve EUDR compliance. Photo © FSC/ Bablu Singh

laws are complex and do not take full advantage of existing certifications, plus

compliance systems that would allow trading partners to submit documentation showing their adherence to the new regulations are not in place.

As a result, there has been understandable worry from countries and businesses that trade with the EU, as well as from some EU members.

For the timber sector, FSC is helping to take the sting out of EUDR compliance with a new voluntary add-on module FSC-STD-01-004 *FSC Regulatory Module* that provides additional requirements for Forest Management, Chain of Custody, and Controlled Wood Certification as well as accreditation requirements.

It's designed to help companies use their FSC certification to meet EUDR's stringent requirements by taking the guesswork out of what is required on top of FSC certification.

FSC has also published the FSC-PRO-60-006b *FSC Risk Assessment Framework*, which is aligned with EUDR regulatory requirements to ensure responsible sourcing.

A free webinar on the framework will run next Wednesday (17 July) at 5pm AEST to discuss the details and how to use it, with time at the end of the presentation for questions (see below for the link).

These supports are accompanied by system-wide changes from FSC in its Advice Notes. The following Notes have already been updated in line with the new laws:

- ADVICE-20-007-24 *Deforestation-free products from FSC-Certified management units*
- ADVICE-20-007-02 *Certification of Primary Forests*
- ADVICE-40-004-26 *Inclusion of the FSC Regulatory Claim*
- ADVICE-40-005-27 *Use of FSC-PRO-60-006b Risk Assessment Framework*
- ADVICE-20-011-19 *Evaluation of the use of FSC-PRO-60-006b Risk Assessment Framework.*

For all EUDR-related FSC materials, click here and to register for the Webinar, click here.

“ FSC IS HELPING TO TAKE THE STING OUT OF EUDR COMPLIANCE WITH A NEW ADD-ON MODULE

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Dear Editor

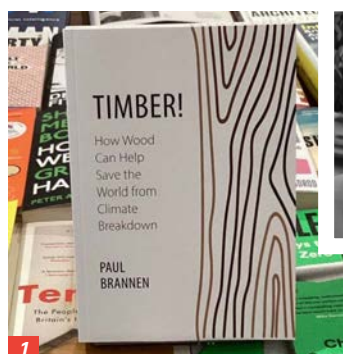
New book promotes timber for buildings

We need to plant trees, but it's more important we also cut them down says expert.

A NEW book makes the clear and necessary case that we need to be increasing the amount of timber used in construction if we hope to meet our climate targets.

Timber! How wood can help save the world from climate breakdown is by Paul Brannen, the director of public affairs for the European Confederation of Woodworking Industries and the European Organisation of the Sawmill Industry and a former MEP for North-East England.

Brannen persuasively argues that planting trees is not enough to fix the environment, we also need to be cutting them down and using them to build our homes and cities.



1/ *The new book makes a clear case for the environmental importance of more timber building.*
2/ *Paul Brannen has a long history of working with environmental groups as well as the timber sector.*

With deep insights built through many years of hands-on experience, Brannen makes his fact-heavy case to both a construction sector nervous of change and environmentalists who have become stuck in a logging = bad mindset, very clearly showing the latter group that the sustainability of certified timber is a solid net gain for the environment, as well as reassuring the former

that the transition will be easier than they think.

Brannen told 8.9ha, a sustainable land-products media site, that "I wrote this book out of a growing sense of frustration that one of the biggest single solutions to tackling climate change was barely recognised outside of a relatively small group of informed forestry, timber and architectural specialists." (Click here for the whole interview.)

In addition to looking at whole-of life environmental impacts and engineered wood building modalities, *Timber!* demystifies new supply initiatives such as wood farming and agroforestry.

The book is available online now and early reviews are strongly positive. Helen Browning, chief executive of the Soil Association said, "*Timber!* Should be read by all those in planning, housing policy, construction and agriculture, and many more besides. Paul Brannen does a fabulous job of showing how feasible and beneficial it would be if we not only sequestered carbon through growing trees, but then locked it up in our buildings for many decades to come."

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Yarn'n's Deadly Dunny Rolls

How toilet paper supports First Nations education, cultural awareness and global forest preservation.

YARN'N, an Australian First Nations-owned company, produces 100% recycled toilet tissue, sourced from FSC-certified forests, that embodies culture, learning and joy in every roll. Seamlessly blending sustainability, luxury and philanthropy, Yarn'n offers a unique contribution to bathroom essentials. Crafted entirely from 100% recycled materials, its environmentally conscious practices go beyond waste reduction to conserve resources, using 50% less water and 90% less energy than conventional manufacture. Its dedication to local manufacturing minimises environmental impact while ensuring each product meets rigorous global standards.

In 2023, Yarn'n became a FSC Promotional Licence Holder, ensuring its toilet paper originates from FSC-certified forests. This commitment actively contributes to combatting biodiversity loss, deforestation and climate change. By sourcing from FSC-certified forests, Yarn'n promotes sustainable forestry practices that

respect Indigenous Peoples' rights, support local communities and forest workers, and protect diverse wildlife that live in the forests.

"We have always admired FSC's initiatives to bring global awareness to where our products and materials come from. We depend on forests and by doing all we can to protect and steward them, we all profit," said Lane Stockton, CEO and founder of Yarn'n.

Lane explained that Yarn'n's commitment to sourcing from FSC-certified forests underscores its prioritisation of high-quality products, environmental



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- 1/ Lane Stockton, CEO and founder of Yarn'n.
- 2/ Bayley Mifsud, a proud Peek Whurrong woman of the Maar nation, has painted a new artwork for Yarn'n.
- 3/ Made from FSC-certified wood products, supporting First Nations artists with wrappers and education with profits – plus heaps of five-star reviews!



stewardship and cultural significance. In addition to the partnership with FSC, Yarn'n collaborates with organisations like Great Wrap, specialists in compostable stretch wrap, to further reduce plastic waste. Additionally, each roll of Yarn'n toilet paper features artwork and stories inspired by First Nations cultures, celebrating totems, artist profiles and Dreaming stories. This initiative aims

to share and preserve First Nations language and culture, fostering unity and inspiration throughout Australia.

Yarn'n proudly supports education through a partnership with Yalari, directing 50% of its profits to empower First Nations children. Founded by Waverley Stanley AM and Llew Mullins, Yalari provides educational and leadership opportunities for Indigenous youth from regional and remote Australia. This partnership demonstrates Yarn'n's commitment to driving generational change through education and community support.

CEO of FSC ANZ Melanie Robertson said, "We at FSC ANZ are thrilled to have Yarn'n

“YARN'N PROUDLY SUPPORTS EDUCATION THROUGH A PARTNERSHIP WITH YALARI”

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as a part of our community. Its commendable efforts in advancing education for First Nations children underscore its commitment to creating a positive influence.”

She explained that by sourcing its toilet paper from FSC-certified forests, Yarn'n actively contributes to combating deforestation and the climate crisis more broadly. “Its holistic focus on social impact and environmental stewardship exemplifies how everyday products can promote both human well-being and planetary health,” said

“MEMORIES FLOOD BACK OF EVENINGS SPENT WITH MY COUSINS, WATCHING THIS BREATHTAKING VIEW



Available in packs of 24 or 48 rolls, Yarn'n ships Australia-wide.

Robertson. “Yarn'n’s support for FSC plays a crucial role in nurturing healthy, thriving forests, which are vital for communities and biodiversity worldwide.”

This July, Yarn'n introduces new artwork by Bayley Mifsud, a Peek Whurrong woman of the Maar nation (Warrnambool, South

West Victoria). Titled “Kapa Ngoonang – Sunset,” Bayley’s artwork beautifully captures Warrnambool’s beach essence, reflecting her deep connection to Country and community.

“As I gaze upon it, memories flood back of evenings spent with my cousins, watching this

breathtaking view over the breakwater. It’s difficult to articulate the deep connection I feel to this land – a sense of safety, love, and respect ingrained in every sunset witnessed back on Country,” said Mifsud.

Through pioneering efforts in sustainability and cultural collaboration, Yarn'n showcases how business

can positively impact the environment and communities. Moving forward, Yarn'n remains steadfast in creating products that are responsibly sourced, sustainable, enriching, and empowering for all Australians. Click here to order.

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Image: AKD

Research confirms fire behaviour

Scientists have been investigating fire behaviour and yes, it is getting worse.

THREE recent papers provide valuable data and lessons on forest fire behaviour and management.

US research investigating whether or not prescribed burns, forest thinning and undergrowth clearing reduced the severity of future fires looked at 40 studies where wildfire burned into different vegetation treatments, spanning 11 Western US states.

The researchers found overwhelming evidence that in seasonally dry mixed conifer forests in the Western US, reducing surface and ladder fuels and tree density through thinning, coupled with prescribed burning or pile burning, could reduce future wildfire severity by more than 60% relative to untreated areas.

The researchers, led by Kimberley Davis, a Forest Service research ecologist acknowledged that a policy of fire suppression had led to more severe fires that had worse impacts on overstorey trees when they did occur. The treatments investigated were believed to lower these impacts, priming subsequent fires to burn at a lower intensity.

While responses varied, generally the combination of thinning and prescribed burning showed the greatest impact on reducing future fire severity. Areas that were only thinned had less benefit in reducing wildfire severity. Prior low or moderate severity wildfire also reduced fire severity in subsequent wildfires, although to a lesser extent than thinning with prescribed burning.



US research has confirmed Australian experience: fires are creating their own weather. Image: Shutterstock

With conifers forming the backbone of Australian plantations, there are valuable lessons in the work for local managers. Click here to read *Science Daily's* full report on the study.

A paper in *Nature Ecology & Evolution* has found that the number and intensity of the most extreme wildfires on Earth have doubled over the past two decades.

The team found that climate change is exacerbating wildfire conditions, but evidence is lacking for global trends in extreme fire activity itself. They identified "energetically extreme wildfire events by calculating daily clusters of summed fire radiative power using 21 years of satellite data, revealing that the frequency of extreme events (≥ 99.99 th percentile) increased by 2.2-fold from 2003 to 2023, with the last 7 years including the 6 most extreme."

The study found that although the extent of wildfires had decreased overall, the intensity of those fires had increased, saying "Our study highlights that fire behaviour is worsening in several regions—particularly

the boreal and temperate conifer biomes—with substantial implications for carbon storage and human exposure to wildfire disasters."

Click here for the full article, although it is firewalled, so you may need to go through your local library.

Finally, Phys.org has also published research from the University of California – Riverside confirming that large fires create weather that favours more fire.

UCR doctoral candidate James Gomez analysed peak fire days and emissions from every California fire season over the past 20 years, then weighed it against weather, particularly weather that 'should' have helped with fire control.

"I wanted to learn how the weather is affected by aerosols emitted by wildfires as they're burning," said Gomez.

He found that major fires were essentially creating their own weather by making it hotter and drier on the days they burned. The black soot emitted by forests burning trapped more heat in the atmosphere and made it harder for clouds to form.

The impacts were becoming more significant, thanks to improvements in air pollution that have removed climate-cooling sulphate aerosols (which have multiple downsides including acid rain).

These changes in weather made new fires more likely to begin, even when not immediately connected to the original major fire, and increased their severity.

The findings were not reliant on the type of forest burned, so are likely to be consistent wherever major bushfires occur.

Gomez's research supports the Forest Service results that smaller, more regular burns are desirable in conifer forests, as their impacts were vastly less.

"There is a buildup of vegetation here in California. We need to allow more frequent small fires to reduce the amount of fuel available to burn," Gomez said. "With more forest management and more prescribed burns, we could have fewer giant fires. That is in our control."

Read the full story (with links to the study) by clicking here.

Ravensthorpe's winning centre

A sustainable timber building on the south coast of WA has wowed the judges at this year's Western Australia Architecture Awards.

ON Wudjari Country, some 500km south-east of Perth and 40km from the coast is Ravensthorpe, a town and local Shire that's responsible for about 2100 people.

There's also the new Ravensthorpe Cultural Precinct, a gleaming set of red-timbered buildings that shine against the grey-greens of their environment. The precinct houses the Shire offices, Council Chambers, the Community Resource Centre and lending library, dining facilities, professional offices and a training room, as well as Seniors services, a creche and a variety of facilities for tourists.

Recently, it won two accolades at the 2024 Western Australia Architecture Awards: the Jeffrey Howlett Award for Public Architecture (WA) and the Wallace Greenham Award for Sustainable Architecture (WA).

In their comments on the Howlett Award, the judges said: "The building performs the role of a new heart to the town that is inclusive and invites residents, visitors and tourists to participate in passive and active recreation. It forms a new meeting place to support both informal and formal activities while supporting people of all ages and ability..."

"This is a building that is rigorously public, quietly confident and a proudly embraced asset to the community."

Their reasoning behind the Greenham Award is even more obvious. The Shire of Ravensthorpe specified timber



The gleaming set of buildings has become the heart of the local community.
Photo: Johnathan Trask - courtesy ATC and Peter Hobbs Architecture

early on and for that reason, they reached out to Advanced Timber Concepts Studio (ATC).

"We had just completed another building in 2018/19 for the Shire of Pingelly," ATC director Patrick Beale told *T&F Enews*. "At the time this building was the largest timber structure in Western Australia since two RAAF wartime hangars built further north in the Wheatbelt – and still in use

today. It was certainly the largest civic structure to be constructed entirely in timber in the state.

"When the shire received grant funding for the project, I invited Peter Hobbs Architects and Intensive Fields [a trans-disciplinary design practice] to collaborate on the project with ATC."

Beale had begun ATC in 2012 with the goal to prioritise timber as a material ahead of hybrid or conventional structures.

"There are a number of factors rolled into those aims and intentions," says Beale. "The goal is to use materials that are 100% renewable and have the capacity to store carbon and create a very low carbon footprint. We also aim to eliminate wet trades wherever possible so we can minimise the number of trades and finesse the

coordination of trades on site: our buildings typically are prefabricated to a very high level of precision and are assembled on site rapidly with a small crew of riggers and carpenters."

In the case of Ravensthorpe, using light weight timbers had additional benefits. "Sited on a knap of highly volatile clays, any building that rests on the ground risks 'breaking its back' as the clay moves," Beale says, pointing to cracks in the majority of masonry buildings in the town. "Our building is founded on piers that carry down directly to the bedrock between 700 and 1300mm below grade. We have used



Since its opening, the precinct has been warmly embraced by the public. Photo: Dene Bingham - courtesy ATC and Peter Hobbs Architecture

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LVL in the structure either as solid or in the larger members [the portal frames] as box construction to minimise the volume of timber used."

This careful design, which required "a bespoke computational modelling platform [that] provided for an iterative sequencing of the design and construction options" (from the judges' notes) allowed for the size of the piers to be minimised and the ease of construction optimised – after offsite prefabrication, the onsite primary structural work took under six weeks. Timbers were finished with natural oil-based products for durability and ease of maintenance: they simply require a wash-down and recoating.

"The decking, cladding, linings and ceilings are all Yellow Stringy Bark [*E. Muelleriana*] from WA plantations custom-seasoned, milled and profiled to our specifications for this project," says Beale. "Some plywood is used as linings and the interior courtyard decking is Jarrah."

The FSC-certified LVL was imported as billets and milled to size locally to minimise waste. Connections between the floor joists and bearers are dovetails, removing mechanical fixings and making the materials essentially 100% recyclable in future.

"Sustainability in the broadest sense of the word is a driving force behind this building and behind all the work we do," Beale says.

"The nature of timber and its qualities that lend to a warm and healthy environment are important to us as designers and to the client for their workspace. Colour, texture and 'feel' are also important qualities we aim to make evident in the building: there are no frills or decorative overlays in the building: everything that



1/ Floating on concrete piers, the building is both accessible and movable. Photo: Johnathan Trask - courtesy ATC and Peter Hobbs Architecture

Photo: Johnathan Trask - courtesy ATC and Peter Hobbs Architecture

2/ Timber also features in the interiors, which are designed to make people feel instantly welcomed and a part of the precinct. Photo: Dene Bingham - courtesy ATC and Peter Hobbs Architecture

3/ Simple oil finishes protect the timbers and deliver easy upkeep. Photo: Johnathan Trask - courtesy ATC and Peter Hobbs Architecture

you see is part of the structure and enclosure of the building. Finally, of course, the building can be taken apart by removing the bolted connections and re-deployed elsewhere if necessary."

Architect Peter Hobbs says that Ravensthorpe Shire deserves a share of the awards.

"As the client, they saw mass timber construction as the exemplar of sustainable

construction," says Hobbs. "It allowed for material locally and internationally sourced from sustainably managed forests, design-to-fabrication software that optimised material use and reduced waste, and, of course, carbon sequestration. The bonus for them is a precinct made of beautiful materials that is warm, inviting and tactile."

For the full team and judges' comments, click here.



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