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Forestry groups congratulate Albo

COVER STORY P 2

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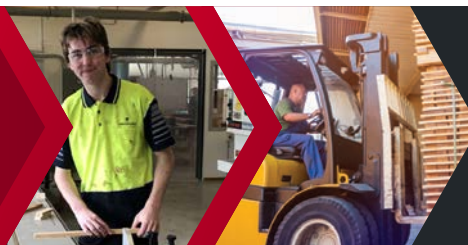
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Election wrap-up

With the Albanese government securing a thumping return, forestry remains a significant battleground concern in the regions.

By **DONYALE HARRISON**

THE sausages have been sizzled, the corflutes packed away, and Anthony Albanese's Labor government has received a significant endorsement at the polls for the next three years.

The Prime Minister's personal brand of pragmatic politics found resonance with the populace, with his decision to announce his policy package early, attach costings and focus on issues around housing and cost of living all proving winners.

At the time of writing, several significant decisions are still up in the air, including the future of Greens leader Adam Bandt in the lower house and Jacqui Lambie in the Senate.



1/ The Prime Minister claims victory on election night, flanked by his son, Nathan, and fiancée, Jodie Haydon. Image: courtesy @AlboMP/X



2/ AFPA's Diana Hallam (right) with The Hon Julie Collins MP, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. Image courtesy AFPA

For the forestry sector, the return of the Albanese Government signals consistency in its support for forestry as a sustainable Australian industry. Several sector leaders have congratulated the PM on his win.

AFCA CEO Tim Lester said, "Congratulations to Prime

Minister Albanese and his team for this election result. During the campaign we welcomed a commitment from Forestry Minister Julie Collins who wrote to us stating that the Prime Minister and the Minister were strong advocates for plantation and native forestry sectors.

"She confirmed that the

Government's position on native forestry is unchanged and that 'An Albanese Government will never walk away from timber workers and communities.'"

Lester noted that "Forestry services businesses are generally small, multi-generational family businesses providing specialist equipment and skills to ensure the supply of timber and wood fibre to processing and export facilities. Security of contracts, viability

of arrangements and surety for resource availability are all critical for long term business success.

"These businesses are the employers of an essential workforce who have high quality jobs in rural

Cont P 3

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From P 2

and regional Australia."

Lester noted that some candidates had campaigned on a fictitious version of Australian forestry that did not represent reality.

"There is a lot of misinformation circulating," he said. "So we would like to extend an invitation to all Parliamentarians to come and see how our forests are managed particularly through harvesting and regeneration.

"We look forward to working with the Labor government to promote certainty and security for forestry services businesses who are providing the foundation for Australia's \$24 billion forest products sector."

CEO of the Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA), Diana Hallam echoed Lester's congratulations to all the successful MPs and Senators.

"We congratulate Prime Minister Albanese on Labor's election victory and increased majority, and we'll now get down to business working with the new Government on a range of issues impacting forestry and the supply chain," Hallam said.

"We are eager to get straight to business with the new Government on policies announced during the campaign including the new ReMade in Australia brand and housing sector initiatives, and the soon-to-be-released Timber Fibre Strategy developed during the first term of Government by the Strategic Forest and Renewable Materials Partnership.

"Our sector faces many challenges, from long-term timber and wood-fibre supply to immediate construction market issues, ensuring we have a skilled workforce geared to needs, illegal imports, social licence to operate and making

sure Australians understand the importance of what the sector does. AFPA will continue lead advocacy for the supply chain, addressing these issues in Canberra."

Hallam noted that forestry had received support from the two major parties and others, who understood the sector's role in building a sustainable future.

"We thank the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, the Hon. Julie Collins MP, along with Shadow Minister for the Environment, Fisheries and Forestry, Senator the Hon. Jonno Duniam, for their ongoing support and all other parliamentarians who represent our industries across the Parliament," she said.

"Forestry and the supply chain directly employs 80,000 Australians, indirectly another 100,000 and creates essential products for our everyday lives, while fighting climate change. AFPA will ensure it gets the attention the sector deserves in Canberra."

FORESTRY SWINGS VOTES

Forestry issues played a significant role in some seats.

Polling commissioned in the weeks before the election by AFPA in the NSW Mid-North Coast based federal electorate of Cowper showed voters are strongly supportive of the region's sustainable native forestry and recognise the importance of the industry for local communities, the economy and environment in the area.

Importantly, more than half of those surveyed who said they'd vote for Independent



National Pat Conaghan's (centre) commitment to forestry saw him edge out a popular 'teal' Independent contender. Image: courtesy Pat Conaghan/Facebook

Caz Heise said they wanted the industry maintained in the region – despite the candidate's public commitment that she wanted to shut the industry down.

At the time of the poll, Heise was ahead in the seat over the Nationals' Pat Conaghan, with a 53-47 two-party preferred (TPP) result. But almost 8% of voters were still undecided as to which candidate or party would receive their first preference vote.

On the night, Heise performed creditably for an Independent, securing 46.83% of the TPP vote, but sitting member Pat Conaghan from The Nationals was never in real danger.

Greens votes went backwards in the House, with the party still on zero seats at the time of writing. One of my neighbours stopped to chat over the fence on Sunday and summed up the issues that had sunk them, saying: "I don't know how they expect to be taken seriously when all they do is obstruct on the issues they say they care about in hopes of making some political point."

Young voters in Queensland particularly punished the party for its perceived slowing down of government action

on housing, which looks certain to be the returned Government's key focus.

"The Housing Industry Association (HIA) calls on the newly elected Federal Government to make housing a first-order priority from day one, any delay or political grandstanding will only deepen the nation's housing crisis," said HIA Managing Director Jocelyn Martin.

Martin also congratulated the Prime Minister and his team on their return and thanked former Opposition Leader Peter Dutton for his two decades of service to the Australian parliament, as well as Michael Sukkar, who also lost his seat and who Martin said "has been a key housing advocate in both government and opposition."

Martin called on the Albanese Government to listen to the voters: "Too often, we see housing policy used as a platform to showboat rather than solve real problems. Australians want practical and meaningful reform. Holding housing legislation hostage to political theatre only pushes the dream of home ownership further out of reach.

"The Federal Government has the influence, the resources and the leadership role to bring all levels of government together. It can drive the coordinated policy, funding and reform needed to move the dial on supply and affordability – not just tinker at the edges."

On the cover: The Prime Minister with his family, Toto and Richard Marles, celebrating with Grayndler supporters. Image: courtesy @AlboMP/X

Giant pine scale fight

Forest industries collaborate with government to eradicate biosecurity threat.

SOUTH Australia's forest industries are working in partnership with the State Government to eradicate the spread of giant pine scale (GPS) in Adelaide's north-eastern suburbs.

"The South Australian Forest Products Association (SAFPA) are grateful to be working hand-in-glove with the South Australian Government on eradicating GPS from Adelaide's suburbs. It would be a biosecurity disaster if this infestation reaches our 128,000-hectare commercial pine plantations and neighbouring urban forests", said Nathan Paine, Chief Executive Officer of SAFPA.

"Giant pine scale is a sap-sucking insect that feeds on pine trees and closely related species including firs and spruces. Infected trees exhibit canopy thinning, branch deaths and tree deaths. With large numbers of pine found across Adelaide's parks and gardens, the pest has the potential to impact our urban forest, with less shade for residents and nesting sites or food sources for local birds. A detection of

GPS in Highbury in 2023 triggered an eradication process involving the removal and destruction of infected trees, with surveillance, monitoring and tree removal efforts continuing to ensure the eradication is successful."

While communities grieve the tree losses, the insidious nature of the pest makes removal the only viable option in some cases.

"It is unfortunate trees in suburban parks and reserves have had to be felled in a bid to prevent GPS from spreading yet is it imperative to protect Adelaide's canopy cover and the businesses and the livelihoods of those working in the forest and timber industries", said Paine.



Giant Pine Scale has a significant impact on the health of pines, firs and spruces and can weaken or kill trees. Image: courtesy PIRSA

"If the infestation reaches any of our commercial pine plantations it would have a devastating impact on our state's economy and regional communities. Forestry in

South Australia contributes almost \$3 billion to the State's economy, employs over 21,300 people and there are countless industries that heavily rely on our products."

Leading SA firm Supashock is helping to fund the program. "Without an immediate response, Giant Pine Scale can severely impact the health and safety of infested trees and the surrounding community. As locals ourselves, we want to protect the remaining urban forests and conservation parks, and we are pleased to support those involved and the wider community during this process," said Steven Russo, CFO of Supashock.

Paine also thanked Minister for Forest Industries, Clare Scriven, MLC, the Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA), ForestrySA, Department of Environment (DEW) and SA Water, along with the City of Tea Tree Gully for their help with the program.

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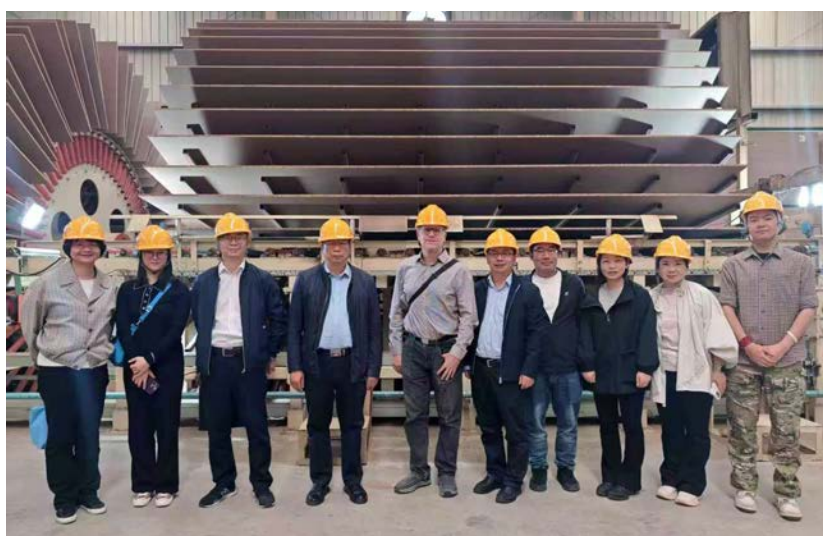
Repositioning Australian forestry

An upcoming Forestry Australia talk takes a positive view.

THERE'S a very positive discussion to be had about where the Australian forestry and timber sector is now and where we could be in the near future. Accordingly, the Victorian Branch of Forestry Australia is sponsoring a presentation by Professor Mark Brown from the University of the Sunshine Coast (UniSC) in Melbourne on 5 June.

Titled 'Optimism & Expansion: Forest Research Repositioning Australian Forestry', the talk will provide an overview of research domains at UniSC. These include:

- Tropical Forests and People
- Nature-based Solutions
- Forest Industries
- AFWI Centre for Sustainable Forestry and Wood Products
- Timber Durability



Professor Mark Brown (centre) at a recent mill tour in China after presenting to academics at South West Forestry University in Kunming. Image: courtesy Professor Brown/LinkedIn

Professor Brown will provide context on where the UniSC team sees the future of forest research and will describe collaborations with the sector and international partners that are shaping the future of forestry in the Australasian and Pacific region.

Brown grew up in a sawmilling family before securing a degree in forest engineering at the University of New Brunswick and become a researcher with the Forest Engineering Research Institute of Canada, then going on to

further study before taking up a position at UniSC in 2012.

Since then, he has had a storied career both in practical forest research and in building international networks within the forestry supply chains, including playing integral roles in the establishment of Australian Forest Operations Research Alliance (AFORA) and the Forest Industries Research Centre (FIRC) at UniSC. He is also leading the global development of the bioenergy industry as the newly appointed Chair of the

International Energy Agency Bioenergy program (click [here](#) for *Enews* 848 to read how timber biomass is helping to decarbonise energy production on pages 14 and 15).

Both Forestry Australia members and friends from the forest plantations and processing sectors are welcome to attend this social and networking event. Victorian Forestry Australia invites attendees to come along and be part of the dialogue about the future of the sector, discussing issues such as:

- What are your priorities for research and development?
- How can you contribute to moving from research to impact in the sector?

Registrations (inc. GST): are free for Forestry Australia members and \$20 for non-members. The event will be held on Thursday 5 June from 5.30 – 8.30pm at The Last Jar, 616 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne. Meals and drinks are at attendees' own expense, to view the menu, click [here](#).

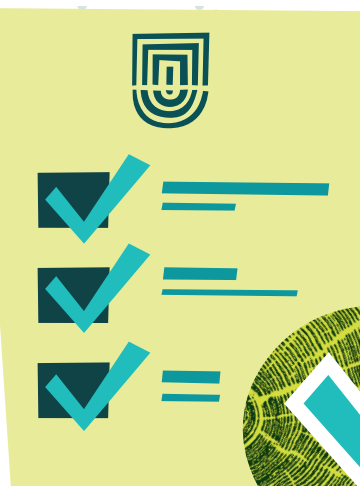
Registrations close Tuesday 3 June at 10.00am, to book, click [here](#).

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Planet Ark voluntary administration

A change in recycling legislation has made it hard for the group to fund itself.

NEWS of Planet Ark Environmental Foundation going into administration last week was overwhelmed by the Federal election, but the effects are now sinking in.

A statement from the board blamed the organisation's financial woes on "the impact of Covid-19 on stakeholder support, current economic climate and ongoing funding challenges", adding, "Voluntary administration provides an opportunity for an independent assessment of the organisation's affairs and to explore potential options for restructuring that will allow the organisation to continue our important work."

The *Sydney Morning Herald* reports that Michael Jones and Bruce Gleeson from Jones Partners Insolvency & Restructuring have been appointed with a mandate to restructure the organisation if possible.

The organisation is well known for its environmental campaigns and programs including National Tree Day and National Recycling Week. Its business model involved partnerships with other businesses and industry groups, including a successful relationship with FWPA talking about the benefits of timber in the built environment and the impacts of biophilic design.

The FWPA/Planet Ark Make it Wood campaign (click here for details and to download the Wood: Nature Inspired Design report) has been referenced many times across the sector in the years since its publication. It both clearly showed the benefits of designing buildings with sustainable timbers and helped to spread the message of



The Wood: Nature Inspired Design report has been a significant tool for showing the benefits of building with wood. Image: courtesy Planet Ark

responsible forestry to the general public.

The report helped to cement Nature Inspired/Connected Design concepts as a focus in Australia, showing the multiple benefits of timber-rich buildings that were connected to the outdoors for residents and workers, particularly in high-stress environments. These included:

- Stress reduction – lowering of blood pressure, heart rate, stress hormones and a sense of wellbeing;
- Cognitive performance – improved mental engagement, alertness, concentration, physiological and psychological responsiveness; and
- Emotion, mood and preference – positive attitude, happiness, tranquillity, mental health, pleasure, comfort, safety and dopamine levels.

These messages flowed naturally into National Tree Day, which encouraged planting every year and became a popular point of connection between forestry nurseries and local school and community groups.

However, those industry partnerships, which were supplemented by government grants, largely revolved around encouraging uptake of voluntary industry recycling schemes. Now, many of those schemes have become mandatory, removing the organisation's main revenue stream.

While focused on its environmental message, Planet Ark's actions have been strongly connected to practical rather than ideological positions. Its activism has always been focused on the active, with schemes such as the Mobile Muster, which encouraged the return of old mobile phones and dramatically lowered the quantity of e-waste in the general system.

Some voices, including Planet Ark co-founder Jon Dee, complained that Planet Ark grew too close to industry and diluted its ability to drive the environmental agenda.

Industry voices, on the other hand, say that the organisation has had a significant impact on how they view the whole of life impacts of their products

and packaging.

Louise Hyland, chief executive of the Australian Mobile Telecommunications Association, told the *Herald* that Planet Ark was a "leading environmental organisation" that had helped educate Australians and promote recycling, and she hoped the restructure would allow it to survive. A partnership meant that Planet Ark promoted Mobile Muster, but the program was run independently and would continue regardless, she said.

PKN Packaging News, a leading business publication for that sector, said "Planet Ark's work has been instrumental in promoting circular economy principles, encouraging better recycling behaviour, and helping industry and consumers make informed choices about packaging sustainability."

In its statement, the Planet Ark board said, "As we work with the Voluntary Administrators, Michael Jones and Bruce Gleeson from Jones Partners Insolvency & Restructuring, our priority is to support our valued staff, partners, and stakeholders as we navigate this transition.

"We are deeply grateful for the support of the Australian public, corporate and government partners, and the many schools and communities who have engaged with our work over more than three decades. We recognise the importance of the environmental mission we continue to pursue every day and sincerely believe that Planet Ark's contribution to that mission will continue with renewed strength beyond this process."

MAY

7-8: Sydney Build 25 – ICC, Sydney. Australia's largest construction and design show. For more details visit <https://www.sydneymbuildexpo.com>

13: EUDR Insights Workshop – FWPA office, VIC and online. Lunch - 12.00pm. Workshop 12.30-4.30pm. To register, please email info@responsiblewood.org.au

14: AFCA Mid-Year Forum & Dinner – Gold Coast, QLD. The Forum will feature a tailored workshop on Chain of Responsibility for forest services businesses as well as a session on operator training and assessment requirements. To register, visit <https://afcaevents.zohobackstage.com.au/events/>

15: NSW-Queensland forest & wood products industries dinner – Casino, NSW. A networking event to celebrate the past, present, and future of the forestry and timber sectors. Dinner ticket includes entry into Primex Expo. For full detail and ticket purchase, visit <https://www.timberqld.com.au/event-details/primex-nsw-queensland-forest-wood-products-industries-dinner>

11-17: Japanese Wood

Architecture Tour – Japan.

Tour the world's oldest and most impressive wooden buildings. From Hōryū-ji, the world's oldest wooden building to the World Expo in Osaka - home to the world's largest wooden ring building. For more information and view the program, visit <https://www.woodsolutions.com.au/events/woodsolutions-sponsors-tda-japan-study-tour/>

26-30: LIGNA 25 – Hannover, Germany. The world's leading trade fair for woodworking and wood processing plant, machinery and tools. For more details visit <https://www.ligna.de/en/for-visitors>

30: 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

JUNE

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

more information visit <https://www.wcte2025.org/event/df0d5655-c16d-47df-b4a6-457a7dc63d96/wcte-2025>

29-JULY 2: 5th International Conference on Timber Bridges – Rotorua, New Zealand. The focus is on timber bridges and the current need for resilient infrastructure to support thriving communities. For more information and to register your interest, visit <https://ictb-conference.org/2025/>

SEPTEMBER

2-3: Timber Queensland Biennial Conference "Doing Timber Business in Queensland" – Brisbane. For more information, email admin@timberqueensland.com.au

OCTOBER

13-14: Timber Construct 2025 – Melbourne. To register your interest, visit <https://timberconstruct.org/>

20-22: International Woodchip and Biomass Seminar and Networking Event – Singapore. For more information visit <https://danaevents.co.nz/2024singapore/home>

20-23: Forestry Australia 2025 Conference – Adelaide Convention Centre, Adelaide. The conference theme is 'Restoring forests and landscapes to secure Australia's future' and aims to develop both local and national collaboration. For more details visit <https://www.forestry.org.au/2025-conference/>

22-23: Melbourne Build 25 – MCEC, Melbourne. Victoria's largest construction and design show. For more details visit <https://melbournebuildexpo.com>

23-24: Field Trip – Vietnam. (Follows on from the woodchip and biomass seminar in Singapore.) For more information visit <https://danaevents.co.nz/2024singapore/fieldtrip>

24: GTTIA – The Barn, Mt Gambier, SA. Nominations are now open for 2025 Green Triangle Timber Industry Awards. Nominate online: <https://gttia.com/nomination-form/> For full details on award categories and submission guidelines, visit: <https://gttia.com/2025-award-categories/>

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Keeping timber top of mind

Inside FWPA's evolving The Ultimate Renewable™ campaign.

FWPA's The Ultimate Renewable™ campaign continues to build momentum, evolving into an always-on model that keeps timber's sustainability message in front of audiences all year round.

Building on the success of previous campaign activity, this new approach ensures a consistent presence across digital, print and audio channels, reinforcing wood's credentials as a renewable, environmentally responsible material.

The 2024/25 campaign was launched with a three-month pilot phase in August 2024 and the always-on strategy is designed to maintain and grow consumer awareness over time, promoting timber as natural first choice in a competitive market.

At the centre of the campaign is trusted ambassador Adam Dovile, delivering the powerful, simple message: **Wood. Grow, Harvest, Repeat.**

EXPANDING REACH THROUGH MULTI-CHANNEL VISIBILITY

Since August 2024, the campaign has run across a range of platforms, effectively reaching both regional and



Adam Dovile is the trusted brand ambassador for The Ultimate Renewable™ campaign.
All images: FWPA

REACHING THE RIGHT PEOPLE, IN THE RIGHT PLACES

Digital channels remain central to the campaign's effectiveness. Facebook and Instagram advertising has been live since November 2024, targeting younger, metro-based women – an audience identified through FWPA social license research as especially engaged with sustainability themes. Google Display ads further extend reach to broader demographics who share aligned values.

SCALING UP: NEW PLACEMENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Earlier this year, the campaign expanded into high-impact formats and new media partnerships, including:

- YouTube pre-roll ads and broader Google Display coverage
- A major partnership with Channel 9, including ads placed during *Married at First Sight* via 9NOW catch-up TV (estimated 2.4 million viewers)
- Premium digital and print placements across The



1/ 'Wood. Grow, Harvest, Repeat.' is a quick way to share the central message of timber's sustainable nature.



2/ Displaying the campaign in high traffic areas helps share the message with a broader audience.

metropolitan audiences. Key highlights include:

- A strong presence on Sports Entertainment Network (SEN) and AFL Nation radio, reaching over 938,000 weekly listeners
- A full-page feature in the AFL Grand Final Record, with estimated readership exceeding 1.3 million
- Continued digital advertising through SEN platforms to reinforce messaging

Cont P 9

From P 8

Sydney Morning Herald, The Age, and AFR Life & Lifestyle

- Street furniture advertising across NSW, ACT, Vic, WA, TAS, and Qld.
- Sponsorship of the Bendigo Spirit and Mavericks women's sports teams, with campaign visibility extending into digital, social, and AFL Record assets

A strategic opportunity was also seized in March, with targeted advertising inside the Qantas Lounge at Canberra Airport during Parliamentary sitting weeks – capitalising on an average dwell time of 44 minutes. These placements will return in June.

LOOKING AHEAD: DEEPER ENGAGEMENT AND BROADER REACH

From April through June 2025, the campaign continues to build momentum. Key initiatives include:

- A second content partnership with Channel 9 and also Channel 7
- Expansion into new audio formats, including radio, podcasts, and Spotify
- AFL Stadium LED

These efforts are designed to deepen audience engagement, grow audience

“THE CAMPAIGN IS NOW REACHING CONSUMERS ACROSS SEVERAL CHANNELS ALL YEAR ROUND



1 & 2/ Every element of The Ultimate Renewable™ campaign is underpinned by FWPA's ongoing research and monitoring.

familiarity, and reinforce the campaign's core sustainability message.

BACKED BY RESEARCH, BUILT FOR INDUSTRY

Every element of The Ultimate Renewable™ campaign is underpinned by FWPA's ongoing research and monitoring. It's built

on insights into consumer attitudes, social license, and historical campaign performance.

For FWPA members, the benefits are clear: enhanced visibility, more efficient media spending, and measurable return on investment. More importantly, it ensures wood remains front of mind in an increasingly competitive

materials landscape and the sustainability credentials of our industry are promoted all year round.

FWPA remains committed to sharing results, insights and future plans with members as the campaign evolves.

HELP US SHARE THE CAMPAIGN

Support the campaign by downloading The Ultimate Renewable™ digital toolkit.

By sharing these resources through your own channels and tagging @TheUltimateRenewable™, you'll help amplify the campaign's impact and reinforce our industry's important sustainability story.

To download the digital toolkit now, click this link: <https://fwpa.com.au/tool/the-ultimate-renewable-member-digital-toolkit/> or scan the QR code.



1 & 2/ The Ultimate Renewable Campaign™ has been running for some time and this refresh continues to keep it front of mind for consumers.



An industry services company working to grow the forest and wood products market
Visit us at fwpa.com.au

Corella deaths

As two regions investigate bird kills, the authorities are seeking information.

IN the same week that the EPA announced it had discovered the poison agent behind some 200 little corella deaths in Newcastle, NSW, another 300 have been killed in Horsham, Victoria.

Deliberate human intervention is suspected in the Horsham case, where the Conservation Regulator is seeking information from the public as part of the investigation.

More than 50 corellas were found on Tuesday 29 April in a park near the Wimmera River at Horsham. The number of dead birds found in the park and river has since risen to 300.

Council workers have removed a quantity of grain that is suspected of being poisoned from the area around the park, using vacuum cleaners to ensure all was removed. Both council workers and residents have expressed concerns that other wildlife, pets and children could also have been affected.

Glenn Coffey, who manages the Horsham Riverside caravan park near where the birds were found, told *The Guardian* that there were a great many sick and dying birds. "They were just sitting on the banks, falling out of the trees – they were drowning," he said. (Click here for the full story.)

Samples from the dead birds have been taken for testing to determine the cause of death.

"It's illegal and dangerous to poison wildlife and we're calling on the community to come forward with any information they might have



1/ Little corellas are clever and cheeky parrots that travel in loud flocks. Photo: CC

www.sharpphotography.co.uk

2/ The Victorian poisoning appears intentional, while the NSW case is still being investigated.

Photo: courtesy Horsham Rural City Council/Facebook

that will help us to track down whoever is responsible," Chief Conservation Regulator Kate Gavens said.

"The investigation of this incident is underway and we need the community to call Crime Stoppers if they have CCTV footage or have seen anything suspicious, particularly along the Wimmera River at Horsham."

Anyone with information about this incident is urged to contact Crime Stoppers Victoria on 1800 333 000 or crimestoppersvic.com.au. You can report anonymously.

Meanwhile, vets and native wildlife rescue groups in the Newcastle area of NSW had a little corella mass-poisoning event to deal with in March, and the EPA has now received toxicology results that have confirmed the cause.

The tests detected the presence of barley grain and pesticides, with fenitrothion identified in the system of all the deceased birds.

The EPA says that fenitrothion is a pesticide commonly used in agriculture to control insect pests.

Investigations of this sort of poisoning can be challenging, particularly when the chemical involved is commonly used across a range of agricultural and pest control activities and is readily available for purchase.

The EPA reminds all pesticide users of the importance of using chemicals

correctly, following label directions and taking care to avoid impacts on non-target animals and the environment. Penalties can be imposed even for accidental poisonings.

Anyone with information about the deaths or possible pesticide misuse is urged to contact the EPA on 131 555.

The poisonings have been particularly concerning with bird flu still a known risk in both areas.

Hunter Wildlife Rescue volunteers have nursed over 100 of the sick Newcastle birds back to health and released them back into the wild. Treatment focused on Vitamin K injections, which were administered every four hours until the birds began to show signs of recovery. You can find links to support the efforts at Hunter Wildlife rescue by clicking here.

If you find dead or sick birds, do not touch or move them. Instead, take photos, note the location, and report to wildlife carers such as WIRES (1300 094 737) or for clusters of five or more dead or sick birds, call the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action on 136 186 in Victoria or Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888 Australia-wide.

Corellas are protected under the Wildlife Act 1975, and there are significant penalties for unlawfully hunting, taking or destroying protected wildlife, including imprisonment. The negligent use of pesticides that harms non-target animals or plants can attract penalties of up to \$500,000 for individuals and \$2 million for corporations.

Tasmanian Timber podcasts

A NEW episode of the Original Thinkers podcast has recently gone live: Michael Lee talking on What's Possible with Australian Resources.

Mick Lee is a 30-year veteran of the Tasmanian timber sector. A technical expert, he has over 30 years experience in research, timber production, and systems. He works with builders, designers, and architects to create solutions that benefit the environment, the economy, and the community.

He talks about the path to Net Zero buildings, which he believes is possible, but

emphasises that carbon reductions of a third, a half, or two thirds in construction projects are every bit as important on the journey to that goal.

Lee concedes that Australia is decades behind Europe, talking about European projects such as concrete-covered spruce carparks that were 60% timber 20 years ago, but says we have made quantum leaps in the past five years.

He is clear that Australia has both the materials and the know-how to deliver on major timber-based builds.



Mick Lee is a technical specialist who shares his knowledge in the podcast. Photo: courtesy Original Tasmanian Timber

"The stadium build for instance, in Hobart, called for 40-metre roof beams. No one in Australia could make a 40-metre roof beam. Could we make two twenties? Of course. So it's just changing the ethos and getting the right engineering involved to

change the design parameters to suit our products. There's nothing that can be done anywhere else in the world that we can't do here. We have the capability of producing it on island – so it's buy local, local supply. We have the product. There's nothing stopping us. There really isn't."

The Original Thinkers podcast is produced by Original Tasmanian Timber, backed by the Tasmanian Timber Promotional Board, with technical information produced by the Centre for Sustainable Architecture with Wood (CSAW) at the University of Tasmania

For all previous podcasts, including more on Net Zero buildings, Designing for Dementia and specials on sustainability and timber processing, click here.

“IT'S CHANGING THE ETHOS AND GETTING THE RIGHT ENGINEERING INVOLVED

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Hyne Group acquires Pallet & Bin

LAST year, Hyne announced the formation of its Hyne Pallets division and its growth through the acquisition of Rodpak Pallets & Packaging (Vic), Express Pallets & Crates (Qld) and Pinetec Pty Ltd (WA). Now, the Hyne Group is pleased to announce further expansion following the acquisition of Pallet & Bin Pty Ltd, located in Shepparton, Victoria.

Pallet & Bin manufactures a range of products for some of Australia's largest food producers, including a significant amount for export markets.

Hyne Group CEO, Jim Bindon, said Pallet & Bin is a well-regarded, local business that has been operating for over 20 years and is a significant supplier for freighting food,

"Clients include five of Australia's largest food producers and this offers further diversity opportunities

for our national pallet customer base," Bindon said.

"Shepparton is also strategically located between Hyne Timber's Tumbarumba sawmill and key Melbourne metropolitan markets, offering some solid locational synergies for both raw material timber supply and freight efficiencies."

The Group also expanded its Australian Garden Care division last year with the acquisition, through its Rocky Point Pty Ltd subsidiary, of Bassett Barks on the Sunshine Coast, Queensland.

In parallel, the Hyne Group's majority owners in the UK,



General manager Pallet & Bin, Matt Alessi (left) and Hyne Group CEO, Jim Bindon. Photo: courtesy Hyne

James Jones and Sons Ltd, has announced the acquisition of United Box Ltd.

United Box Ltd was originally formed as a joint venture in 2003 by James Jones & Sons Ltd and Scott

Group Ltd. United Box manufactures and distributes agricultural boxes and is a valued supplier to the food industry across the UK and Ireland.

Tom Bruce-Jones, chairman of James Jones & Sons Group, said, "Our recent acquisitions, combined with a progressive investment philosophy, are part of our disciplined global strategy and these two additions to our Group demonstrates our strong support of the rural and farming communities in the UK and Australia.

This broadens our product portfolio and provides confidence to all our end users of our vertically integrated local supply chains, particularly given the current global trade war."

Drought extends fire season in SA

APRIL continued the run of dry months in South Australia, with some regions experiencing their lowest rainfall on record. Both the Federal and State governments have announced wide-ranging drought assistance programs, but the effects go well beyond the economic.

The Government of South Australia has extended the Mount Lofty Ranges Fire Ban District season to 14 May 2025

CFS Acting Deputy Chief Officer, Brenton Hastie, said current weather predictions indicate no meaningful rain for May and parts of June.

"Fuel loads vary across the Mount Lofty Ranges, with high forest and scrub fuels in parts

and somewhat low fuels in others, and the exceptionally dry conditions and lack of forecast rain in the near future poses a risk of fire," Hastie said.

"Volunteers have worked incredibly hard to keep the South Australian community safe throughout this Fire Danger Season and will continue to respond to incidents across the state, but the community need to be aware that the risk



Map of the CFS Mount Lofty Ranges district. Image: Courtesy CFS

of fire won't abate until there is significant rainfall."

The CFS and SA state

and local governments are urging residents to continue their own bushfire preparedness into the colder months. You can click here to access up-to-date fire danger ratings and practical advice on the Country Fire Service website.

Preparedness is crucial to making informed decisions during emergencies. Click here to learn how to prepare for and recover from bushfires and other emergencies.

The Adelaide Hills Council also encourages residents to click here for potential changes to Council services on extreme or catastrophic fire danger days.



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NZ farm to forest conversion ban

Foresters worry about the impacts of new legislation.

NEW rules regarding farm to forest conversions in New Zealand are progressing through the Beehive with the Hon Todd McClay, Minister of Forestry and Agriculture, confirming last week that restrictions on full farm-to-forest conversions on LUC 1-6 farmland will be in place this year. The new rules will take effect from 4 December 2024, the date of the original announcement by NZ Prime Minister Christopher Luxon. Enabling legislation will be introduced to Parliament during Q2 of this year.

"The Government is focused on maintaining strong food and fibre production while supporting sustainable land use," McClay said. "We remain concerned about the effect that farm conversions are having on highly productive land — particularly sheep and beef farms in Northland, the East Coast and parts of Otago and Southland."

The rules come in response to claims pine trees have been planted for carbon credits on land that is suitable for intensive pastoral farming or arable cropping, locking up the usage. Effectively, they allege, New Zealand's Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) has incentivised tree planting in the wrong places.

The new rules include:

- A moratorium on full farm to forest conversions from entering the ETS for Land Use Classification (LUC) 1-5 actively farmed land.
- An annual registration cap of 15,000 hectares for forestry entering the ETS for LUC 6 farmland.
- Up to 25% of a farm's LUC



Production plantations like this one in Port Underwood, South Island, New Zealand, worry they will lose ETS credits, but unmanaged ETS pine plantations also bring risks. Image: Shutterstock

1-6 land to be planted in forestry for the ETS, ensuring farmers retain flexibility and choice.

- Excluding specific categories of Māori-owned land from the restrictions, in line with Treaty obligations, while ensuring pathways for economic development.

Transitional measures for landowners who were in the process of afforestation prior to the 4 December 2024 announcement would be available where they could demonstrate qualifying evidence of a forestry investment.

Dr Elizabeth Heeg, chief executive of the NZ Forest Owners Association, responded to the Luxon announcement last year, telling Jamie Mackay from The Country radio show that "Our concern with the policy as it's been announced is that it's presuming that the different land use classes are all very clear in the landscape, but in practical reality, that's just not how it is when you're boots on the ground and

you're looking to make land management decisions."

Heeg said that ETS was an important supplemental income for foresters and that forestry was making a significant contribution to abating the climate crisis.

While she acknowledged there had been a significant growth in plantings under the ETS — estimated at over 200,000 hectares of productive stock land in the past five years — Heeg noted that the legislation was both complicated and lacking in detail as to how it will work. She said it would both defer planting decisions on some land use classes and force forestry to more remote areas in others.

"I don't think right now we've got evidence that there's a systematic problem," Heeg said. "We might have a few

bad actors, but at the national scale, this could have a chilling effect on planting, full stop, which isn't in the best interests of the country."

Mackay, who admitted being sympathetic to the government position, fairly noted that "If the government does effectively drive production forestry to the hills, [into] land classes 7, 8 and 9, that's steep,

it's far away from ports, it's not good growing country, it's not ideal for growing good production forestry."

Heeg agreed, saying that rule changes needed to be pragmatic and would ideally go through the Resource Management Act. She noted that tackling the issue through ETS legislation failed to address most of the significant current issues, including the fact that some of the carbon farms were not being actively managed as forestry and could contribute to future environmental problems rather than solving them as well as "give us a bad name."

This worry is echoed by the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment, Simon Upton, who has just released a report: *Alt-F Reset: Examining the drivers of forestry in New Zealand*. In it, the Commissioner discusses how current policies are shaping New Zealand's forest estate and looks at which

“THIS COULD HAVE A CHILLING EFFECT ON PLANTING, FULL STOP

From P 14

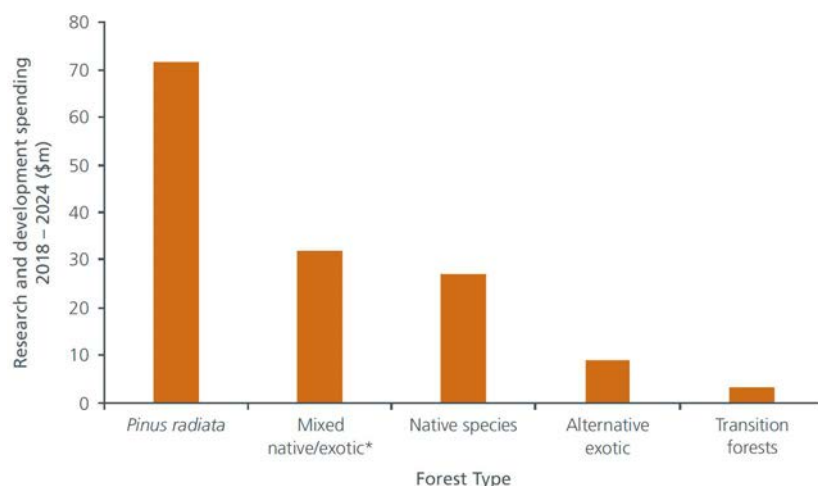
alternative forestry systems could play a greater role in afforestation.

He warns that New Zealand needs to take a long, hard look at its current approach and ask whether the country is establishing the forests it wants in the long run.

"Our policies, particularly settings under the current New Zealand Emissions Trading Scheme, are driving a wave of land use change to carbon forestry with significant environmental, economic and social risks," he says.

"We may live to regret our current approach as it is driving a wave of land use change with significant environmental, economic and social risks."

Upton emphasises that forests planted for timber production continue to have an important role to play



Source: PCE

Figure 10.4 from the Alt-F Reset report. In recent years, radiata pine has received almost as much investment as all alternatives forest types put together. Image: courtesy Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment

in New Zealand, saying: "In places where they can be safely harvested, production forests are the backbone of an important industry. Because the people who plant them intend to harvest them, they have every incentive to look after them.

"But new permanent forests being planted as

carbon offsets through the New Zealand Emissions Trading Scheme (NZ ETS) carry long-term risks for future generations."

He notes that the ETS forests are monoculture and often unmanaged, increasing risks from pests, disease and fire, which could result in a carbon liability rather

than saving in the future.

The report calls for forestry units to be phased out as legitimate offsets for fossil fuels under the ETS, but recommends that radiata pine production forestry could be used as an offset for methane. It also calls for permanent native afforestation in areas not suitable for farming or production forestry

as a method to capture carbon without undesirable secondary environmental impacts.

[Click here to download the report.](#)

For more information on the proposed ETS changes, [click here.](#)

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Tariffs impact shipping

International shipping may be headed for choppy waters.

MANY of the worst impacts of the Covid era were caused by the descent of international shipping into chaos. From containers marooned in various ports, to ship delays and soaring costs, and let's not forget the Ever Given's week blocking the Suez, the shockingly fast destabilisation of global container trade was at the heart of many of the shortages and cost spikes that plagued us during those years.

As was the pandemic to 2020-23, so is Trump to 2025. Right now, the latter is shaping up to have a similar impact on shipping.

"The outlook for container shipping is even more uncertain now than it was

at the onset of the Covid virus," Simon Heaney, Drewry's senior manager of container research, told the AFR's Jenny Wiggins, warning the firm's outlook for global volumes had become more pessimistic over the past month (click here for her story).

After a brief spike in the months before and at the start of Trump's second term, as companies attempted to stockpile in expectation of tariffs, US imports from China dropped notably in April. For



Booking volumes from China to the US are reported to have dropped 45% in April. Photo CC A Guy Named Nyal

the week of April 14, booking volumes from China to the U.S. dropped 45% compared with the same period one year earlier, according to Vizion, a container tracking service.

"This dramatic drop aligned with two key developments: the April 4 U.S. tariff announcement, followed by China's retaliatory measures

announced on April 5. The result? A widespread booking freeze, as shippers paused mid-shipment cycle to reassess costs, timelines and broader trade strategy," Vizion said in a report (click here to read).

The immediate result will be increasingly empty American shelves and higher costs to ship to the US even for products not made in China, but the longer-term impacts may well include reduction in fleet sizes and cancellation of ship building orders. Even if tariffs ease, major investments are less likely in times of uncertainty. Overall, shipping delays and increased costs may be another fallout of Trump's trade wars.

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Rainforest regeneration and termites

We're used to thinking of them as pests, but termites power soil health.

TERMITES and timber are famously only a good match if you are firmly Team Termite. But a new multi-year study in the Daintree region led by visiting University of Queensland academic Dr Baptiste Wijas suggests that termite 'transplants' may be necessary to give regenerated rainforests a boost.

Dr Wijas found that termites were not thriving in former farmland replanted with rainforest species and that this was having an impact on the decay of deadwood and subsequent soil health.

Wijas, a post-doctoral fellow at the New York-based not-for-profit Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies, said while many people — including forest managers — did not like termites, the insects played an important role in a healthy forest ecosystem.

"People tend to think that by just planting a diversity of trees, these rainforests will regenerate," Wijas said.

"But should we actually be putting in other organisms as well, to restore other ecosystem processes that help the forest function?"

"Termites are essential for recycling nutrients and carbon from dead timber and the insect's slow recovery could be hindering the growth and health of the young forests."

To assess how decomposers such as termites and fungi functioned in replanted areas, the research team placed blocks of wood at three sites — one

old growth area in the Daintree Rainforest and two nearby former plantation sites replanted four and eight years prior to the start of the study.

They checked the wooden blocks every six months over four years for fungi and termites, and also measured how quickly the blocks were decomposing.

Based on previous studies in South America, the researchers expected termite activity to be similar in the old growth and replanted forests, and fungal decay rates to be lower in the younger forests.

Instead, they found the opposite — termites were slower to decay the wood blocks in the replanted forests while fungi were functioning similarly in both.

Cary Institute senior scientist Dr Amy Zanne said lower rates of termite-driven decay could mean a slower return of carbon and nutrients to the soil, harming forest health and future growth.

The researchers suggest transplanting deadwood logs from old growth rainforests to newer forests to boost abundance and diversity, while also providing a food source for decomposers.

"A young, regenerating forest doesn't have a lot of dead wood in it," Dr Zanne said.



The researchers put wooden blocks in old growth and replanted forests and assessed the termite activity over four years. Image: courtesy University of Queensland.

"So, if you bring in these logs, you're giving them some food to tide them over while they wait for parts of trees to start falling."

Zanne said that the bad reputation termites have was unfair for the majority of the genera. Only about 3% of termite species are known to damage houses, while very little is known about the other 97% and Zanne and Wijas were working to understand the role termites have in rainforests and other ecosystems.

The team says transplanting termite mounds into new forests along with deadwood should also be studied in the future.

The research was published in the *Journal of Applied Ecology*. Click here to read the full paper.

Source: UQ News



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HEAD OFFICE

Timber Media Australasia Pty Ltd
PO Box 3001
Maraylya NSW 2765

PUBLISHER

Timber Media Australasia Pty Ltd

EDITORS

Nicky Ainley
Donyale Harrison
Jess Hockridge
editors@timberandforestryenews.com

ADVERTISING

Campbell McInnes // +61 (0) 406 223 007
campbellm@timberandforestryenews.com

ACCOUNTS

Chris Parker // +61 (0) 413 710 203
cparker@ttnews.com.au

SUBSCRIBE

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CONTACTS

Media releases and editorial:

Nicky Ainley // Donyale Harrison // Jessica Hockridge

e: editors@timberandforestrynews.com

Display ad bookings:

Campbell McInnes // e: campbellm@timberandforestrynews.com

Accounts:

Chris Parker // e: cparker@ttnews.com.au

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