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NTHA celebrates the high achievers across SA, NT and WA

COVER STORY P 2

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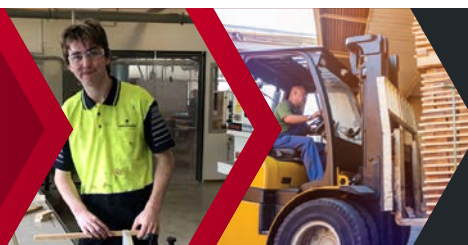
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Timber and hardware industry celebrates excellence in Adelaide

Australia's timber and hardware elite gather to celebrate the sector's high achievers and rising stars.

OVER two hundred guests filled the National Wine Centre of Australia for the prestigious event, with the awards not only recognising standout individuals and businesses, but also the newest graduates of NTHA's traineeships and apprenticeship.

Welcome drinks saw guests catch up with friends and colleagues as they arrived at the iconic venue before enjoying the very best of Adelaide's food and wine.

Stepping in for NTHA Chief Executive Officer David Little, who was unwell, NTHA Chairman Peter Hutchison officially opened proceedings. Leading the NTHA board for over 17 years, Mr Hutchison took to the stage to welcome guests and praise the calibre of this year's nominees and honourees.

Mr Hutchison said the SA, NT & WA Awards not only recognised the outstanding achievements of businesses and individuals but also marked a significant milestone



1/ NTHA Chairman Peter Hutchison welcomes guests to the SA, NT & WA Timber and Hardware Industry Awards.

2/ NTHA Chairman Peter Hutchison congratulates Trainee Apprentice of the Year Samuel Chambers of Kustom Joinery Manufacturers. All photos: NTHA



for NTHA's newest graduates, "whose training and dedication are recognised alongside the industry's top performers."

"These talented young people are the industry's future, and we are very proud to celebrate your achievements. You stuck it out and now you have a full qualification that puts you a step ahead in the workforce. Well done."

"The truth is we need more people like you. Our industry is facing the simple, demographic reality that our workforce is aging. The challenge is clear.

If we do not bring in the next generation of talent, we risk losing skills, knowledge, and the capability that we need to build timber and hardware into one of the most essential parts of the Australian supply chain," Mr Hutchison said.

This is why traineeships and apprenticeships are so important, Mr Hutchison pointed out because, "they not only change the lives of the people that undertake them, but they also safeguard the future of the businesses they work in. Tonight is proof that

when we invest in people, we all benefit."

Several dignitaries were recognised on the night including NTHA directors—Michael Shadbolt, Director at ITI Australia; Glen Tilling, Managing Director at Tilling Timber; John Lornete, Managing Director of Big River Industries, NTHA Vice-Chairman Paul Stewart, Managing Director of Barrow & Bench Mitre 10, and John Chapman from the

Cont P 3



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From P 2

Construction and Mining Skills Council.

Group Training Organisation MD Melissa Clark also took a moment on stage to recognise the tireless efforts and dedication of Mr Hutchison who has now led NTHA through many years of significant change. As he enters his retirement year, Ms Clark made a point of acknowledging Mr Hutchison for his time, service, and dedication as Chairman.

INDUSTRY WINNERS ANNOUNCED

The highly anticipated awards were then presented by TV, radio, and sports host Mark Aiston, who took to the stage to announce the following awards:

- **2025 NTHA Host Employer of the Year:** Flinders Timber & Building Supplies.

Presented by NTHA Vice-Chairman Paul Stewart, the 2025 NTHA Host Employer of the Year Award recognises a host employer dedicated to supporting the trainee and apprentice journey.

- **2025 Trainee/Apprentice of the Year:** Samuel Chambers – Kustom Joinery Manufacturers.

Upon receiving his award Samuel said the accolade was particularly significant because his grandfather had also won Apprentice of the Year many years ago.

- **2025 Garden & Outdoor Supplier of the Year:** Yates

Garden & Outdoor Supplier of the Year nominations are received directly from store owners and managers of suppliers who have a high regard and appreciation for the nominees.

- **Store of the Year Over 2500 square metres:** Barossa Mitre 10

Mick Shaw accepted the



1/ **Store of the Year Over 2500 square metres, Barossa Mitre 10.**

2/ **Trade Store of the Year, K&B Mitre 10 Trade Centre Torrensville.**

award on behalf of Barossa Mitre 10, saying the recognition was, "a reflection of the hard work and extra effort put in by the team, with some working at the store for over 15 years."

- **2025 Retail Supplier of the Year:** Trio Group Australia

The 2025 Retail Supplier of the Year recognises a retail supplier who provides outstanding service and support, while also recognising the supply of outstanding products.

- **2025 NTHA Student of the Year:** Kristy Black (Big River Dry Creek)

The award is dedicated to students who have developed their industry knowledge while demonstrating enthusiasm and a positive attitude. Award winner, Kristy Black, not only thanked NTHA but also her

team for a fantastic journey.

- **Garden Department of the Year:** Barrow & Bench Mitre 10

The Garden Department of the Year demonstrates diversification and the ability to specialise in a niche market. Store owners Paul and Amanda Stewart said the award would not be possible without the outstanding efforts of their staff and their suppliers.

- **Safety Culture Award:** Stratco

The Safety Culture Award recognises a commitment to safety while ensuring everyone in the organisation are accountable for WHS practices. Stratco's Justin Brown accepted the award and said safety in any workplace is so important, but good safety culture needs to start at the top

of the management chain.

- **Best Frame & Truss Operation of the Year:** Flinders Timber & Building Supplies

The Best Frame & Truss Operation is acknowledged for the development of efficient operations and the production of high-quality products. Brook Chambers of Flinders Timber and Building Supplies thanked his team for having such a strong belief in what they do every day.

- **Supplier Sales Representative of the Year:** Rocco Lagana (Mayo Hardware)

Winner Rocco Lagana thanked his customers saying that, "after 20 years in the industry I continue to work with amazing individuals. They are the reason I love going to work."

- **Retail Store of the Year Under 2500 square metres:** Katanning H Hardware

The Retail Store of the Year recognises excellence in smaller retail spaces, while also delivering outstanding performance, innovation, and customer service.

- **Trade Supplier of the Year:** Adbri Cement

This award recognises trade suppliers who excel at all levels of their business. Vicki of Adbri Cement said that she could provide the best customer service because she had an exceptional team behind her.

- **Trade Store of the Year:** K&B Mitre 10 Trade Centre Torrensville

As sponsors for the Trade Store of the Year Award, ITI Australia's Leon Rayner took to the stage to recognise K&B Mitre 10 for their dedication in delivering exceptional customer service in a safe work environment. Peter Finlay of K&B Mitre 10 accepted

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From P 3

the award and thanked the K&B network and the Metcash group for transforming a 10,000 square metre site into a thriving trade yard.

NTHA RECOGNISES INDUSTRY YOUNG GUNS

Young trainees and apprentices were also recognised for their outstanding achievements on the night, with NTHA Training Operations Manager Kim Jones, GTO Manager Melissa Clark and Mr Hutchison kicking off the graduation ceremony by presenting NTHA students with their certificates.

"Our NTHA graduates have worked tirelessly, learning not only the technical skills regarding timber and hardware

products, but also the values of safety, sustainability, and adaptability that define our industry. Graduates, as you embark on your careers, remember that you are now custodians of an industry that has deep roots but is reaching toward new horizons," Ms Jones said.

GRADUATING TRAINEES:

- **Kristy Black** - Certificate IV in Leadership and Management



NTHA team: (L-R) Kim Jones, Christine Bannister, Melissa Clark, Vicki Stableford, Rachel Lippett and Tahlia Bellotti.

- **Cameron Cockrell** - Certificate III in Supply Chain Operations
- **Mark Crawford** - Certificate IV in Leadership and Management
- **Anita Saulius** - Certificate IV in Leadership and Management
- **Shaun Wild** - Certificate III in Timber Frame or Truss Manufacture

- **Purushottam Bhattari** - Certificate IV in Leadership and Management

- **Kaedmon Goldfinch** - Certificate III in Timber Building Product Supply

Graduating apprentices:

- **Samuel Chambers** - Cabinet Making Apprentice
- **Ethan Dittmar** - Tester - Cabinet Making Apprentice
- **Micah Sarre** - Carpentry Apprentice

- **Ethan Arbon** - Carpentry Apprentice

SUPPORTING SPONSOR RECOGNISED

The importance of sponsorship was also recognised on the night with Mr Hutchison reminding guests that, "these events do not happen without the support of a wonderful group of sponsors."

Platinum sponsor: ITI Australia

Silver sponsors: Independent Hardware Group – (IHG), Adbri Cement, Big River Group

Bronze sponsors: Parkside Timber, NCI Trade Credit Solutions, Bremick, First Super, SYC

"Thank you all for your generous support, particularly in these particularly challenging market conditions," Mr Hutchison concluded.

On the cover: NTHA Graduates and SA, NT & WA Award winners celebrate together. Image: NTHA

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OneFortyOne announces largest Australian forestry land acquisition in a decade

ONEFORTYONE, a leading forestry and sawmill business, is proud to announce the acquisition of the former New Forests managed Limestone Coast plantation forestry estate. This landmark acquisition, completed on 30 May 2025, marks a significant milestone in Australian forestry investment.

OneFortyOne CEO Wendy Norris said the acquisition represents the first investment in forestry of this scale by an Australian company, in the past decade.

"We are thrilled to expand our Green Triangle, Australian plantation forestry estate by 15%, adding close to 15,000 hectares of plantable area," Wendy said.

The acquisition includes approximately 14,800 hectares of mixed hardwood (Bluegum) and softwood (Radiata Pine) plantation resource or plantable area, within a total of 20,500 hectares of associated freehold land in the Green Triangle region and in Western Australia. New Forests has invested in the Limestone Estate since 2014, and the sale forms part of its Australia New

Zealand Forestry Fund 2's divestment process.

SFM, the current property manager of this asset, will continue to provide hardwood and carbon-related management services to OneFortyOne, across the estate for the foreseeable future.

"This is a significant acquisition for OneFortyOne and for the future potential of Australian softwood production," Wendy added.

Securing domestic sawlog supply from the mid-2050s

OneFortyOne's strategic decision to acquire the Limestone Coast estate is aimed at potentially securing domestic sawlog supply well into the future. "We are planning decades into the future and are focused on supporting our domestic customers by looking at ways to increase supply of sawlog," Wendy explained.

"This potential optionality



OneFortyOne's acquisition marks the largest by an Australian company in the past decade. Image: OneFortyOne

of converting hardwood to softwood plantation estate, from short to long-term tree rotation, could provide additional certainty for domestic sawmill manufacturing and support domestic processing."

Importance of forestry for Australia's sovereignty

Plantation forestry plays a crucial role in supporting Australian sovereignty in construction and manufacturing. Australia is projected to require approximately 2.5 million new dwellings by 2034, an average of 225,000 new homes annually. By 2050, this demand figure is expected to exceed

250,000 new homes annually.

In the absence of new domestic log supply (and consequently a constrained ability to grow domestic sawn structural timber production), this potential increased demand would likely be met by offshore imports, with imports potentially

doubling from circa 20% share of sawn timber demand today, to over 40% by the 2050s.

"This trend underscores both the supply challenges and emerging opportunities for the domestic forestry and wood products sector," Wendy emphasised.

"With domestic softwood log availability in the 2050s being dependent on decisions made today, we are proud to be making one such decision now that has the potential to support log supply, and inevitably housing construction, in the middle of this century."

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Forest industries welcome new Shadow Minister, Senator Ross Cadell

ON behalf of the nation's forest industries, the Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA), welcomes and congratulates Senator Ross Cadell, who has been announced as the new Shadow Minister for Forestry, Fisheries, Emergency Management and Water. We also thank Senator the Hon Jonno Duniam, who has served for several years in the forestry portfolio, both in government and opposition, Chief Executive Officer of AFPA, Diana Hallam said.

"We welcome Nationals Senator Ross Cadell to the role and look forward to working with him and the Opposition as we advocate for our supply chain and work on policy vision and solutions



1/ **Senator Ross Cadell, the new Shadow Minister for Fisheries and Forestry.**
2/ **Senator the Hon Jonathon Duniam, previously the Shadow Minister for Forestry and Fisheries, now the Shadow Minister for Education and Early Learning.** Images: Parliament of Australia

for the forestry sector that is incredibly important for employment, manufacturing, sovereign capability, fighting climate change and the



environment," Diana Hallam said.

"Senator Cadell comes from the Newcastle area in NSW, so he's very familiar with the importance of the industry along the NSW Mid-North and North Coasts, which provides a great grounding to build further knowledge and appreciation for the plantation, native, resource processing and manufacturing parts of the sector, located across Australia.

"While we are excited about Senator Cadell's elevation to the Shadow Ministry, it's with some sadness that we farewell Senator Duniam from the forestry portfolio. Senator Duniam has been a dedicated advocate for our sector. Notably, he led a

suite of Coalition policies and other commitments to the 2022 Federal Election, many of which were ultimately reciprocated by the Labor Government and are being delivered now.

"Senator Duniam will no doubt continue to advocate for the forestry and forest products sector as he continues service in the Shadow Ministry and as a proud Tasmanian Senator. We wish him well as Shadow Minister for Education and Early Learning.

"We also welcome Angie Bell MP to the Environment portfolio and look forward to working with her on a range of issues, as well as Shadow Assistant Minister for Fisheries and Forestry, Senator Matt O'Sullivan, Senator Andrew Bragg as Shadow Minister for Housing, which is a critical portfolio for forest industries, as well as Shadow Minister for Industry and Innovation, the Hon Alex Hawke. Forestry and its supply chain is of course Australia's 6th largest manufacturing sector and is embarking on some exciting innovation, for example in the recycling space.

"Like Federal Labor, the Federal Coalition has a strong record of supporting the sector and we'll work hard to ensure that continues through the 48th Parliament and with cross bench MPs and Senators as well," Diana Hallam concluded.

“SENATOR DUNIAM HAS BEEN A DEDICATED ADVOCATE FOR OUR SECTOR

Australian Forest Products Association

AFPA THE LEADING VOICE FOR AUSTRALIA'S FOREST PRODUCTS SECTOR

JUNE

20-22: Perth Home Show – Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre, Perth 10.00am - 5.00pm daily.

Explore hundreds of home related products, exclusive Show specials, attend free seminars, and gain insights from top Australian renovation and building experts. For more information and to book tickets, visit <https://homeshows.com.au/perth/>

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/>

30: WoodSolutions Workshop "Timber in a carbon neutral environment" – Pridham Hall, Adelaide. 8.30am - 3.30pm. Discover how timber is reshaping the future of sustainable construction. For more information and reserve your place visit <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/woodsolutions-workshop-timber-in-a-carbon-neutral-environment-tickets-1363725101489>

SEPTEMBER

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

7-12: Gottstein Trust's Understanding Wood Science Course – Albury and Canberra. The course is designed to provide exposure to a wide range of

industry & research experts and includes site visits to leading plants across 3 types of end products. For further information and registration details visit <https://gottsteintrust.org/grants-courses/understanding-wood-science-course>

18: SAVE THE DATE: Onetrak/ Tigercat field demonstration day followed by AFCA AGM & dinner – Canberra. More details to follow.

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 – Perth, WA. (Follows on from the woodchip and biomass seminar in Singapore.) For more information visit <https://danaevents.co.nz/2025singapore/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/>

Melbourne Build 25

VICTORIA'S largest construction and design show, officially supported by the Premier of VIC, is coming to MCEC on October 22 - 23. Registration for the event is now live and completely free!

The event features: 300+ incredible speakers across

12 conference summits; 175+ exhibitors showcasing the latest innovations; 10+ networking parties co-hosted with CIOB, NexGen, Carpentry Australia, Master Builders Victoria, prefabAUS, Australian Smart Communities Association, and many more

industry bodies; Architect's Hub and Government Hub showcasing project opportunities and planning across VIC; and much more.

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Introducing AUSWOOD

Laminated Veneer Lumber (LVL).

By **CHRIS PARKER**

AUSWOOD was founded in 2004 and is a vibrant, growing business based on personal service and quality products. The main operation is located at Milperra in NSW and has outlets situated at Laverton North VIC, managed by Frankk Portolesi and Yatala QLD which is managed by Kris Murray.

James Wang is the proprietor and has over 35 years forestry and timber industry experience with formal qualifications. James leads a dedicated and passionate team who are ready to assist you with your order. The AUSWOOD team includes Frank Portolesi, Ahmad Mossa, Stephen Habib and Kris Murray.

I sat down with James to interview him just about his LVL product line and find out what might set him apart from others. James started with 'All our LVL product is compliant with Australian standards and quality is assured'. He added 'AUSWOOD stands behind our product with an uncompromising guarantee and we have repeat, long-term clients who are testament to this'.



1/ LVL E13 240x45mm in 12m lengths being loaded for delivery.

2/ Friendly staff are always ready to help, providing expertise to select the right product.

I was particularly interested in stock levels and ensuring orders could meet expectations in a timely and efficient manner, as delays can cost a job site a lot of money. James responded, 'We always carry plenty of stock at each of our outlets to meet demand so you won't be left waiting, we will pack your specific order and have it on the delivery truck to meet your delivery day or it will be ready to go for your scheduled pickup time.'

We discussed that not

everyone is a qualified and an experienced builder, and some customers could be undertaking DIY projects. So, I asked James what assistance can your business provide, when this is the case? James showed me 'We have technical data sheets available with clear specifications for all our LVL

product we sell, so you be sure you are ordering the right grade for your job'. He went on to add, 'We can also provide 3rd party engineering services if you would like to have your plans reviewed, to make sure you are ordering the right amount and grade of product.'

When I asked about the LVL range, I quickly found it is extensive. Here is an overview:

LVL OPTIONS:

Envirobeam E13

- Mason, Scots Pine or Spruce
- 45mm or 63mm x [130mm, 150mm, 170mm, 200mm, 240mm, 300mm and 360mm]
- Lengths available: 3m, 4.2m, 4.8m, 5.4m, 6m, 7.2m, 10.8m or 12m
- Treated H2S

Envirobeam Formwork

- Mason or Radiata Pine
- 45mm, 63mm or 75mm x [95mm or 150mm]
- Lengths available: 1.8m, 2.4m, 3.6m, 4.8m, 5.4m or 6m

Envirobeam Scaffold Planks

- Mason Pine
- 39mm x 230mm
- Lengths available: 1.8m, 2.4m, 3m, 3.6m, 4.8m or 6m

Envirobeam E10

- Mason or Radiata Pine
- 35mm or 45mm x [70mm or 90mm]
- Lengths available: 5.4m or 6m
- Treated H2S

AUSWOOD STAFF ARE AVAILABLE TO HELP YOU WITH ANY QUESTIONS

Cont P 9



1/ New QLD Warehouse located at the transportation hub between Brisbane and Gold Coast.

2/ AUSWOOD has an extensive LVL range. All photos: Auswood



From P 8

Enviroedge boards

- Mason or Radiata Pine
- 36mm or 45mm x [100mm, 150mm, 170mm, 200mm, 240mm or 300mm]
- Length available: 6m

Specification sheets are available for all the above products and include detailed information on the standard, species of timber, veneer thickness, type of finger joint, adhesive used, stress grade, density, moisture content, tolerances, followed by stock and pack sizes, lengths

available, treatment, surface and code.

AUSWOOD staff are available to help you with any questions. They work as a team and have experts on the various product lines they carry, which include flooring, formwork and plywood

amongst the mix, and someone is always available to help with complex technical issues. They can be contacted by phone: 1800 888 986 (free call), e: info@auswood.com.au or through their website: auswood.com.au





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EUDR country benchmarking misses the mark

Why governance, legality and circumvention risks matter.

ON May 22, the European Commission (EC) released its long-awaited country benchmarking classifications under the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR). This system classifies 194 countries by deforestation risk across seven commodities—cattle, cocoa, coffee, oil palm, rubber, soy, and wood—marking a key milestone in the EC's rollout of the EUDR.

For many in the environmental and policy world though, the results were both underwhelming and deeply concerning.

After years of development, one might have expected a risk classification tool robust enough to help companies navigate the complex terrain of global sourcing. Instead, the rankings are poised to mislead businesses into thinking certain countries are “low risk” when the realities on the ground tell a very different story.

A NARROW LENS ON RISK

At the heart of the problem is the methodology. The EUDR sets out dual requirements: products placed on or exported from the EU market must be both “deforestation-free” and “produced in compliance with the laws of the country of origin.”



In a global market, knowing the quality of timber and where it came from is very important. As global sustainability and responsible practices become more essential and expected there is a greater demand for the supply chain to be well vetted for illegal logging, deforestation and other harmful practices. Photo: Shutterstock

However, the EC's benchmarking appears to focus overwhelmingly on deforestation metrics and existing EU political sanctions—giving little attention to equally critical issues like governance, corruption, and law enforcement capacity. Findings from Forest Trends' Illicit Harvest, Complicit Goods report further underscore the problem: illegal deforestation and associated commodity trade are widespread in many countries currently labelled as “low” or “standard” risk according to the EC scores. In fact, estimates suggest there is up to 50–90% illegal deforestation in some tropical countries—a level of illegality that cannot be ignored when assessing risk.

This is not a minor oversight. More than a decade of implementing laws like the EU Timber Regulation,

US Lacey Act, and Australia's Illegal Logging Prohibition Act has shown that corruption, weak governance, and limited enforcement capacity are some of the clearest signals of risk—and essential for directing enforcement efforts where they matter most.

Who's high risk? Only the diplomatically convenient

Surprisingly, only Russia, Belarus, Myanmar, and North Korea were classified as “high risk.” These are all countries already under EU Council sanctions for other reasons, making them politically safe choices with little chance of diplomatic blowback.

Meanwhile, countries with long-standing forest governance concerns—Congo, Central African Republic, Papua New Guinea, South Sudan, Solomon Islands—were all marked as low risk, grouped alongside the likes

of Finland, Norway, and the United States. The result is not just misleading—it actively undermines the regulation's credibility.

RE-EXPORT HUBS AND LAUNDERING LOOPHOLES

The inconsistencies continue when it comes to global trade hubs. The risk of laundering and obfuscating origin is real and well documented. Major re-export centres like China, India, and Singapore also receive low-risk labels, despite their documented roles in transshipment processing, and/or re-exporting high-risk materials in ways that obscure original country of harvest. Even more striking is that Turkey and Kazakhstan, which the EC itself has flagged for laundering banned Russian-origin plywood, remain listed as low risk—a troubling disconnect. Without stronger safeguards, the current country classifications could further incentivise this kind of circumvention.

A BETTER LENS: FOREST TRENDS' IDAT RISK SCORES

To help importers and enforcement agencies, Forest Trends developed the Illegal Deforestation and Associated Trade (IDAT) Risk scores in 2017, which offer a more comprehensive view of risk by incorporating indicators of governance quality, corruption, law enforcement capacity, and conflict from credible sources, such as the World Bank, UN agencies, the Economist

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From P 10

Intelligence Unit, and other global governance and environmental data providers. Combined with commodity-specific legal risk data, this approach yields a clearer picture of where due diligence should be strongest. Despite their diverse origins, these indices show strong alignment in relative country rankings.

The 2025 IDAT Risk scores classify 104 countries as high risk, 54 as medium risk, and 53 as low risk. These classifications offer a sharper, more grounded assessment of supply chains.

TALES OF TWO RISK SCORES: EC VS FOREST TRENDS' SCORES

The Republic of the Congo is labelled "low risk" under the EC's EUDR benchmarks, yet Forest Trends' IDAT Risk scores assess it as high risk

due to persistent governance weaknesses and its World Bank designation as a state with high fragility. Forest loss surged 150% in 2024, largely driven by illegal logging and unsustainable land use—closely tied to governance and institutional breakdowns. These are not the signs of a low-risk sourcing environment.

Transshipment hubs are overlooked by the EUDR benchmarks, despite the substantial role they play in today's complex global supply chains. Re-export hubs like China and Vietnam, both classified as low risk, are in fact major importers and processors of raw materials from high-risk countries—often obscuring true origin and complicating verification efforts. Even more concerning, the EC itself has launched investigations into rising imports of banned Russian birch plywood entering through Turkey and

Kazakhstan—also countries labelled low risk by the EUDR but higher risk by Forest Trends' IDAT Risk scores. These gaps suggest that the current classifications will incentivise transshipment and laundering through countries deemed low risk.

THE BOTTOM LINE ON THE EC SCORES: HANDLE WITH CAUTION

For a regulation meant to be a gold standard for global deforestation-free supply chains, this first round of benchmarking is a missed opportunity. Without a fuller picture that includes

governance, legality, and institutional risk, companies would do well to treat these rankings with caution. Due diligence remains their responsibility—and in many cases, the risks run deeper than the EC's classifications suggest.

Relying solely on EUDR benchmarks could weaken the very enforcement system they aim to support. To be effective, enforcement and due diligence must be guided by a broader set of indicators—governance scores, conflict risk, corruption levels, and transshipment patterns.

Because even if a country is rated low risk on deforestation, it doesn't mean it's low risk on legality. Due diligence and enforcement targeting must be guided by a fuller picture.

Source: Forest Trends, written by Kerstin Canby and Marigold Walkins

“A COUNTRY DEEMED LOW RISK ON DEFORESTATION DOES NOT MEAN IT'S LOW RISK ON LEGALITY

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Image: AKD

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“You can’t be what you can’t see” - Marian Wright Edelman.

THE future of the forest and wood products industry workforce is being grown right now. Under the nurturing glow of Australia’s educators, they are sprouting new ideas about the world and their place in it.

ForestLearning, an initiative of Forest & Wood Products Australia (FWPA), exists to support not only teachers with curriculum-aligned teaching resources about sustainable forests and renewable wood products, but also to empower industry members to connect with their local schools and communities. By sharing your story, you can inspire the next generation and help them see a future in forestry.

WHY EARLY INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT MATTERS

Children start thinking about their future careers surprisingly early—often in primary school—and research shows their interests at age seven are similar to those they hold at eighteen.

In fact, 82% of primary students who participated in industry-related activities reported a clearer

“THESE EARLY ENCOUNTERS CAN HELP BREAK DOWN STEREOTYPES



Primary school students on a guided walk with an officer from Forest Corporation of NSW. Photo: FWPA / ForestLearning

understanding of how school subjects connect to real-world jobs and 84% saw that careers aren’t limited by gender (CICA, 2021).

These early encounters can help break down stereotypes and open students’ eyes to meaningful, skilled, and future-focused career pathways like those in the forest and wood products industry.

WAYS TO ENGAGE WITH SCHOOLS:

Incursions: Visit a local school to share your career story, demonstrate skills or equipment, run a short hands-on activity, and answer student questions. Your story matters - and students love hearing from real people. Use ForestLearning’s Industry Champions Toolkit to make incursion activities stress-free and engaging.

Excursions: Host a class or teacher group at your workplace - plantation, sawmill, or research site. ForestLearning can support you in navigating school requests or initiating an invitation.

Virtual presentations: Short on time or based in a remote area? Video calls are a simple, low-cost way to connect with students and show them your work.

Career days: Represent your role, your company, and your story at a local school or region’s career event. Reach students when they begin choosing the paths that will shape their lives.

ForestVR™ Loan Kits – from seed to shelter: Take students or your community on an immersive virtual journey through Australia’s sustainable

forestry cycle and careers without leaving the classroom. ForestVR™ Headset Loan Kits showcase real-world forestry operations, from plantations to sawmills and construction. Ideal for schools, career days, and community events, the kits are free to borrow (just cover postage) and proven to boost understanding and interest in forest and wood product industry careers. [Loan here.](#)

JUST ONE SCHOOL

Schools are actively looking for industry partners to enhance their curriculum with real-world relevance. Your involvement - even with just one school - can leave a lasting impact.

Whether you’re a forester, harvester, ecologist, truck driver, research scientist, sawmill technician or business owner - your experience matters. By connecting with students, you’re helping grow awareness, trust, and interest in the sustainable forestry sector.

Take the first step. Sign up to become an Industry Champion or email us at info@forestlearning.edu.au to get involved. Let us know if you’re planning a school visit or event - we’d love to support and share your story.

Together, let’s plant the seeds for tomorrow’s forest industry.

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Accoya backs woodworking's future with BWF sponsorship

ACCYSYS, the manufacturer of Accoya wood, proudly sponsored the 'Rising Star' award at the British Woodworking Federation (BWF) Awards 2024, reaffirming its commitment to nurturing the next generation of talent in the woodworking and joinery sector.

As part of the sponsorship, winners and shortlisted candidates for the Rising Star award, alongside the Apprentice of the Year finalists, were invited to Accsys' state-of-the-art Accoya wood production facility in Arnhem, The Netherlands, to see first-hand how Accoya is made.

Attendees of the trip included: Lilli Mae, Partnerships Manager at Gowercroft; Harrison Ward, Apprentice/Student at James Wilding Joinery Ltd.; Paige Kavanagh, Carpenter at Corbel Conservation and Tautvydas

Bumblys, Production Administrator at Heron Joinery.

The Accoya sales and marketing team hosted the group, with key representatives including Laura Keily, Head of Marketing; Alejandra Castro, Marketing Manager; and Mike Lewis, Technical Sales Manager. They were supported by Helen Hewitt, CEO of the BWF.

The multi-day experience included exclusive site visits to several long-standing Accoya projects in the Netherlands, offering attendees a first-hand look at the material's performance over time. Stops included the Breakers Beach House in Noordwijk,



A key feature of the trip included a tour of the Accsys' state-of-the-art Accoya wood production facility in Arnhem, The Netherlands. Photo: Accsys

where Accoya's natural aesthetic complements the coastal environment; Fort Vier Restaurant with its distinctive architecture and exposed Accoya cladding; and the 1.5-kilometre Accoya boardwalk in Amsterdam. Now over a decade old and exposed to continuous foot traffic and variable weather, the boardwalk continues to demonstrate Accoya's proven durability,

dimensional stability, and suitability for demanding outdoor applications.

Laura Keily, Head of Marketing commented: "Nurturing the next generation of talent in woodworking is crucial to ensuring a strong future for the industry. We were honoured to host the rising stars of the industry and show them the magic that happens behind the scenes at our Accoya manufacturing site. It was inspiring to show them some of the incredible projects that can be achieved with Accoya and witness their enthusiasm and passion for wood. I look forward to seeing how they will continue to shape the future of our industry."

Swedish Valutec introduces "Closed Loop Drying"

INNOVATION and continuous improvement have always been a crucial part of Valutec's business strategy. Over the past decades the company has successfully developed and registered over 20 patents, and today are improving drying performance at sawmills all over the world.

The new "Closed Loop Drying" patent-pending solution is a further development of a patent registered in 2013 "Drying arrangement for high energy recovery", Enabling drying at two different temperature levels in the two drying zones of the continuous kiln, there is no longer any air exchange with the atmosphere. Instead, each zone maintains a sealed and precisely

controlled microclimate. The air drawn in at the kiln's outlet remains within the system, flows counter to the material direction through the kiln, and is released again in the heating zone at the beginning of the kiln near ambient conditions. Fresh air is used solely for cooling in the heat exchanger and does not encounter the drying zones. The heat exchanger is used exclusively to dry the air, which is then reintroduced into the drying process. This way the energy is utilised three times.

Energy consumption is reduced by up to 50%, resulting in significantly lower overall energy requirements.

"Lumber drying is one of the most energy-intensive



This diagram shows how the Closed Loop Drying system works. Photo: Accsys

processes at the sawmills... The energy savings are substantial — up to 50% is achievable", says patent inventor Robert Larsson, Business Developer at Valutec.

The desire to increase the use of wood is the ultimate reason for Valutec's existence. We have been combining Nordic expertise in the field of lumber drying with

insights into the challenges facing our customers for almost 100 years. This has all been done with the aim of pushing the boundaries of what is possible, both in regards to value-creating

lumber kilns as well as intelligent control systems. Valutec Group, which forms part of Addtech, has companies in Sweden, Finland and North America and had sales of around €45 million in 2024. With more than 6,000 lumber kilns delivered, they are the leading supplier in Europe.

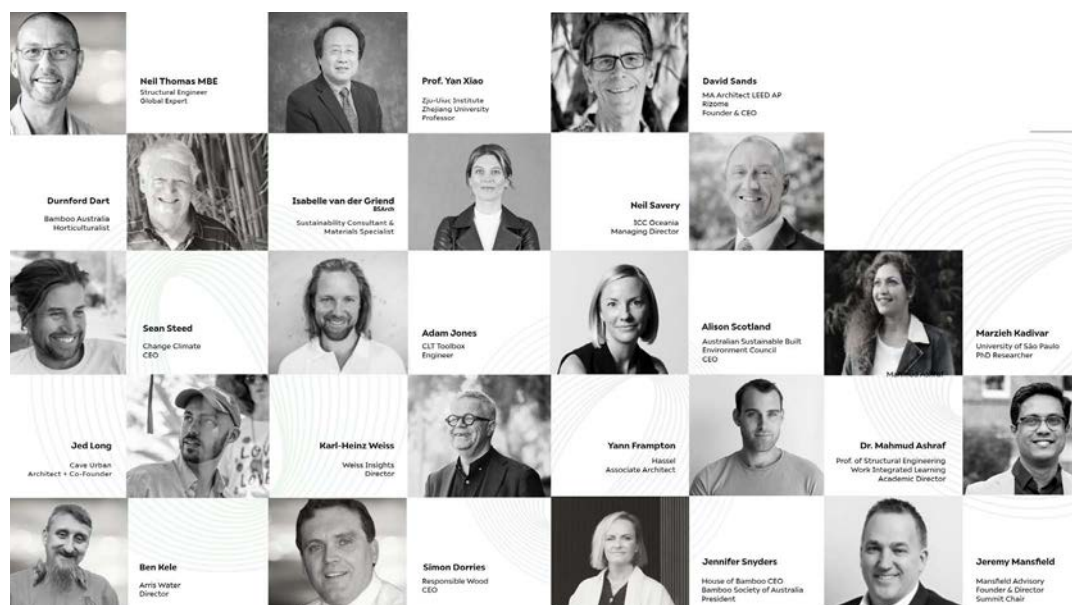
Read more about our "Good for Wood" here.

Bamboo summit to shape Australia's future

National events to launch 10-year engineered bamboo roadmap.

A GROUNDBREAKING three-city national summit will mark the first coordinated push to scale bamboo in Australia's construction, land restoration, and climate strategy—aiming to shift the industry from curiosity to commercialisation. From 18-20 June, the Bamboo Society of Australia (BSA) will launch the Next Frontier Summit, a pivotal event that brings together a diverse group of architects, policymakers, farmers, investors, and global experts to explore bamboo's potential as one of the world's most sustainable building and reforestation materials. Despite its proven applications across Asia and Europe in structural beams, panels, and even multistorey buildings, engineered bamboo remains under-utilised in Australia—yet it offers remarkable benefits, being fast-growing, carbon-sequestering, and stronger than steel by weight. This summit represents a turning point for Australia, as the nation seeks to address pressing challenges in sustainability, carbon reduction, and economic resilience through innovative materials like bamboo. The

“BAMBOO IS NO LONGER A NOVELTY—IT'S A SERIOUS ANSWER TO THREE NATIONAL CHALLENGES: CARBON, SUPPLY, AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE



The summit will have a wide range of speakers covering all the important topics around bamboo, including Responsible Wood's CEO, Simon Dorries. Image: Bamboo Society of Australia

event will not only showcase global success stories but also lay the groundwork for a transformative 10-year roadmap to integrate bamboo into Australia's construction and environmental strategies.

A TIPPING POINT FOR BAMBOO IN AUSTRALIA

"We've hit a tipping point," said Jennifer Snyders, President of the Bamboo Society of Australia. "Bamboo is no longer a novelty—it's a serious answer to three national challenges: carbon, supply, and climate resilience." The Bamboo Society of Australia, a community association dedicated to pioneering bamboo innovation and sustainability, has been at the forefront of this movement. What began as an appreciation for bamboo's aesthetic and cultural value has evolved into a firm commitment to harness its

versatile and eco-friendly potential. The BSA champions a vision to lead a bamboo revolution, addressing global challenges in environmental sustainability, economic resilience, and social welfare. Their mission is clear: to foster and encourage the growth of the bamboo horticultural industry in Australia and advocate for the advancements of the many bamboo bio-products which are emerging. Bamboo, with its ability to grow rapidly and sequester carbon at a higher rate than most trees, offers a unique opportunity to tackle Australia's lagging adoption of low-carbon construction methods. The summit aims to bridge this gap by uniting stakeholders who can drive policy reform, investment, and practical applications of bamboo in building and design.

SUMMIT HIGHLIGHTS AND GLOBAL

EXPERTISE

Headlining the Summit is Neil Thomas MBE, a world-renowned structural engineer behind The Arc at the Green School in Bali—a groundbreaking bamboo structure acclaimed for its innovation. Thomas, with over 30 years of experience, brings a wealth of knowledge to the event. "Bamboo is the most exciting natural material I've worked with in over 30 years," he said. "Its strength, flexibility, and renewability make it ideal for Australia's next generation of buildings." His work on The Arc demonstrates how bamboo can be used to create stunning, sustainable architectural designs that are both functional and environmentally responsible. He'll be joined by leading figures such as Professor Yan Xiao from Zhejiang University, who has pioneered the

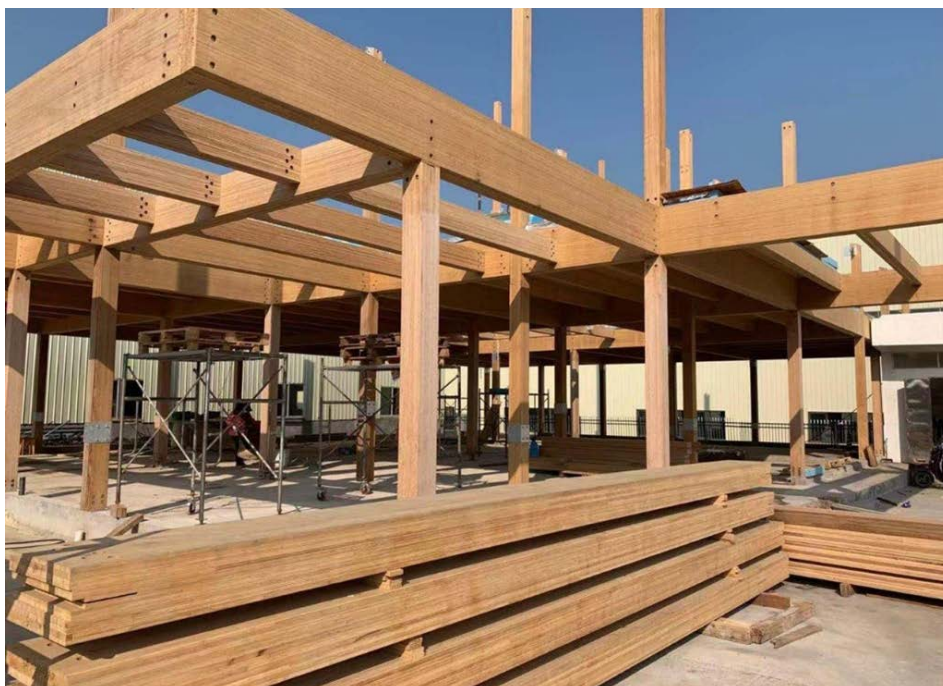
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world structural innovations, including the world's first 6-storey engineered bamboo building in China. Sustainability strategist Isabelle van der Griend from Brightworks Sustainability will also share insights on embodied carbon and bamboo's sustainability benefits, highlighting its potential to reduce the environmental impact of construction. David Sands, whose company Rizome is investing \$150 million into bamboo reforestation in Asia, will showcase bamboo's regenerative potential, with a \$100M investment into the Philippines aiming to plant 10 million bamboo clumps by 2030, drawing down 26 million tonnes of CO₂. Additionally, Sean Steed, CEO of Change Climate, will present the latest on commercialising new sustainable environmental products with the recently patented BYOXY Bio-Epoxy resin, a game-changer for bamboo-based construction materials. These global experts will provide a comprehensive view of bamboo's potential, from practical applications to large-scale environmental impact.

EVENT BREAKDOWN ACROSS THREE CITIES

The Summit, held in the Sunshine Coast, Sydney, and Melbourne from 18-20 June, will feature over 20 speakers exploring a wide range of topics, including structural innovation with



A factory and showroom constructed out of structural bamboo.. Image: Bamboo Society of Australia

engineered bamboo, climate-smart design and sustainable architecture, and local growing, policy reform, and regional investment. Each city will host a tailored event to address different aspects of the bamboo industry, ensuring a holistic approach to scaling its use in Australia.

On 18 June, the Sunshine Coast Stakeholder Forum at the University of Sunshine Coast will focus on building Australia's bamboo supply chain. The Bamboo Society of Australia will introduce the 10-year roadmap, followed by Neil Thomas MBE sharing global insights. Durnford Dart will offer 30 years of bamboo growing insights, while Ben Kele from Arris Water will discuss using recycled water for cultivation. A research showcase will feature Dr. Marzieh Kadivar on commercialisation challenges, with Simon Dorries, CEO of Responsible Wood and Neil Savary addressing sustainability certification and regulatory hurdles. A panel will tackle cultivation, processing, and logistics challenges.

The Sydney Public Forum on 19 June at the University

of Technology Sydney and House of Bamboo will ignite demand for bamboo in construction. Neil Thomas MBE and Professor Yan Xiao will highlight global applications, including the world's first 6-storey bamboo building. Isabelle van der Griend and Dr. Mahmud Ashraf will discuss sustainability and mechanical properties, while case studies from Yann Frampton and Jennifer Snyders will showcase practical uses. An evening event will offer networking, an exhibition, and discussions with experts, plus drinks and finger food.

The Melbourne Stakeholder Forum on 20 June at RMIT will connect supply, demand, and policy. David Sands from Rizome will highlight their \$100M investment in the Philippines, aiming to plant 10 million bamboo clumps by 2030. Sean Steed will present bio-resin innovations, while panels and roundtables will explore cultivation, investment opportunities, and policy frameworks, including subsidies and R&D funding, to support the industry.

WHY BAMBOO MATTERS FOR AUSTRALIA

Australia lags in adopting low-carbon construction methods, making the push for bamboo a timely and critical initiative. Bamboo is regenerative, ultra-fast growing, and absorbs 30-40% more CO₂ than most tree species per hectare, making it a powerful tool for carbon

sequestration. Engineered bamboo, such as laminated bamboo lumber or bamboo scrimber, is as strong as or stronger than many hardwoods and softwoods used in construction. Bamboo scrimber, in particular, has comparable compressive and tensile strength to steel and a higher strength-to-weight ratio than timber, making it an ideal material for a variety of structural applications. Globally, bamboo has been used in multi-storey construction, with notable examples like the 6-storey engineered bamboo building in China. Bamboo's root system remains intact after harvest, enabling rapid regrowth without replanting and preventing erosion, while its potential for carbon credits, particularly with voluntary carbon markets emerging in Australia, adds an economic incentive for adoption. The global market for engineered bamboo was worth around \$38 billion in 2023 and is expected to grow steadily to over \$47 billion by 2030, with major

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markets including China, India, Vietnam, Colombia, and parts of Africa, and growing interest in Europe and North America for green construction. Unlocking its use in Australia could transform regional economies and architectural practices, providing both environmental and economic benefits.

A common misconception that "bamboo can't grow well in Australia" is false. Bamboo thrives in many parts of the country, particularly in the subtropical and tropical zones, including New South Wales, Queensland, the Northern Territory, and parts of Western Australia. With the right cultivation practices, as will be discussed at the summit, Australia could become a leader in bamboo production and innovation.

SHAPING THE FUTURE WITH A 10-YEAR ROADMAP

Insights from the Summit will inform the development of Australia's 10-Year Bamboo Roadmap, launching on World



Detailed bamboo joinery. Image: Bamboo Society of Australia

Bamboo Day—18 September 2025. The roadmap will outline strategies to address production challenges, such as scaling cultivation, improving processing and logistics, and overcoming commercialisation hurdles. It will also focus on policy frameworks, discussing subsidies, land use, and R&D funding to support the industry, as well as investment opportunities that highlight the economic and environmental benefits of bamboo. The roadmap aims to position bamboo as

a cornerstone of Australia's low-carbon construction future, fostering innovation in structural engineering, sustainable architecture, and regional economic development.

The Next Frontier Summit is a call to action for Australia to embrace bamboo's potential. The full program

details and registration is available here. With bamboo thriving in Australia's subtropical and tropical zones, this summit is set to debunk myths and drive a sustainable revolution in construction and design. By uniting global expertise, local innovation, and forward-thinking policy, the Bamboo Society of Australia is paving the way for a greener, more resilient future, where bamboo plays a central role in shaping the nation's architectural and environmental landscape.



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Rio Tinto expands into forestry sector

MINING giant Rio Tinto is diving into a groundbreaking biofuel project, planting native pongamia trees across Australia's Northern Territory and Queensland to cut its reliance on fossil fuels. The company's sowing 8,000 trees near its Gove Peninsula bauxite project and 750,000 at a newly acquired 3,000-hectare farm near Townsville. These oil-rich pongamia seeds will be processed into renewable diesel to fuel Rio's mining fleet, with harvesting

expected in five years. The trees, which thrive on degraded or previously mined land, also produce meal that can be treated for cattle feed, adding value to the project.

Rio Tinto's Gove Operations town manager, Andres Hoffman, said the fast-growing pongamia, common in Brisbane and Darwin suburbs, offers a long-term solution. "It's a hardy tree with a long lifespan, perfect for tough landscapes," he explained.

While not enough to power Rio's entire fleet, the biofuel will play a key role. This follows a successful trial of 10 million litres of renewable diesel from used cooking oil in Rio's Pilbara operations. Forestry Industry Association's Hanna Lillicrap praised the investment, noting pongamia's potential in decarbonising hard-to-abate sectors. With Australia leading pongamia research, Rio's efforts could set a precedent for sustainable mining practices nationwide.



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