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ISSUE 896 // 30 April 2026

# timber & FORESTRY *e*news

## 20,000 seedlings to be delivered to support koalas

COVER STORY P 5



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# Firewood thief cops \$10,000 fine

## Illegal firewood collection.

WORKING forests and national parks are at risk from illegal firewood gatherers. While multiple schemes exist for legal firewood gathering, the high cost of firewood has made breaking the law an attractive option for some – including organised crime gangs who conduct large-scale thefts.

Stiff consequences for illegal firewood collection exist under the law. Recently, a significant fine was handed down in the Geelong Magistrates' Court. A Winchelsea man was convicted through the Conservation Regulator's Taskforce Ironbark and received a \$10,000 fine after unlawfully cutting down trees and damaging wildlife habitat in the Otway Forest Park.

The 28-year-old pleaded guilty to five offences relating to illegally felling and taking messmate trees, damaging hollow-bearing logs which provide shelter for wildlife, and unauthorised off-road driving.

On 7 August 2025, Conservation Regulator Authorised Officers, with the support of Victoria Police, intercepted the man in connection with the illegal removal of timber from Paddy's Swamp in the Otway Forest Park.

The man accessed the site via an illegal trailbike track, unlawfully felled four messmate trees, partially processed the timber for firewood, and loaded it into his four-wheel drive.



**The four-wheel drive filled with illegally collected firewood was impounded at Paddy's Swamp.** Image: courtesy Vic Gov

The felled trees included hollow-bearing logs that provide critical habitat for native wildlife within the Otway Forest Park, including the gang gang cockatoo and swamp antechinus, which are threatened species.

More than 9000 trees are illegally cut down in Victoria's State forests, reserves and parks each year. Taskforce Ironbark is a state-wide initiative led by the Conservation Regulator to disrupt the

theft and illegal trade of firewood from Victoria's public land. As well as catching and prosecuting thieves, the Taskforce raises community awareness through regular patrols, intelligence-gathering and education opportunities.

Glenn Sharp, manager of regulatory operations Barwon South West, said, "This outcome sends a clear warning to illegal firewood operators. Those caught unlawfully removing timber from public land will be held to account."

"The illegal removal of firewood damages forest health and wildlife habitat. Messmate trees play an important role by providing habitat, food and shelter for many native birds and marsupials, including threatened species."

Domestic firewood collection from public land for personal use is only permitted in designated areas during the autumn and spring firewood collection seasons. For more information, visit [vic.gov.au/sourcing-firewood](http://vic.gov.au/sourcing-firewood).

"Before heading out to source firewood, it's important to know the rules around where, when and what timber can be collected to avoid serious fines and penalties," said Sharp.

Suspected illegal firewood activity can be reported to Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000. Reports can be anonymous.

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# Time to call it what it really is

IN Issue #888 published on 5 March, *Enews* featured a detailed article on Izzy Smith, who works in the Central West for Forestry Corporation of NSW. At just 23 years old, Izzy shared valuable insights into forestry operations and her career journey—from completing her schooling and working in office administration to pursuing a profession in forestry, which has clearly become her passion.

Izzy raised a very important point several people have commented on as being more than just an important phrase - something we completely agree with. Her point is that forestry operates along the lines of farming, that is, a crop of trees is planted for the sole purpose of harvesting at the right time. Of course, unlike most crops, softwood pine takes around 28 years to reach maturity – a true long-term investment.

To quote directly from that article Izzy said: “I would say to those that are concerned about our industry that we are large-scale **long-rotation crop farmers**. The trees are a crop, just like wheat or barley. At the end of day, they grow back just as fast as they did the first time. All we are doing is making space for the next generation.

“How many other farmers must protect their crop for 28 years, before they can reap the rewards? I can understand how it looks when we cut the trees down. However, this pine was planted purely for this reason, it's been assessed, so we are aware of native habitat trees or endangered species in there and take measures to protect them. The forest was built for that purpose.

“The country needs our forests to be

“SO WHY STRESS THE WORD MANAGED? BECAUSE REGROWTH ON ITS OWN ISN'T ENOUGH



**Long rotation crops or managed regrowth are two of the ways that forestry can be referred to that better highlight the truth of our sustainable industry.** Image: courtesy FCNSW

sustainable. The public need houses, regional timber towns need employment. In most cases, within two years of a harvest, new trees are growing there. Think about that.”

In issue #893 published on 9 April, *Enews* shared an article written by Nick Steel who is the CEO of the Tasmanian Forest Products Association (TFPA). Nick wrote about how “Words shape perception” and his article goes on to state: “What we now call native forestry bears little resemblance to those critical practices of the past. In reality, our industry is now built on sustainability, science, and long-term stewardship.”

“Which is why it's time we start calling it what it really is: **managed regrowth**.”

Nick went onto explain “So why stress the word managed? Because regrowth on its own isn't enough. Left unchecked, regrowth forests can face higher risks of catastrophic bushfires, pest outbreaks, and disease. Active management helps reduce these risks while maintaining

habitats and ensuring a steady, renewable supply of timber”.

“Modern forestry plans don't just measure logs, they track soil health, monitor species populations, and plan for fire resilience. Forestry workers collaborate with ecologists, Indigenous land managers, and government regulators. The result? A working landscape that produces materials we all rely on - housing timber, paper, biofuels - without sacrificing ecological integrity”.

## LONG-ROTATION CROP FARMING AND MANAGED REGROWTH.

Two different people from different locations within Australia bringing a clear message about forestry operations, being long-rotation crop farming and managed regrowth.

These statements are accurate and we need to challenge ourselves to make these changes in our everyday language. I know we are trying.



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# Nominations closing for QLD Timber & Hardware Industry Awards

RECOGNITION doesn't happen by chance—it happens when the industry steps up and nominates the people and businesses driving performance, safety, and excellence across our sector.

The 2026 Queensland Timber & Hardware Industry Awards will be held on July 18, 2026, 6:30pm–11:30pm at Rydges Southbank, Brisbane and we need your say on who should be nominated at the best-of-the-best.

Time is running out. All nominations must be submitted by **Friday 1 May 2026**. It only takes five minutes to nominate, but the impact of recognition lasts far longer.

**“IF SOMEONE IS DOING GREAT...DON'T ASSUME THEY'LL BE RECOGNISED**



**Friday May 1 is the last opportunity to nominate for the QLD 2026 awards.** Image: supplied

Members are encouraged to submit nominations across all categories:

- NTHA Trainee/Apprentice of the Year
- NTHA Student of the Year
- NTHA Host Employer of the Year
- Outstanding Employee Award
- 30+ Years Industry Service
- Safety Champion Award
- Industry Icon
- Workplace Equity Award

- Trade Store of the Year
- Retail Store of the Year (Under 2500sqm)
- Retail Store of the Year (Over 2500sqm)
- Best Off-site Manufacturing Award
- Building Materials Supplier of the Year
- Retail Hardware Supplier of the Year
- Timber Supplier of the Year
- Supplier Sales Representative Awards (Timber, Retail Hardware, Building Materials)

### TICKETS

- Dinner Guest: \$185 (inc GST)
- Table of 10: \$1,700 (inc GST)
- RSVP for event: 30 June 2026
- Purchase Tickets Here

If someone is doing great work in your business or across the industry, don't assume they'll be recognised. Click here to nominate them now.

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**Australian Forest Products Association**

**AFPA THE LEADING VOICE FOR AUSTRALIA'S FOREST PRODUCTS SECTOR**

# 20,000 trees to boost koala conservation initiatives

KOALA habitat is being restored across flood-impacted parts of the Northern Rivers, with community groups and Indigenous Ranger teams leading the planting of thousands of vital eucalypt trees.

A total of 20,000 seedlings will be delivered through Koala Conservation Australia's (KCA) annual Koala Food Tree Giveaway, helping to rebuild and reconnect critical habitat corridors for local koala populations.

The tallowwood, grey gum and forest red gum seedlings have been grown from seed by Forestry Corporation NSW and donated to KCA through a partnership spanning over ten years.

Since its inception, the program has delivered more than 185,000 seedlings to landholders, community groups and large-scale restoration projects across the NSW North Coast. We're proud to reach 200,000 trees in 2026.



2026 will mark 200,000 trees donated to help with conservation and restoration of bushfire and flood-damaged koala habitats. Image: Shutterstock

This year, seedlings will be distributed through WWF Australia's Koala Friendly Carbon Initiative, with Indigenous Ranger teams supporting on-ground planting.

Koala Conservation Australia's Conservation Manager, Scott Castle, said the program is a critical step in restoring habitat following extreme weather events.

"The annual koala food tree giveaway goes some way to regenerating and connecting existing habitats. We've helped restore critical habitat in the wider community after devastating bushfires and floods. This year we're changing the structure of the giveaway, and working on a few large projects, to

recover and enhance flood affected habitat to our north."

KCA remains committed to growing koala food trees at its two koala food plantations - at Maria River and Moripo - as a cornerstone of its conservation work.

Forestry Corporation's Grafton Nursery produces more than one million seedlings annually to support plantation forestry and regional timber supply.

Forestry Corporation's Senior Manager Community & Partnerships, Kathy Lyons, said the initiative highlights the impact of strong partnerships.

"These seedlings play an important role in strengthening koala habitat and supporting the resilience of koala populations in the Northern Rivers and will be delivered to multiple program partners, including Indigenous ranger groups, who are central to on-ground restoration and long-term land stewardship," Ms Lyons said.

“THESE SEEDLINGS PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN STRENGTHENING KOALA HABITAT

On the cover: Forestry Corporation is part of the annual Koala Food Tree Giveaway, an initiative to help rebuild and reconnect critical habitat corridors for local koala populations. Pictured is nursery worker Tiara Mundine. Image: courtesy Forestry Corporation

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# Business Grants

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for our industry here.

Business Grant Advisors can assist you with eligibility criteria, grant writing, application process and lodgement. They offer hourly through to full end-to-end service. You can schedule an

appointment directly on a day and time that suits you based on their listed availability. The initial appointment is free for a confidential chat. Go online to book: <https://calendly.com/profshell/introductory-session>

## Australian Forest and Wood Innovations (AFWI) national open call for research

AFWI is co-investing in industry-led or investigator-led research partnerships that address significant national challenges and opportunities across the forest and wood products value chain.

Australian Forest and Wood Innovations (AFWI) is Australia's national research and innovation institute for forest science, wood products innovation, sustainable materials and bio-based industry development.

AFWI invests in research partnerships that strengthen forest productivity and resilience, improve fibre utilisation and manufacturing competitiveness, expand the adoption of engineered timber and modern methods of construction, and develop credible approaches to forests and wood products in climate and natural capital systems.

Proposals should demonstrate strong collaboration with industry partners, align with AFWI's four Strategic Pillars – Healthier Forests, Maximising Fibre Use and Value, Climate Solutions and Housing Innovation – and show a credible pathway to industry adoption and impact.

AFWI's objective is to undertake cross-disciplinary research spanning the full forest and forest products value chain, supporting the creation and adoption of new knowledge, products and services co-developed with industry.

AFWI encourages projects led by,



**Don't miss this grant opportunity for research funding.** Image: Shutterstock.

or, involving Indigenous organisations and stakeholders that incorporate First Nations' perspectives and provide benefits to their communities and enterprises.

Projects must demonstrate strong collaboration with multiple industry partners and secure matching funding from industry or other funding sources in the forest and forest products sector.

While cash contributions from project partners are preferred, AFWI will also consider in-kind support. These co-contributions must at least equal the amount provided by the AFWI grant and can exceed 50 per cent of the total project cost.

Proposals need to demonstrate alignment to AFWI's four strategic pillars:

- Healthier Forests: Building a resilient, productive and climate-adapted forest estate.
- Maximising Fibre: Lifting fibre recovery, processing efficiency and value creation.

- Climate Solutions: Positioning Australia as a leader in forest-based climate and natural capital systems.

- Housing Innovation: Accelerating adoption of engineered timber and MMC to support national housing supply.

Eligible applicants include but are not limited to:

- Research Organisations including universities and the CSIRO
- Forestry and forest products industry stakeholders including industry associations and peak bodies
- Indigenous organisations
- Not for profits
- Local and state governments
- Consortia or partnerships (lead organisation must be based in Australia)
- Private or public companies (must be based in Australia)

### GRANT DETAILS

**Provider:** Australian Forest and Wood Innovations (AFWI)

**Amount:** \$50,000 - \$2,500,000

**Round 1 Closes:** 14 May 2026

**Location:** National

**Who Can Apply:**

Government  
Non-Government  
Education  
Community Groups  
Businesses

**Co-Contribution Required:** Yes

<https://www.afwi.au/research/national-open-call/>

**MAY**

**5: WoodSolutions Webinar – ONLINE, 11.00am.** In a tough market focused on affordability, how can residential builders differentiate? Join Green Homes Australia CEO Mick Fabar and WoodSolutions Timber Framing Campaign Manager Christine Briggs to explore a real-world perspective on delivering energy-efficient, high-performing housing to support business growth. Register now to earn CPD points: <https://hubs.li/Q04cY7220>

**6: Timber Queensland Webinar – ONLINE, 11.00am.** Explore the versatility of locally-grown cypress. Learn how cypress is naturally durable, termite resistance and has strong sustainability credentials including technical experts and designers providing international case studies. To register, click here.

**15: Victoria & Tasmania Timber & Hardware Industry Awards – Arts Centre Melbourne, 6.30pm - 11.30pm.** Join us in celebrating the Victorian/Tasmanian Timber and Hardware Industry. For more information, visit <https://www.ntha.com.au/eventdetails/37604/2026-victoria-tasmania-timber-hardware-industry-awards> or contact Tahlia at [events@ntha.com.au](mailto:events@ntha.com.au)

**17-19: SAVE THE DATE: Professional Woodworking Expo – NEC, Birmingham, UK.** Dedicated event for woodworking professionals, the Professional Woodworking Expo is the essential platform for joinery and installation businesses. For more information, contact Jess Hardisty: [jess.hardisty@montgomerygroup.com](mailto:jess.hardisty@montgomerygroup.com)

**18-19: FTMA National Conference – Sunshine Coast Convention Centre, Novotel Twin Waters, QLD.** The conference theme, At the Crossroads – Reframing for Growth, reflects the pivotal decisions facing our sector as

we navigate a rapidly evolving housing market, new technologies and changing material preferences. Delegates will hear from internationally renowned futurist and best-selling author Michael McQueen along with long-time industry expert, Tim Woods, who will provide his comprehensive housing and market update. For more information, contact [kersten@ftma.com.au](mailto:kersten@ftma.com.au)

**20-21: SAVE THE DATE: 5th International Forest Business Conference – Sheraton Sopot Hotel, Poland.** A two-day conference on megatrends that shape responsible forest and wood industry investments. The conference aims to bring together leading timberland investment management organizations, investors interested in forestry asset class and sustainable wood industry representatives in order to exchange and share experiences and ideas about new forest business frontiers. Register at [www.fba-events.com](http://www.fba-events.com) or contact [rafal@forest-analytics.com](mailto:rafal@forest-analytics.com)

**JUNE**

**9-11: SAVE THE DATE: Woodex Trade Exhibition – Gallagher Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa.** Africa's premier trade exhibition for timber, woodworking machinery, tools, and forestry. WoodEX for Africa has evolved into a true international event, consistently attracting visitors and exhibitors from more than 20 countries. Visit [www.woodexforafrica.com](http://www.woodexforafrica.com) for more information.

**23: SAVE THE DATE: AFPA members dinner – QT Hotel, Canberra, 6.30pm - 9.30pm.** Further information, including speakers and registration details coming soon.

**JULY**

**18: Queensland Timber & Hardware Industry Awards – Rydges South Bank, Brisbane 6.30pm - 11.30pm.**

Join us in celebrating the Queensland Timber and Hardware Industry. For more information, visit <https://www.ntha.com.au/eventdetails/37606/2026-queensland-timber-hardware-industry-awards> or contact Tahlia at [events@ntha.com.au](mailto:events@ntha.com.au)

**SEPTEMBER**

**4: New South Wales & ACT Timber & Hardware Industry Awards – Doltone House, Sydney 6.30pm - 11.30pm.** Join us in celebrating the NSW Timber and Hardware Industry. For more information, visit <https://www.ntha.com.au/eventdetails/38006/2026-new-south-wales-act-timber-hardware-industry-awards> or contact Tahlia at [events@ntha.com.au](mailto:events@ntha.com.au)

**12: SAVE THE DATE: 2026 WFTN Cocktails for Charity – Cloudland, Brisbane, 1.30pm - 6.00pm.** In support of Zephyr Education Limited. Further information, and ticket sale details coming soon.

**OCTOBER**

**7-9: Forestry Australia 2026 Symposium – Rex Hotel, Canberra.** This Symposium will explore how the forestry sector can articulate and share its values and engage constructively with diverse audiences and stakeholders – from local communities and Traditional Owners, to politicians and policymakers, the media, and the wider public. For more information visit <https://www.forestry.org.au/2026-symposium/>

**NOVEMBER**

**18: SAVE THE DATE: 2026 SIM-PAC Sustainability Awards – Castlereagh Boutique Hotel, Sydney.** The Awards recognise practical leadership in decarbonisation, circular economy, and sustainable industrial practice across the Asia-Pacific region. Further information will be available soon on the Awards website <https://www.sim-pac.live/2026-awards>

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# Letter from Timber Queensland's CEO

## Where the rubber hits the road.

By **MICK STEPHENS**

Following on from issue #895, Timber Queensland CEO, Mick Stephens, has shared his thoughts on Queensland policy and future plans for the Queensland timber and forestry industry.

*This year I am pleased to report that the policy environment for the Queensland timber industry has improved significantly with a genuine shift in attention by Government over the past twelve months.*

*During this time our members, the broader industry and the hard-working team at Timber Queensland have worked collaboratively with the new Crisafulli Government to provide a solid footing on which to build a strong future across the plantation softwood, native hardwood and cypress sectors through to downstream manufacturing. The Government has listened to our call for a comprehensive plan to remove productivity barriers and has put the forest and timber industry back at the forefront of strategic economic development.*

*In October 2025, the Queensland Government released the new Queensland Future Timber Plan as a landmark moment for our industry. This new plan sets out a comprehensive and strategic direction to strengthen and grow the industry to 2050 and help achieve the goal to build 1 million new homes by 2044. The plan will be supported by a broad range of priority actions to be co-designed and co-led in partnership between industry and the Queensland Government.*

*This collaborative approach included high level consultation as part of the Timber Supply Chain Ministerial Roundtable with the Minister for Primary Industries, the Hon Tony Perrett, Member for Gympie. As Minister, we have welcomed his passion and commitment to the industry, with valuable firsthand knowledge and experience. This experience has included harvesting, milling and building his family home from timber sourced from his own rural property - a testimony to his love of timber!*

*It's now time for the rubber to hit the road in terms of implementing the plan and making progress on such broad themes*



**Mick Stephens, CEO of Timber Queensland.** Image: courtesy Timber Queensland

*as resource security, manufacturing and supply chain competitiveness, workforce development and ongoing innovation and regulatory reform to boost productivity and growth to meet the demand for wood products. The importance of this work cannot be understated in light of the current fuel crisis, and we acknowledge that priority work has already started with the Department of Primary Industries as lead agency for the plan.*

*As an industry, we should be rightly proud of our clean and green credentials, being a renewable and sustainable industry that provides an essential material for our homes and public infrastructure. There should be nothing more noble than providing the essential materials*

*for such fundamental human needs as shelter and a place to call home for millions of Australians.*

*Then there are the significant carbon benefits from using timber products in the built environment. In 2025, for example, over 33,000 new homes were completed in Queensland with around 80% constructed using renewable pine framing. The use of structural timber frames in these homes would have removed 265,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, in addition to other materials such as decking, cabinetry and furniture. This is equivalent to offsetting over 3 million one-way flights from Brisbane to Sydney.*

*It is for these reasons that we are pleased to be part of this wonderful industry. As I have said before, we really do care about our industry, our people, our environment and our future. We look forward to the year ahead.*

**Do you have SOMETHING to say?**

Share observations, comments, opinions, by email and, subject to normal editorial rules, your feedback will be published.

Send media releases, news stories, events, any timber and forestry news related information anytime to Donyale, Jess and Nicky at the following dedicated email address -

[editors@timberandforestrynews.com](mailto:editors@timberandforestrynews.com)

**Hello!**

s B d f @ #

**Dear Editor**

# Three future pathways for our industry to achieve emission reductions

THE new decarbonisation study, *Building a Low-Carbon Future for Australia*, developed by Wood Beca, provides a clear, evidence-based view of how the forest and wood products industry can contribute to a lower-carbon future for Australia.

Taking a whole-of-life approach, the study examines carbon flows across the full value chain, from forests and processing through to construction, use and end-of-life. The findings reinforce the important role the industry already plays, while identifying practical opportunities to go further.

## A STRONG STARTING POINT

The report shows the industry is starting from a position of strength.

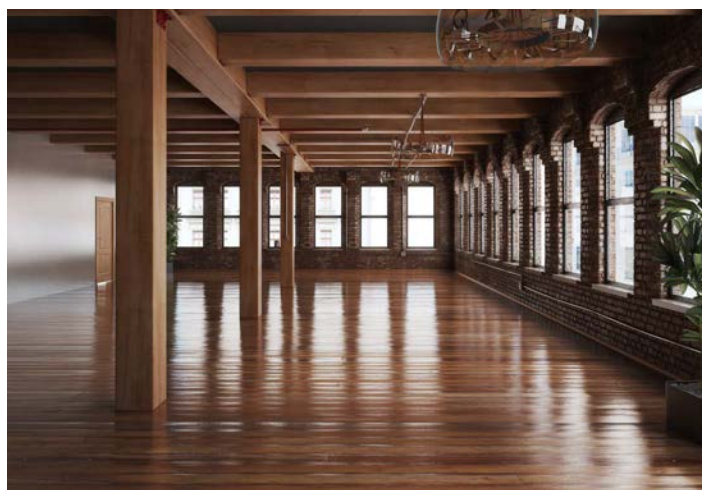
In 2023, the sector accounted for approximately 0.3% of Australia's total net emissions, while also storing significant amounts of carbon in forests and wood products.

This dual role sets the industry apart. As trees grow, they absorb carbon from the atmosphere, which continues to be stored in long-lived wood products used across the built environment.

## PATHWAYS TO NET ZERO AND BEYOND

The report outlines three potential pathways for the industry:

- Baseline: Emissions continue to decline gradually under current conditions
- Beyond Net Zero: Targeted operational changes, such as increased use of biomass energy, accelerate emissions reduction
- Building a Low-Carbon Future: Combines operational improvements



**Timber not only removes and stores carbon from the atmosphere, but increased use of timber can also play a vital role in addressing the housing crisis, while delivering beautiful, sustainable built environments..** Image: Shutterstock

with increased use of timber in construction

Under the most ambitious pathway, the industry could reach net zero as early as 2029 and move beyond, removing more carbon from the atmosphere than it emits.

## THE ROLE OF TIMBER IN CONSTRUCTION

A key finding is the impact of material choice in the built environment. Increasing the use of timber, particularly in residential, commercial and mid-rise construction, can significantly reduce embodied carbon.

The report highlights that:

- Early design decisions have a major influence on carbon outcomes
- Timber and hybrid systems offer practical, scalable solutions
- Existing technologies, including engineered wood products, are ready to be applied at greater scale

This presents a clear opportunity for the industry to support Australia's growing housing needs while contributing to lower emissions outcomes.

## TURNING INSIGHTS INTO IMPACT

For FWPA, this work is about more than analysis, it's about action.

The report directly supports FWPA's role in:

- Growing demand for timber products through evidence-based market development
- Supporting members with practical insights that can be applied across design, manufacturing and construction
- Strengthening the industry's value proposition in a changing regulatory and market environment

By translating research into real-world application, FWPA is helping ensure members are well-positioned to respond to emerging opportunities.

## SUPPORTING INDUSTRY AND COMMUNITY OUTCOMES

Importantly, the findings highlight how industry growth and broader community outcomes can go hand in hand.

Expanding the use of timber can:

- Support the delivery of sustainable housing
- Strengthen regional economies and jobs
- Contribute to Australia's emissions reduction goals

## LOOKING AHEAD

The report provides a clear direction for the future – one that builds on the industry's existing strengths while unlocking new opportunities for growth.

FWPA will continue working with members, government and industry partners to translate these insights into practical outcomes, supporting a more productive, competitive and sustainable forest and wood products sector.

The full report, *Building a Low-Carbon Future for Australia*, is now available to download.

“THE STUDY EXAMINES CARBON FLOWS ACROSS THE FULL VALUE CHAIN

“THE INDUSTRY COULD REACH NET ZERO AS EARLY AS 2029

# Australia's forest industries can reach net zero by 2029

AS a result of the carbon stocks stored in Australia's production forests, the forest industries supply chain has a clear trajectory to reach net zero and is critical for achieving a low-carbon future, according to the new report released by Forest & Wood Products Australia (FWPA).

The ground-breaking *Building a Low-Carbon Future for Australia* report showed the forestry and forest products industry supply chain has a clear and credible pathway for reaching net zero emissions, potentially as early as 2029, under the right policy settings.

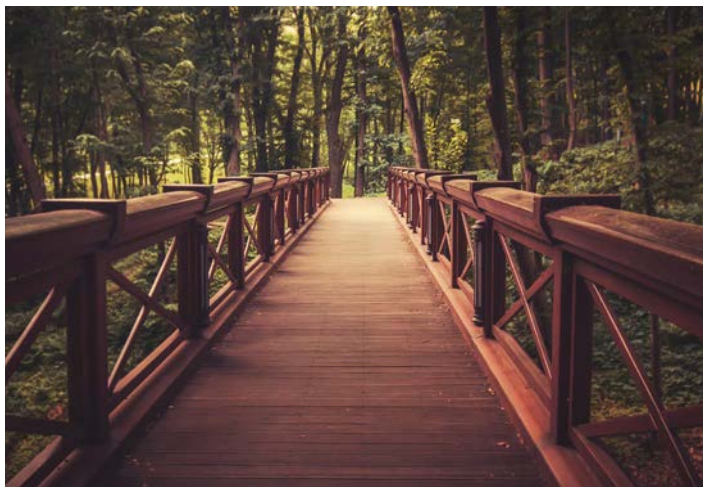
The evidence-based study also dispels misleading claims that forestry is an intensive carbon emitter, and ending the harvesting of trees will lead to long-term carbon benefits. This is not accepted science in Australia or internationally.

AFPA Chief Executive Officer Diana Hallam said, "The new report provides a clear baseline for industry's emissions across the entire supply chain. It showcases forestry's impressive carbon credentials with production forests currently storing about 14,263 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (MtCO<sub>2</sub>e) and, through photosynthesis, removing more than 15.8 MtCO<sub>2</sub>e annually from the atmosphere. This equates to taking about 3.4 million cars off Australia's roads each and every year.

"Forestry is Australia's sixth largest manufacturing sector and can be the first to achieve net zero under the scenarios outlined in the report, which is a remarkable achievement. (See case studies below).

"The landmark study by Wood Beca and FWPA comprehensively confirms Australia's forest industries supply chain is a low-emissions industry, and a cornerstone for climate action into the future.

"The report also shows that forestry can also go beyond net zero and help



**Harvested timber not only stores the carbon it collected during growth, but when used for construction, it saves even more carbon compared to steel and concrete alternatives.** Image: Shutterstock

the Federal Government meet its 2050 emissions target, as sustainably managed forests act as carbon vacuums, by storing carbon in trees and long-lived wood products and building materials."

Ms Hallam said, "We have been working closely with the Government to harness and unlock the full potential of the forestry, timber and wood fibre sector to help Australia meet its net zero targets, including by using more timber in the built environment.

"Three of the Government's recent Net Zero Sectoral Plans all acknowledge that forestry will play a key role in supporting Australia's climate ambitions. We also understand what we need to achieve to maximise our decarbonation efforts in the future.

"Strengthening the forestry industry will help Australia to address climate change and ensure we have sovereign capability in timber supply to provide essential everyday products as well as continue to support jobs, economic growth and long-term productivity for our nation."

Read the full report here.

## INDUSTRY CASE STUDIES ON EMISSIONS REDUCTION

### Hyne Timber

Hyne has installed several innovations to reduce emissions and energy use. For example, the company has installed a

Continuous Drying Kiln Heat Exchanger (Air Preheater) at its Tuan sawmill in Queensland to improve thermal efficiency during the winter months and reduce gas consumption. Hyne also has a solar-powered pump for its sediment dam at the Tuan sawmill, as well as new solar lighting at the sawmill to replace end-of-life solar lighting units to maintain site emergency lighting during grid outages.

### OneFortyOne Jubilee sawmill

OneFortyOne has reached a major milestone in decarbonising

its manufacturing operations, with phase one of the biomass powered cogeneration project at its Jubilee Sawmill in Mount Gambier now complete. The successful commissioning of a new fuel handling system marks the first step in a broader A\$88 million investment to transform the site into a renewable energy powered operation. Once fully implemented, the cogeneration system will enable Jubilee to generate its own electricity from waste fibre, eliminating Scope 2 emissions across OneFortyOne's Australian sawmill operations and supporting its 2030 emissions reduction target.

### Timberlink Bell Bay in Tasmania

Timberlink has invested in decarbonisation at both its Bell Bay, Tasmania and Tarpeena, South Australia manufacturing facilities with a transition to using electric forklifts. The company has 20 electric forklifts that will be commissioned to replace diesel units and will deliver nearly 40 per cent of total Scope 1 & 2 reductions required to meet 2030 science-based targets. This will help to deliver approximately 38 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e savings per forklift per year. Timberlink has also implemented energy-efficient equipment, including on-site solar and the production of new bio-composite products at its Bell Bay facility.

# National report puts WA at top of housing table

“WESTERN Australia retained its status as Australia’s strongest home building market, even extending its lead, atop HIA’s latest Housing Scorecard,” stated HIA Senior Economist Tom Devitt.

HIA’s Housing Scorecard benchmarks contemporary levels of activity in each state and territory against long term averages across indicators of home building and renovations activity, lending data and population flows.

“Western Australia’s home building recovery has produced the strongest detached housing sector in the nation, the equal strongest renovations sector, and the equal second strongest multi-units market,” added Mr Devitt.

“Activity has been supported by the most impressive migration dynamics in the nation, with tens of thousands of arrivals each year from both overseas and interstate.

“Western Australia, Queensland and South Australia filled out the top three spots of the Housing Scorecard, comfortably ahead of the other



**HIA’s Housing Scorecard provides an excellent overview for suppliers of building materials.**

Image: Shutterstock

jurisdictions, leading the national recovery across most individual indicators of housing and renovations activity.

“New South Wales, Victoria and the Northern Territory sat in the middle of the pack in this Housing Scorecard. All three jurisdictions are still seeing relatively weak volumes of new home building entering the pipeline.

“Nonetheless, underlying demand for housing in these jurisdictions is being supported by the continued inflow of

overseas migrants. Moreover, signs of strengthening activity in these markets are expected to continue through 2026 and beyond.

“Rounding out the Housing Scorecard are the Australian Capital Territory and Tasmania, both struggling to get off the bottom of the list for a number of years now.

“Both jurisdictions underperformed on a number of indicators of detached housing, multi-unit and renovations activity. Local residents continue to leave for other states and territories, while Tasmania is also the only jurisdiction receiving fewer net overseas migrant arrivals than their decade average.

“It is arguably too soon to see sustained evidence of recovery in Tasmania’s approvals or building activity data, and only early signs in the Australian Capital Territory,” concluded Mr Devitt.

Download the latest HIA Housing Scorecard Report.

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# Second public consultation opens

## The revised FSC Forest Management Standard for Australia.

THE Forest Stewardship Council® Australia and New Zealand (FSC ANZ) have opened the second and final public consultation on the revised Forest Stewardship Standard for Australia (the Standard).

The consultation is open from 29 April to 29 June 2026. FSC ANZ invites all stakeholders to review the draft Standard and provide feedback via the FSC Public Consultation Platform. Constructive feedback is welcomed, especially suggestions that clearly explain how specific changes can be improved.

"This is the last chance to shape the Standard in its entirety for at least the next five years. The FSC ANZ Board urges everyone passionate about responsible forestry to participate and help set the new benchmark for responsible forest management in Australia," James Felton-Taylor, Australian Sustainable Timbers, Chair of FSC ANZ said.

To support stakeholder understanding and encourage engagement, FSC ANZ will host an informational webinar on 3 June at 2:00-3:30 PM AEST. All stakeholders are welcome to attend and can register here. Please note the webinar will not be recorded.

### KEY CHANGES IN THE SECOND DRAFT

The Standards Development Group (SDG), the technical working group responsible for revising the Standard, considered all stakeholder feedback received in the initial consultation which closed in August 2025.

Stefan Jensen, Senior Policy Manager at FSC ANZ and SDG Facilitator explained,



**Harvesting is a vital component of forestry and, when undertaken sustainably and responsibly, delivers significant benefits for communities, the economy, and the environment.** Image: courtesy FSC® ANZ/Andreas Weiss

"The first consultation yielded nearly 500 high-quality comments. We appreciate the strong engagement from the FSC community, which enabled the SDG to further enhance an already robust first draft. We welcome further feedback to help ensure the Standard is ambitious, focused, streamlined, and clear in intent."

Based on the feedback received in the first consultation, the draft Standard has been updated to reflect stakeholder input. Key proposed changes include:

- Significant changes to the requirements for the use of highly hazardous pesticides, including a streamlining of Indicators
- Clarified requirements for Cultural Empathy Training
- Expanded scope to cover all non-timber forest products (NTFPs), with additional NTFP-specific Indicators to ensure responsible extraction

### FOREST TESTING

The draft Standard will be field-tested from 19-21 May in a Victorian native forest and a Tasmanian plantation. This

trial will help verify that the revised Standard requirements are practical to implement and can be effectively audited. The learnings from the forest testing, together with the feedback from the consultation, will underpin the development of the final draft of the Standard.

### FINALISING THE REVISION PROCESS

The final draft Standard will be submitted to the FSC ANZ Board for review and approval. It will then be assessed by FSC International to ensure all required normative processes have been met and that the

Standard itself includes all required elements. Hereafter, it is considered for final approval by the Policy and Standards Committee, which has delegated authority from the FSC International's Board of Directors for decisions on FSC Forest Stewardship Standards. Any conditions for approval identified by the Committee must be addressed by the SDG before the Standard is fully approved.

Melanie Robertson, CEO of FSC ANZ, concluded that "The revision continues to demonstrate the power of FSC's multistakeholder standard-setting processes, bringing together environmental, social and economic interests to further improve a best-in-class forest management standard."

Please contact Stefan Jensen, Senior Policy Manager at FSC ANZ and SDG Facilitator at [s.jensen@au.fsc.org](mailto:s.jensen@au.fsc.org) for questions or comments.

For more information about the revision process, click here.

Take part in the consultation by clicking here.



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# Fuel cost recovery order now in effect

FROM 21 April, the first Road Transport Contractual Chain Order (RTCCO) is now in place.

Made by the Fair Work Commission, the Order sets rules to make sure fuel cost increases are built into transport rates across the supply chain.

## WHAT THIS MEANS

Businesses must make sure the rates they pay for road transport work reflect increases in fuel costs since 6 March 2026, as well as any ongoing changes. These obligations apply across the whole chain—down to contractors (including owner drivers), and up to the business at the top of the chain.

## WHO IT APPLIES TO

The Order applies to most businesses involved in road transport. This includes those that move their own goods, use transport companies, receive goods by road, run transport operations, or engage contractors.

## WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

- Review your rates regularly: rates need



**The RTCCO now in place will affect businesses from the top of the supply chain to the bottom and is legally enforceable with penalties for non-compliance.** Image: Shutterstock

to be checked at least every fortnight (or twice a month) and adjusted so they keep up with fuel price changes.

- Adjust rates in a practical way: this can be done by increasing rates, adding a fuel levy or surcharge, reimbursing fuel costs, or using a mix of these.
- Pass costs through the chain: fuel cost increases need to flow through the supply chain—both up and down

## EXTRA REQUIREMENT

Some businesses at the top of the chain may need to take reasonable steps to make sure transport providers further down are also adjusting their rates. This does not apply if the business is a small business employer and not a transport business.

## TIMING

- Started: 21 April 2026.
- Does not apply to past arrangements.
- Will stop if average diesel prices drop below \$2.00 per litre, based on data from the Australian Institute of Petroleum.

## IMPORTANT

This Order is legally enforceable, similar to a modern award or enterprise agreement. Not following it can lead to penalties.

## MORE INFORMATION

Guidance is available from Australian Business Lawyers & Advisors (ABLA).

Further details on the fuel cost recovery can be found on the ABLA website here.

Source: NTHA ([view article here](#))

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# FSC® ANZ Indigenous Working Group becomes First Nations Committee

FSC Australia and New Zealand's (FSC ANZ) Indigenous Working Group has formally transitioned to the First Nations Committee (FNC), reflecting the growing preference for 'First Nations' terminology and reinforcing the Committee's ongoing role in advancing First Nations perspectives and championing FSC ANZ's commitment to responsible forest management.

Since its establishment in 2014, the Indigenous Working Group (IWG) has played an important role in shaping the direction of FSC ANZ, ensuring First Nations voices and perspectives are meaningfully represented. As broader conversations around identity and representation have evolved, so too has the IWG's role and place within the organisation.

With full endorsement of the FSC ANZ Board of Directors, the IWG steps forward as the First Nations Committee, a transition that reflects the growing preference for 'First Nations' terminology across both Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. This change also aligns with proposed updates to the revised Forest Stewardship Standard of Australia, which also includes a shift from 'Indigenous' to 'First Nations' terminology, and has just entered its second round of public consultation.

At its inception, the title 'working group' signalled a defined, time-bound mandate. Over the years, however, the FNC's scope, influence, and responsibilities



**The First Nations Committee. L to R: Jacob Cassidy, Shawn Wondunna-Foley, Adrian Bauwens, Tolita Davis Angeles, Cheryl Wright, Jacqueline Te Mataara Iorangi, Thomas Holden and on screen, Te Ngahe Wanikau.** Image: courtesy FSC®

have expanded well beyond those initial parameters. Reframing the group as a 'committee' acknowledges its ongoing and integral role within FSC ANZ, as well as its enduring partnership in guiding the future of responsible forestry across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand.

Today, the FNC stands as a diverse and dynamic collective of First Nations representatives, united by a shared vision to strengthen leadership, knowledge, and influence within the

forestry sector, for the benefit of current and future generations. All ten members bring a range of cultural perspectives, lived experience, and regional insight, grounded in deep connections to Country, community, and culture.

Tolita Davis-Angeles, Chair of the FNC, says, "Over the past year, our

Committee has grown significantly, uniting even more voices and perspectives from across our communities. We look forward to continuing to deepen our influence within the forestry sector, ensuring First Nations values and knowledge are central to the future of responsible forest management in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand."

Find out more about the FNC here.



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# Strengthening forest defences

Global fire preparedness tested as northern hemisphere fire season intensifies.

AS the Northern Hemisphere wildfire season gains momentum, regions across Türkiye, the United States, and Japan are intensifying efforts to combat the rising threat of forest fires. Recent developments highlight how climate change, drought, high winds, and human factors continue to challenge forest management worldwide.

In Türkiye, senior government officials including Interior Minister Mustafa Çiftçi and Agriculture and Forestry Minister İbrahim Yumaklı recently met with governors of high-risk provinces to review preparedness plans. Recognising that approximately 65% of the country's forests are highly vulnerable, authorities are enhancing aerial response capabilities with a fleet of 28 aircraft, 119 helicopters, and 14 UAVs capable of discharging 462 tons of water. A strict "zero tolerance" policy toward those responsible for starting fires has also been reinforced.



**Wildfires pose a significant threat to forests, with unmanaged forests often facing the greatest risk.** Image: Shutterstock

In the United States, firefighters are already stretched thin. In New Mexico's Gila National Forest, the lightning-caused Hummingbird Fire has burned more than 1,080 hectares, with strong winds exceeding 65 km/h hampering containment efforts and forcing community evacuations. In Georgia, the Forestry Commission responded

to 15 new wildfires over one weekend, while two much larger blazes continue to burn largely out of control: the Pineland Road Fire in Clinch and Echols counties (over 13,000 hectares, 10% contained) and the Highway 82 Fire in Brantley County (over 9,100 hectares, around 6-7% contained). Both fires have destroyed dozens of homes and structures.

Meanwhile in Japan, wildfires in Iwate Prefecture that began on April 22 continue to burn, having scorched around 730 hectares and prompting evacuation orders for more than 3,200 residents in Otsuchi.

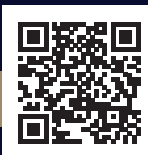
These incidents serve as a timely reminder that forest fires are becoming

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# Ghana pushes for stronger forestry protection powers

IN Ghana, protecting the nation's forests is a deadly occupation. On April 25, 2026, Dr Hugh Brown, Chief Executive Officer of the Forestry Commission Ghana, used the burial of 28-year-old resource guard Raphael Ganyo to renew calls for the Commission to be granted paramilitary status.

Ganyo was shot in the chest by a poacher on January 6, 2026, while patrolling the Kalakpa Resource Reserve in the Volta Region of Ghana. His death is part of a grim pattern. Since 2017, at least four resource guards have been killed by poachers, with 19 others severely maimed. Across the Forestry Services Division, over a dozen officers have lost their lives in confrontations with illegal miners and environmental criminals in the past eight years, while dozens more have suffered life-threatening injuries.

Dr Brown argued that current limitations on weapons and the need to seek approval from the Ministry of Defence leave field staff dangerously outgunned against heavily armed illegal miners (known locally as galamsey operators), poachers, and chainsaw operators. He highlighted ongoing challenges including



**Ghana's Forestry Commission CEO Dr Hugh Brown is advocating to protect the forestry staff who defend the natural resources of Ghana in a what is a deadly role.** Image: Shutterstock

staff shortages of around 2,400 personnel, inadequate vehicles, and insufficient protective gear. A review of the Forestry Commission Act is underway to allow officers to carry appropriate arms and enforce the law more effectively within reserves and national parks.

The Commission honoured Ganyo with an in-memoriam promotion to Chief Resource Guard and announced the renaming of Zitoe Camp in his memory. It also pledged to employ two family members and provided financial support of GH¢50,000.

This tragic situation stands in stark contrast to the reality in Australia and New Zealand. In both countries, forestry and conservation officers do not face routine armed violence or lethal attacks from illegal loggers or miners while on duty. While the Australian

and New Zealand forestry sectors have their own serious challenges – primarily workplace accidents during harvesting operations – there are no recorded cases of officers being systematically shot or killed by criminal elements defending against illegal resource extraction.

Australians and New Zealanders working in forestry and conservation can be grateful for strong institutions, effective law enforcement, and high regulatory standards that make such violence almost unthinkable. In many parts of the world, including Ghana, frontline guards risk their lives daily to defend natural resources against well-organised criminal networks. This sobering reality should remind us how valuable robust governance and public safety systems truly are.

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a growing global issue, driven by changing climate patterns and extreme weather.

In Australia and New Zealand, forestry teams and fire agencies work hard year-round to prepare for the fire season through multiple

avenues, including prescribed burning, early warning systems, improved aerial and ground resources, community education, fire training, and strong inter-agency coordination. However, the sector is not immune to the escalating challenges, as devastating fires in Victoria

only months ago clearly demonstrated.

As wildfire risks intensify worldwide, continued investment in prevention, rapid response, adaptation and ongoing forest management will be crucial for protecting forests, biodiversity, and communities everywhere.



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