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timber & FORESTRY *e*news



Timber takes centre stage at Tasmanian Architecture Awards

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Review questions bushfire risk harvesting claims

PUBLIC claims that timber harvesting increases bushfire risk are based on narrow and contested evidence and should not be generalised across Australia's diverse forests.

A new review, *Contested Evidence About Timber Harvesting and Bushfire Risk in Australian Landscapes*, examines claims that timber harvesting increases forest flammability and bushfire risk. It finds that many public claims rely on evidence from one particular forest type and management system - tall wet eucalypt forests in south-eastern Australia that have been previously clear-felled - and that these findings are often presented as though they apply universally across all Australian forests.

Forestry Australia President Dr Michelle Freeman said the review was developed to help clarify a complex and often misunderstood area of forest science.

"Public discussion about timber harvesting and bushfire risk is often highly contested, and at times, confusing," Dr Freeman said.

"The purpose of this evidence review is to unpack the science. It looks carefully at what the evidence does and does not show, where research findings are contested, and why terminology matters when discussing bushfire risk, fire severity, flammability and fire intensity."

"Australia's forests are highly diverse. Evidence from one forest type,



Claims linking timber harvesting to increased bushfire risk are often based on narrow, contested evidence and should not be generalised across the country's diverse forest types. Image: Shutterstock

management system or landscape context should not be generalised across the country without careful qualification," she said.

"The review highlights that different forms of forest management can have very different outcomes, and that it is inappropriate to reduce complex forest and fire dynamics to a simple claim that timber harvesting always increases fire risk."

The review also highlights the importance of using fire terminology accurately.

"Terms such as fire risk, fire severity, fire intensity and flammability have different meanings," Dr Freeman said. "When these terms are used interchangeably, public understanding suffers. Sound policy depends on precise language and careful interpretation of evidence."

The review notes that landscape-scale analyses of major bushfires, including

the 2019-20 bushfires, have found that extreme fire weather and topography are dominant drivers of fire severity, while timber harvesting, stand age and land tenure have comparatively minor effects at landscape scales. It also notes that while young regrowth forests may experience higher site-level fire severity under some conditions, large areas of mature and old growth forests, including forests in conservation reserves where timber harvesting is excluded, have also burnt at high severity.

Dr Freeman said Forestry Australia hoped the review would support a more informed and constructive public conversation.

"Forestry Australia represents a large cohort of professionals with deep scientific and practical expertise in Australian forests," Dr Freeman said. "Our role is not to prosecute simplistic arguments. Our role is to support evidence-based discussion, grounded in forest science, so that policy makers, media and the broader community can better understand what the research is actually saying."

"Forests are central to some of the most important challenges facing Australia, including climate adaptation, biodiversity conservation, bushfire resilience, regional livelihoods and sustainable resource use," she said. "These issues deserve careful, evidence-based discussion."

To view the evidence review, [click here](#).

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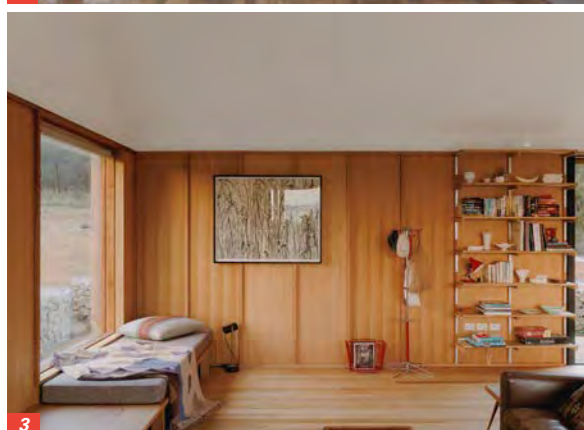
Standout winners from the 2026 Tasmanian Architecture Awards

FOLLOWING the announcement of some of the projects nominated for the 2026 Tasmanian Architecture Awards in last week's *Enews* issue #900, the winners have now been announced. Tasmania's architectural excellence is shining brightly with 31 awarded projects showcasing innovation, sensitivity to place, and a deepening commitment to sustainable practices. This year's winners reveal a compelling trend: the thoughtful and prominent use of timber as both a structural and aesthetic choice. From mass timber systems to carefully detailed timber cladding and reclaimed elements, these projects demonstrate how timber delivers warmth, tactility, and significantly better carbon capture and storage, making it an exciting material for contemporary Tasmanian architecture that respects the island's forested heritage while addressing urgent climate challenges.

Jury Chair Martin Stephenson highlighted the respect for existing fabric, reduced carbon footprints, and meaningful reconciliation seen across many entries. This year's awards celebrated projects that balance ambition with restraint, often using timber to bridge old and new. The result is architecture that feels grounded, inviting, and forward-looking.

THE FOREST: A BENCHMARK FOR LOW-CARBON TIMBER INNOVATION

One of the most awarded projects, The Forest by Woods Bagot, claimed both the Tasmanian Chapter Sydney Blythe Award for Educational Architecture and



1/ **The biophilic heart of The Forest by Woods Bagot combines timber elements with natural planting.** Image: Peter Bennetts

2/ **The Inveresk Library by Wardle, winner of the Henry Hunter Triennial Prize, uses extensive Cross-Laminated Timber (CLT) and mass timber: a calm, tactile environment that enhances both sustainability and a strong sense of place.** Image: Anjie Blair

3/ **Light-filled timber interior of Spring Beach House by Scale Architecture. The project demonstrated how timber can create warmth and delight within a modest footprint and budget.** Image: Tim Clark

the Barry McNeill Award for Sustainable Architecture. This ambitious reimagining of the University of Tasmania's campus transforms existing heritage structures into a vibrant sequence of learning spaces

filled with greenery and natural light.

What makes The Forest particularly exciting is its rigorous commitment to low-carbon materials, prominently featuring timber alongside bricks and hemp. The project's lifecycle assessment guided material choices that dramatically cut upfront and embodied carbon. Timber elements bring warmth and robustness to the interiors, creating tactile, welcoming environments that support everything from quiet study to lively collaboration. The jury praised the craftsmanship and the way natural materials are used with integrity, not as decoration, but as core to the building's character and performance.

By prioritising adaptive reuse and scaling innovative applications like hempcrete, The Forest sets a confident standard for educational buildings. It proves that large-scale projects can feel intimate and loved by their users while delivering genuine environmental benefits. Under the leadership of University of Tasmania Vice-Chancellor Professor Rufus Black, recipient of the President's Prize, such projects reflect a broader vision of universities as civic institutions that champion quality and sustainable design.

MASS TIMBER AT INVERESK LIBRARY

Further demonstrating timber's potential in public architecture, Inveresk Library by Wardle received the Henry Hunter Triennial Prize. This project achieves a remarkable balance of community, culture, and sustainability through clear purpose and generous spaces.

A standout feature is the successful use of Cross-Laminated Timber (CLT) and mass timber construction. This approach not only reduces the building's carbon footprint but creates an interior that feels welcoming and connected to its place. The timber structure contributes to acoustic comfort and a sense of calm, supporting diverse users from individual students to community gatherings.

The library sensitively integrates Indigenous narratives, including Caleb Nichols-Mansell's artwork in the custom carpet, while responding thoughtfully to

Cont P 4

From P 3

the Inveresk precinct. Its use of mass timber exemplifies how contemporary architecture can be both rigorous and inviting; forward-looking yet deeply rooted in Tasmania's traditions.

COASTAL HOMES EMBRACING TIMBER VERNACULAR

In the residential category, timber takes centre stage in projects that reinterpret Tasmania's iconic beach shacks with modern sensitivity and sustainability.

Sandford by 1+2 Architecture, winner of the Esmond Dorney Award for Residential Architecture – Houses (New), continues a century of family history on the site through material reclamation and thoughtful design. Organised as a series of smaller forms around a sheltered north-facing veranda, the house uses timber alongside a brick plinth and Zinalume. Moving between rooms involves stepping outside, heightening connection to the landscape, sea, and weather. The lighter timber elements feel contemporary yet respectful of the Tasmanian shack tradition; comfortable, light-filled, and full of small delights like a sliding servery window.

Spring Beach House by Scale Architecture, which took the Residential Architecture – Houses (New) Award, further exemplifies "doing more with less." This compact 100-square-metre dwelling features silvery timber that helps it blend gracefully into the coastal scrub. Its simple gabled form and robust material palette, including standard timber construction, respond intelligently to budget and remoteness. Window seats, a playful mezzanine, and vaulted living spaces draw in light and views, creating moments of delight while minimising environmental impact. The jury noted how the house feels sunny even on cold, rainy days, a testament to thoughtful detailing and material choices that age gracefully.

These homes show how timber enables architecture that is unfussy, resilient, and deeply connected to place.



Rich timber detailing in the Sandford house by 1+2 Architecture used reclaimed materials and thoughtful timber construction, honouring generations of family history. Image: Adam Gibson

They honour the spirit of the Tasmanian shack without nostalgia, instead offering better comfort, lower impact, and clearer architectural expression.

BROADER THEMES AND LASTING IMPACT

Across the awards, timber's rise reflects

wider priorities. Winners demonstrate how good design can achieve low carbon outcomes even on modest budgets, preserve heritage while integrating new work, and support reconciliation, as seen in the Tasmanian Architecture Medal-winning projects at Wybalenna by Taylor and Hinds Architects with the Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania.

The use of timber is not merely aesthetic. It delivers measurable sustainability benefits through better carbon capture and storage, potential for circularity (with elements designed for future disassembly), and enhanced biophilic qualities that improve user wellbeing. In a state blessed with renewable timber resources, these projects highlight responsible sourcing and innovative applications, from CLT in civic buildings to expressive detailing in homes.

Professor Rufus Black's recognition underscores the importance of visionary client leadership in driving these outcomes. His support for projects like The Forest has elevated Tasmania's built environment through collaboration and high ambition.

As Tasmania continues to evolve, these award-winning projects illustrate an exciting trajectory. More architects are embracing timber not just for its beauty and performance, but as a key tool in creating architecture that is sustainable, site-responsive, and socially meaningful. The warmth of timber, the craft of its detailing, and its low-carbon credentials are helping define a distinctly Tasmanian contemporary architecture, one that learns from the past while building responsibly for the future.

The awards, organised by the Australian Institute of Architects, continue to spotlight the talent shaping the state's communities, landscapes, and identity. With timber at the forefront, the future of Tasmanian architecture looks remarkably bright, and beautifully warm.

On the cover: The Forest's glazed atrium showcases timber's warmth, versatility and sustainable design excellence. Image: Peter Bennetts



Quieter fire season concludes with low forest impact

ONEFORTYONE'S 2025–26 fire season has officially concluded, following generally milder conditions across the Green Triangle compared to previous seasons.

OneFortyOne Green Triangle Forests general manager Deon Kriek acknowledged the efforts of crews and partner brigades.

"Working closely with the Country Fire Service (CFS), Country Fire Authority (CFA), and industry brigades continues to be essential in protecting our forests and supporting our communities," Deon said.

The 2025-26 season ran from 1 December 2025 to 13 April 2026, lasting 134 days.

Deon said conditions across the region were generally wetter than average for most of the season, which helped reduce overall fire activity.

"Our crews were on standby for 88 days, which is slightly below the long-term average," Deon said.

"Across the season, we responded to 28 fires both within our estate and across the region."

Fifteen fires occurred on OneFortyOne-managed land, with crews also assisting at fires on private property, other forestry estates, national parks, and roadsides.



1/ OneFortyOne's fire fleet, including one of the new Quick Response Vehicles, positioned in plantation forest during the 2025–26 fire season.



2/ OneFortyOne's fire crew are highly trained professionals who not only fought fires in OneFortyOne's managed forests but assisted the region and even other states. All images: OneFortyOne

Fire causes included lightning strikes, suspected arson, vehicle-related incidents, and escaped agricultural burns.

"Only 0.3 hectares of our local forests were impacted, and most importantly, our crews went home safe and well every day," Deon said.

OneFortyOne supported efforts interstate, with teams of firefighters completing three deployments to Victoria, including assisting with the Otways fires.

The season also saw three new Quick Response Vehicles (QRVs) added to the

fleet, along with ongoing construction of the Mount Burr Fire Tower, due to be completed before the next season begins.

An end of season celebration was held in May to thank crews and recognise their contribution.

"The end-of-season get-together is a good opportunity to catch up and thank our crews for the effort they've put in," Deon said.

"While we had a relatively quiet season, we're proud of our teams, the work they've done and the connections they've made with other brigades," Deon said.

Fire management activities, including training, prescribed burns and firebreak maintenance, will continue throughout the year to keep crews and forests prepared.

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Growth Scholarship Program open for applications

THE Growth Scholarships provide financial support of up to \$10,000 for development projects that help individuals working in timber and forestry strengthen skills and knowledge while delivering benefits for Queensland's forest and timber industry.

Timber Queensland's General Manager of Strategic Relations and Communications Clarissa Brandt said, "Growth Scholarships have supported everything from deep technical research and international study tours through to qualifications, safety training, equipment operation, workforce training and leadership development.

"Previous recipients have undertaken projects focused on sustainable forest management, timber durability, mechanised harvesting and planting systems, drone and spatial technologies, training and assessor qualifications, work health and safety credentials and practical on-the-job skills," she said

"These examples demonstrate that the

program is deliberately flexible, supporting both academically focused development and hands-on, operational capability building."

For the 2026–27 program, age limits have been removed, reflecting the diversity of career stages and pathways across Queensland's forest and timber workforce.

The program has also evolved to better reflect the operational focus of many applicants, with the HQPlantations Award now becoming the HQPlantations Operational Award.

"This award recognises people working in practical, on-the-ground roles in forestry and processing and supports development that improves day-to-day operations, including safety, productivity, logistics, training and workforce capability," Mrs Brandt said.

"Applicants for the HQP Operational Award can choose to apply using either a written response or a short video..."

The questions, assessment criteria and standards remain unchanged, and video submissions are assessed as equivalent to written applications."

The Growth Scholarship Awards available in the 2026–27 program include:

- Kennedy's Timber Award – \$10,000
- HQ Plantations Operational Award – \$5,000
- AKD Award – \$5,000
- DTM Timber Award – \$2,500

Applications are open to people working across all parts of the forest and timber supply chain, including forest management, harvesting, haulage, processing, manufacturing, construction, research, sales, marketing, administration and operational support roles.

Applications are now open and close on 30 June 2026.

For full eligibility criteria and to apply, click here.



Strategic Forest and Renewable Materials Partnership - Expressions of Interest

The Australian Government is seeking expressions of interest from experienced professionals across the forest and wood products industry to serve as members of the Strategic Forest and Renewable Materials Partnership. This is the Government's principal advisory body on the future strategic direction of Australia's forest and wood product industry.

Skills and experience

The Government is seeking a diverse and balanced membership with expertise across areas such as:

- Native and/or plantation forestry, timber fibre processing and/or advanced wood product manufacturing including engineered wood products, supply chain, trade and innovation
- Harvest, haulage and enabling services
- Environmental sustainability within a native and/or plantation forestry context including forest carbon
- First Nations community representation or engagement
- Trade union or industry association representation
- Experience in an advisory, governance or representational capacity
- Strong stakeholder engagement across government, industry and community

Members may be based anywhere in Australia. Individuals representing First Nations interests, emerging leaders and next generation voices are strongly encouraged to apply.

Appointment details

- Unremunerated advisory roles (approved travel costs reimbursed)
- Estimated commitment of around 5 days per year
- Appointments of up to three years, with the possibility of reappointment

How to apply

To submit your expression of interest, visit:



<https://directorsaustralia.com.au/jobs/the-forest-and-wood-products-council-strategic-forest-and-renewable-materials-partnership/>

Applications close 10.00 am Tuesday 30 June 2026

Authorised by the Australian Government, Canberra

JUNE

9-11: 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 for more information.

18: Vehicle technology safety workshop – Mt Gambier, 8.00am - 12.30pm. Forestry leaders are invited to attend a workshop in Mount Gambier in June to explore safety implications of having multiple technologies in vehicles used in Australian forestry. Email a.naweed@cqu.edu.au with expressions of interest to attend. Participants will receive a \$100 gift voucher for attending.

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

30: Timber Queensland Presentation – University of Queensland, Brisbane, 12noon - 5.00pm. WoodSolutions presents Queensland Timber Trajectory: award-winning exemplars showing the way to modern construction. For more information and to register, visit <https://www.timberqueensland.com.au/event-details/woodsolutions-presents-queensland-timber-trajectory-award-winning-exemplars-showcasing-the-way-to-modern-construction>

JULY

9: National Centre for Timber Durability and Design Life-Annual Showcase 2026 – UniSC, Moreton Bay, 8.30am - 4.00pm. The event will highlight the latest research, innovation and industry engagement across the Centre's work in timber durability, design life, circularity and sustainable construction. For more information and to register, visit <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/national-centre-for-timber-durability-and-design-life-annual-showcase-2026-tickets-1987465010347>

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@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@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/>

19-20: International Woodchip and Biomass Trade Conference – Singapore. The conference will serve as a key meeting point for the global biomass community. For more information and to register, visit: <https://web.cvent.com/event/7fd17c6e-d403-4eb4-a6cd-ab69df757864/summary>

30: SA, NT & WA Timber & Hardware Industry Awards – National Wine Centre, Adelaide, 6.30pm - 11.30pm. Join us in celebrating the SA, NT & WA 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@ntha.com.au

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.com>.

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Native forestry can deliver wood, biodiversity and environmental outcomes

Forest and Wood Communities Australia calls on policymakers to put science ahead of ideology.

FOREST and Wood Communities Australia (FWCA) has welcomed the publication of a major peer-reviewed scientific review that concludes Australia's native forests can be sustainably managed for timber production while protecting biodiversity, carbon values, water resources and other environmental outcomes.



Native forestry is compatible with environmental, social and economic goals. Forestry workers are trained to meticulously care for the trees and the forests as a whole. Image: Shutterstock

The paper, *Australia's Native Forests Can Be Sustainably Managed for Wood Production Together with Other Important Forest Values*, published in the journal *Australian Forestry*, brings together the expertise of highly respected forest scientists Dr John Raison, Professor E.K.S. Nambiar, Dr Geoff Kile and Dr Lindsay Bren.

FWCA Director Steve Dobbyns said the review should serve as a wake-up call for politicians and decision-makers who have increasingly relied on activist campaigns rather than scientific evidence when making forestry policy.

"For too long, public debate about native forestry has been dominated by misinformation, emotion and ideology rather than facts," Mr Dobbyns said.

"This comprehensive scientific review examines many of the claims used to justify forest industry closures and harvesting bans and finds that they are often based on poor evidence, flawed assumptions or selective use of science."

The authors conclude that sustainable native forestry does not cause deforestation, does not threaten biodiversity at a landscape scale, does not increase wildfire risk and does not generate the large carbon emissions often claimed by anti-forestry campaigners.

Importantly, the review highlights that

native forest harvesting occurs on only a tiny proportion of Australia's forest estate each year and that harvested areas are regenerated under strict regulatory requirements.

"The reality is that Australian forestry operates under some of the world's most rigorous environmental regulations," Mr Dobbyns said.

"The science confirms what forestry professionals, regional communities and independent experts have been saying for years – well-managed native forestry can coexist with biodiversity conservation, carbon storage and other community values."

Mr Dobbyns said the findings are particularly relevant as governments continue to make decisions affecting thousands of regional jobs, domestic timber supplies and the long-term management of public forests.

"We have seen governments in Victoria and Western Australia close native forest industries based largely on claims that this paper directly challenges."

"These decisions have devastated regional communities, increased Australia's dependence on imported timber and reduced our capacity to actively manage forests for bushfire risk and other values."

FWCA said the review also exposes

the flawed assumption that plantations can immediately replace all wood currently sourced from native forests.

"The authors make it clear that Australia already faces a growing timber deficit and increasing reliance on imports," Mr Dobbyns said.

"Politicians need to understand that if we stop producing timber from sustainably managed Australian

forests, the demand doesn't disappear. It is simply shifted offshore to countries that may have weaker environmental standards."

Mr Dobbyns said forestry policy must be based on evidence rather than activist pressure.

"Every policymaker considering restrictions on forestry should read this paper before making decisions that affect regional communities, housing affordability, renewable materials supply and the long-term health of our forests."

"The authors demonstrate that sustainable native forestry remains an important part of responsible forest management and that blanket harvesting bans have no sound scientific foundation."

FWCA is calling on federal and state governments to ensure future forestry policy is informed by peer-reviewed science, practical forest management experience and a balanced assessment of environmental, social and economic outcomes.

"Australia deserves evidence-based forestry policy," Mr Dobbyns said.

"Regional communities, forest workers and future generations should not pay the price for decisions driven by misinformation."



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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>

Forestry Industry Supply Chain Support Program

Supports businesses impacted by the moratorium on timber harvesting within the proposed boundary of the Great Koala National Park.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Program are to provide financial support to impacted businesses that have had the majority of their hardwood or by-product supply cut from sawmills that have had a reduction in their wood supply as a consequence of the moratorium on harvesting in the Great Koala National Park.

The required outcomes of the Program are that impacts on the operations of impacted businesses are reduced by the financial support provided by this Program.

The scope and types of initiatives offered by the grant opportunity aim at including short term targeted support to offset the increased costs on impacted businesses of hardwood and by-product goods and freight, reducing the immediate financial burden caused by supplier impacts.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for grant funding, applicants must meet all of the following requirements:

- You are an impacted business that (directly or indirectly) sources at least



Many businesses have been impacted by the stop work order in the proposed GKNP. This grant is aimed at supporting and alleviating costs for affected businesses.

Image: Shutterstock

50% of hardwood or by-products from a sawmill or contractor that has had the majority of their hardwood or by-product supply cut through reduced wood supply agreements as a consequence of the moratorium on harvesting in the Great Koala National Park

- You have a contract, agreement or other supporting evidence of supply (direct or indirect) from a sawmill or contractor that has had the majority of their hardwood or by-product

supply cut through reduced wood supply agreements as a consequence of the moratorium

- You operate as a sole trader, partnership, trust or company in Australia
- You have an active Australian Business Number (ABN)
- You are registered with the Australian Taxation Office (ATO)

GRANT DETAILS

Provider: NSW Govt - Rural Assistance Authority

Amount: Up to \$100,000

Round 1 Closes: 8 September 2026

Location: NSW

Who Can Apply: Businesses

Co-Contribution Required: Unspecified by Provider

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/grants-and-funding/forestry-industry-supply-chain-support-program>

Public comment invited on amendment

Australia and New Zealand Sustainable Forest Management Standard (AS/NZS 4708) is under revision.

PUBLIC comment is now being sought on an amendment to Australian/New Zealand Standard for Sustainable Forest Management (AS/NZS 4708:2021).

Developed by Responsible Wood, AS/NZS 4708 sets out requirements for sustainable forest management in Australia and New Zealand. It forms part of the Responsible Wood Certification Scheme and supports PEFC-endorsed certification in Australia. In New Zealand, it underpins the PEFC-recognised sustainable forest management scheme.

The Standard plays an important role in stewarding responsible forest management practices that support healthy forests, biodiversity, renewable timber supply, regional jobs, cultural values and community expectations.

Responsible Wood CEO Simon Dorries said the review process helps ensure the Standard continues to reflect evolving industry practices, environmental priorities, scientific knowledge, and stakeholder expectations.

"Sustainable forest management impacts a wide range of people and sectors, from forest managers and manufacturers through to builders, designers, retailers, environmental groups,



The Australian/New Zealand Standard for Sustainable Forest Management is undergoing an amendment and anyone with an interest or stake in forestry is invited to make a submission, commenting on the amendment.
Image: Responsible Wood

“AN IMPORTANT OPPORTUNITY FOR STAKEHOLDERS TO HELP SHAPE THE FUTURE OF RESPONSIBLE FOREST MANAGEMENT”

communities and consumers,” Mr Dorries said.

“This public consultation is an important opportunity for stakeholders to help shape the future of responsible forest management in Australia and New Zealand.”

With the revision process initiated every 5 years, latest updates reflect changes to the PEFC International Standard for Sustainable Forest Management PEFC ST 1003:2024 introduced to align PEFC with the European Deforestation Regulation and stakeholder feedback received since AS/NZS 4708 was last updated in 2021. The revised draft has been developed by the Standards Reference Committee, which includes representatives from forest management, forest research, auditing, government, community organisations, environmental groups, Indigenous stakeholders, industry and labour unions across Australia and New Zealand.

The review process is being undertaken in accordance with Standards Australia procedures. Responsible Wood is accredited as a Standards Development Organisation (SDO) and is accredited to develop Australian and New Zealand Standards in line with recognised standards development processes.

The Responsible Wood Certification Scheme, of which AS/NZS 4708:2021 is a key component, is endorsed by the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC), the world's largest forest certification system.

Stakeholders are invited to review the draft Standard and provide feedback by 7 August 2026. The draft Standard and submission form are available via the Responsible Wood website.

For the Draft Standard, click here.

For the submission form, click here.

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Forest and wood products are key to decarbonisation

A 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.

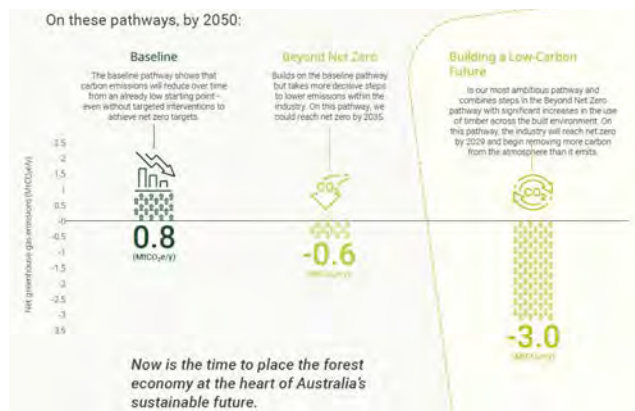
In 2023, the sector accounted for approximately 0.3% of Australia's total net emissions, while also storing significant amounts of carbon in forests and wood products.

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



This diagram displays the different pathways Australia has for reaching net zero and beyond. Image: FWPA

- Building a Low-Carbon Future: Combines operational improvements 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.

To download the full report, *Building a Low-Carbon Future for Australia*, [Click here](#).

Building confidence in carbon markets and plantation growth

Carbon market integrity and plantation investment remain key priorities for Australia's sustainable forestry sector.

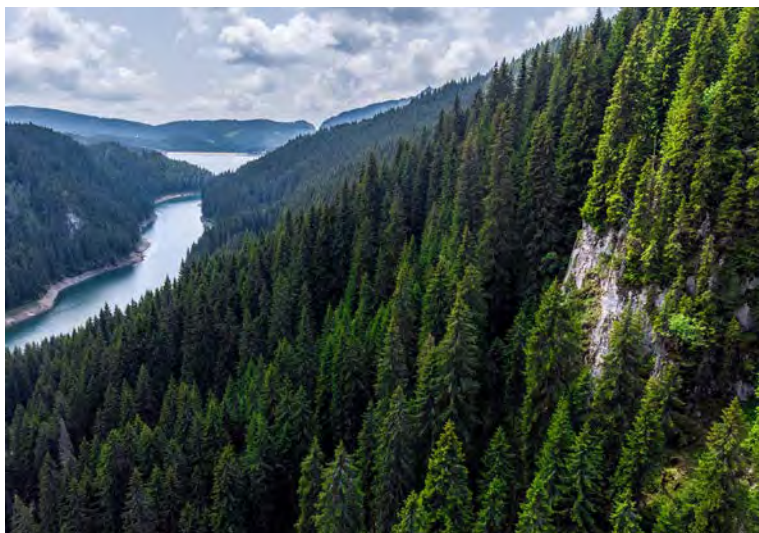
AUSTRALIA'S sustainable forestry sector has welcomed positive developments on both carbon market reform and plantation investment, highlighting the importance of policy settings that support industry growth, investment confidence and practical emissions reduction.

Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) recently attended an industry roundtable in Perth with Federal Assistant Minister for Climate Change and Energy Josh Wilson to discuss the Government's proposed Australian Carbon Credit Unit (ACCU) Scheme reform package.

During the discussions, AFPA highlighted the importance of maintaining high-integrity standards across existing methods and the development of current and future methodologies. The organisation emphasised that robust checks and balances are essential to ensure consumers, investors and developers can maintain confidence in the integrity of the scheme.

AFPA also reinforced the need to prioritise new methods that support productive abatement, particularly in the built environment, sustainable forestry, manufacturing and wood products sectors.

In a lodged submission, AFPA supported the intent of the Carbon Credits and Other Legislation Amendment (Integrity and Transparency) Bill and welcomed reforms arising from the Chubb Review to strengthen integrity, transparency, governance and public confidence in the ACCU Scheme. AFPA believes the integrity of carbon methods



Healthy, productive forests playing a key role in Australia's sustainable future. Recent developments in carbon market reform and plantation investment are supporting jobs, regional economies, and emissions reduction. Image: Shutterstock

and the Scheme is essential to support investment in practical and productive abatement.

At the same time, the sector has welcomed the latest round of funding under the Federal Government's successful \$73 million Support Plantation Establishment Program (SPEP), with 16 new grants announced covering almost 9,500 hectares of new softwood and hardwood plantations across Australia.

AFPA Acting Chief Executive Officer Richard Hyett thanked Federal Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Julie Collins for the latest funding allocation, describing the program as highly successful for the industry in recent years.

"We appreciate the Government's continued roll-out of this important program, which AFPA has strongly supported from the outset," Mr Hyett said.

“THE PROGRAM HAS NOW SUPPORTED NEARLY 40,000 HECTARES OF PLANTATIONS

He said the initiative has become a highly effective partnership between industry and government, delivering positive and tangible benefits for Australia's forestry sector and the national economy.

Before the introduction of the program, plantations declined by 230,000 hectares over six years. Mr Hyett said the SPEP has been critical in reversing the decline in plantation investment and restoring confidence across the sector.

The program has now supported nearly 40,000 hectares of plantations and is encouraging growth and much-needed investment. Since launching in 2023, it has driven new plantation investment across Australia, supporting regional economies, local jobs, future fibre security, and the Government's climate and sovereign capability targets.

"These sustainable plantations will also help support the long-term future of the construction industry," Mr Hyett said.

The latest funding round follows the allocation of almost \$26 million in the recent Federal Budget as part of the final SPEP funding package.

Given the program's demonstrated success, AFPA has encouraged the Government to extend the SPEP through ongoing funding arrangements to ensure timber plantation establishment and expansion can continue across Australia into the future.

Together, the ACCU Scheme reforms and continued plantation investment demonstrate the importance of policy frameworks that strengthen confidence, support productive abatement and help deliver long-term growth for Australia's sustainable forestry sector.

Struggling to find reliable factory labour? Coastline Frame and Truss found a way

ONE regional frame and truss business is tackling labour shortages by investing in international trainees; creating opportunities both for the business and for workers building a future for their families.

For many timber and hardware businesses across regional Australia, securing reliable labour continues to be a major challenge. Coastline Frame and Truss Production Manager, Jack Dreger said after Coastline struggled to fill positions locally, the business turned to the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme.

It was not long before Coastline welcomed four trainees from Papua New Guinea through the PALM/RWM scheme, with the group commencing their training contracts in March this year.

The trainees, Hekron, Joel, Lance and Kennedy, are undertaking the FWP30322 Certificate III in Timber and Wood Products Operations through NTHA Training (RTO #5343), which also includes frame and truss manufacturing units.

Jack said the decision to try the PALM scheme had already delivered strong results for the business and the trainees as well.

"This is the first time for us, employing through another avenue and so far, it has



Coastline Frame and Truss' new trainees from Papua New Guinea. Image: NTHA

been a really good one. The trainees are doing a really great job, and they are keen to further enhance their skills and gain a certificate to take home or use here in Australia."

"They start off on the tools, the trainees do their courses through NTHA Training (RTO #5343) and then the assessor monitors and accesses them and signs them off," he said.

Under the PALM scheme, the trainees can remain in Australia for up to four years, giving both the business and the workers long-term opportunities.

"The four-year program is great for us and then the trainees can decide if they stay here or go back home to PNG, but I think they will stay on because this is such a huge opportunity for them," Jack said.

Alongside addressing labour shortages, Jack said the trainees had also brought a positive influence on his workplace culture.

"They are very good humans and make the rest of our workers happy and appreciative, so taking them on has been such a positive for our work culture as well."

Jack said each of the four trainees had come to Australia determined to create better opportunities for themselves and their families.

"One has a young family and is supporting them by undertaking this traineeship, one has just lost his father, so he's come over here to work and earn a living for his family to set up that home," he said.

"And then our other two are very similar and have just come over to create a better opportunity for [themselves] and their family. While it is an amazing opportunity for them, they continue to have an incredible impact on our business as well."

For businesses across the timber and hardware industry facing ongoing workforce shortages, programs like PALMs are increasingly providing another pathway to build skilled teams while creating life-changing opportunities for workers prepared to learn and contribute.

Source: NTHA

Award wage increase, updated pay guides and payday super changes from 1 July

THE Fair Work Commission has announced a 4.75% increase to modern award minimum wages, effective 1 July 2026. The increase applies to employees covered by modern awards, including the General Retail Industry Award. The National Minimum Wage will also increase to \$26.44 per hour.

The Commission's decision aims to help address cost-of-living pressures faced by award-reliant workers.

Additional increases will also apply to some of the lowest award classifications as part of the ongoing phase-out of the C13 classification level.

The new wage rates take effect from the first full pay period on or after 1 July 2026.

What retailers and other general awards need to do:

- Review payroll systems and employee

pay rates to ensure compliance with the new award rates.

- Update budgets and labour cost forecasts where required.
- Confirm employment contracts and payroll settings reflect the new minimum rates.
- Prepare payroll systems for the commencement of Payday Super.

Source: NTHA

Hotel Hábitat 2026

Joaquín Homs envisions a new way of living; more sensory, sustainable and universal.

FERIA Hábitat València 2026 will once again create an experiential setting around design, architecture and new ways of living with the launch of a new edition of 'Hotel Hábitat 2026', the major conceptual and immersive project of the upcoming edition, which this year will be led by the acclaimed Mexican architect Joaquín Homs.

The initiative also marks the international consolidation of the Hotel Hábitat project, which after proposals



Joaquín Homs has spent over 42 years in architecture, interior design and contemporary design. He is passionate about sensory experiences and bringing elements together. All images: Feria Valencia and Joaquín Homs

developed by Héctor Ruiz in 2024 and Tomás Alía in 2025, now evolves towards a global perspective on new ways of living, feeling and inhabiting spaces.

Far from being conceived as a simple exhibition space, Hotel Hábitat 2026 is born as an architectural and emotional reflection on the contemporary act of dwelling. The project proposes the creation of a "universal hotel, a place capable of simultaneously belonging to the sea, the mountain, the desert or the city, where different cultures, landscapes and ways of understanding contemporary life converge", according to Homs' studio.

Inspired by the ancestral idea of the "navel of the world", the symbolic point where sky, earth and underworld converge in numerous ancient cosmologies, Joaquín Homs builds a space conceived as a centre of connection, balance and awareness. A place where architecture ceases to be

Cont P 16

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From P 15

merely form and becomes a sensory and emotional experience.

Spanning nearly 550 square metres, the project will offer a 360-degree vision of a new way of living: more conscious, more human and deeply connected with the surroundings. Visitors will be invited to experience the space through their senses; to listen, touch, observe and perceive architecture through emotion, not just aesthetics.

A SENSORY PROPOSAL

The architectural proposal will unfold from a broad white atmosphere layered with natural materials, mineral textures, sands and woods in warm and organic tones. Spatial continuity, human scale and material honesty will shape the journey through an installation conceived around calm and contemplation.

At the heart of the pavilion, a pond and a central garden will serve as the emotional core and inner breath of the project, creating an oasis of serenity within the bustle of the fair. Rising above this landscape, a large vertical element in cobalt blue will emerge, conceived as a visual and spiritual symbol of the connection between earth and sky.

One of the most striking elements of the route will be a large wall built from blocks of natural straw. Beyond its sculptural power, this intervention seeks to “activate the visitor’s sensory memory through the texture, aroma and warmth of the material”. Straw thus becomes an architectural statement about “sustainability, material honesty and the recovery of ancestral techniques and raw materials”.



1/ **Timber will play a key role in Hotel Hábitat and is part of the warm sensory tones that build the experience.**

2/ **Hotel Hábitat is an experience designed to bring together earth, ocean, desert and more to create a meeting point of the senses.** All images: Feria Valencia and Joaquín Homs

A COLLECTIVE PROJECT WITH THE LEADING HABITAT BRANDS

Hotel Hábitat 2026 will also bring together different environments and spaces conceived by outstanding interior design studios and prestigious designers, all equipped with proposals from leading ‘made in Spain’ habitat brands with strong international reach. The result will be “a great collaborative project where architecture, interior design, furniture, lighting, materials and design will converse around a single idea: redefining how we want to live in the present and future”.

The project will occupy a strategic location in Pavilion 6 at Feria Valencia,

“AN ARCHITECTURAL AND EMOTIONAL REFLECTION ON THE CONTEMPORARY ACT OF DWELLING

next to the new 360 by Cevisama initiative and Salón nude 2026, with direct access from the North Forum and connected to the entire offering of Hábitat, Textilhogar and Espacio Cocina SICI 2026. A prime location for a project set to become one of the great experiential icons of the 2026 edition.

JOAQUÍN HOMES: FROM CIRQUE DU SOLEIL TO THE RIVIERA MAYA

Joaquín Homs is a Mexican architect and designer with more than 42 years of international experience in architecture, interior design, and contemporary design. Trained at the University of Guadalajara, he has developed more than 1,500 residential, tourism, and corporate projects for major groups such as Grupo Vidanta and Grupo Mayan in destinations including Riviera Maya, Los Cabos, Cancún, and Punta de Mita.

His work is defined by creating sensory spaces that are emotionally connected to their surroundings, where architecture, landscape, light, and materiality interact to generate unique experiences. Among his most notable projects is the conceptual interior design of the first permanent Cirque du Soleil theatre outside Canada, developed for Vidanta in Riviera Maya.

He has also developed an acclaimed international furniture design line with Point 1920 and has participated in projects and pavilions for the Milan Furniture Fair. His career has been recognised on various international architecture and design platforms and in publications across Europe and the United States. He currently leads his studio in Guadalajara, Mexico, where he continues exploring new ways of living through an architecture based on emotion, experience, and the human connection with space.

Cross-Tasman governance backed by members at AGM

FROM key governance decisions to updates shaping the future of responsible forest management, this year's Annual General Meeting brought FSC ANZ members together for a day of connection, discussion, and shared purpose. Held on Thursday 28 May, the event welcomed members from across Australia and New Zealand to reflect on progress and look ahead to the work still to come.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Three special resolutions relating to constitutional amendments were passed by members. The amendments introduced formal definitions for Australian and New Zealand members, updated membership arrangements by establishing National and International membership classes and associated eligibility requirements and amended board composition provisions to support Australian and New Zealand representation across the three chambers.

In practice, this reflects Australian members' support for proposed cross-Tasman governance arrangements. However, the final decision regarding New Zealand governance remains contingent on a vote by New Zealand-based members.

BOARD DIRECTOR APPOINTMENTS AND DEPARTURES



FSC ANZ's Annual General Meeting not only allows members to vote on matters and changes to the board to be announced; but it also encourages connection and networking. Image: FSC ANZ

This year's AGM marked both a returning and a new appointment to the FSC ANZ Board.

We congratulate Nicky Moffat on her re-appointment to the Board in the Environmental Chamber and thank her for her continued dedication to FSC ANZ.

FSC ANZ also warmly welcomes Patrick Anderson as a newly appointed Director. Patrick has been involved with FSC since its founding, representing Greenpeace International at the organisation's inaugural meeting in 1994, and brings more than three decades of experience in forest governance, human rights and environmental advocacy. We look forward to the expertise and perspective he will bring to the Board. Find out more about Patrick here.

We also extend our sincere thanks to Rachael Cavanagh, who concluded her tenure on the Board earlier this year, recognising her valued contribution and service to FSC ANZ.

POST-AGM PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

With strong participation, the day highlighted several important developments for FSC in the region. Members

heard updates on the revision of the Australian Forest Stewardship Standard, which is now in its second and final round of public consultation. We also reflected on a year of engagement, including FSC Forest Walk events held across

Australia and New Zealand, which brought stakeholders together to see responsible forest management in practice. The continued growth of our promotional licence holder program was another highlight, with leading businesses across Australia helping promote FSC-certified products and strengthen awareness of responsible forestry.

The program continued with presentations from Rayne van den Berg, Founder of Value Australia, who outlined progress and next steps from the Global Forestry Natural Capital Project; Michelle Wong, Deputy Regional Director, FSC Asia Pacific, who provided an update on FSC Trace; and Tolita Davis-Angeles, who spoke to the First Nations Committee's work and future direction.

Grounded in collaboration and member participation, the AGM once again reinforced the importance of member engagement in shaping the direction of FSC ANZ. We thank all members for their continued commitment to advancing responsible forest management across Australia and New Zealand and look forward to building on this work together in the year ahead.



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