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# TQ slams NSW Carbon Scheme

TIMBER Queensland (TQ) has strongly criticised the New South Wales Government's plan to use a proposed native forest carbon method to fund the creation of a Great Koala National Park, describing it as a blatant misuse of the national carbon scheme that prioritises green ideology over evidence, jobs and genuine climate outcomes.

In media releases issued in January and September 2025, the peak body for Queensland's timber industry highlighted multiple fundamental flaws in the method known as Improved Native Forest Management in Multiple-use Public Forests. Timber Queensland CEO Mick Stephens argued that the approach fails basic integrity tests required under the Australian Government's emissions reduction framework.

The September release specifically targeted the NSW Government's intention to convert state forests into protected parkland while using carbon credits to bankroll the decision. Stephens said the proposal fails the additionality test, noting that converting state forests to parks has been common practice by governments for decades without carbon incentives. It also fails on scale, with the Queensland Government itself rejecting the method and recognising the multiple benefits of well-managed state forests for timber production, recreation, and ecosystem services.

Crucially, the releases emphasised scientific evidence showing that sustainable timber harvesting in managed forests can deliver superior long-term



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

carbon abatement when combined with the substitution of high-emission materials like steel and concrete. Ceasing harvesting, by contrast, risks perverse outcomes and lower overall mitigation benefits compared to continued active management.

The January release raised broader concerns about the method's alignment with established climate science. It directly contradicts the IPCC's 4th Assessment Report principle that sustainable forest management, maintaining or increasing carbon stocks while producing a sustained yield of timber, delivers the greatest long-term mitigation benefit. The proposal ignores life cycle analyses that account for carbon stored in forests, harvested wood products, and avoided emissions from material substitution.

Timber Queensland also pointed to adverse economic and social impacts. The native hardwood sector in Queensland contributes almost \$700 million annually to the economy and supports around 6,000 jobs. NSW would have similar numbers and permanent closures would be deeply felt. The releases noted that key threats to koalas, disease, land clearing, wild dogs, and road accidents, are not




addressed by simply locking up forests, with some research even showing koala population declines after conversion to national parks, such as in the Pilliga Forest.

Timber Queensland supports the disallowance motion for the reasons outlined in its detailed submissions on the method. TQ CEO Mick Stephens said, 'Both the NSW Government and ERAC have failed to make publicly available the submissions received, let alone address their multiple failings including integrity issues on leakage and additionality, negative social and economic impacts and perverse climate outcomes. This is bad policy and bad process and is undermining the integrity of the ACCU system and leaving it open to future legal action.'

Stephens has called for the method's immediate withdrawal and a public inquiry into its development, including the role of the Australian Government and the Emissions Reduction Assurance Committee (ERAC). The industry group has raised these concerns since January 2025 and continues to advocate for carbon methods that encourage active management, thinning, and sustainable harvesting to improve forest health and carbon outcomes, particularly in overstocked private forests in Queensland.

The position underscores growing industry concern that politically motivated decisions are distorting the carbon market at the expense of genuine abatement, regional economies, and evidence-based environmental management.

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# The Greens must choose

## Will the Greens oppose native forest carbon offsets or admit the principle was always political?

FOREST & Wood Communities

Australia has called on the Australian Greens to support the proposed Senate disallowance of Labor's Improved Native Forest Management carbon method ahead of the expected Senate vote on 18 August 2026, saying the vote will expose whether the party genuinely opposes carbon offsets or only opposes them when they deliver its preferred anti-forestry outcome.

The Improved Native Forest Management method allows state governments to generate Australian Carbon Credit Units by ceasing planned timber harvesting in defined areas of multiple-use public native forests. It also requires reduced wood extraction across the broader project area and imposes a 100-year permanence obligation.

FWCA Chair and Director Steve Dobbyns said the method is not simply a conservation measure. It is a carbon-crediting mechanism that monetises the closure and restriction of sustainable native forestry.

"This disallowance motion is a test of principle," Mr Dobbyns said.

"The Greens can vote to disallow this method, or they can admit they are prepared to support forest offsets when those offsets are used to shut down sustainable native forestry.

"They cannot condemn carbon credits as a licence for big polluters one day, then defend the same offset mechanism when it is used to bankroll their preferred political outcome."

Mr Dobbyns said the INFM method raised serious concerns that FWCA and others had warned about from the beginning.

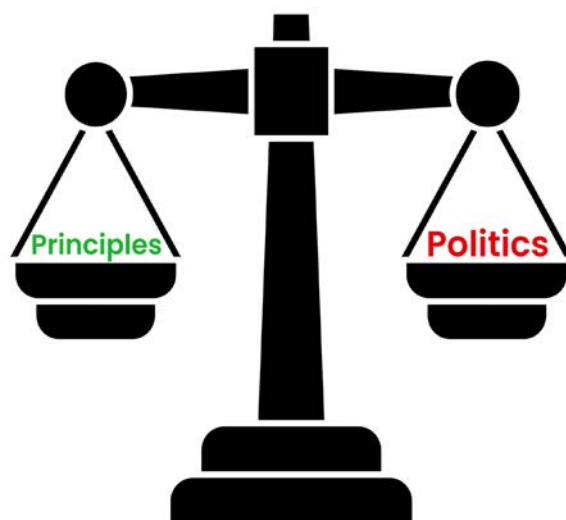
"The first issue is additionality," he said.



"If governments have already made political commitments to close or reserve these forests, then the public is entitled to ask whether the carbon credits represent genuine new abatement or whether taxpayers and emitters are being asked to pay for a decision that was already politically intended.

"The second issue is leakage. Timber demand does not disappear when harvesting is stopped in one region. It shifts to private forests, interstate supply, imported timber, steel, concrete and other substitute materials. If that

**“THE GREENS NOW HAVE TO CHOOSE: PRINCIPLE OR POLITICS”**



**The Greens must decide between standing by their opposition of carbon credit offsets as a licence for big polluters and allowing the INFM as it bankrolls their political preference of locking forests up.** Image: Jessica Hockridge

leakage is not fully and honestly accounted for, the claimed carbon benefit is little more than accounting theatre.

"The third issue is permanence. A 100-year carbon obligation is not a short-term policy adjustment,

particularly when that century-long commitment is effectively being paid for through just 15 years of carbon credit payments. It is a century-long restriction on future forest management, timber supply, regional employment, housing materials and the capacity of future governments to respond to changing circumstances."

FWCA said the method also has implications beyond the specific areas where harvesting formally ceases.

"This method is not limited to drawing a line around a park and walking away," Mr Dobbyns said.

"It operates across whole forestry regions and requires reduced wood extraction across the broader project area. That means the economic and supply impacts can extend well beyond the immediate carbon protection areas, and risks creating a financial incentive for governments to constrain or discourage private native forestry activity in surrounding landscapes, particularly where increased private harvesting could undermine claimed abatement through leakage.

"That matters for sawmills, haulage contractors, harvest crews, timber workers, builders, manufacturers and regional towns that depend on a predictable supply of Australian hardwood."

Mr Dobbyns said the Greens' own public comments had already exposed the contradiction at the centre of the debate.

"The NSW Greens have criticised

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the idea of turning forests into carbon banks and offsets for climate polluters. On that point, we agree," he said.

"So, the question for the federal Greens is simple: will they vote according to that principle, or will they protect a method that does exactly what they claim to oppose?"

FWCA said the INFM debate should not be misrepresented as a choice between conservation and forestry.

"This is a choice between credible climate policy and political carbon accounting," Mr Dobbyns said.

"Australia needs carbon methods that are transparent, scientifically robust, fully account for leakage, and support active, adaptive forest management for carbon storage, fire resilience, biodiversity, cultural values and long-term forest health.

"What we do not need is a carbon-crediting mechanism that shuts down one of the most heavily regulated timber industries in the world, increases pressure on imports and substitute materials, and then pretends the emissions consequences disappear."

Mr Dobbyns said the method also undermines Australia's broader sovereign capability in timber and housing supply.

"Australia is already under pressure to meet future timber demand," he said.

"Reducing domestic hardwood supply for the next 100 years will not help build homes, support local manufacturing or reduce reliance on imported timber from countries that may not meet

**“THIS IS A CHOICE BETWEEN CREDIBLE CLIMATE POLICY AND POLITICAL CARBON ACCOUNTING**

Australian environmental, labour or governance standards.

"You do not protect the global environment by closing well-regulated Australian production and outsourcing demand elsewhere."

FWCA said the proposed disallowance is now an integrity test for every party in the Senate.

"If the Greens vote to disallow the method, they are standing by their stated opposition to forest offsets for polluters," Mr Dobbyns said.

"If they vote to protect it, they are not opposing dirty offsets. They are simply choosing which regional communities, workers and industries should be sacrificed to create them.

"The Greens now have to choose: principle or politics."

## FWPA appoints acting CEO to ensure leadership continuity



**FWPA Board Chair, Craig Taylor takes up position as acting Chief Executive Officer while the CEO recruitment process is undertaken.**  
Image: FWPA

THE Forest and Wood Products Australia (FWPA) have announced the appointment of its Board Chair, Craig Taylor, as Acting Chief Executive Officer, effective 1 July 2026.

The move follows the departure of former CEO Andrew Leighton on 30 June. Taylor will serve in the interim role while the FWPA Board conducts a formal recruitment process to appoint the organisation's next permanent Chief Executive Officer.

"This appointment not only supports continuity but also ensures FWPA remains focused on delivering outcomes for members and industry stakeholders," the organisation stated.

Craig Taylor brings extensive industry knowledge and leadership experience to the position, having served as Chair of the FWPA Board. His dual role during this transition period is expected to provide stability and maintain momentum on key initiatives that support Australia's forest and wood products sector.

FWPA plays a vital role in research, promotion, and industry development for one of Australia's important primary industries. The organisation expressed confidence that the interim leadership arrangement will allow it to continue advancing its strategic priorities without disruption.

Further updates on the CEO recruitment process will be provided in due course.

Australian Forest Products Association

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

# Carbon credits vs. sustainable forestry

## Industry leaders warn of dangerous precedent in native forest policy.

AUSTRALIA'S native forests are at the centre of a heated debate after the Albanese Government approved a new carbon credit methodology. It allows state governments to earn Australian Carbon Credit Units (ACCUs) by permanently ending native forest harvesting and converting the areas into national parks.

Critics argue the policy prioritises accounting outcomes over practical land management, regional economies, and genuine carbon benefits.

Two industry voices, Daniel Parkin of Pentarch and Robert Onfray, have strongly criticised the approach.

### NOT ABOUT THE KOALA: IT'S ABOUT INCENTIVES AND OUTCOMES

Daniel Parkin, with more than 20 years in the timber industry, gets to the point:

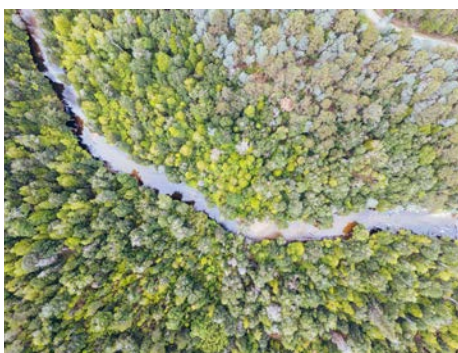
"IT IS NOT ABOUT THE KOALA.

The approval of a new carbon credit methodology that rewards governments for ending native forest harvesting is, in my view, a dangerous precedent."

"On paper it's about carbon. In reality, it creates a financial incentive to close sustainably managed state forests and convert them into carbon generating assets."

Parkin notes that Australians still need timber. Halting domestic production simply shifts demand offshore.

"If we stop producing timber here, we'll simply import more from overseas,



**Industry voices are calling for balanced policy decisions that take real science into account not just incentives and loud voices.** Image: Shutterstock

shifting the environmental impact somewhere else while weakening our own industry."

He stresses that active management, fuel reduction, regeneration, responsible harvesting and stewardship, keeps forests healthy and resilient. Locking them away often increases bushfire risk.

"We've spent generations investing in these forests and building a world class sustainable forestry sector. Regional jobs, renewable timber and active land stewardship shouldn't be sacrificed for an accounting outcome."

### THE "GREAT CARBON CREDIT RORT"

Robert Onfray, a historian and writer with 33 years' experience in forest management, echoes these concerns. In his post "The Great Carbon Credit Rort Has Begun," he writes:

"The Albanese Government has approved a carbon credit methodology that allows state governments to earn Australian Carbon Credit Units (ACCUs) by permanently ending native forest harvesting and converting state forests into national parks. NSW is first in line via the proposed Great Koala National Park."

"Taxpayers will lose twice. First, they lose a renewable public asset that has supplied timber, jobs and regional prosperity for generations. Then they help fund its closure through taxpayer-backed carbon credits."

Onfray warns that long-term carbon storage requires active management:

"Forests cannot simply be locked up and expected to remain healthy. Long-term carbon storage depends on active management, such as fuel reduction, thinning and harvesting, regeneration, pest control, and adaptive silviculture, not simply banning harvesting, adopting benign neglect and hoping for the best."

He highlights leakage: "Stopping timber harvesting does not stop Australians from using timber. Demand simply shifts elsewhere through increased imports... This means the environmental footprint is exported to other countries with weaker environmental controls."

Onfray concludes that good environmental policy must rest on science, transparency, and measurable outcomes; not mechanisms that reward governments for closing productive forests.

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# New contracts strengthen on-island timber processing

SUSTAINABLE Timber Tasmania (STT) has substantially completed the development of new long-term wood supply arrangements that will guide timber supply through to 2040, replacing existing agreements due to expire in 2027.

A key feature of the new contracts is a requirement that logs sourced from Tasmania's public production forests are processed in Tasmania.

New wood supply contracts will additionally result in future sawlog supply reflecting the increasing role of Tasmania's maturing plantation resource, while sustainably managing native forests.

STT is reaffirming its commitment to providing the continuity, certainty and stability required across Tasmania's forest sector through new long-term native forest and plantation wood supply contracts extending to 2040.

STT is the state's manager of public production forests and is responsible for managing 821,000 hectares for both public production and multi-use values. Sustainable Timber Tasmania supplies native sawlogs under contract to sawmillers that operate processing facilities in Tasmania.

The contracts will be the culmination of a multi-year allocation and negotiation process, supported by independent commercial, legal and probity advice. The contracts will include measures to respond to potential changes arising from the Australian Government's Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation 1999 Act reforms announced in 2025. STT has confidence that Tasmania's forest management system will continue to meet any new environmental standards.

**“RESPONSIBILITY IS TO MANAGE TASMANIA'S PUBLIC FOREST RESOURCE FOR THE BENEFIT OF TASMANIA**



**STT staff with a customer inspecting logs.** Image: courtesy STT

The long-term certainty provided through the new contracts is intended to support continued investment, innovation and confidence across Tasmania's forest and wood processing sector. STT welcomes opportunities to work with industry on new investment proposals that expand local processing, increase value-adding and strengthen Tasmania's forest economy.

The contracts are being developed to provide greater certainty for customers while recognising the increasing role of Tasmania's maturing plantation resource alongside the sustainable management of native forests on Permanent Timber Production Zone land.

A key feature of the new arrangements is a requirement that all timber supplied from Tasmania's public production forests be processed in Tasmania, strengthening local manufacturing, supporting regional employment and encouraging continued investment in on-island processing and value-adding.

Wood supply volumes will continue to be determined in accordance with the sustainable yield framework established under the Regional Forest Agreement.

Dean Kearney, Chief Executive Officer, Sustainable Timber Tasmania, said the new arrangements support both the future evolution of Tasmania's wood supply mix and continued investment in local processing.

"The future of Tasmania's wood supply is increasingly about the right mix of plantation and native forest resources, backed by local processing, local investment and long-term certainty for industry."

"These contracts will provide the long-term certainty our customers need to invest with confidence, while ensuring Tasmania's public forest resource continues to deliver jobs, regional investment and sustainable timber supply for decades to come."

"Tasmania's sawmilling sector is continuing to invest in new technology, new products and expanded processing capability. These contract changes recognise that investment and support the continued growth of local processing and value-adding."

The new on-island processing requirement is intended to support local jobs, encourage further investment and ensure more of the value generated from Tasmania's public forest resource remains within the State.

"Our responsibility is to manage Tasmania's public forest resource for the benefit of Tasmania. By strengthening on-island processing, we can support local businesses, local jobs and the next generation of investment in Tasmania's wood processing sector."

The on-island processing requirement forms part of STT's broader long-term wood supply arrangements, which are designed to provide certainty for customers while supporting sustainable industry development and economic outcomes for Tasmania.

**On the cover: Local logs, local futures – STT delivers certainty to 2040.** Image:

**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@ntha.com.au](mailto:tahlia@ntha.com.au)

**AUGUST****7: WCTE 2027 – Call for Abstracts.**

Call for abstracts for WCTE 2027 is now open. Submission deadline is 7 August. Visit <https://event.fourwaves.com/wcte27/submission>

**11: SAVE THE DATE: WoodSolutions Seminar – Perth, WA, 2.00pm - 6.00pm.**

Designed for engineers, architects, building designers, certifiers and builders, this seminar, hosted by Timber Insight, is bringing together the brightest minds in residential construction for an afternoon of practical technical presentations exploring the latest developments in timber framing, engineered wood products, prefabrication and building performance. Full details and ticket

sales details coming soon.

**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](mailto: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](mailto: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.live/2026-awards>

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# Australia's sawmills face an insurance gap as wildfire risks grow

AUSTRALIA'S forestry and timber industry contributes approximate \$24 billion to the national economy each year, yet many businesses operating within the sector remain highly exposed to the growing threat of extreme weather.

While plantations are often the focus when discussing wildfire risk, the sawmills that process timber are equally vulnerable and remain a key item in the value chain.

Despite the industry's economic importance, many sawmill operators remain underinsured, or uninsured altogether, as traditional insurers regard the asset as high-risk.

According to Descartes Head of Business Development for Australia and New Zealand, Lynn Roehrig, many sawmill operators, are increasingly exploring alternatives such as parametric insurance.

"It's a tough market for sawmills because it's considered high risk, they are generally located close to the plantations and forests to reduce transport costs and to be close to the source of production which is why this insurance gap exists," Roehrig said.

"Depending on the location of the mill many property underwriters effectively treat mills as a no-go zone."

## NEW RISKS DEMAND NEW SOLUTIONS

Today's sawmills bear little resemblance to the operations of decades past. Significant investment in automation, advanced scanning technology and artificial intelligence has transformed the way timber is processed, improving efficiency but also increasing the value of the assets at risk.

"It's high-tech now and not such a manual process anymore," Roehrig said.

"Logs are scanned with the use of

“THE FIRE-IN-A-CIRCLE PRODUCT CAN BE TAILORED TO SUIT A CLIENT'S RISK PROFILE



An example of the Descartes 'Fire-in-a-Circle' product. Image: Descartes

AI to determine the best way to cut to maximise yield and efficiency. That means there's very high-value equipment at stake.

"The technology increases the overall value of the property and, in turn, the cost of protecting it."

As a result, some operators have chosen to go without traditional insurance altogether, carrying the risk themselves because coverage is either prohibitively expensive or simply unavailable.

"I've been working with a number of sawmills across Australia that have operated uninsured for a long time," Roehrig said.

"One particular client looked at the cost of traditional insurance and decided it simply wasn't worth it. Others off the back of wildfire claims has not been afforded cover from the traditional market."

"As a result, many businesses are effectively self-insuring risks that can exceed \$20 million at a single site."

## ALTERNATIVE APPROACH TO WILDFIRE PROTECTION

Descartes' Fire-in-a-Circle solution is

designed to help address this protection gap.

The parametric wildfire product provides a predetermined payout when a wildfire enters a customised geographic boundary surrounding an insured location, this cover also incorporates business interruption, and increased cost of working losses.

Typically, the coverage area is created by placing a buffer around the insured property, often extending approximately 100 metres beyond the site boundary. However, the protected area can be tailored during the underwriting process to suit the specific risks and asset layout of each client.

Unlike Descartes' broader Wildfire Solution, which is designed for larger-scale exposures such as forestry plantations, Fire-in-a-Circle is specifically focused on property damage and business interruption risks.

"It doesn't have to be an exact circle – it can be any shape required to protect the assets being covered," Roehrig said.

"If a fire starts outside that protected area and then moves into it, that's the

From P 8

trigger for a claim. Everything within that designated zone is covered."

### FASTER ACCESS TO FUNDS WHEN THEY'RE NEEDED MOST

The Fire-in-a-Circle product can be tailored to suit a client's risk profile, coverage requirements and budget, while providing a simpler and faster claims experience than traditional indemnity-based insurance.

"In terms of parametric insurance, it's an affordable alternative," Roehrig said.

"The quick cash payment is what it's all about. Clients aren't waiting for loss adjusters to assess the damage before receiving funds."

"It's a first-layer policy that triggers based on satellite imagery, providing immediate liquidity when an event occurs."

Descartes' parametric wildfire solutions can provide coverage of up to \$80 million per contract, helping businesses access insurance capacity that may be difficult to obtain through traditional markets.



Stacks of logs at a timber yard and sawmill in Victoria. Image: Descartes

"We're providing capacity to an industry that often struggles to access adequate insurance capacity through

conventional channels," Roehrig said.

"For many sawmills, it's about having a practical solution that helps strengthen financial resilience in the face of increasing wildfire risk."

Want to know more? Speak with your insurance broker or visit <https://descartesunderwriting.com/solutions/bushfire>.

“WE'RE PROVIDING CAPACITY TO AN INDUSTRY THAT OFTEN STRUGGLES TO ACCESS ADEQUATE INSURANCE

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# FCNSW running with new technological advancements

DEEP in Orara East State Forest, on the NSW North Coast, the future of forestry is taking shape in flashes of laser light and layers of data.

What looks, at first glance, like a stretch of ordinary native hardwood forest is becoming something far more remarkable: a living digital replica.

Forestry Corporation of NSW is quietly building what could be a global first, a detailed “digital twin” of its native forest estate, and in doing so, changing the way forests are understood, measured and managed.

At the centre of that work is Rob Lloyd, Forestry Corporation’s inventory coordinator for native hardwood forests, based in Coffs Harbour.

Rob’s work is grounded in the plot network that has long underpinned forest modelling, but he is also helping lead the shift into a new era, one where traditional field knowledge is paired with powerful remote sensing technology to reveal the forest in extraordinary detail. That technology is LiDAR, or Light Detection and Ranging. By sending out pulses of laser light and measuring the reflections, LiDAR creates dense three-dimensional “point clouds” that map the shape of the land, the layers of vegetation and even the structure of individual trees.

For Forestry Corporation that means the possibility of knowing almost instantly what stands in the forest, the species, the size and the position, information that has traditionally taken people on the ground many hours to collect.

For decades that work has relied on careful manual measurement



1/ The transponder assists with the capture of digital data.  
2/ Rob Lloyd using a Vertex, a precision electronic tool for accurately and instantly measuring tree heights, angles and distances. All images: FCNSW

where a single 0.1-hectare plot has been assessed by hand, then used to represent roughly 340 hectares of surrounding forest. Robert says the digital twin will sharpen that picture dramatically.

“We are now moving towards a position where we will literally be able to use the digital twin forest to model how the forest is growing with respect to

“THE DIGITAL TWIN IS NOT REPLACING HARD-WON FIELD EXPERTISE. IT IS BUILDING ON IT

timber that’s in the stand,” he said.

“This technology will give us a much more accurate handle on every aspect of how the trees are growing.”

The promise is still just over the horizon. Robert believes the technology is about five years away from commercial-scale use, but the groundwork is already being laid by Forestry staff who decide which plots need to be measured to model the forest across a 100-year rolling cycle. In that sense, the digital twin is not replacing hard-won field expertise. It is building on it, extending it and making it more powerful.

And the boots-on-the-ground work remains crucial. Rob manages plot work in the field, audits measurements, trains staff and checks consistency across the program.

Eventually measurement from the digital twin will provide the information to drive the models that tell forestry what is likely to be in the forests. Rob expects to audit 5 to 10 per cent of the digital plots, by returning to the forest to physically mark-up plots and compare what is standing in front of him with what appears in the digital model.

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These field checks will help fine-tune the system, steadily closing the gap between the real forest and its virtual twin. Behind that process is a complex web of information.

Forestry Corporation maintains several types of plots, each designed to tell a different part of the forest's story. The two most prominent plot types are Permanent Growth Plots (PGPs) which capture the environmental character of a site, its growth potential, strata and understory and Native Forest Strategic Inventory (NFSI) plots that provide a picture of timber stand volume and product potential.

Each year about 500 NFSI plots and 100 PGPs are measured as part of a rolling five-year program creating the long-term picture that the FRAMS (Forest Resource and Management Evaluation System) depends on.

Each tree adds another layer to that picture. Trees are graded for timber quality, from high value stems to low quality, waste and habitat trees, which are protected for native wildlife. All of that detail will eventually feed into the digital twin, creating a stronger evidence base for how the forest is managed over a 100-year cycle.

It is a story of old school precision field measurement supporting the development of new and innovative cutting-edge AI enabled technology. In the end, it represents adaptive change of the most innovating kind.

Rob has worked for Forestry



1/ Rob Lloyd, Forestry Corporation's inventory coordinator for native hardwood forests.  
2/ FCNSW manages over 2.18 million hectares of forests in NSW. All images: FCNSW

1998. She did it for a long time and now works with Save our Species in the Department of Environment.

"That's how I got here. She stayed in it for seven years. I got my first permanent job with the Forestry Corporation in 2003 as a harvest planner.

"I felt like I'd won lotto that day."

"I already loved forestry, and it had been a struggle to get in without a forester's degree. It was a very hard job market to break into at that time because there were still lots of good foresters coming out of university. You had to be known, and you had to have a good history."

Corporation in the field for over two decades. He graduated with a Bachelor of Natural Resources majoring in Forest Hydrology and Myology, the study of life in streams.

"My wife, Anna, and I were looking to join forestry. We both took the job in

**“ WE WILL LITERALLY BE ABLE TO USE THE DIGITAL TWIN FOREST TO MODEL HOW THE FOREST IS GROWING ”**

In 2012 Rob secured a Resources Forester job under the Resources Manager for the North-East region. Then, in 2014 Rob became a tactical planner, which involves going out and looking at forward estimates over the five years in front of harvesting and planning. In 2021, he moved into a role as a Harvest Planner, before becoming a tactical planner assessing the five-year rolling future. Rob then moved into the strategic sphere, which models the forest over a 100-year rolling cycle.



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# Warning to landowners

## The devil is in the detail of carbon accounting.

By **TIMBER NSW**

PRIVATE forest owners across NSW may be banned from harvesting their trees by the NSW Government and Timber NSW is calling for Minister Penny Sharpe to outline what compensation for lost earnings will be available to private forestry owners across the entire State of NSW.

According to Timber NSW Chief Executive Maree McCaskill, the creation of the Great Koala National Park will have dire consequences for owners of private forests across the entire State.'

'The NSW Government will be paid by Australian taxpayers for shutting down the timber industry in northern NSW. That's an undisputed fact and it all stems from the Improved Native Forest Management carbon credit scheme which is used to calculate payments under the Australian Carbon Credit Unit Scheme

'Once again, the reality as it's experienced by the people of NSW is completely different to the Minister's words.

### THE INTENT OF THE SCHEME

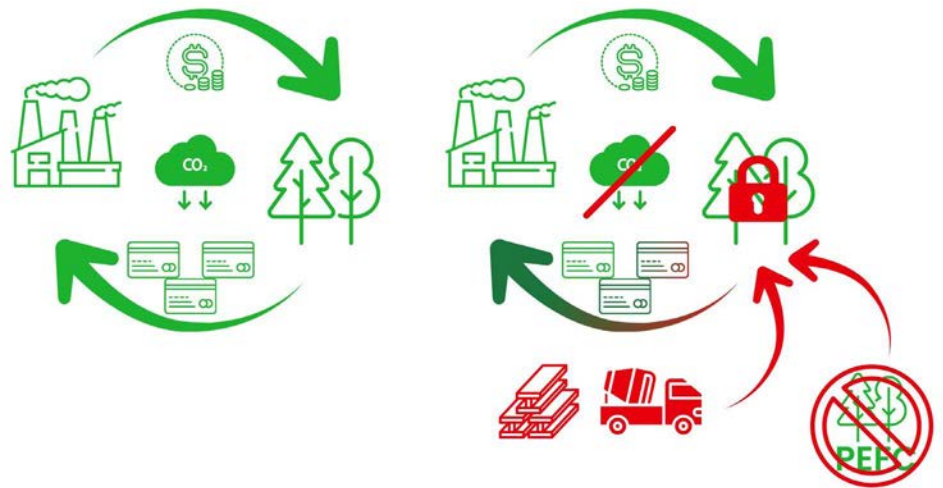
What the Federal Government says is that under the Australian Carbon Credit Unit Scheme, the Emissions Reduction Assurance Committee (whoever that is) must be satisfied that a method complies with the legislated Offsets Integrity Standards.

Those standards require that credited abatement reflects real, measurable, and additional emissions reductions. If leakage is underestimated, more ACCUs could be issued than the true global emissions benefit justifies, undermining the environmental integrity of the scheme.

### THE REALITY

What this really means is that there can be no private native forest harvesting in the State above its 'baseline level' which is calculated as the average monthly wood volume extracted from private native forests over the previous 4-year period.

The Sydney Morning Herald has reported that; "There are also leakage clauses, providing penalties if logging of public forest increased elsewhere in the



**The theory of carbon credit schemes is to encourage heavy CO<sub>2</sub> producing businesses to invest in CO<sub>2</sub> reduction. However, locking up forests comes with serious leakage issues that undermines the point of the carbon credit schemes.** Image: Jessica Hockridge

state on private or public land, or if there is an increase in imports of unsustainable timber".

What is not reported is that only a maximum of 40% of the carbon leakage (both domestic and international) can be discounted by the Commonwealth despite that figure being widely debunked and calculated by Dr Tyron Venn et al from UQ at over 80% for timber harvest leakage, with most of the demand met by elevated-risk countries. View the report here.

Maree said, 'What this whole deception means is that:

- communities in northern NSW are shut down;
- private forest landowners no longer control their own income
- Australian taxpayers are funding the NSW Government for forcing those changes, and
- the real impact of carbon emissions into the atmosphere is assumed away because it will happen overseas.'

The forestry sector supports thousands of jobs across NSW and contributes significantly to regional economies through timber harvesting, transport, processing and manufacturing. It is an undisputed fact that sustainably managed state forests can and do deliver both conservation and economic outcomes.

### KEY FACTS

- Timber NSW is calling on Minister Penny Sharpe to clarify what compensation will be available to private forest owners in NSW who may be banned from harvesting their trees due to the creation of the Great Koala National Park.
- Under the Australian Carbon Credit Unit Scheme, there can be no private native forest harvesting above a calculated baseline level, meaning private landowners would lose control of their own income whilst Australian taxpayers fund the NSW Government for enforcing these restrictions.
- Timber NSW argues that the carbon leakage figures used in the scheme are misleading, with independent research from the University of Queensland calculating timber harvest leakage at over 80%, far exceeding the maximum 40% discount permitted by the Commonwealth.
- The organisation warns that reduced domestic timber production will likely shift demand to overseas suppliers in elevated-risk countries, meaning the scheme effectively exports carbon emissions rather than reducing them globally.
- The forestry sector supports thousands of jobs across NSW and makes a significant contribution to regional economies; Timber NSW maintains that sustainably managed forests can deliver both conservation and economic outcomes simultaneously.

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# Timber Queensland launches the Colin MacKenzie Award

## Strengthening timber design and construction capability.

TIMBER Queensland has announced the launch of the *Colin MacKenzie Award for Technical Excellence in Timber Application and Use*, a new national initiative recognising outstanding technical achievement and leadership in the use of timber across Australia's building and construction sectors.

The award was launched at the WoodSolutions event, *Queensland Timber: Trajectory Award Winning Exemplars Showcasing the Way to Modern Construction*, bringing together leaders from the forest and timber, engineering, architectural and construction industries.

The initiative responds to widespread calls from industry to formally recognise Colin MacKenzie's legacy following his passing on 24 March 2025 and to continue the work he championed in lifting capability, innovation and confidence in the use of timber across Australian construction.

Widely regarded as "The Timber Expert", the award reflects Colin's lasting contribution to advancing timber as a high-performance, compliant and fit-for-purpose construction material across a diverse range of applications, from buildings to infrastructure and beyond.

Timber Queensland CEO Mick Stephens said the award is intended to recognise those delivering real technical impact across the sector.

"The award is intended for engineers, architects, designers, builders and researchers who are delivering real technical impact and helping to strengthen capability across the sector," Mr Stephens said.

"This is not limited to building

“THE AWARD REFLECTS COLIN'S LASTING CONTRIBUTION TO ADVANCING TIMBER



**Applications are now open for the inaugural Colin MacKenzie Award.** Image: Timber Queensland

projects, it recognises the full breadth of timber innovation, including infrastructure, engineered solutions and other applications that demonstrate excellence in using or enabling the use of timber," he said.

Mr Stephens said the award will focus strongly on outcomes that contribute to advancing industry knowledge and practice.

"Judging will focus on technical merit, innovation, and the contribution a project or individual makes to improving knowledge, collaboration and sustainability in timber use.

"It will also consider alignment with Colin's vision for timber as a high-performance, compliant and fit-for-purpose construction material."

A national judging panel comprising respected leaders from across engineering, design and specification will assess entries, ensuring a strong emphasis on technical rigour and industry relevance.

Mick Stephens said, "We are honoured to have Professor Benoit Gilbert, Griffith University; Rob Mansell, National Specification Manager, Hyne

Timber; Dr Andrew Magub, Principal, Architect; Kim Harris, Technical Advisor, AKD and Matt Smith, Senior Technical Consultant, Timber Queensland join the inaugural selection process."

By recognising leading projects and individuals, Timber Queensland said the initiative will help drive greater confidence in timber and support the continued development of capability across the industry.

Mr Stephens said the recipient of the inaugural Colin MacKenzie Award will be honoured at the Queensland HIA Building Awards in Brisbane on 13 November 2026.

"We gratefully acknowledge the support of the foundation partners, including Timber Queensland, to launch this award. The seed funding has enabled the national award to be offered annually for the next five years at which point the goodwill and delivery of the award can be reviewed going forward," said Mr Stephens.

The Queensland Building and Construction Commission (QBCC) is supporting the 2026 award as Presentation Sponsor, recognising Colin MacKenzie's long-standing expertise, collaboration and trusted advice across a range of QBCC initiatives and the broader development sector over many years. The QBCC's involvement with an award associated with technical excellence aligns with a commitment to promoting high standards, capability and integrity within the building and construction industry.

Further details about the application and judging process are available here.

# “Forest wars”

## An open letter from FWCA to the Managing Director of the ABC Mr Hugh Marks.

Dear Mr Marks

THE management of Australia's vast and diverse native forests, understandably, is open to a range of views and often conflicting suggestions and actions. The provision of balanced information to enable informed public discussion would help the community, and the ABC should play a constructive role.

Unfortunately, the recent ABC 4 Corners program [‘Timber turmoil’, 22 June] was yet another catering for the anti-forestry campaign, designed and delivered accordingly. Understandably, it has been widely criticised as biased, unfair and factually flawed by many stakeholders. It was seriously deficient in reporting on the science underpinning sustainable management, including harvesting, of Australia's native forests. We are advised that the ABC was provided with relevant scientific background papers and offers from senior scientists to be interviewed – but to no avail. We recently published a detailed scientific analysis and rebuttal of the main claims and allegations made by activists against the harvesting of native forests (Raison et al., 2026). The program repeated many of the false claims and ignored all alternative science-based information

Prof. Lindenmayer (author of a book entitled ‘The Forest Wars’, 2024) had several appearances and was interviewed (and used to promote the program). He repeated his well-publicised (including via several ABC programs) claims including that harvesting is accelerating the loss of old habitat trees and other biodiversity values, is increasing bushfire risks and threatens water supply. He accused state forest management agencies of ‘rape and pillage’ of native forests. These serious allegations were left unquestioned by the presenter.

All the claims above have been strongly challenged or debunked by critical scientific research and analysis published by several academics and researchers, and by experienced forest managers. The aging process and repeated wildfires are the main factors driving loss of old trees, not



Steve Dobbins, Chairman of FWCA. Image: FWCA

harvesting. Detailed studies over extensive areas have shown that harvesting does not increase either the severity or area burnt by wildfires at the landscape scale because harvested areas are small and dispersed. Fire weather, heavy fuel loads and steep topography are the main drivers of extensive wildfires. Good planning and regulated harvesting are effective in protecting water values – repeated claims that harvest of mountain ash forests is a threat to Melbourne's water are based on flawed and outdated modelling.

In this program and on several occasions previously, the ABC seeks only the opinions and conclusions on native forestry from one academic source, as though Australia has no other science-based expertise spanning our diverse native forests and how to sustainably manage them. The extensive on-ground experience of many hundreds of dedicated forest managers across the country seems to matter little. This skewed approach is a disservice to the community and does not reflect well on our national broadcaster.

The program used emotive techniques to create a negative image of native forest harvesting. Thus, we saw the reporter and Prof. Lindenmayer standing on large stumps to create the impression that cutting down old-growth trees is common when in fact almost all areas now

harvested are regrowth originating after earlier harvesting or wildfire. Nationally, about 95 % of current harvesting uses lower impact selective removal trees - but background images used in the program mostly show intensive higher impact harvesting operations. Then an activist spotlights to locate a glider and argues that their identification of ‘den’ trees will save gliders from harvesting. No mention is made of the considerable efforts made by the Forestry Corporation in pre-harvest surveys, and in modifying harvest plans and practices to protect endangered species. First class long-term research and monitoring by scientists from the NSW Forestry Corporation, the NSW Environment Department and CSIRO which shows that koala numbers are increasing, and that regulated sustainable harvests have no impact on their populations is not even mentioned.

The activist from the Wilderness Society made the usual allegation, without providing any evidence, that harvesting is destroying forests and creating major threats to biodiversity, especially old-growth forests.

The program made much of so-called “timber turmoil”! At the hub of the story was the discovery (by the ABC and anti-forestry ‘detectives’) that a small quantity of logs from Tasmanian public forests are being sold and transported to Victoria for processing. What is improper or wrong about that? The logs are being legally sourced from sustainably managed, independently certified, forests and being converted into high value, strong, long lasting (storing carbon) and beautiful wood products which we use. Those industries support rural economies and jobs for hundreds of fellow Australians and is exactly what we should do and promote. Such activities are internationally recognised as one effective way to support climate change mitigation. The allegations made by Prof. Lindenmayer and by the Wilderness Society that Victorian taxpayers are subsidising a ‘zombie’ industry are flimsy and highly disrespectful.

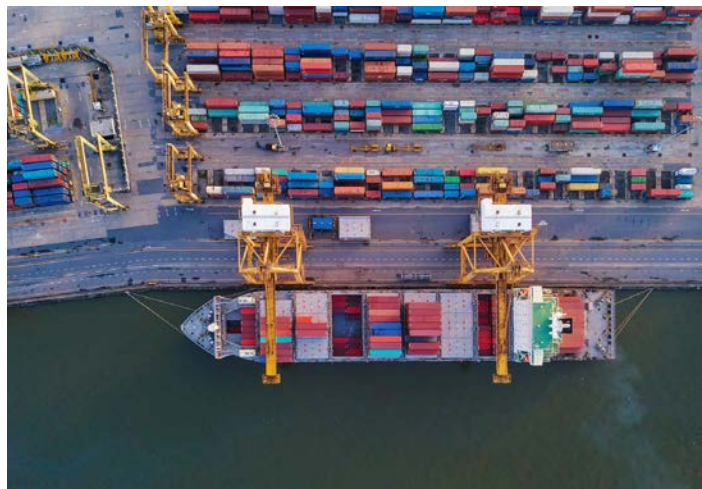
# Setting the record straight

## Imported timber is legal, responsibly sourced and essential to Australia's housing future.

THE Australian Timber Importers Federation (ATIF) represents Australian businesses that import and distribute structural timber products, including laminated veneer lumber (LVL) and plywood, to the construction sector. Our members supply a substantial share of the engineered wood products used in Australian housing and building projects. This statement responds to inaccurate claims suggesting imported timber products, particularly those manufactured in China, contain illegally logged or conflict timber.

Australia operates one of the world's most rigorous timber legality regimes. The Illegal Logging Prohibition Act and subsequent reforms impose strict due diligence obligations on all importers of regulated timber products. These requirements are supported by significant penalties for non-compliance and are enforced through detailed risk assessment, supply chain verification, record keeping and regulatory oversight.

Responsible importers invest heavily in compliance systems, supplier verification, chain-of-custody controls and ongoing engagement with government regulators. Imported timber entering Australia is not sourced through unregulated supply chains. It is subject to extensive legal scrutiny



**ATIF is adamant that it is not a case for imported timber vs domestic supply, the two are complementary parts of Australia's supply chain and both support Australian jobs and businesses.** Image: courtesy ATIF

and accountability before it reaches the Australian market.

Claims that Russian timber fibre is entering Australia through Chinese-manufactured LVL and plywood are not supported by current or recent evidence. The products imported by ATIF members are manufactured predominantly from plantation-grown species including radiata pine, masson pine, spruce and eucalypt. These species form the foundation of China's engineered wood

products industry and are sourced from established, managed plantation resources.

China has developed one of the world's largest plantation forestry estates, including extensive eucalyptus plantations in southern provinces such as Guangxi and Guangdong. These plantation resources provide a clear, documented and auditable source of timber fibre. Masson pine, another key plantation species, is grown specifically for commercial timber production under regulated forestry programs. Increasing volumes of Chinese LVL and plywood are also supplied under FSC and PEFC chain-of-custody certification systems, providing additional independent verification of responsible sourcing practices.

Recent commentary has also pointed to declining average LVL prices as alleged evidence of market distortion. This overlooks the substantial evolution of the LVL market over the past decade. LVL is no longer limited to premium structural beam applications. The category now includes a broad range of products, from high-performance structural grades through to framing, formwork and non-structural applications. As product diversity has

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*Broad claims and campaigns against native forestry, including calls for a total ban on harvesting, are largely based on misinformation, selective or flawed use of science, misplaced focus on iconic fauna and exaggerated accounts of occasional management failures. Such campaigns hinder the development of better policies and practices that can benefit both the*

*environment and the community. What we urgently need is not more "Forest Wars" or one-sided activism, but science-based forest policies that support informed conservation and enable sustainable forest management for multiple forest values and community benefits.*

Contacts:

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expanded, average category pricing has naturally declined, reflecting a broader product mix rather than inappropriate market behaviour.

Imported LVL has become a critical component of Australian construction. More than 200,000 cubic metres of LVL moved through Australian ports in 2025, demonstrating that imports are not a marginal supplement to domestic production but an essential source of supply. Australian builders, developers and manufacturers rely on access to these products to maintain construction activity and manage project costs.

The debate around imported timber is sometimes framed as a choice between Australian jobs and imported products. This is a false choice. ATIF members are Australian businesses employing Australians in compliance, logistics, warehousing, engineering, sales, procurement and distribution. The sector also supports thousands of jobs across freight, customs, transport, retail and building supply networks. Restricting

imports would not simply impact overseas producers; it would affect Australian workers, businesses and communities that depend on well-functioning timber supply chains.

ATIF supports robust enforcement of Australia's illegal logging laws. We support stronger resourcing of DAFF's compliance and enforcement function. We support targeted action against any importer, large or small, who cannot demonstrate compliance with their due diligence obligations.

What we do not support is the use of misleading claims about fibre origins, pricing behaviour, or compliance standards to advocate for import restrictions that would drive up construction costs, worsen Australia's housing supply crisis, and harm the Australian businesses and workers who depend on accessible, competitively

“ AUSTRALIA OPERATES ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST RIGOROUS TIMBER LEGALITY REGIMES

priced timber products.

Australia needs approximately 1.2 million new homes by 2029. It cannot build them without imported timber. The choice is not between Australian timber and imported timber, it is between a well-regulated import sector that complements domestic supply.

Imported timber plays a critical role in meeting Australia's housing, infrastructure and economic needs. A strong domestic industry and a responsible import sector are not competing objectives; they are complementary parts of the same supply chain. Ensuring reliable access to legal, responsibly sourced imported timber helps keep homes affordable, supports employment, and provides the materials required to meet Australia's growing housing demand.

ATIF welcomes engagement with government, industry and the public on these issues. We are committed to transparency, to compliance, and to ensuring that the Australian timber import sector operates to the highest possible standards.



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