

Sustainable Forest Industry Carries Benefits

Did you know that without certain industries during this pandemic we would have more people without a job and Tasmania would be further in debt?

Forestry is one of those industries, within our primary industries portfolio, that have continued to provide direct and indirect jobs for many Tasmanian families who rely on this industry.

From my relatively short time within the industry I have found it to be a proud industry that through adversity continues to harvest, grow, and process trees for the many products and benefits that come with wood.

You will see Tasmanian timber from our sustainably managed native forests on the floors of the basketball stadiums as you watch your kids play basketball. You will see it adorning the walls, floors, staircases, and ceilings of our finest tourist icon buildings at Cradle Mountain, Freycinet, Lake St Claire, huts on the Overland and Three Capes tracks and Strahan. You will see it as solid timber and decorative veneer in the form of locally produced cabinetry, joinery and claddings in some of Tasmania's most recent construction projects including hotels, conference centres, and Parliament House.

Our plantations are used for the framing that holds up your house, to building that pergola and deck in the back yard. They also are used for fibre in paper and cardboard products.

It goes further than timber products we see and use every day. Many Tasmanian businesses rely on the sawdust and chip residues from our timber industry to power their own enterprise, they include vegetable processing, meat production, brick manufacture, flower farms, berry farms, commercial laundries and the heating for a regional pool. Without locally produced wood residues to power these plants, their only option is conversion to gas or coal.

Tasmania's forestry operations produce responsibly sourced wood that is both renewable and sustainable. Once harvested the forests are regrown, reflecting the ultimate renewable status of wood, and providing a resource for future generations.

As Planet Ark states, 'Responsibly sourced wood products (are) part of the solution to climate change.' As forests grow, they remove CO₂ from the atmosphere through the process of photosynthesis. When the wood is harvested and used to make wood products, the carbon remains locked in the wood for the life of the product. Approximately 50% of the dry weight of wood is carbon, which means that by using more responsibly sourced wood in our built environment in place of more carbon-intensive materials such as steel or concrete, we can reduce carbon emissions and store carbon through this renewable resource.

Tasmanians can be proud that our forests are sustainably managed with some of the most stringent environmental protections in the world.

The industry remains committed to maintaining these standards that help thousands of Tasmanians, which injects more than \$1.2 billion into our economy and supports regional communities and families across the State.

We are all still feeling the effects of this pandemic, however you can be rest-assured that hard working Tasmanians are working in our forests, driving on our roads, in offices, in sawmills or in laboratories getting on with their job nurturing, managing, harvesting and growing our forest industry.