



### Message from Mark

The NZ–India Free Trade Agreement signing on the 27 April in Delhi marks a significant milestone for New Zealand’s wood products and forestry sector, with 95 percent of tariffs set to be removed on day one. The agreement now moves to the next stage, the Select Committee process, where it will be formally considered by Parliament. WPMA acknowledges and appreciates the hard work of officials and Minister McClay to progress the FTA, along with the Labour Party for providing their support so that the Agreement can be legislated. All 1364 pages of the NZ-India FTA text can be accessed [here](#):



Mark

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### WPMA Outlines Priorities for a Stronger, High-Value Wood Sector – Election 2026

Representing a sector that employs more than 38,000 people and generates over \$5 billion in combined export and domestic sales, WPMA sees New Zealand as having a significant opportunity to expand high-value wood manufacturing, boost the economy, and reduce emissions through greater use of low-carbon wood products. WPMA is urging the next Government to act decisively to unlock this potential. Our five-pronged Manifesto priorities include a national commitment to shifting from raw log exports to value-added wood products, improving market access and trade, domestic infrastructure that enables industry growth, wood playing a larger role in New Zealand’s building and construction sector, plus development of workforce sector skills for the future. Our Manifesto can be downloaded [here](#)

## Keeping Watchful Eye as Middle East Crisis Continues

Wood product exporters continue to face increased operational complexity due to the Middle East Crisis, as longer shipping times, uncertain logistics, and changing market conditions require more active management. Log and fuel supply remains stable in most cases, but this could change should the conflict continue. Mills are absorbing costs where possible to ensure that they can continue to operate. The situation with fuel is expected to remain primarily a price-driven challenge rather than a supply-driven one in the near term. Work is ongoing to refine the fuel response framework, including providing greater clarity on rationing and priority allocation should conditions deteriorate. This includes incorporating industry feedback to ensure any future interventions are targeted and practical. As per our election manifesto WPMA continues to advocate for the long-term supply of affordable energy and fuel to enable industry growth. As a critical industry, it is essential that wood processing is supported by the government when it comes to future fuel allocation should supply deteriorate.

## Forced Labour and U.S. Section 301 investigation

The United States Trade Representative (USTR) is currently progressing a Section 301 investigation into the importation of goods produced with forced labour. New Zealand is one of 60 countries included in this review. This investigation is widely viewed as one mechanism the U.S. Government may use to maintain tariffs on imported goods after the current Section 122 tariffs expire on 4 July. While no decisions have been made, the process signals a continued focus on labour standards within global supply chains. WPMA has been collaborating with the International Wood Products Association (IWPA) who has provided its own submission and will also testify during the hearings, with a focus on wood products more broadly. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) has also provided a submission on behalf of the New Zealand Government. MFAT's submission clearly states that our timber is grown and processed domestically under New Zealand labour laws, which uphold strong protections for workers. The submission also highlights our extensive legislative and international commitments prohibiting forced and slave labour. The key message is clear: New Zealand does not have forced-labour risks in its timber sector or wider export industries. WPMA will continue to monitor developments closely, engage with officials and industry partners as needed, and keep members informed as the situation evolves. You can access the Section 301 submissions [here](#)



## Canada Opens Global Investigation into Wood Product Imports

A petition from the Canadian Wood Products Alliance has prompted the Canadian International Trade Tribunal (CITT) to open a safeguard investigation into rising imports of certain wood products. The investigation covers three categories: cabinets and vanities, hardwood flooring, and engineered-wood storage furniture. Unlike anti-dumping cases, safeguard actions apply globally, so the investigation includes imports from all countries. The CITT now has 270 days from 24 April to decide whether these imports are causing serious harm to Canadian producers. If so, Canada could impose surtaxes or import restrictions. A final decision is due 15 January 2027. For New Zealand, the risk appears low. We exported only \$5 million NZD of wood products to Canada in the past year, so any impact is expected to be limited. Even so, WPMA is working closely with members and government officials to ensure New Zealand's interests are represented if needed. More details can be found [here](#)

## Timber design award finalists announced

The finalists for the 2026 New Zealand Timber Design Awards have been announced, showcasing the innovative use of timber, architecture and construction. The finalists and more details on the Awards can be found [here](#)



## Forestry Phytosanitary Requirements for Argentina decommissioned

The Ministry for Primary Industries Importing Countries Phytosanitary Requirements (ICPR) for Argentina has been decommissioned as there is no active trade or phytosanitary certificates issued for 8 years. Exporters seeking to trade forestry products to Argentina must work with their importer to contact Argentina's National Plant Protection Organisation to obtain official confirmation of the export requirements. If you have any questions, please contact your Independent Verification Agency (IVA) in the first instance.

## Latest Forest Industry Insights – Ministry for Primary Industries

The latest edition of Forestry industry insights is now available online. In this issue December 2025 estimates of forestry GDP increased 2.20% on September 2025, outperforming the broader agriculture, forestry and fisheries category (which increased 0.50%). By contrast, December 2025 estimates of GDP were down for wood and paper

product manufacturing (-0.50%). This is consistent with forestry production statistics showing a decrease in paper and paperboard production. January 2026 new dwelling consents were 19.34% higher than January 2025, and 12-month consent volumes were up 10.09% on the previous year. Domestic structural log prices decreased to 127.60 NZD/tonne in February 2026 from 128.60 NZD/tonne in February 2025. Log export revenue and volumes increased by 4.74% and 3.70% respectively, over the year ended January 2026. Over the same period, export revenue for all forestry products increased, except for paper and paperboard.

[Issue 6 - March 2026 - Forestry industry insights \[PDF, 809 KB\]](#)

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## [Upcoming Events](#)

### **E-Tipu Conference – 21-22 May**

E Tipu - New Zealand's Future Food and Fibre Summit this year takes place on 21-22 May at Te Pae in Christchurch. The theme for the two days is *Trending Into The Future*.

The Summit is forward leaning, action oriented and impact driven - a space to bring people together to have conversations others are reluctant to start.

See [here](#) for more details

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### **2026 NZIF Conference**



#### **Back to Business: Forward with Confidence**

Showcasing how we can and do get forestry right.

Dunedin, 26-18 August 2026

Join industry leaders, innovators, researchers, and practitioners as we share success stories, highlight cutting-edge innovation, and explore strong partnerships that deliver both environmental and economic gains. Together, we'll demonstrate what good forestry looks like – sustainable, safe, and forward-focused and rebuild confidence in an industry that is vital to New Zealand's future

**For more information click [here](#)**

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## Timber Design Awards 2026

**Gala Event Dinner: Friday 26 June 2026, Cordis Hotel Auckland**

Now entering their 51st year in 2026, these prestigious Awards celebrate the best in timber design and construction and provide a national platform to recognise outstanding achievement in the use of timber across the built environment.

Proudly hosted by Timber Unlimited, the Awards recognise the businesses, people, and teams who are at the forefront of the timber revolution, using timber to deliver beautiful, high-performance, low-carbon, exemplary projects – from large-scale commercial and public buildings through to residential, interior and innovation-focused work.

**[Register here to secure your ticket](#)**

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### WoodTECH 2026 - programmes released / registrations open!

In June 2026 the Australia and New Zealand WoodTECH conference series will bring industry leaders and technical specialists together to network and learn. The focus is on getting the best from advancing technologies. With leading international experts there will be plenty on offer. It's all about new ways of improving wood products. 2026 conference sessions will include sawing technology developments, wood treatment product advances, kiln drying improvement options, and wood processing technologies

**More details can be found [here](#):**

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### In the News

#### **WPMA Election Manifesto released**

*New Zealand's Wood Processors and Manufacturers Association (WPMA) is getting a head start on NZ's general election by releasing a manifesto calling on a national focus on value added wood processing.*

[Timberbiz WPMA's manifesto for the NZ government ahead of November election - Timberbiz](#)

#### **Wood sector pushes action on energy and trade ahead of election**

*This episode features Mark Ross, CEO, Wood Processors and Manufacturers Association (WPMA) discussing the sector's election manifesto and the role of the India Free Trade Agreement.*

[Wood sector pushes action on energy and trade ahead of election // Mark Ross - CEO, Wood Processors and Manufacturers Association \(WPMA\) - CountryWide CONNECT - Omny.fm](#)

## Kaitiāia Juken Mills sale: Northland councils seek forestry investors

A major investment opportunity in Northland's forestry sector has opened, with councils backing efforts to find a buyer or operator for Kaitiāia-based Juken Mills.

[Kaitiāia Juken Mills sale: Northland councils seek forestry investors - NZ Herald](#)

## NZ-India Free Trade Agreement supported by WPMA

Ross has previously told Wood Central that connecting on shared values and focusing on mutually beneficial areas of interest will be critical to the Indian Government opening the door to a longer-term trading relationship in timber and lumber products.

[95% Timber Tariff Cuts on the Line as NZ-India FTA Heads to Signing | Wood Central](#)

## WIDE Trust – apply for funding towards your wood processing apprenticeship programmes



Do you need funds to progress an initiative, project or programme in your business?

Do your employees need funds to progress wood processing studies, projects or qualifications?

Apply to the WIDE Trust for support ...

**\$6 MILLION AWARDED IN GRANTS TO DATE!**

The Wood Industry Development and Education Trust (WIDE Trust) is a charitable trust established in 2018. The Trust supports businesses undertaking research, development and other initiatives to advance the wood or forestry industry sectors in New Zealand and students undertaking career-related studies or projects in these industry sectors.

Initiatives supported by the Trust include:

- apprenticeship programmes
- in-house training programmes
- international study tour to seek out industry innovations and best practice
- attendance at industry events
- assessor training
- timber design and wood processing awards

Apply online  
[www.widetrust.org.nz](http://www.widetrust.org.nz)

**WIDE** WOOD INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION TRUST

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