

GIPPSLAND FORESTRY HUB: INVESTING IN GIPPSLAND'S SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY FUTURE SUMMARY



Background

- Gippsland Forestry Hub (GFHub) established in 2020 under the National Forest Industries Plan.
- Purpose: Identify opportunities to secure a sustainable forest industry in Gippsland.
- Led by PF Olsen Australia with input from Industry Edge and Spatial Vision.

Key Findings

1. Fibre Security & Market Needs:

- Native forest harvesting ends 2030 → fibre supply gap:
 - 1.2m m³ by 2030
 - 2.1m m³ by 2050
- Rising demand in packaging & construction.
- Current plantations cannot meet demand.

2. Plantation Potential

- 1.2m+ hectares suitable for plantations (Wellington, East Gippsland, South Gippsland).
- Integration must reflect landscape & landholder preferences.
- Carbon markets = key incentive for investment & cashflow.

3. Barriers

- Policy inconsistency & regulation complexity.
- Lack of transparent pricing, advice, finance models.
- Community concerns: fire risk, biodiversity, amenity loss.

4. Stakeholder Insights

- Landholder engagement is inconsistent, not landholder centric.
- Farmers show interest but require clearer incentives & messaging.
- Trusted advisors & networks vital for communication.

Key Findings cont.

5. Innovation Opportunities

- Engineered wood products (CLT, LVL) & bio-economy potential.
- Case studies: Australian Sustainable Hardwoods, Radial Timbers → diversification & vertical integration.

Recommendations

(Aligned to GFHub's four strategic themes)

1. Fibre Security for a Thriving Industry	• Develop catchment-level plantation visions. • Partner with water authorities, councils, institutional landowners. • Share farm forestry case studies.
2. Innovation for a World-Class Sustainable Industry	• Advance the circular bioeconomy. • Support local fibre innovation & processing technologies.
3. A Trusted and Reliable Source of Information	• Create a central forestry information hub for landholders. • Preserve historical industry data. • Build a compelling value proposition for tree investment.
4. Contributing to Gippsland's Community & Economy	• Develop a shared, inclusive forestry vision. • Partner with regional bodies: Latrobe Valley Authority, Food & Fibre Gippsland. • Engage Traditional Owners in strategy co-design. • Launch a strategic communications campaign. • Strengthen networks: Landcare, Gippsland Agroforestry Network.

Conclusion

Gippsland has unique opportunities to lead in sustainable forestry, with:

- Expansive land potential.
- Strong innovation base.
- Community partnerships to build trust.

The path forward requires coordinated action, investment, and communication to secure Gippsland's forestry future.