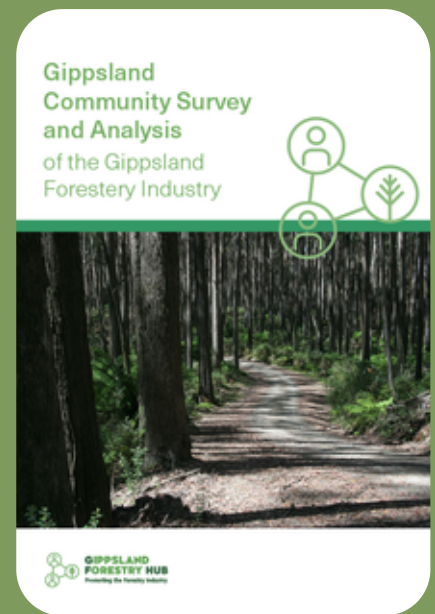


GIPPSLAND FORESTRY HUB: COMMUNICATIONS REPORT SUMMARY



This report, prepared by Agilus for the Gippsland Forestry Hub (GFHub), presents findings from stakeholder consultations across Gippsland to understand perceptions of the forestry industry and inform future communication strategies.

Consultations involved: local governments, advocacy groups, educational institutions, and industry representatives.

Key Findings

Consultations revealed a significant disconnect between the industry's economic contribution and public perception:

- **Support & Perception Gap:** Strong recognition of forestry's economic importance but mixed community views, especially around native forest harvesting and environmental impact.
- **Employment Concerns:** Skills shortages, poor career awareness, and limited training pathways are restricting workforce renewal.
- **Low Visibility:** Limited public understanding of modern, sustainable forestry practices and advanced technology in operations.
- **Communication Needs:** Stakeholders want coordinated, fact-based messaging that highlights jobs, innovation, and supply chain contributions.
- **Partnership & Trust:** A desire for stronger collaboration with Traditional Owners and more community-based education initiatives.

Strategic Recommendations

To bridge the communication gap and support industry growth, the following actions are recommended:

OBJECTIVE	ACTION PLAN
Unified Communications Strategy	Create a consistent regional narrative that highlights sustainability, jobs, and innovation.
Promote Good News Stories	Share success stories on technology, training, Indigenous engagement, and careers.
Youth Engagement & Education	Partner with schools, TAFEs, and careers expos; use virtual tours and relatable career content.
Build Partnerships for Visibility & Trust	Collaborate with Traditional Owners, councils, and community groups, particularly in East Gippsland.
Strengthen Local Economic Messaging	Promote “Gippsland Grown” to showcase local jobs, manufacturing, and sustainability.
Establish Industry Champions	Support ambassadors to represent forestry publicly, focusing on innovation and sustainability.