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Timber



The forestry and timber products industry is a significant contributor to the NSW economy, adding more than A\$2 billion each year. It directly employs more than 20,000 people, about half in regional NSW.

Timber production

NSW is a major timber producer, with extensive native forests throughout the State on public and private land. The State Government (through [Forests NSW](#)) manages more than 2.7 million hectares to meet the twin objectives of ecological sustainability and commercial efficiency, with almost 60% of these forests managed primarily for timber production.

NSW also has a significant plantation estate, and leads the nation in the production of softwood timbers. Some 330,000 hectares of mainly softwoods are under commercial cultivation in NSW. More than half the new softwood plantations established in Australia during 2005 are in NSW.

The plantation estate spreads across regional NSW, with major growing areas in South West Slopes around Tumut/Tumbarumba and the Central Tablelands around Bathurst/Oberon. Softwoods are also grown around Bombala, the New England region, the Southern Highlands and the North Coast.

In total, the State's native forest and plantation resource produces over 5 million cubic metres of logs, valued at more than A\$300 million, each year for processing by manufacturers of wood and paper products.

Timber processing

The NSW timber processing industry produces a diverse range of products, including paper, plywood, fibreboards, structural timbers and laminated veneer timbers, as well as a diversity of high value niche products. It generated sales and services income of more than A\$5.7 billion in 2004-05, more than 30% of Australian production.

Leading international companies with world class softwood timber processing facilities in NSW include Weyerhaeuser, Carter Holt Harvey and Norske Skog. Boral Timbers is the State's largest hardwood sawmilling company with operations along the eastern seaboard.



A significant recent entrant is Visy Industries with its A\$450 million pulp and paper mill at Tumut. Opened in 2001, this facility produces up to 320,000 tonnes of high quality kraft paper each year. The company is now investing a further A\$450 million in the Tumut facility to more than double throughout.

Government support

Recognising the importance of the forestry industry, the NSW Government is committed to encouraging and facilitating private sector investment in new plantation developments in NSW to provide feedstock for value added timber processing.

The Government has introduced reforms to encourage the private sector to invest in plantations and timber processing in NSW. The Plantations and Reafforestation Act 1999 established a one-stop approval process for plantation developments in NSW and confers harvesting certainty for growers.

The Government has also led the way in developing markets and instruments that recognise the financial value of carbon sequestered in plantations, and in separating title to both the timber and carbon outputs from the land on which they are produced.

For more information

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