

FORESTRY AUSTRALIA VICTORIAN COMMITTEE REPORT – 2021

The Division was very active during 2021 despite limitations due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A Strategic Plan developed in December 2020 set objectives and strategies for the Committee for 2021-23. Those addressed in 2021 were mostly achieved, or significant progress made. Most are still relevant for 2022. I thank all Committee and Forestry Australia members for their active involvement in our activities. If you have ideas on objectives, activities or ways we can improve, please contact a committee member.

Key achievements in 2021:

1. Events

- Tree-via event for the International Day of Forests, March 2021
- East Gippsland Field Trip to connect with Traditional Owners and review 2019-20 bushfires. >40 people attended.
- Next-Gen Technologies for Forest Management organised in partnership with the Royal Society of Victoria
- Victoria's Production Forests: a way forward, on the Victorian Forestry Plan for the transition out of native forest timber harvesting
- North East Victoria Forum and Field Trip to address long-term timber production and inspect plantation fire salvage and replanting > 50 people attended.
- Developments in Global Forest Restoration
- Proposed bi-monthly informal networking events were mostly postponed or cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions. One event held in Warragul in December.

2. Submissions

- Parliamentary Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline in Victoria
- Victorian Code of Forest Practice Review
- Submission to Major Events Review under the Regional Forest Agreements.
- Submission to Parks Victoria Land management strategy.

3. Other Initiatives

- Meeting with Timber Towns Victoria - local governments with an interest in forest management - to discuss forest management and their professional needs
- Ongoing discussions with the Gunaikurnai and Taungurung Traditional Owner Groups (in East Gippsland and north of Melbourne respectively) about how the IFA/AFG might support their aspirations for their country and their communities
- A shared electronic calendar of events with the 3 regional groups and Future Foresters Initiative to avoid clashes of dates
- An op-ed article in response to the Victorian Government's announcement following the Review of the Central West Forests based on the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council Recommendations;
- Information pitches to enable members to speak in a more informed way about forest management in Victoria
- Survey of lapsed members to understand reasons members resigned in 2019 and 2020
- Increased contact with regional treegrower groups to progress their aspirations

Membership

Given our growing success and increased member involvement, the Committee aims to recruit new members. We invite all current members to discuss membership with colleagues and direct them to the Forestry Australia website for information on how to join. <https://www.forestry.org.au/>

The Committee

Rod Keenan (Chair), Keith Maplestone, Gary Featherston, Gavin Livingston, Danielle Read, Jan Newport, David Dore and Joanne Lewis (replaced Mark Poynter during the year).

Monthly meetings are held by video conference, enabling regionally-based members to participate.