

Forest Products



Key points

- Sustainable Timber Tasmania supplies over 1.4 million tonnes of sustainable forest products to more than 50 customers.
- Sustainable Timber Tasmania's harvesting operations are focused on producing high quality sawlog, veneer logs and peeler logs.
- We also produce lower quality logs and residues as an unavoidable by-product of these operations.
- These residues are generally processed into woodchips and sold for paper production.

Product recovery from timber harvesting

Sustainable Timber Tasmania's harvesting operations are focused on producing high quality sawlog, veneer logs and peeler logs. We try to maximise overall value recovery and minimise the production of lower value residue products.

Sustainable Timber Tasmania supplies over 1.4 million tonnes of forest products to more than 50 customers.

These forest products include:

- High quality eucalypt sawlogs and veneer logs suitable for milling into appearance-grade timber, structural timber and decorative sliced veneer;
- Lower-quality sawlogs mainly used as a structural timber for building homes;
- Special timbers, such as blackwood, celery-top pine and sassafras – highly prized for designer furniture, boat building and crafts;
- High-grade peeler logs processed into rotary peeled veneer leaf for plywood and flooring;
- Low-grade peeler logs used to produce engineered wood products; and
- Pulp logs which may either be woodchipped locally, or exported as whole logs. These are often used to manufacture the range of paper products we use every day from copy paper to cardboard.



Maximising product value

We aim to maximise the economic value from all harvested areas. Wood produced from felled trees is segregated into craftwood, special timbers, high quality sawlogs and sliced veneer logs, with the remainder being available as peeler logs, pulpwood and fuel wood. Harvesting contractors are trained and accredited as log classification officers and are responsible for the appropriate segregation of products.

In addition to paying contractors a premium for higher value products, there are processes in place to maximise the recovery of wood volume and value, including:

- Segregation inspections carried out by staff to determine the presence of any logs that may have been misclassified as a lower-grade product. These inspections routinely take place on coupe landings during harvest monitoring. Sustainable Timber Tasmania also has a program for conducting segregation audits at mills and on log trucks; and
- Post-logging residue assessments, to monitor the efficient removal of forest products and to quantify any merchantable wood being left on the forest floor after harvesting operations.



Residues

Wood residues are produced from two sources:

- Harvesting operations required to produce high quality sawlogs and peeler logs unavoidably generate a significant volume of residues as by-product. This is because many trees and parts of trees are not of sawlog or peeler quality. On average, for every sawlog and peeler log produced in Tasmania there are two residue logs produced as by-products. This proportion of high-quality logs is similar to that found in other native hardwood forests around the world.
- Processing operations also generate significant residue volumes. Even when a log is high enough quality to be a sawlog or peeler log, the whole log cannot be sawn into timber or peeled into veneer. Sawmillers attempt to maximise the value from each sawlog but typically only about 30 per cent of the log ends up as sawn timber. The remainder ends up as sawdust (7 to 15 per cent), woodchips (30 to 35 per cent) and an allowance for shrinkage and shavings (20 per cent).

Rotary peel veneer mills have a higher recovery rate than sawmills. They can recover about 40-60 per cent of the log to make veneer leaf but this process still produces residues.

Getting the best possible economic return on residues is essential for the overall viability of the forest industry. Like any business, we need to maximise the value of all harvested products. This applies not just to public forests managed by Sustainable Timber Tasmania, but also to privately owned forests.

