



SOUTH AFRICA'S FORESTRY SECTOR IN THE BIOECONOMY

GIB MEETING

Forestry South Africa

29 May 2025



SOUTH AFRICA'S FORESTRY SECTOR IN THE BIOECONOMY

ROOTED IN SUSTAINABILITY

**A Sustainable Pathway to Climate
Resilience and Economic Growth**

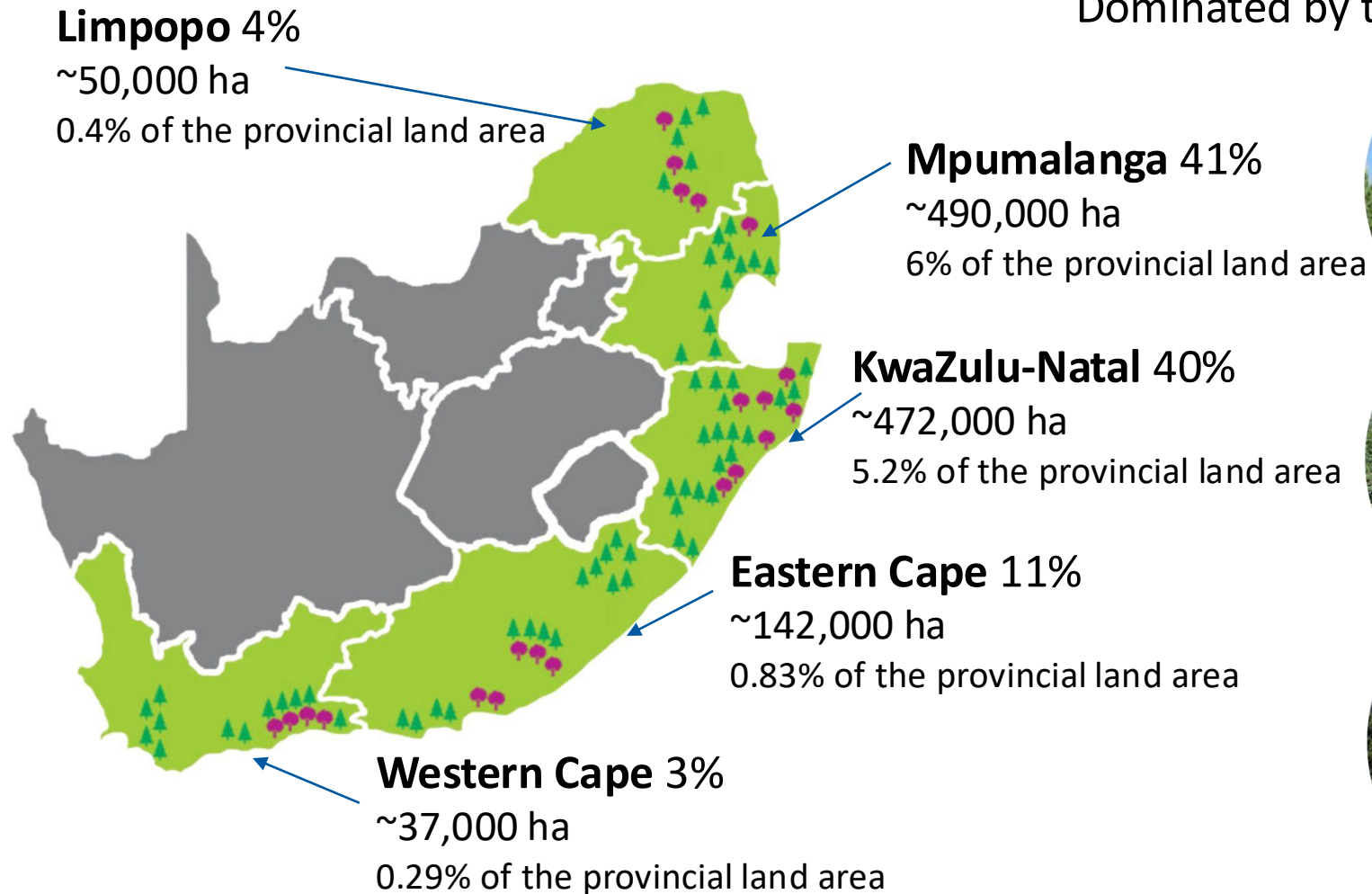
29th May 2025, Kruger National Park, ZA

G20 Initiative on Bioeconomy



A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

South Africa has approximately 1.2 million hectares of planted forests



Dominated by three tree types (genera)



Pine 49%
Softwood
~584 000 ha



Eucalypts 43%
Hardwood
~520 000 ha



Wattle 7%
Hardwood
~82 000 ha

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

Grower composition by land area

81.6% PRIVATELY OWNED

18.4% PUBLICLY OWNED



63% - 13 corporate companies

- Nine own their land
- Four lease land from the government
- Each have upwards of 15 000 ha

14.8% - Medium-scale independent businesses

- Owning between 100 and 10,000 ha

3.8% - Small-scale growers

- Individuals and community schemes
- High proportion of women
- Owning between 2 and 1,000 ha

10.7% - SAFCOL

- Government owned

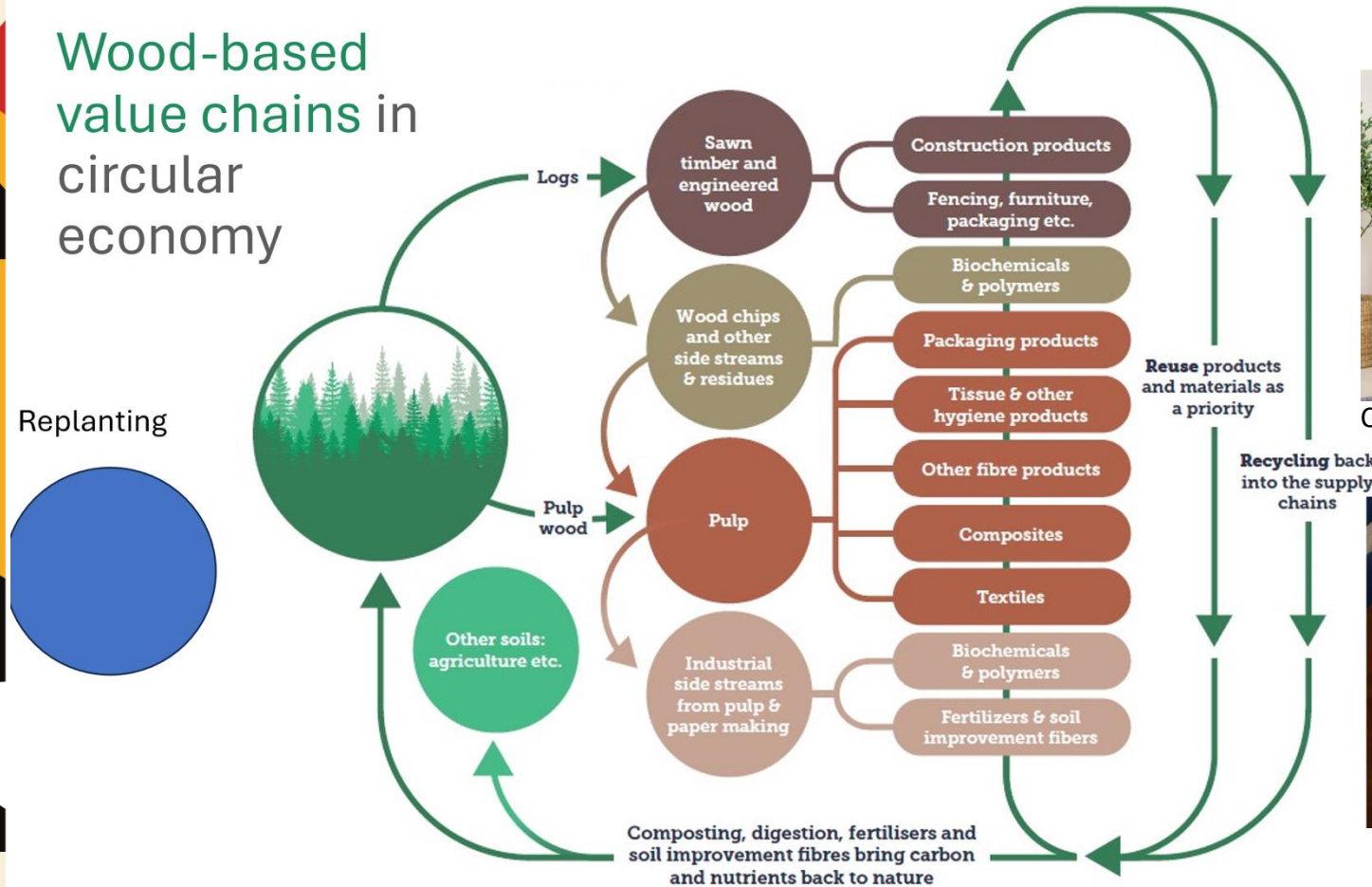
7.3% - DFFE

- Ran by the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment

THE FORESTRY VALUE CHAINS & CIRCULARITY

Between 14 and 16 million tons of timber into forestry-based bioproducts every year

Wood-based value chains in circular economy



Casting & release papers



Labels & release liners



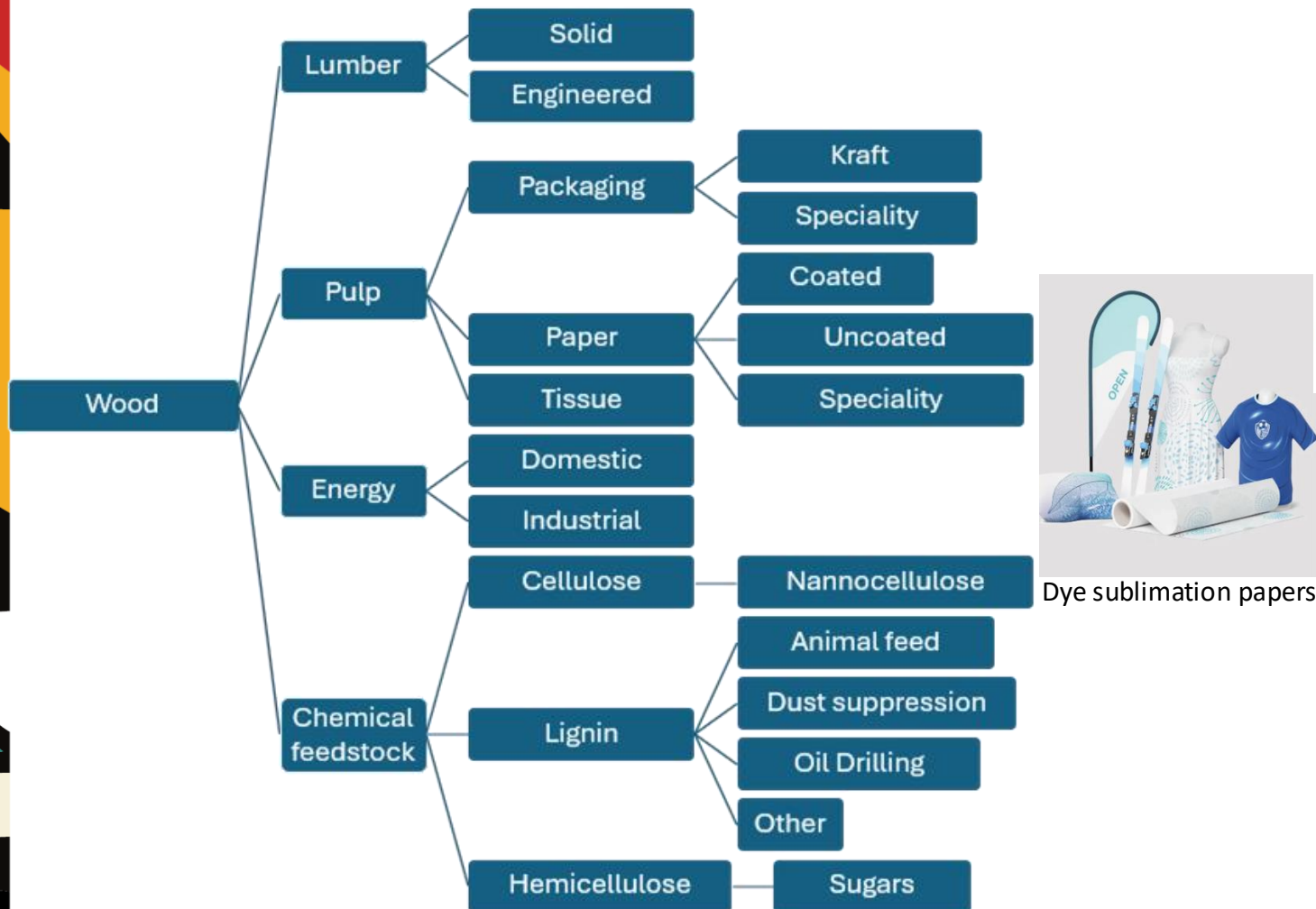
Graphic papers



Packaging papers

THE FORESTRY VALUE CHAINS: BIO PRODUCTS

Between 14 and 16 million tons of timber into forestry-based bioproducts every year



Lignin



Fibrillated cellulose



Biochemicals



Xylose & organic acids



SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION



ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION

- 24% of Agri-sector GDP
- 5% Agri-sector water use
- 5% of Manufacturing Sector's GDP
- Forestry Sector has committed R36 billion in additional investment (2020-2025)
- Key role player in the 'rural' economy

EMPLOYMENT CONTRIBUTION

- Employs 100 000 across the Forestry Sector and its associated Forest Product value-chains
- High proportion of these are women and those living in rural communities



SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION

CORPORATE SOCIAL INVESTMENT - CSI

- Currently achieving 143% of our social-economic development transformation target of 1% Net Profit After Tax,
- Predominately in rural communities where plantations are located
- Broadly divided into eight categories





SUSTAINABLE USE OF A NATURAL RESOURCE

SUSTAINABILITY

PLANTED FORESTS – a renewable resource

- Sustainable forestry involves **replacing** each harvested tree with a newly planted seedling, creating a sustainable resource with this ongoing cycle
- This is **NOT** to be confused with deforestation, which is the plundering of natural indigenous resources without an attempt to replant the harvested area.

BIODIVERSITY BENEFITS – of a patchwork landscape

- The Forestry Sector's landholdings go beyond its 1.2 million hectares of plantations
- 30% of the Sector's landholdings remain unplanted
- This includes over 300 000 ha preserved as natural area, creating a range of ecosystems that provide homes for a wealth of biodiversity – including rare and endangered species.
- All actively managed by the Sector as part of its **Environmental Management Stewardship**
- Found within the forestry landscape:



Indigenous Forests
~62,000 ha



Water bodies
~59,500 ha



Fynbos
~12,900 ha

SUSTAINABILITY

WATER STEWARDSHIP

We recognise that our timber plantations are located within key high-rainfall catchments, and if plantations are not well-designed and, more importantly, well-managed, they have the potential to impact these systems. However, they are not the water guzzling monsters some make them out to be.

- The Forestry Sector contributes to **3%** of South Africa's annual water use – the agriculture sector uses 60%
- The Forestry Sector is the only sector to **pay** for its **rainwater** via Water Use Licences
- Most FSA members are actively involved in Water Stewardship Initiatives, which involve:
 - Removing alien and invasive species from our landholdings
 - Removing 300,000 hectares of planted trees from wetlands since 1990
 - Partnering with conservation organisations like the WWF to improve water stewardship within and beyond our plantations

SUSTAINABILITY

CARBON CAPTURE – and storing it long after they are harvested

- On average, for a *Eucalyptus* tree to make one cubic metre of wood will have removed 880kg of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, releasing 640kg of oxygen and safely locking away 240 kg of captured carbon.
- Pine is slightly lower, with one cubic metre removing 770 kg of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and storing 210kg of carbon.
- If the wood-based products made from our trees do not end up in landfills or are burnt, they will continue to keep their carbon locked away.

FORESTRY SECTOR



A SUSTAINABLE

FEEDSTOCK

SUSTAINABILITY

FEEDSTOCK

- Resource allocation is market-driven
- Currently producing 13.2 million tons
- Compared to 15.8 million tons in 2015 and 20.3 million tons in 2004
- Impact of the National Forestry Sector Masterplan
 - 152,000 ha new afforestation & 68,000 ha recommissioned State-owned plantations.
- Investments in R&D
- Investment in forest protection

PEOPLE

- Collaborations (Government – Industry – Academia – Society): **Quadruple Helix Innovation Model**
- Entrepreneurial Universities
- Growing cohort of unemployed youth (Forestry Graduates) F-GEP
- People-centred development



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G20
SOUTH AFRICA 2025



Solidarity

Equality

Sustainability

Thank you