



Australian Government



Tasmania

# **A way forward**

*for Tasmania's forests*



## **THE TASMANIAN COMMUNITY FOREST AGREEMENT**

*Protecting old-growth forests, securing jobs, supporting communities.*

On May 13, Prime Minister John Howard and Premier Paul Lennon signed an historic agreement to increase protection of Tasmania's forests and secure jobs. The Agreement builds on the Regional Forest Agreement of 1997 with both governments contributing \$250 million to revitalise the timber industry and preserve more old-growth forests.

## **The Tasmanian Community Forest Agreement protects forests.**

The giant trees of the Styx Valley are now protected.  
The deep red myrtle in the Tarkine is now protected.  
1080 poison will be banned from State forests by the end of the year.

Old-growth clear-felling will be limited to 20% of the annual old-growth harvest on State forests by 2010.

Clearing of native forests for plantations will end in 2015.

## **The Tasmanian Community Forest Agreement protects jobs.**

The \$250-million plan will revitalise the forest industry, protect existing jobs and create new ones.

It means investing to maintain timber supplies.

It means making better use of plantations and regrowth forests.

It means more downstream processing.

It means modernising and retooling timber mills.

It means getting more value for smaller, lower quality logs.

It means developing new markets for high-quality products.



**The Tasmanian Community Forest Agreement is the way forward. We commend it to you.**

**John Howard**  
Prime Minister

**Paul Lennon**  
Premier

## **MOVING FORWARD - A Fresh Start**

The Tasmanian Community Forest Agreement is a fresh start for the forest industry - a chance to move into a new era of smart practice, greater efficiency and clever solutions.

It's a circuit breaker for those who have wanted to modernise, retool and find new markets, but have lacked the capital or confidence.

There is help for all - from the beekeepers, to the small country sawmills, to the hardwood sawmills prepared to invest in new, emerging technologies to get the most from our forest resource.

The Agreement will help the forest industry protect existing jobs and create new ones by moving into higher value forest products. More training will be available to develop a highly skilled workforce to ensure the industry obtains maximum benefit from new harvesting and processing equipment, the introduction of new technology and new marketing opportunities.

A revitalised timber industry and a world-class forest reserve system will secure the future of the many small communities that depend on the sawmills, the furniture makers, the craftsmen and the tourism industry for jobs.

The Agreement recognises that timber and tourism can co-exist to create a secure future for country towns.

Tasmania aims to be the supplier of choice to the world - a place recognised for quality forest products with world-class environmental credentials.



# The Financial Package

**More than \$250 million has been committed to revitalise the forest industry and deliver better conservation outcomes including:**

- **\$115 million to improve the productivity of existing regrowth forests and plantations to meet sawlog and veneer log commitments.**
- **\$42 million for Tasmanian hardwood sawmills for upgrading and retooling of mills to use plantation and regrowth logs.**
- **\$4 million for country sawmills.**
- **\$20 million for road infrastructure.**
- **\$9.5 million for modernising industry infrastructure.**
- **\$11.4 million to support the speciality species and beekeeping industries, including to improve access to leatherwood stands and to support sawmills in the north-west and west affected by the new Tarkine reserves.**
- **\$4 million to build skills and training for the Tasmanian forest industry.**
- **\$10 million in assistance for the Tasmanian softwood industry.**

## **Intensive Forest Management Program - \$115 million**

Over the next decade, the timber industry's reliance on older native forest will increasingly shift to plantations and regrowth forest.

Under the current Regional Forest Agreement, plantations would provide about 25% of the sustainable hardwood sawlog yield by 2020.

This figure will now rise to about 40%.

Foresters will need to improve the productivity of existing plantations and there will be a need for some new plantations.



Existing eucalypt plantations will receive additional fertilising, pruning and thinning and a further 16,000 hectares of hardwood plantations will be established to make sure the industry has sufficient sawlogs in the future.

Additional regrowth forests will be thinned to produce more sawlogs and additional areas of blackwood regeneration will be fenced.

## **Tasmanian Forest Industry Development Program - \$46 million**

This program will help hardwood mills to adjust to the different types of logs they will need to process as a result of the move away from old-growth clear-felling towards regrowth and plantation timber.

Assistance will be provided for projects that:

- Improve sawlog recovery rates and add value to forest resources (particularly regrowth wood and native forest thinnings);
- Develop new forest products;
- Result in more efficient timber use;
- Assist with adjustment to the changing nature of supply;
- Increase export competitiveness;
- Upgrade harvesting and haulage equipment;
- Promote the Tasmanian forest and wood products industry; and
- Increase co-operation or collaboration among industry participants.

\$4 million from the program will be directed specifically to country sawmills.

## **Country Sawmills - \$4 million**

Tasmania's country sawmills are the lifeblood of the timber industry. They will have the opportunity to retool and modernise.

The Tasmanian Community Forest Agreement is a way forward for these mills.

Assistance will be provided for projects that:

- Reduce reliance on old-growth logs and introduce new technologies and products, and new markets based on increased use of smaller regrowth logs and thinnings;
- Add value to native forest timber harvested and processed in Tasmania;
- Increase co-operation or strategic alliances within the forest industry; and
- Promote a sustainable Tasmanian forest and timber industry, which is efficient, environmentally sound and internationally competitive.

## **Tasmanian Softwood Industry Development Program - \$10 million**

The softwood development program will allow the Tasmanian softwood industry to invest in environmentally friendly best practices including by retooling existing mills and improving the efficiency and competitiveness of the softwood industry. The softwood industry development program may also assist mills to retool to produce alternatives to treating wood with Copper Chrome Arsonate.

Assistance will be provided for:

- Retooling mills and the modernisation of forest and haulage contractor equipment;
- Adoption of environmentally friendly new technology to add value to forest products;
- Maximising recovery rates from forests;
- Training for mill workers and harvesting contractors;
- Research into improved silvicultural management; and
- Upgrading existing transport linkages to support more efficient log cartage.

## **Special Species and Honey Producers - \$11.4 million**

The commitment to speciality timbers and leatherwood beekeeping will focus on:

- Special financial assistance for sawmills in north-west and western Tasmania affected by the large new reserves of rainforest in those areas;
- Low-impact roading to provide access to leatherwood honey and special species sawlog supply areas;
- Alternative techniques for maximising recovery of special species timbers; and
- Improved management of special species timbers supply areas.



# Protected Now and Forever

## Old-growth forest

More than 1 million hectares of old-growth forest protected.

## Styx Valley

Three new reserves to protect Australia's tallest trees - the magnificent *Eucalyptus Regnans* - the tallest flowering plant in the world.

## Tarkine

One of the largest areas of cool temperate rainforest protected in a new reserve of 31,000 hectares.

## Other new reserves

New formal reserves in the Wielangta State Forest, the Blue Tier, the Eastern Tiers and the north-eastern highlands.

## Old-growth clear-felling

On State forests to be restricted to 20% of old-growth harvest by 2010 - replaced by new harvesting techniques to conserve biodiversity.

## 1080

Banned from State forests by the end of the year, with more money for further research into alternatives on private land.

## Land clearing

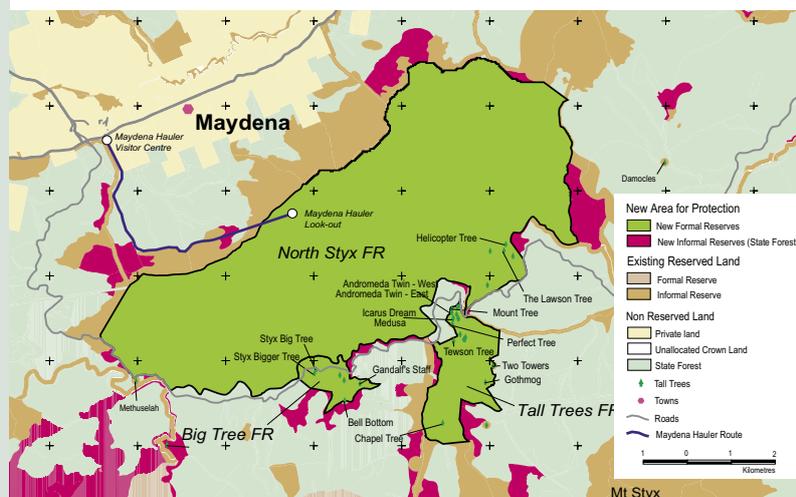
Clearing and conversion of state-owned native forests phased out over five years and over 10 years on private land.

- Capped to ensure at least 95% of the 1996 native forest cover is maintained.

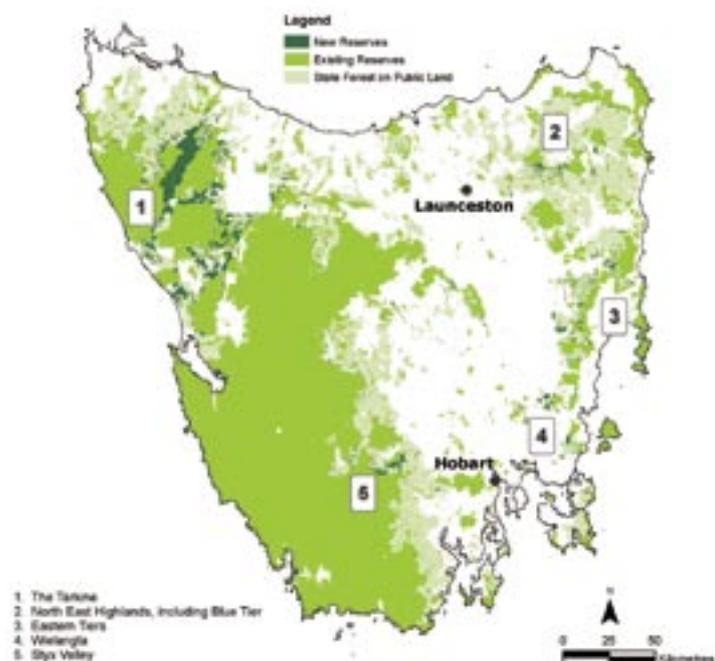
Under the Tasmanian Community Forest Agreement an extra 148,000 hectares of public land will be added to reserves, including 120,000 hectares of old-growth forests. In addition, 45,000 hectares of old-growth forest and other under-reserved forest type on private land to be reserved through voluntary sale or covenanting.

Forty per cent of Tasmania's 1996 forest cover was reserved under the Regional Forest Agreement. This supplementary agreement lifts the protected forest cover to 45%, including one million hectares of old-growth.

## New Styx forest reserves



## New reserves on public land in Tasmania



Map produced by the Australian Government Department of the Environment and Heritage. © Commonwealth of Australia 2005.

## The Styx

Icarus Dream, a 97-metre eucalypt, is believed to be the world's tallest flowering plant. It and 15 other giants of the Styx Valley will be protected in a new 336-hectare Tall Trees Reserve.

The existing Big Tree informal reserve near Waterfall Creek Road will be enlarged to create a new formal reserve of 185 hectares and include giant trees like Gandalf's Staff, the site of the Greenpeace tree platform in 2004.

A new 4,200-hectare forest reserve will protect a large expanse of unlogged, tall old-growth forest from the banks of the Styx River to the top of the Maydena Range.

About 13,000 hectares of the Styx Valley will be protected now and forever.

These reserves will enable visitors to access, enjoy and marvel at the tallest flowering plants in the world and will complement the new forest tourism experience.

## The Tarkine

A new 31,000-hectare reserve will protect the last large area of cool temperate rainforest in the world, preserving the habitat of about 50 rare and endangered species, including the wedge-tailed eagle and the giant freshwater crayfish.

With the new reserves, 87% of the Tarkine will be protected.

In all, 308,000 hectares stretching from north of the Arthur River to south of the Pieman River and from the shores of the west coast to the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage area near Cradle Mountain will be reserved.

Ecologists and conservationists regard this area as significant on a global scale. Cool temperate rainforests are extremely rare worldwide, with only remnants left in New Zealand, Chile, Siberia and western North America.

The area will be protected, and the sawmills affected will be provided with alternative resource and assistance to retool to use different species from other areas.

A way forward has been found!

## Clear-felling

Over five years, clear-felling in state-owned old-growth forests will be dramatically reduced.

Clear-felling will be used in less than 20% of the small amount of old growth harvested each year, replaced by alternative, more environmentally-friendly harvesting practices.

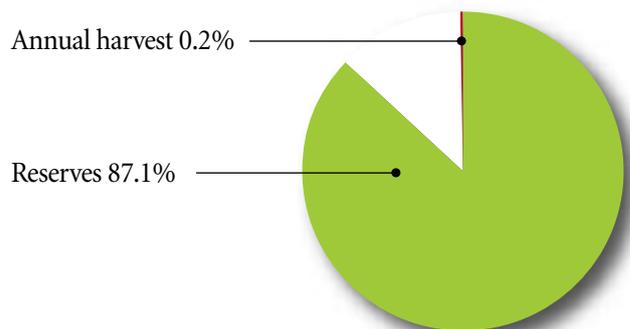
This is the most significant change to forestry operations in more than 50 years.

Instead of clear-felling, a large proportion of the forests will be left standing to provide shelter and habitat for native animals and to act as a source of seeds during regeneration.

To protect the trees left standing, there will be fewer high-intensity (hot) regeneration burns. Instead, the Tasmanian Government will progress plans for a clean biomass energy plant, using waste that would otherwise have been burnt on the forest floor—reducing smoke from regeneration burns and creating jobs.

A way forward for the environment and for jobs.

### Old-growth forest on public land (1,122,300 hectares)

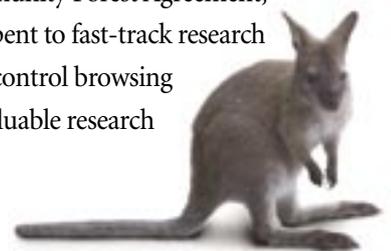


**Less than 0.2% or 2,500 hectares of Tasmania's state-owned old-growth forests are logged annually, and only 20% of this will be clear-felled.**

## 1080

The Tasmanian Government previously announced it would ban the use of 1080 in State forests by the end of the year.

Under the Tasmanian Community Forest Agreement, an extra \$4 million will be spent to fast-track research into alternative methods to control browsing animals on private land – valuable research for private land managers.

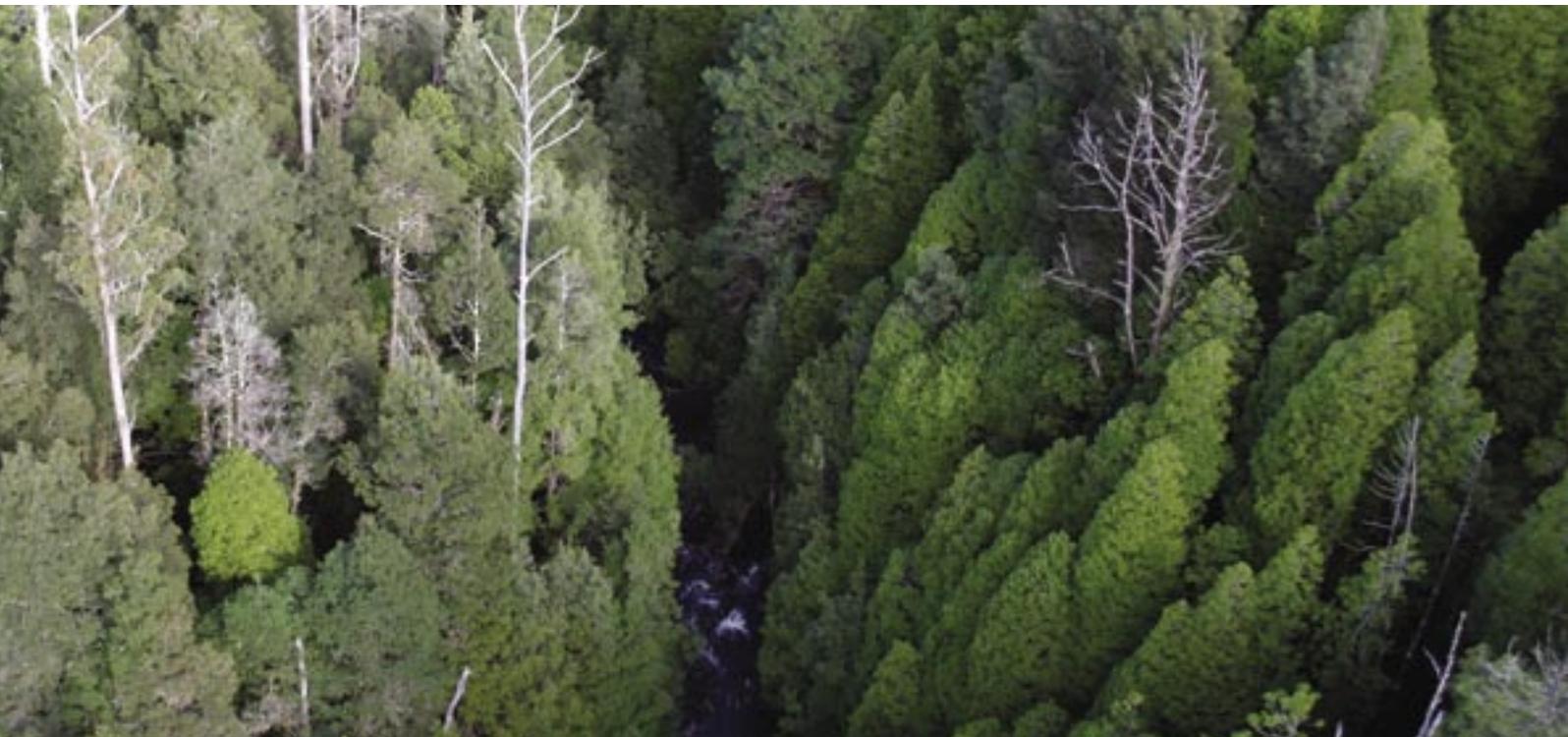




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For further information please visit

[www.premier.tas.gov.au](http://www.premier.tas.gov.au)

[www.rfa.gov.au](http://www.rfa.gov.au)

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