

Forest Management Plan

Summary

October 2023

This publication has been compiled by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.

© State of Queensland, 2023

The Queensland Government supports and encourages the dissemination and exchange of its information. The copyright in this publication is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) licence.

Under this licence you are free, without having to seek our permission, to use this publication in accordance with the licence terms.



You must keep intact the copyright notice and attribute the State of Queensland as the source of the publication.

Note: Some content in this publication may have different licence terms as indicated.

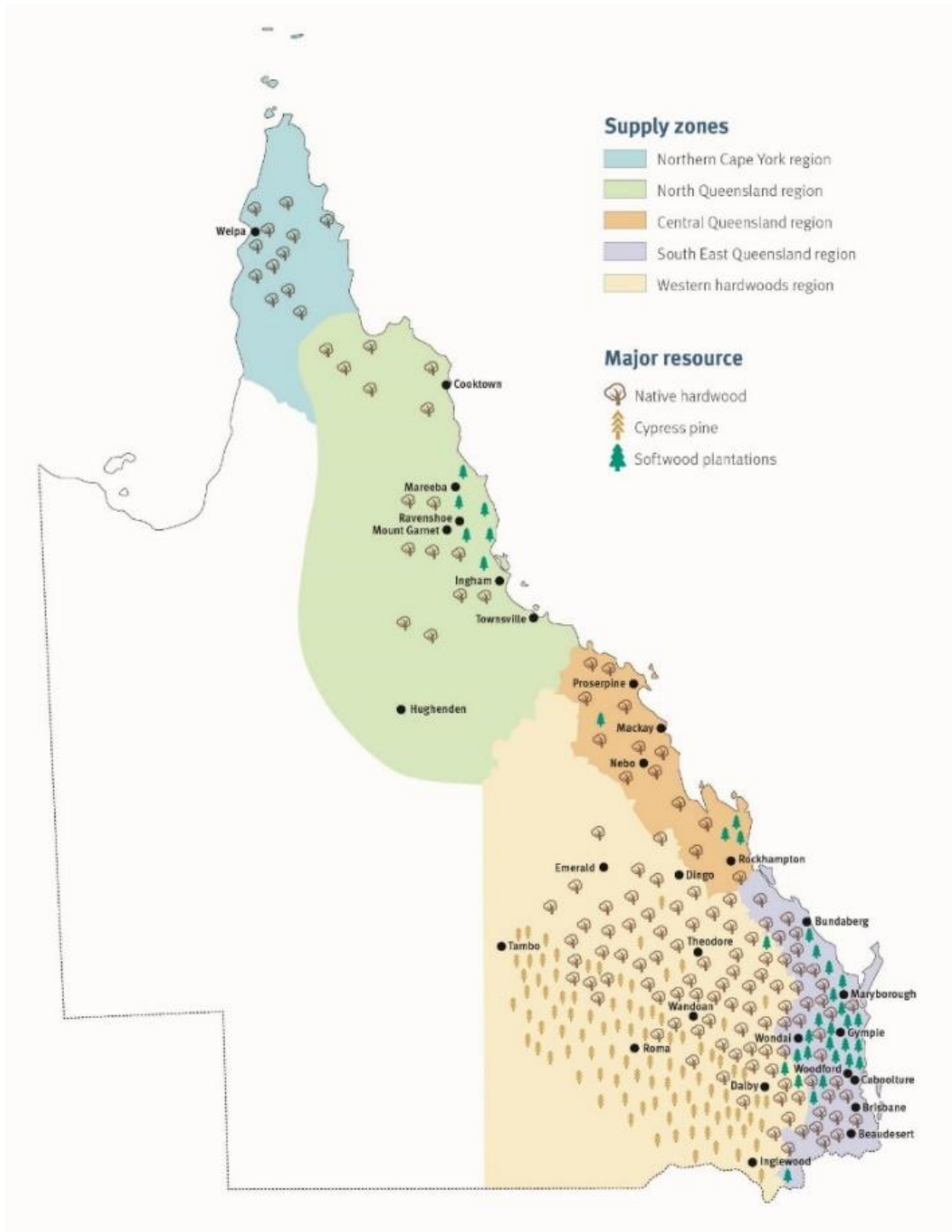
For more information on this licence, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

The information contained herein is subject to change without notice. The Queensland Government shall not be liable for technical or other errors or omissions contained herein. The reader/user accepts all risks and responsibility for losses, damages, costs and other consequences resulting directly or indirectly from using this information.

The forest and timber industry in Queensland

Queensland's forest estate is characterised by large, highly productive softwood plantations and extensive areas of relatively slow growing native forest of hardwoods and cypress pine. A significant proportion of the State's productive forests are certified under internationally recognised forest management schemes. Figure 1 indicates the location of key production forests across the State.

Figure 1 - The distribution of forests across the State



The Queensland forest and timber industry makes an important contribution to the State's economy and is a significant source of employment. Queensland forests support an extensive regionally based processing sector that produces a broad range of timber products. These facilities generate important regional employment and economic activity. The industry has a proud history in Queensland, and continues to evolve and innovate to meet changing market demands.

Most of Queensland's timber is used to produce building products, with the domestic housing market consuming the greatest quantity of timber products. The State's diverse forest estate also contributes to a broad range of unique products, such as naturally termite resistant cypress pine, durable hardwoods and appearance grade Araucaria (hoop pine).

The [Forestry Act 1959](#) (Forestry Act) provides the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) with the authority to sell and manage State-owned native forest products. Within the Department this role is delegated to the Forestry business unit (DAF Forestry).

Summary Forest Management Plan

Introduction

DAF is responsible for activities related to the supply of State-owned timber, quarry material and other forest products from State forests and a range of other tenures under the [Forestry Act 1959](#)

DAF Forestry works in partnership with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service & Partnerships of the Department of the Environment and Science (DES), industry, community and other stakeholders to ensure the responsible management and efficient supply of forest products for the benefit of all Queenslanders.

This Summary Forest Management Plan is a key document within our forest management system and represents the culmination of our efforts to date to collaborate with our stakeholders and incorporate feedback in line with our compliance obligations, core business values and Forest Management Policy Statement commitments.

This plan provides an overview of our systems, policies and procedures that collectively make up our forest management system, which is certified to the [Australian Standard® for Sustainable Forest Management AS4708](#).

DAF Forestry's role

DAF Forestry administers the sale of State-owned forest products, including seeds and foliage under the Forestry Act, as well as managing access for beekeeping. We also administer the sale of State-owned quarry material.

These activities can occur on State forests, timber reserves, leasehold lands, reserves, public roads and certain freehold lands where the State has retained ownership of the forest products or quarry material.

These activities are also subject to legislation and other frameworks that protects environmental and cultural heritage values, recognises native title rights and requires a safe and healthy work environment.

More information about DAF Forestry can be found [here](#).

Other parties with a role in forest management or operations

DES is responsible for the day-to-day and overall management of State forests, including any non-commercial activities. A [Master Plan](#) for Queensland's parks and forests to 2025 outlines its objectives for management including:

- working with stakeholders to ensure a sustainable, risk-based approach to resource use
- management of fire and invasive species
- cultural management
- provision of recreational opportunities
- maintenance of essential infrastructure.

Permittees authorised under the Forestry Act also play an important role, being the parties that remove forest products, or use apiary sites, subject to conditions detailed in legislation, relevant codes and sales permits.

Other State government departments with relevant responsibilities are:

- DES for protecting environmental and cultural heritage values
- the Department of Resources primarily for administration of state leasehold lands and native forest harvesting on privately-owned land
- the Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (DSDSATSIP) for the protection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage
- Workplace Health and Safety Queensland for improving workplace health and safety.

Goals and objectives

DAF Forestry's business goal is to responsibly supply forest, timber and quarry resources that support further investment and development opportunities for regional Queensland while protecting economic, environmental, community and cultural values.

We achieve this by:

- conducting our business on a commercial and environmentally responsible basis
- planning for and monitoring authorised activities to minimise any impacts on environmental and heritage values in accordance with our certification, government policy and legislation
- providing responsive, effective and efficient administration of our activities
- maintaining a skilled, motivated and professional workforce that operate in a safe and healthy workplace.

Forest management policy statement

DAF Forestry's [Forest management policy statement](#) details its commitment to systematic management that delivers on environmental, social and economic objectives.

Forest management plan scope

This plan applies to areas of State-owned native forests within Queensland. State-owned native forests on which we authorise operations include State forests, timber reserves, leasehold land and some freehold land where the State retains the right to the timber resources under a Forest Consent Agreement.

Legislation, code and certification requirements

DAF Forestry's activities are conducted under the authority of the Forestry Act.

Other key legislation applying to authorised operations includes:

- the [Nature Conservation Act 1992](#), the [Environmental Protection Act 1994](#) and the Commonwealth's [Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999](#) for protecting environmental values
- the [Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003](#), the [Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Act 2003](#) and the [Queensland Heritage Act 1992](#) for protecting indigenous and non-indigenous cultural heritage values
- the [Native Title \(Queensland\) Act 1993](#) for respecting native title rights
- the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#) to provide a safe and healthy work environment.

On State forests, timber reserves, leasehold and freehold lands under the *Land Act 1994*, authorised harvesting operations are required to follow the [Code of practice for native forest timber production on Queensland's State forest estate 2020](#). The accepted development code [Managing a native forest practice](#) may be applied on certain freehold lands.

We are also committed to maintaining certification under the Standard for Sustainable Forest Management (AS/NZS 4708 2021) over State forests and timber reserves.

Our certification provides an assurance that the forests we harvest are conserved and managed responsibly to ensure they deliver social, environmental and economic benefits now and in the future.

To maintain certification, we must:

- undertake our management in a systematic manner
- proactively engage with our stakeholders
- ensure the maintenance of biodiversity, forest health, soil, water, cultural heritage and other values.

Certification also enables our timber processing customers to maintain chain-of-custody certification. This allows them to label and promote the environmental integrity of their timber products.

Certification applies to the State forests and timber reserves within the [defined forest area](#), and requires our management systems to undergo regular independent audits, and the [summary audit](#)

[report](#) of our operations to be made publicly available. We apply a similar management approach in forests outside of the defined forest area.

Forest values

DAF Forestry is committed to protecting productivity, biodiversity, forest health, soil, water, cultural heritage and other values. We do this by:

- identifying the values that either exist or are likely to be found on each operational area
- requiring our customers to implement the measures in the [Code of practice for native forest timber production on the Queensland's State forest estate 2020](#) or in some cases [Managing a native forest practice – A self-assessable vegetation clearing code](#) to protect these values
- where relevant, such as for native sandalwood, requiring customers to not only comply with the relevant forestry code of practice, but also the [Code of practice for the harvest and use of protected plants under an exemption](#).
- where appropriate applying further measures to protect identified values that may otherwise be adversely impacted by the activities we authorise.

Forest resources and inventory

Queensland's native forest resources occur mainly in two broad forest types:

- eucalypt forest and woodland in coastal and subcoastal Queensland
- cypress open forest and woodlands located west of the Great Dividing Range in the southern areas of the State.

Most of Queensland's State-owned forests are comparatively low productivity and generally slow growing; but with around 3 million hectares in the defined forest area, contain substantial forest resources.

Growth rates and standing timber volumes in the wetter hardwood forests closer to the coast are usually higher due to the species present and site conditions such as higher and more reliable rainfall and better soils. Growth rates and standing volumes tend to be lower in the drier subcoastal forests, dependent on-site conditions and associated species.

We use inventory, modelling, on-site inspections, satellite and other imagery and historical harvest records for wood supply estimations and scheduling.

Forest operations and silviculture

State-owned native timber resources are allocated and sold to timber processors (permittees) as standing trees under sales permits issued under the Forestry Act. The majority of sawlogs are sold through long-term sale permits, with other products allocated and sold on shorter term arrangements.

We mostly supply sawlogs, poles and girders, along with small volumes of landscaping logs. The main species include white cypress pine, spotted gum, ironbark, stringybark, forest red gum, blackbutt, Gympie messmate and sandalwood.

Timber harvesting is done on a selective basis from within the available forest area, targeting only those trees of suitable commercial species and merchantable grade. A maximum of 50% of trees can be removed and a specified number of larger trees must be retained as habitat trees. Gaps created during harvesting provide for natural regeneration.

We develop a detailed operational plan for each harvest area prior to operations commencing. This plan identifies the key features of the area to be harvested, values to be protected, and management systems to be applied.

Our management may involve marking exclusion zones to protect environmental values and the trees to be harvested. We regularly monitor operations to ensure compliance with the operational plan and associated codes of practice throughout harvesting operations.

To maintain safety, all forest operations must comply with the [Forest Harvesting Code of Practice 2007](#).

Native forest log timber product [removals](#) authorised by DAF Forestry are published to the internet.

Monitoring and review

DAF Forestry regularly monitors permittee operations for compliance with contractual and legal obligations. Operations on State forests are also subject to regular audits by DES.

Our forest management system is also subject to regular independent audits to maintain our certification, and as part of the Queensland Public Sector we may also be subject to audits by the Queensland Audit Office.

Where any of these processes identify a non-conformance issue, we ensure that corrective action is taken and if necessary, make changes to procedures and systems. All non-conformances are monitored until resolved.

Our stakeholders

DAF Forestry proactively engages with stakeholders regarding the activities it authorises by:

- contacting stakeholders that are directly affected by activities to obtain their views in the development of our operational plans;
- inviting all stakeholders to contact us to make submissions about the activities we authorise, provide us with feedback or to make a complaint.

DES, through A Master Plan for Queensland's parks and forests, commits to encouraging community involvement in the management of its estate.

This summary Forest Management Plan and other information about DAF Forestry's business is available through the DAF's [website](#).

Contact us

Phone: 13 25 23 or Email: info@daf.qld.gov.au