

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Queensland Sustainable Timber Industry Framework



JUNE 2024



Queensland
Government



A 30-year plan for reforming
the forest and timber industry
to grow jobs in partnership
with stakeholders.

Priority areas

The *Queensland Sustainable Timber Industry Framework* will include six priority areas that the Queensland Government will develop in partnership with stakeholders:



PRIORITY AREA 1

Securing sustainable timber supply



PRIORITY AREA 2

Adding value to forest and timber supply chains



PRIORITY AREA 3

Realising the potential of forest-related markets for industry, landholders and the environment



PRIORITY AREA 4

Future forest workforce and strong timber industry



PRIORITY AREA 5

Growing Queensland's protected area estate



PRIORITY AREA 6

Fostering First Nations peoples' forestry employment and enterprise opportunities

Overview

Native forests and plantations are of significant value to Queensland's community, industry and environment.

They supply wood for housing, furniture and food, and create jobs for more than 8000 Queenslanders. Forests make up unique habitats and ecosystems, support water quality and carbon storage, and provide a landscape for recreational activities unique to our Queensland way of life. Queensland is Australia's most biodiverse state.

The Queensland Government is committed to a sustainable forest and timber industry which secures regional jobs now and into the future.

Balancing positive environmental outcomes, supporting industry growth and jobs, and meeting housing and construction needs for our growing population will inform the path forward. Today's decisions will determine what supply of timber is available for the next generation and our ability to derive value from forest products for low carbon construction methods whilst protecting biodiversity.

To provide a longer-term and comprehensive system to protect forest values and balance the many ways Queensland's forest estate is used, we will develop a new *Queensland Sustainable Timber Industry Framework* by the middle of 2025.

Development of the *Queensland Sustainable Timber Industry Framework* will be supported by an Advisory Group which will include representatives from the timber industry, forestry experts, the conservation sector, First Nations peoples, the Australian Workers' Union, construction sector and outdoor recreational groups. The Advisory Group will be established by the end of July 2024.



Our commitment to timber jobs and timber for housing

The *Queensland Sustainable Timber Industry Framework* will be underpinned by a commitment to a sustainable long-term future for Queensland's timber industry.

The *Queensland Sustainable Timber Industry Framework* will support good secure jobs for Queensland timber workers now and into the future.

The *Queensland Sustainable Timber Industry Framework* will secure the sustainable timber supply needed to build the additional houses Queensland needs.

To achieve this, the *Queensland Sustainable Timber Industry Framework* will start from a baseline that there should be no reduction in overall timber supply levels from 2025 to the end of 2034, including softwood, plantations and native timber, and that industry needs contractual certainty.

The *Queensland Sustainable Timber Industry Framework* will explore ways to incentivise new plantations and new technology over a planning horizon from now to 2054.



Our priorities



Priority area 1

Securing sustainable timber supply

Changes are needed to the way Queensland produces timber to make sure we have an ongoing supply of timber from native forests that is harvested in an ecologically sustainable way on both private and state-owned tenures. How much timber is derived from domestic native forests and plantations will influence industry investment and which types of timber products are sourced locally, including for housing and infrastructure.

Sustainable commercial native forestry practices

Queensland needs to ensure the sustainable management of commercial native forestry on private and state-owned land to secure our native forests into the future. Changes will support industry confidence in investment and drive protection outcomes for high conservation value native forests in an informed way. Certainty for industry and landholders about when and where native forestry can be undertaken will support a prosperous timber industry.

We will:

- establish a revised framework for sustainable forest management on all tenures to balance timber demand with the protection of biodiversity and seize carbon opportunities
- develop a supply and demand analysis in relation to timber in Queensland, including opportunities for salvage
- work with industry stakeholders to create certainty about harvesting in state forests
- to create certainty for private native forestry, develop a revised regulatory framework including the establishment of a new 'Category F' in the *Forestry Act 1959*, and consider other measures to streamline private operations and provide certainty for forestry activities on private land
- consult with stakeholders on a revised *Managing a native forest practice accepted development vegetation clearing Code*, for consultation in 2025 and implementation by the end of 2026.

Contribution of the plantation estate

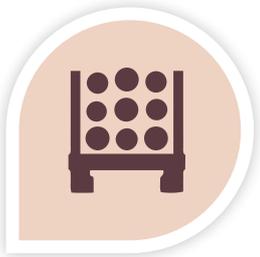
Options for expanding softwood and hardwood plantations in partnership with the Australian Government, industry, landholders and First Nations peoples will be evaluated and progressed. This needs to occur in the context of continued domestic supply.



Plantation timber has the potential to boost domestic timber production, create and support regional jobs, add value to supply chains and sequester carbon. But commercial plantation production can take years to mature, and there are a range of economic and environmental factors that influence plantation success. Interim measures may be required.

We will:

- determine economic and environmental feasibility of softwood and hardwood plantation expansion to respond to projected demands for timber resources, informed by statewide mapping of plantation potential
- identify measures to promote and expand the plantation timber industry, including through emerging markets and government investment vehicles
- engage with stakeholders and investigate plantation investment models between private industry, First Nations peoples' businesses, farm foresters and state and territory governments
- apply learnings from previous hardwood plantation ventures in Queensland to ensure plantation expansion is future-focussed
- support plantation supply chain development, infrastructure and employment in plantation forest management, harvest, haulage and processing.



Priority area 2

Adding value to forest and timber supply chains

Ensuring and enhancing the high-value uses of native and plantation timber through supply chain diversification and value-adding will broaden what we can use our timber for (e.g. for housing and construction, power poles, or other materials). This will also help in maximising returns on forestry investment.

The expansion of new sectors can create economic and employment opportunities in regional Queensland, increase timber product security and embed circular economy principles while supporting commitments for net zero economy.

We will:

- work with stakeholders to determine key areas for supply chain development and optimisation to respond to Queensland's priorities in housing and infrastructure, including establishing a *Timber Supply Chain 2035 Strategy* supported by expert and stakeholder engagement, involving the Australian Research Council Advance Timber Hub, administered by The University of Queensland
- accelerate supply chain diversification with investment across government, research organisations and private enterprises to support product development and new jobs
- facilitate cross-sectoral collaboration with emerging environmental markets to maximise investment.



Priority area 3

Realising the potential of forest-related markets for industry, landholders and the environment

Queensland is in a position to seize immediate opportunities across conventional forestry practices and in environmental markets. Emerging environmental markets will provide options to diversify current business models and land management practices. They include carbon credits and future markets in biodiversity and other environmental credits related to land management.

We will:

- improve the ways we help landholders, including through extension support, to make decisions about entering these markets – noting these offer an opportunity for ongoing workforce and jobs to manage carbon and biodiversity projects as part of a diversified future forestry and land sector
- improve the information available for landholders to understand the value of native forests on their property, and investigate linkages with land valuation processes
- continue to engage with the Australian Government and regional communities to maximise opportunities and shape markets for the benefit of Queenslanders across primary production, forest industry and the conservation sector.



Priority area 4

A future forest workforce and strong timber industry

Through these reforms there are opportunities for the forest and timber industry with new roles and functions. The forestry industry makes a significant contribution to our state and the livelihoods of skilled workers in our regional communities and their families.

We will:

- work with stakeholders to co-develop a Forest and Timber Workforce Plan, informed by regional and economic analyses, to address workforce challenges and opportunities
- integrate forest and timber workforce opportunities with other clean economy jobs in conservation, agriculture and other economic sectors like renewables and critical minerals
- provide support to increase skills and training for new and existing workers in the forestry and timber industry.



Priority area 5

Growing Queensland's protected area estate

The government's *Queensland's Protected Area Strategy 2020–2030* provides a pathway to grow our protected area system and transform the way protected areas are managed. It includes a mix of state-owned and managed protected areas, Indigenous-owned, jointly managed national parks, and privately owned and managed nature refuges. Certain state forests could be added to the protected area estate and other tenures can be used to allow tourism, recreation and other low impact activities.

We will:

- transition approximately 50,000–60,000 hectares of high-value ecosystems within the Eastern Hardwoods and adjacent areas to a new Natural Capital Reserve tenure to support the creation of a Greater Glider Forest Park
- work with stakeholders to add to the protected area estate and determine appropriate tenures for areas of state forest where native timber harvest has ended or is planned to end in the future
- investigate mechanisms to maximise economic and social benefits from forests within protected areas, including for eco-tourism, recreation and other low impact uses
- streamline the regulatory processes needed to facilitate the transfer of state forests to the protected area estate under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*, including using a new 'Natural Capital Reserve' tenure to support these transfers
- undertake a comprehensive statewide assessment of forest, woodland and savannah values to determine best value conservation areas for protection and to inform approaches to native timber harvesting
- investigate opportunities to support private landholders to participate in conservation programs and create and manage private protected areas.



Priority area 6

Fostering First Nations peoples' forestry employment and enterprise opportunities

The *Queensland Sustainable Timber Industry Framework* will consider and incorporate the interests, knowledge and practices of First Nations peoples. This includes linkages with the National Indigenous Forestry Strategy to provide improved opportunities for First Nations peoples to pursue and develop business partnerships that drive employment in forest management and related areas, and in the forestry industry statewide.

We will:

- work with stakeholders to better facilitate opportunities for First Nations peoples to access existing and emerging forest-based markets to drive employment and economic activity
- encourage participation in the forest industry by forming business partnerships with industry to provide long-term benefits to First Nations peoples' communities, as well as to the industry
- investigate opportunities for new economic partnerships and regional jobs in environmental management through the Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers and other ranger programs, increased tourism, new protected areas, and skills in technology and data.



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