Acknowledgement

The Forest Products Commission (FPC) acknowledges the Noongar Nations that are the traditional owners of the Yued, Gnaala Karla Boodja, Ballardong, Whadjuk, Southwest Boojarah and the Wagyl Kaip and Southern Noongar forests and lands. We respect the Elders past, present and emerging.

Further detail of the FPC’s commitment to first Australians is available in the FPC’s Reconciliation Action Plan (FPC, 2021c).

Feedback

Please refer to the Forest Products Commission’s website for information on how to provide feedback on this document. Feedback and comments on this document can be directed to:

Forest Products Commission
Phone: +61 8 9363 4600
Email: certification@fpc.wa.gov.au
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Introduction

The Forest Products Commission (FPC) is responsible for the sustainable management and development of Western Australia’s forest products industry, using plantation, sandalwood and native forest products on land owned or leased by the State.

Our operations are undertaken in accordance with the Forest Management Plan 2014-2023 (the FMP), which is prepared by the Conservation and Parks Commission and the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA). The scope of the FMP covers the land categories vested in the Conservation Commission across the state’s south west, within the Swan, South West and Warren regions of the DBCA.

The FMP protects all old-growth forest and balances the complex values of our forests, including biodiversity, ecosystem health, soil and water resources with social, cultural and economic benefits.

This public summary document provides an overview of the FPC’s role in forest management in native forest and plantation operations on both State-owned and private land. This document should be read in conjunction with the FMP, the FPC’s Karri Forest Management Plan (FPC, 2021a) and the Sandalwood Management Plan (FPC, 2021b).

Policy and objectives

The FPC’s goal is to deliver healthy forests for future generations. This is aligned with the FPC’s mission, which includes the sustainable harvesting and regeneration of Western Australia’s native forest resources. The FPC’s strategic objective for its native forest operations includes building on its social license to operate in the forests of the South West and enable innovation in the industry to expand its product range and maximise the value of the resource.

The FPC has a Statement of Corporate Intent (SCI), which describes how the agency intends to achieve its financial, industry, environmental and social objectives. The SCI complies with the requirements of the Forest Products Act 2000 and represents an agreement between the Minister for Forestry and the FPC.

The Statement of Corporate Intent is consistent with the Strategic Development Plan which details a five-year view of the FPC’s planning.

Vision and values

The FPC’s vision is to build and maintain a sustainable and commercially viable forest products industry that provides economic and social benefits to the people of Western Australia.

The FPC has clearly defined values. These include operating responsibly, ethically and sustainably. The FPC is committed to achieving results and delivering excellent services to its customers, partners, the community and each other.
The FPC also commits to providing a safe workplace for its staff and contractors, and puts the wellbeing and professional development of its people at the forefront of its business.

Information on acceptable conduct for employees of the FPC is available in the FPC’s Code of Conduct (FPC, 2017b).

**Forest management policy**

The FPC’s commitment to implementing forest management practices that are environmentally sound, socially acceptable and economically viable is documented through our Forest Management Policy.

A copy of Policy 9 - Forest Management (FPC, 2019) is available on the FPC website.
Scope

Scope of Forest Management certification

The FPC’s operations are certified to the Australian Standard for Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) AS 4708, a standard supported by the Programme for Endorsement for Forestry Certification Schemes (PEFC). This certification covers activities associated with the management of the FPC’s Defined Forest Area (DFA). The DFA includes:

- The forest area available for timber harvesting under the Forest Management Plan 2014-2023 (FMP) that is not subject to active mining within a mining tenement.
- Freehold land held in the name of the FPC (This includes all land identified on the certificate of title, including non-plantable lands).
- State pine plantations on public land outside the FMP area.
- The FPC’s pine plantations (share-farms) on private land.
- Wild sandalwood areas listed on the annual Flora Supplying (Sandalwood) licence
- Plantation sandalwood operations
- Property held by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) within the Wellington dam catchment planted with exotic eucalypts, proposed for conversion to pine plantations.

A key change to the FPC’s DFA has been the inclusion of pre-mining activities and post-mining rehabilitation since 2020. Currently this is relevant for Alcoa operations only. Pre-mining activity includes salvage operations and the recovery of forest products prior to commencement of mining activities. Post-mining rehabilitation includes the recovery of forest products as part of thinning operations, associated with improvements in hydrology, fire management and forest health. These sites will remain within the DFA to enable the recovery and utilisation of forest products that would otherwise be wasted as a result of mining activities. This will also enable independent third-party verification of the rehabilitation until the Completion Criteria meets the required standard and the mine site is formerly handed back to the DBCA.

Wild and plantation sandalwood were added to the FPC’s DFA in 2021.

The DFA excludes:

- *Eucalyptus* share-farms on private land.
- Pine plantations that the FPC manages but has no timber harvest rights to.
- Active mine site activities within the FMP.
• An area of state forest within the FMP area that does not contain harvestable forest (Banksia Woodland, Moore State forest) and also an area of Executive Director land that does not contain harvestable forest (Kemerton Industrial Area).

Please note that operations on sites which are not returning to forest in the next rotation will be in the DFA until the site is handed back to the landowner.

Further information about the areas excluded and included in our SFM certification is covered in the internal Procedure 55 - Defined forest areas (FPC, 2020).

Maps of our DFA, as well as our certificate, are available on the FPC website.

Scope of the EMS

The scope of the FPC’s Environmental Management System (EMS) includes the processes involved in the planning and management of harvesting operations, post-harvest re-establishment activities and the transport and sale (nationally and internationally) of forest products associated with plantations, native forests and sandalwood. It also includes the development and maintenance of associated infrastructure.

The scope includes all activities, products and services associated with the FPC’s operational areas and work sites for which the FPC has direct operational control or influence over. The FPC engages contractors to complete various activities throughout the business e.g. harvesting and roading operations. The FPC is a Government Trading Enterprise and is bound to use government Common Use Agreements where applicable for procurement.

The FPC employs staff throughout the South West, Goldfields-Esperance, Gascoyne and Perth regions of Western Australia. The FPC’s office and facilities locations include:

• Perth – Head office
• Albany
• Bunbury
• Carnarvon
• Collie
• Esperance
• Harvey – Office and Log Yard
• Kalgoorlie
• Manjimup – Office and West Manjimup Nursery
• Nannup

The addresses of these facilities are available on the website.

The physical boundaries of the FPC’s EMS include:

• Areas of forest available for timber harvesting under the Conservation and Parks Commission’s Forest Management Plan 2014-2023;
• Plantation areas managed by the FPC under Profit-a-Prendre agreements with private landowners. This includes sandalwood plantations;

• Wild sandalwood on pastoral leases and unallocated crown land available for harvest under Commercial Purposes sandalwood licenses issued by the DBCA;

• Private property held by the DWER within the Wellington Dam catchment planted with exotic eucalypts which are proposed for conversion to pine plantations;

• Plantations the FPC manages, but has no timber harvest rights to; and

• Salvage of timber on mine sites.

The FPC’s EMS also includes the following of which the FPC has some influence over, but not direct operational control:

• Maintenance of firebreaks on sharefarms;

• Prescribed burning for re-establishment operations and protection of forest values (note the FPC funds prescribed burning for both regeneration and protection of a range of values and assets including life and property).
Agency obligations and functions

The FMP 2014 identifies the obligations of the parties responsible for implementing this management plan. The Parks and Wildlife Service within the DBCA and the FPC respectively are responsible for the majority of implementation activities.

The Conservation and Land Management Act 1984 (CALM Act) and the Forest Products Act 2000 both prescribe a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Parks and Wildlife Service and the FPC for the performance of statutory functions and joint obligations with respect to the sustainable management of native forests, the management of public plantations, the harvesting of forest products and related matters. An MOU was entered into in March 2001.

Under the MOU working arrangements were formalised in February 2016. Their intent and purpose includes:

- Facilitating effective planning and compliance of field operations with the requirements of legislation and Parks and Wildlife Service documents.
- Facilitating cooperation and timely approval of FPC harvesting operations and subsequent acceptance of completion.
- Clarifying and communicating the responsibilities for the implementation of matters associated with ‘mutual interests’ of the parties.
- Streamlining processes of inter-agency interaction.
- Giving effect to the FMP’s requirements for a regulation policy to be developed by the Parks and Wildlife Service and for formal working arrangements between the Parks and Wildlife Service and the FPC.

The FPC is governed by the Forest Products Act 2000 and sections of the Forest Management Regulations 1993. Under the Forest Products Act 2000, the FPC is responsible for the harvesting and regeneration of native forests and plantations in State forests and timber reserves, and for the sale of forest products and some associated industry development matters.

The Parks and Wildlife Service’s key responsibilities include conserving biodiversity and managing the State’s national parks, marine parks and other reserves. The Parks and Wildlife Service is also responsible for fire preparedness and pest and weed control over 89 million hectares of unallocated Crown land and unmanaged reserves. The DBCA administers eight acts and six regulations. Acts include the Conservation and Land Management Act 1984 and the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016, and Regulations include the Conservation and Land Management Regulations 2002, the Forest Management Regulations 1993 and the Biodiversity Conservation Regulations 2018.

Table 1 outlines the management areas within the DFA and the specific activities relevant Government agencies are responsible for.
Table 1: Roles and responsibilities of Government agencies for managing areas within the FPC’s DFA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Tenure</th>
<th>Business area</th>
<th>Activity / Purpose</th>
<th>Agency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State Forest</td>
<td>Native Forest (available to the FPC for harvesting)</td>
<td>• harvesting • regeneration • roading activities</td>
<td>FPC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• fire management • approval of disturbance activities</td>
<td>DBCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Forest</td>
<td>Plantations (available to the FPC for harvesting)</td>
<td>• harvesting • regeneration • firebreaks • roading activities</td>
<td>FPC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• fire management • approval of disturbance activities</td>
<td>DBCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Forest</td>
<td>Native forest/plantations (unavailable for harvesting or handed back to the DBCA by the FPC)</td>
<td>• all activities</td>
<td>DBCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Forest</td>
<td>Section 62 Forest Conservation Zones</td>
<td>• all activities</td>
<td>DBCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timber Reserve</td>
<td>As for State Forest available for harvest.</td>
<td>• all activities</td>
<td>DBCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Park</td>
<td></td>
<td>• all activities</td>
<td>DBCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation Park</td>
<td></td>
<td>• all activities</td>
<td>DBCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Tenure</td>
<td>Business area</td>
<td>Activity / Purpose</td>
<td>Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature reserve</td>
<td></td>
<td>• all activities</td>
<td>DBCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 5(1)(g) and 5(1)(h) Reserves</td>
<td></td>
<td>• all activities</td>
<td>DBCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freehold Land held in the name of CALM Act CEO</td>
<td>Much of the freehold land is specified in section 131 of the CALM Act as previously held by the Conservator of Forests</td>
<td>Predominantly this land has been used to grow exotic tree species, largely pine. Whilst not bound by any management objectives in the CALM Act, DBCA manages the plantation freehold land in association with the FPC for the optimum yield in production similar to the State forest and timber reserves planted with exotic species.</td>
<td>DBCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unallocated Crown Land</td>
<td></td>
<td>No formally assigned management purpose. Land not specifically allocated to a Government department</td>
<td>DPLH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land in which water agencies have an interest</td>
<td></td>
<td>Includes freehold land, land vested under the Land Act or Land Administration Act where water is listed as a purpose, catchment reserves coincident with State forest, and areas declared under the Main Water Supply Acts.</td>
<td>DWER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPC Freehold Land</td>
<td>Plantations</td>
<td>Purchased to add to the plantation estate, the forest to be managed within the fence line of the property including all environmental features within the property.</td>
<td>FPC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharefarms (1)</td>
<td>Plantations</td>
<td>To manage the planted forest asset only (Deposited Plan)</td>
<td>FPC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>To manage firebreaks and non-plantation features</td>
<td>Landowner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Tenure</td>
<td>Business area</td>
<td>Activity / Purpose</td>
<td>Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharefarms (2)</td>
<td>Plantations</td>
<td>To manage the planted forest asset, firebreaks and internal environmental features (Deposited Plan)</td>
<td>FPC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forests managed by the FPC but not under contract</td>
<td>Synergy Afforestation Project</td>
<td>Planting and measuring the sites for their contribution to the Carbon Farming Initiative</td>
<td>FPC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mine sites (Alcoa)</td>
<td>Pre-mining activities</td>
<td>To salvage and recover forest products prior to commencement of mining activities</td>
<td>FPC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-mining rehabilitation</td>
<td>To manage thinning operations following post-mining rehabilitation</td>
<td>FPC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehabilitation assessment</td>
<td></td>
<td>To assess Completion Criteria for handback to the Conservation and Parks Commission</td>
<td>DBCA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Crown Land/pastoral lease         | Wild sandalwood   | • harvesting  
• regeneration  
• roading activities | FPC             |
|                                    |                  | • conservation  
• fire management | DBCA            |
|                                    |                  | • grazing management  
• fire management  
• roading infrastructure | DPLH and lessee (pastoral lease only) |
Legal and other requirements

The FPC is governed by the *Forest Products Act 2000* and sections of the *Forest Management Regulations 1993*. Section 12 of this Act requires the FPC in undertaking its activities to ensure:

- the long-term viability of the forest products industry; and
- the principles of ecologically sustainable forest management are applied in the management of indigenous forest products located on public land.

The FPC also operates in accordance with a wide range of legislative and other compliance requirements, including the FMP which covers the South West native forests and plantations in State forest and timber reserves.

The Forest Management Plan (FMP) is a 10 year plan developed in consultation with key stakeholders across industry and conservation groups, State and Local Government and the community. It is the key policy framework for managing forests as this plan identifies goals and performance targets and proposed management activities to achieve these goals. The FMP is developed in accordance with the principles of ecologically sustainable forest management (ESFM) and the requirements of relevant State and Commonwealth legislation.

Prior to the FMP’s implementation it is reviewed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and approved by the Minister for Environment. More information about the development of the FMP is available on the DBCA website. The DBCA and the Conservation and Parks Commission oversee compliance with the FMP.

The FPC also manages plantations on private property, although not subject to FMP requirements, are subject to the relevant State and Commonwealth legislation, as well as Local Government by-laws. Our private property plantations are referred to as sharefarms and operate through profit-a-prendre arrangements.

The *Mining Act 1978* controls mineral exploration activities (including fossicking and prospecting) and mining operations other than those within State Agreement areas. Mining activities on State forest are not covered by the FMP but are carried out under State Agreement Acts.

The *Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation* (JTSI) administers State Agreement Acts and associated projects. State Agreements are in force for major mining projects operating on lands covered by the FMP (mostly State forest), including the bauxite/alumina operations of Alcoa and Worsley, and the coal mining operations of Griffin and Premier Coal, affecting smaller areas near Collie.

The Mine Management Planning Liaison Group (MMPLG) chaired by JTSI Committee is responsible for reviewing mine management plans including the post mining rehabilitation of mine sites. The Completion Criteria are reviewed approximately every five years and are publicly accessible. The DBCA and the DWER are influential in the review of the Completion Criteria to ensure best practice principles are applied.

Figure 1 (DBCA, 2019) provides an overview of the legislative framework governing both South West native forest and plantations (including private softwood plantations under sharefarm arrangements).
The FPC undergoes routine audits for SFM and EMS in accordance with the standards requirements. Further information about these standards and our summary SFM audit reports are available on the FPC’s Independent Certification web page.
Figure 1. An overarching view of our legislative framework for forest management (DBCA, 2019)
Forest values

The basis of forest management under the FMP stems from the principles of ecologically sustainable forest management (ESFM). The FPC must abide by the requirements of the FMP for land vested in the Conservation and Parks Commission. For other land such as plantations on sharefarms, the FPC must adhere to legal and other requirements. Accordingly, all our forests are managed to ensure the protection of a range of values.

Management of the forests according to the principles of ESFM takes into account the range of forest values including environmental, economic, social and cultural values. Forest values should not be considered in isolation, as they also overlap with each other. For example, protecting soil and water resources is important for biodiversity and productive capacity. Also, the conservation of soil and water is important for preserving the value of the land for the culture and heritage of Noongar people. Water also provides an essential commodity for the community.

It is important to consider the diverse needs of societies. As part of achieving a balance between these needs and values, effective stakeholder engagement is important.

The following provides a summary of forest values relevant to South West native forest and/or plantation areas. Further detail about each of these values and their management are included in the FMP and in the Karri Forest Management Plan (FPC, 2021a) and the Sandalwood Management Plan (FPC, 2021b).

Our South West native forests and plantations are managed whilst ensuring the protection and maintenance of the following:

- **Biological diversity** – Forests are managed to maintain a range of biological values including threatened and priority species, ecological communities and old-growth forests.

- **Ecosystem health and vitality** – This includes protecting the forest from damaging agents such as weeds, pests, diseases and fire.

- **Soil and water resources** – This includes measures to limit soil disturbance and ensuring the protection of soil and water quality.

- **Productive capacity** – This relates to ensuring the forests are managed to ensure we sustain ecosystem processes to provide for goods and services over the long term.

- **Natural and cultural heritage** – Heritage in forests includes both cultural and natural values related to the biophysical expression of forests. Forests must be managed to ensure we identify and protect cultural heritage that is valued by Noongar people and other Australians.

- **Socio-economic benefits** – There are a wide range of benefits the forest provides and this is not limited to providing jobs and renewable forest products. Other values society places on the forests include clean air and water, biodiversity protection and carbon sequestration.

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1 The term Noongar refers collectively to the Noongar community who are the traditional owners of the South West of Western Australia.
Carbon stocks

In managing the forests to protect the above values, forest management must consider other impacts such as a changing climate and global carbon cycles.

Indicative estimates of the above and below ground carbon stocks in live standing trees within the major native forest types were provided in the Draft FMP (Conservation and Parks Commission, 2012b). In this analysis, it was projected that at the whole of forest scale, the quantity of carbon stored in live trees in the forests would increase by between three and five per cent during the plan’s 10 year period (Conservation and Parks Commission, 2013).

The indicative estimate of the total above and below ground carbon in the live standing trees in the South West forests projected to 2014 is 164.1 million tonnes, of which some 44 per cent (or 72.8 million tonnes) occurs on formal reserves and forest conservation areas (Table 2) (Conservation and Parks Commission, 2012b, page 92).

Table 2: Indicative estimates of the above and below ground live tree carbon stocks to 2014 in major native forest types (Conservation and Parks Commission, 2012b, page 92)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major forest type</th>
<th>Biomass carbon (Million tonnes C)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Formal reserves and forest conservation areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jarrah</td>
<td>47.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karri</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wandoo/other</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>72.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
1. These estimates are for the 2.25 million hectares of South West forests within the Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) boundary on lands vested in the Conservation and Parks Commission.
2. These estimates have been compiled from inventories that vary in sample intensity and geographic coverage, and the relative precision of the estimates therefore varies markedly between vegetation types and tenure categories.
3. These estimates do not include litter, coarse woody debris and shrub components.
4. Other forest types are bullich, peppermint and coastal heath, shrub, herb and sedgelands, ecosystems.

The 2019 carbon estimate for the FPC’s softwood plantation estate (77 348ha) is 4,881 398 tonnes of Biomass Carbon. This Carbon estimate was calculated for above and below ground Biomass Carbon using formulas derived from Snowden et al (2000).

For carbon estimates in the sandalwood production regions, see the Sandalwood Management Plan (FPC 2021b).
Forest types

A brief description of each of the forest types the FPC operate within the DFA is as follows:

- Northern Jarrah forest – Jarrah (*Eucalyptus marginata*) dominates this dry sclerophyll forest, with marri (*Corymbia calophylla*) occurring throughout. Wandoo (*E. wandoo*) and powderbark wandoo (*E. accedens*) can be found on the drier eastern range. Blackbutt (*E. patens*) occurs in valley floors.

- Southern Jarrah forest – Jarrah dominates this dry sclerophyll forest, with marri occurring throughout. The cooler southern forests can comprise a mix of karri (*E. diversicolor*) yellow tingle (*E. guilfoylei*) and red tingle (*E. jacksonii*).

- Karri forest – The karri (*E. diversicolor*) dominates this wet sclerophyll forest, found in the lower South West. Some areas are ‘pure’ karri, with other areas containing a mix of marri and a smaller portion of jarrah. Further details on the karri forest are available in the *Karri Forest Management Plan* (FPC, 2021a).

- Wild sandalwood – WA sandalwood (*Santalum spicatum*) is a root hemi-parasite growing in acacia shrublands and eucalypt woodlands throughout central WA. This small and slow growing tree connects its roots to suitable host species (often *Acacia*) to assist in obtaining water and nutrients. Further detail is available in the *Sandalwood Management Plan* (FPC, 2021b)

- Softwood plantations – Our softwood plantations mainly comprise of radiata pine (*Pinus radiata*) and maritime pine (*P. pinaster*) but small amounts of other pine species are included.

- DWER Mixed eucalyptus plantations – These plantations comprise of a range of exotic eucalyptus species. Once harvested, the FPC plans to plant these areas as pine plantation.

- Sandalwood plantations – Sandalwood plantations are first planted with the host species (often *Acacia acuminata*) and once these are established, they are sown with sandalwood seed. The plantations are ready to harvest at 20-30 years of age.

For South West native forests, the FMP provides information on the available resources for timber harvesting. It also includes information on the sustainable yield with specific information on the annual harvest limits. The FMP provides full detail on how the allowable harvest levels are calculated, which also allows a safety margin to account for various risks such as the impacts of a drying climate and wildfire. Inventory information on the native forest species in areas available for harvest is maintained by the DBCA.

The Geomaster record management system is the repository for all softwood plantation standing resource information and future volume predictions. Geomaster is also used to ensure accurate reporting for our *Annual Report* (FPC, 2020).

For more information on wild and plantation sandalwood, see the FPC’s *Sandalwood Management Plan* (FPC, 2021b)
Forest operations and silviculture

Forest operations and silviculture take place after extensive planning to ensure the protection of forest values such as threatened flora, fauna and cultural heritage. Further information is provided in the FMP, Karri Forest Management Plan (FPC, 2021a) and the Native Forest Timber Harvesting Planning Manual (FPC, 2018).

An overview of the South West native forest planning process is provided below:

- Rolling three year indicative harvest plans are prepared by the DBCA in consultation with the FPC.

- Indicative one year harvest plans are prepared by the FPC and approved by the DBCA. These are released for public consultation and notices are provided through local newspapers.

- The online Disturbance Approval System (DAS) form is completed and submitted to the DBCA for approval. The FPC must receive a letter of approval prior to operations commencing.

An overview of the plantations and sharefarms planning process is provided below:

- One year rolling plantations harvest plans are developed for the central forest region and the northern forest region.

- For plantations on State owned land, site level plans are developed, and disturbance activities commence only after a valid DAS form has been approved by the DBCA.

- For plantations on sharefarms, site level plans are developed, and disturbance activities only commence after the completion of the FPC47 – Planning checklist for disturbance activities on sharefarms (FPC, 2019).

For information on wild and plantation sandalwood, see the FPC’s Sandalwood Management Plan (FPC, 2021b).
Silvicultural guidelines are applied depending on the forest type and considering extensive scientific research. For example, in native forest, silvicultural guidelines have been developed considering an independent expert panel review process (refer to Calculating the Sustained Yield for the South-West Native Forests of Western Australia (Ferguson et al. 2013).

In addition, current guidelines consider the outcomes of the Review of Silviculture in Forests of South West Western Australia (Burrows et al. 2011). Key documents that provide the rationale for our silvicultural regimes in native forest are listed in Table 3. Our native forest and plantation operations are tailored to suit a number of silvicultural objectives that take into account one or more factors such as current forest health, stand productivity, biodiversity, water resources, market conditions and resource capacity.

Table 3: Documents providing a rationale for our silvicultural regimes in native forest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference material</th>
<th>Guideline document</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Silviculture (Bradshaw, 2015)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference Material for Karri Forest</td>
<td>Silviculture Guideline for Karri Forest (Parks and Wildlife, 2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silviculture (Bradshaw, 2015)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Silviculture Guideline for Wandoo Forest (Parks and Wildlife, 2014)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Records on silvicultural treatments in native forest are stored in the silvicultural recording system (SILREC), which is managed by the DBCA's Forest Management Branch.

In terms of softwood plantations, silvicultural regimes such as thinning, are determined based on the outcomes from woodflow modelling and information stored in the FPC’s operational plantations record management system, Geomaster. Other silvicultural management such as fertiliser and weed control are undertaken as required. There are a range of Technical Specifications relevant to silvicultural regimes within plantations.

The harvest and production levels are managed through formal contracts, and log deliveries are captured in the Delivery and Billing system, DAB. This enables the management of log removals within sustainable harvest limits and provides an accurate record of what we have harvested.

Information on sandalwood production is provided in the Sandalwood Management Plan (FPC, 2021b).

Management of wildfire

Our forests are managed to prevent the spread of wildfire. Uncontrolled spread of large wildfires can have a substantial impact on both the environment and our business. However, fire is also a useful silvicultural tool. Appropriate fire regimes in native forest ecosystems help to promote natural regeneration, ecosystem health and vitality and biodiversity. The DBCA has primary responsibility for managing fire within areas covered by the FMP, and part of this involves prescribed burning to reduce fuel build up. Within private
sharefarm areas, the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) has primary responsibility for emergency fire management.

The FPC work in close cooperation with the DBCA, DFES and private forest management companies to plan and deliver fire mitigation measures designed to protect Western Australia’s productive forests. FPC staff participate in joint agency emergency response arrangements.

More information about fire management is included in the FMP.

**Mining and mine site rehabilitation**

Working Arrangements between mining companies and the DBCA provide the framework for the control of mine site operations and management of rehabilitation. Under these Working Arrangements the DBCA is responsible for providing oversight, including monitoring and reporting against [Completion Criteria](#). The Water Corporation is responsible for the protection and production of water supplies.

Pre-mining activities (salvage and recovery operations) and post-mining rehabilitation is included within the DFA to enable the full recovery and utilisation of forest products that would otherwise be wasted as a consequence of mining activities. Once the FPC has completed the pre-mining salvage and recovery of forest products, these areas are removed from the FPC’s DFA.

Mined areas are returned to the DFA as soon as the initial stage of rehabilitation has met the DBCA’s specified standards, typically at the 15-month review. The inclusion of these areas into the DFA does not in any way diminish the responsibilities of any party with respect to the completion of the mine site rehabilitation (Completion Criteria) and subsequent hand-back to the DBCA.

Further, the inclusion of these areas into the DFA assists in the scheduling of silvicultural treatments (thinning) on rehabilitated areas and subsequent recovery of thinning material. Thinning rehabilitated areas is an important silvicultural tool that promotes ecosystem health and vitality and helps mitigate fire risk. Certification will enable cost effective recovery and utilisation of silvicultural thinnings.

The inclusion of pre-mining activities and post-mining rehabilitation in the DFA will ensure that salvage and recovery operations, together with silvicultural activities are planned and carried out in a controlled manner subject to third-party verification during routine certification audits.

**Chemical use**

The FPC uses an integrated pest management approach to limit the use of chemicals where possible, but they are often necessary to control weeds and damaging insect pests and diseases within a plantation environment. The FPC only uses Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) approved chemicals and has a process for ensuring their safe and environmentally responsible handling and use, in accordance with relevant legislation.
Research and Innovation

The FPC participates in or contributes to research and innovation to maximise the value recovery of forest resources and to improve forest health. Areas of focus include improved genetics in plantations, sandalwood regeneration and pest animal control. Currently the FPC is investigating the use of remote sensing technologies to improve the quality of volume predictions and to monitor forest health. Adopting remote sensing technologies will lead to more detailed, timely knowledge of the forest, and enable better decision-making in planning and implementing harvesting operations across our business.

Native title and cultural heritage

Through our Reconciliation Action Plan (FPC, 2021c) and Policy 92: Aboriginal Engagement, the FPC acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional custodians of the lands and forests. The policy commits the FPC to collaborate with Aboriginal peoples to infuse traditional, ecological and spiritual values into corporate culture, decisions, policy and practice.

State Government and Noongar representatives have negotiated the South West Native Title Settlement (the Settlement), projected to commence in 2021.

Four elements of the Settlement are: the establishment of a prescribed bodies corporate for each of the six Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) regions; joint and cooperative management of the South West conservation estate; land and water access; and a Noongar Heritage Partnership Agreement. For further information about the South West Native Title Settlement refer to their web page.

The ILUAs oblige the FPC to enter into Noongar Standard Heritage Agreements (NSHAs) to ensure the protection of Aboriginal heritage sites (as also required under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972).

The NSHAs require the FPC to provide an Activity Notice to SWALSC if there is a risk that an activity will unlawfully impact (i.e. by excavating, damaging, destroying or altering in any way) an Aboriginal site. SWALSC will respond to the Activity Notice by advising the FPC of the requirement for a heritage survey that will prescribe management actions.

Low and minimal ground disturbance activities, as defined by the NSHAs, do not require an activity notice. A letter of understanding dated 16 December 2016 from SWALSC itemizes the FPC’s activities that it agrees are low ground disturbance pursuant to the NSHAs.

The FPC’s Procedure 44: Observing native title rights and identifying and protecting Aboriginal heritage in the defined forest area and share-farms outlines its processes to ensure the FPC’s operations do not impact Noongar cultural and heritage values.
Plan implementation and management

Our forest management is monitored and continually improved. This is achieved through our Integrated Forest Management System (IFMS), which ensures that all legal and other requirements are identified and managed under a corporate governance framework and supports the processes and systems we have in place to ensure compliance with external forest certification requirements. The framework provides the basis for strategic planning, ongoing development of procedures and work instructions, measurement of performance and review for ensuring improvement. As part of maintaining and improving our system, both internal and external reviews and audits are undertaken.

External auditing includes DBCA audits to assess our performance against FMP compliance requirements, as well as third-party environmental and forest management certification bodies who assess the FPC against the Australian Standard for Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) AS 4708: 2013 and Environmental Management System (EMS) ISO 14001:2015.

Risk Management

Risks and opportunities are identified and assessed at various levels throughout the FPC.

The FPC maintains a risk register that includes identified Strategic, Corporate, Operational and Project risks. Relevant parties are involved in assessing the risks identified at each level including determining appropriate control measures and monitoring their effectiveness on an ongoing basis to ensure risks are eliminated or minimised.
The FPC’s risk management process calculates potential risk as the product of likelihood (probability) and the consequence (severity) of an impact occurring. A risk rating is applied prior to implementing control measures (inherent risk) and after control measures are applied (residual risk).

The FPC assesses all risks relevant to our activities. The mitigation of some risks may not be within FPC’s control, however where relevant the FPC may be able to influence outcomes.

**Aspects/ Impacts, objectives and targets, monitoring and measurement**

The FPC identifies and assesses the environmental aspects that can impact on forest values through the risk management process described above. All environmental aspects found to be significant are managed through the environmental management system.

The FPC’s Policy 9 – Forest Management (FPC, 2019) states that the FPC will, in conjunction with other relevant authorities ‘Set objectives and targets to ensure a continuous improvement approach to both management performance and managing environmental, economic, social and cultural impacts and outcomes including the prevention of pollution’.

Objectives and targets are important for meeting the environmental policy commitments and how overall organisational goals are developed. The processes in setting objectives and targets considers such elements as significant aspects, applicable legal and other requirements, views of interested parties, financial, operational and organisational considerations, findings from internal and external audits, as well as possible effects on the FPC’s public image.

Objectives and targets are monitored regularly, and periodic performance evaluations are completed. Objectives and targets can also be set to pursue opportunities for positive impacts.

**Incident management**

Incident management is an important component of the IFMS. The FPC has robust incident management procedures and practices in place, including a process for determining the root cause of incidents and implementing appropriate actions and system improvements.

Incident data is periodically analysed for trends, incident reoccurrence and to determine the effectiveness of prescribed actions. This information is communicated throughout the agency via toolbox meetings, Executive reports, Strategic and Organisational Committee meetings.

**Stakeholder engagement**

Ongoing engagement with stakeholders is essential and can help the FPC to improve our forest management. There are a number of opportunities for stakeholders to engage with us including, but not limited to:
the release of indicative harvest plans;
during the preparation of site level (coupe or plantation specific) plans;
through operational specific notifications;
through our feedback and complaints process;
via feedback on information materials, or plans such as the Karri Forest Management Plan (FPC, 2020);
through providing feedback on any other materials that are available on our website including the information contained on our Independent Certification page; and
through provision of field tours of FPC operations for interested stakeholders.

Please refer to Policy 54 – Stakeholder Engagement (FPC, 2019) and our stakeholder engagement web page.

Review system performance

Performance monitoring and auditing are an integral part of the IFMS. The FPC reports on key performance indicators in its annual report.

An internal audit charter commits the FPC to complying with ISO 19011:2011 (guidelines for auditing management systems) in implementing its three-year internal audit plan as approved by the FPC’s Audit and Risk Committee. The FPC does this through its internal audit function responsible for undertaking internal system, procedural and corporate and financial compliance audits.

The FPC’s IFMS is reviewed regularly at both operational and Executive level to assess and continuously improve the effectiveness of the system. The FPC is independently certified as conforming to AS/NZS ISO 14001 and the Australian Standard for Sustainable Forest Management AS4708-2013.
References


--2021b. ‘Sandalwood Management Plan.’ Forest Products Commission, Perth, Australia


Bradshaw, F. 2015. 'Reference material for Karri Forest Silviculture', Department of Parks and Wildlife, Perth, Australia.

