



Draft forest management plan 2014–2023 at a glance

The State's national parks, conservation parks, nature reserves, State forests and timber reserves are vested in the Conservation Commission of Western Australia and managed by the Department of Environment and Conservation under 10-year plans developed in consultation with the community. The process of developing management plans includes the preparation and release of a draft plan for public comment.

The Conservation Commission released the *Draft Forest Management Plan 2014-2023* on 15 August 2012 for a 12-week public comment period that will close on 7 November.

The Draft plan covers a total land area of 2.5 million hectares within the region from Lancelin north of Perth, to Denmark on the south coast. Nearly 62 per cent of this total land area is in existing or proposed conservation reserves or otherwise protected areas.

The main goals set out in the Draft plan are for:

- biodiversity to be conserved
- Aboriginal and other Australian cultural heritage to be recognised and protected
- the health, vitality and productive capacity of ecosystems to be sustained
- soil and water resources to be protected
- the contribution to global carbon cycles to be sustained
- the wide range of social, cultural and economic benefits valued by the community to be produced in line with the principles of ecologically sustainable forest management.

The Draft plan builds on the current *Forest Management Plan 2004-2013* and proposes changes to improve biodiversity conservation.

Key among these improvements are the proposed addition of a further 4,000 hectares to Whicher National Park, near Busselton, to protect what is now recognised as a separate forest ecosystem on the Whicher Scarp, and proposed changes to silviculture that will better protect the habitats of a variety of species, including threatened black cockatoos and numbats.

South-west forests are valued for many reasons. They are the catchment areas for water supply for most of Western Australia's population, the source of our main native timber industries, a major recreation and tourism drawcard and have a rich heritage.

The Draft plan sets out measures to protect forest values and balance the many uses to which the forests are put. This requires healthy forests that are resilient to the changing climate evident in the declining rainfall, streamflows and groundwater levels recorded since the 1970s.

The Draft plan also includes a range of alternative measures on which public feedback is sought, with two scenarios for calculating the sustained timber yield from State forest and timber reserves.

During September, the Conservation Commission will be holding public information sessions in Perth and the south-west to give people the chance to clarify any queries or concerns they may have about the Draft plan. Dates and venues will be advertised on the Commission's website.

Once the public consultation period concludes on 7 November, submissions will be analysed and considered in the preparation of a proposed final plan, which will be assessed by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA).

The EPA's assessment report and the proposed final plan will be submitted to the Minister for Environment next year. It is anticipated that the final *Forest Management Plan 2014-23* will come into force on 1 January 2014.

The *Draft Forest Management Plan 2014-2023* is available at www.conservation.wa.gov.au and is open for public comment until 7 November 2012.



Department of
Environment and Conservation

