



# FUTURE FORESTS

## SOUTH WEST FORESTS TOO PRECIOUS TO LOSE

**Our precious South West forests are under threat from logging, disease and climate change. We need to act urgently to protect them. 600 year old trees are still being cut down for woodchips. Most Western Australians don't support logging in our native forests. Only the Greens are standing up for our forests, with a plan to create secure jobs in the South West.**

WA's native forests are well loved and extremely valuable. They play a vital role in providing clean air, clean water and rainfall. Recent studies have found a direct link between deforestation and reduced rainfall.<sup>1</sup> Our native forests are also home to threatened species like the Numbat. Their outstanding beauty and biodiversity value is enjoyed by many West Australians as well as making them a tourist magnet, feeding the South West tourism industry. According to a recent Australia Institute report we could earn more from managing our native forests as carbon stores, than we currently do from logging them.<sup>2</sup> More than 80 per cent of the logs produced in Australia come from plantation<sup>3</sup> and the vast majority of logs sold from our native forests end up as woodchips and fuel wood.<sup>4</sup> There is no longer any need to log the South West native forests.

For millennia, Aboriginal people have managed and had connection to the southern forests. This connection is valued and respected, and will be recognised in forest management plans.

Recently, local community groups have discovered that karri trees up to 600 years old are being logged and turned into woodchips.<sup>5</sup> This has outraged many West Australians, who had hoped that all ancient trees had been protected from logging following the banning of old-growth logging in 2001. A Sunday Times survey with 12000 respondents found 72% of Western Australians were against clear felling of karri forests.

In the past, the main drivers of native forest logging were the need for timber and the need for jobs.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.cwr.uwa.edu.au/~jimberger/Global\\_Resilience/References/Andrich\\_and\\_Imberger\\_%282012a%29.pdf](http://www.cwr.uwa.edu.au/~jimberger/Global_Resilience/References/Andrich_and_Imberger_%282012a%29.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.tai.org.au/sites/default/files/TB18%20Carbon%20credits%20from%20Western%20Australia\\_4.pdf](http://www.tai.org.au/sites/default/files/TB18%20Carbon%20credits%20from%20Western%20Australia_4.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.agriculture.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/forestry/fiac-issues-paper.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <http://forestsforlife.org.au/>

<sup>5</sup> Samples taken from mills and stumps in recently-logged areas were sent for carbon dating, and the results confirmed that at least one sample was approximately 600 years old. This was recently reported in this state's Sunday Times. Trevor Paddenburg, 'Ancient karri trees destroyed by wood chippers, say environmentalists', The Sunday Times, October 13, 2012. <http://www.perthnow.com.au/news/ancient-karri-trees-destroyed-by-woodchippers-say-environmentalists/story-e6frg19l-1226495048156?sv=d3498c7f48f9861e56582c43e85473b2>

This has now changed, as 80% of our supply of timber comes from plantations, and the jobs have already gone from the native forest logging, with less than 460 jobs remaining in felling, hauling and transport.<sup>6</sup>

A change to protection and management of all native forests will increase jobs in active management, and increase job opportunities in plantation harvesting.

In recent years, harvesting of native forests has been subsidised by the state government, with The Australian Institute reporting a cumulative loss of \$34 million over the past four years for the Forest Products Commission results from harvesting native forests.<sup>7</sup>

This cumulative loss, plus substantial cash injections by the State, are in effect, a subsidy to the industry which effectively undermines the growth of the plantation forestry industry as it competes for market share.

## > THE GREENS' VISION FOR OUR FORESTS

The Greens Future Forests initiative will see native forests in the South West of the state protected from commercial logging, with plantation and farm forestry expanded to address additional requirements for timber products.

The Greens' Future Forests initiative will both conserve our native forests, and ensure we are producing sustainable timber to create long-term jobs in a viable forestry industry.

Native forest logging is not a viable industry in the long-term. Ending native forest logging can open up sustainable permanent jobs in plantation timber and farm forestry, sustainable forest management and eco-tourism. It will bring revenue to the regions from domestic and international carbon credit regimes.

Managing native forests and developing farm forestry will give the communities of Manjimup, Pemberton, Greenbushes and Nannup further opportunities to develop their local economies.

Properly managed native forests will store carbon, contribute to rainfall, provide habitat and provide jobs. There should be no allocation of harvest for wood chips, firewood, charcoal, sawn timber or biomass fuel.

All logging and thinning of native forests should be phased out as quickly as possible except for small, carefully planned and strictly monitored long-term independent trials of non-commercial thinning of re-growth forest to determine whether this practice improves ecosystem health and vitality.

The Greens will recommend that the forests are valued for carbon credits as an additional source of revenue

### **The Greens will:**

- Continue to work for the full protection of native forests in secure conservation reserves
- Involve Aboriginal people in the determination and implementation of forest management plans.
- Advocate for the Forest Management Plan (2014 – 2023) to be assessed by the Commonwealth Government under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act

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<sup>6</sup> <http://forestsforlife.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Swann-Browne-2016-Barking-Up-The-Wrong-Trees-FINAL.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> ibid

- Call for the urgent listing of all species and ecological communities which belong on the threatened list, and adequate funding levels to rapidly implement recovery plans for listed species, and fund additional research to halt Western Australia's biodiversity decline
- Work to ensure that native forest logs are not put back on the list of energies that attract Renewable Energy Certificates.
- Call for an additional \$10m in WA Tourism funding to support nature-based tourism in the South West
- Advocate for a \$5m package to develop a South West sustainable prefabricated housing industry using plantation timber.
- Support the funding of a comprehensive scientific assessment of the carbon sequestration capacity of the South West forests, and using that information,- pursue access to the most viable carbon credit markets
- Promote the need for a comprehensive Statement of Planning Policy for farm forestry to guide the Western Australian Planning Commission. The Greens intend farm forestry to be clearly linked to reversing land degradation and stream salinity, improving natural resource management and biodiversity corridors and where possible using a range of species.
- Call for the funding of research, development and extension services to support farm forestry across all rainfall and soil regions
- Support the expansion and extension of trials of Western Australian native tree species suited to specialty high value timber production
- Promote the highest value adding for timber produced in Western Australia and develop appropriate strategies to work with the fine woodcraft industry to meet their needs

## > JOBS IN SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY AND BUILDING HOMES

The Greens will focus on two areas related to forestry for the creation of jobs:

1. Expansion of the timber plantation industry
2. Building affordable sustainable homes from plantation timber

The creation of more jobs in these plantation timber industries will complement the creation of more jobs in the tourism industry within native forests, and more jobs in forest conservation.