

### Forests & Woodlands

The Greens (WA) recognise the unique and natural beauty of Western Australia's native forests and woodlands and acknowledge both their intrinsic value as well as their vital role in the protection and production of clean water and air. They are an important part of our natural heritage, they contain and protect rich biodiversity, they provide a wide variety of recreational opportunities and they store large amounts of carbon.

Western Australia's forests and woodlands have developed unique and often complex symbiotic associations and adaptations aimed at efficient nutrient and water use in nutrient-deficient, water-scarce environments. Study of these (provided they remain intact) will help us to understand how crop plants, and other plants of economic importance, can produce under increasing nutrient and water stress.

We seek to end the logging and clearing of native forests and woodlands. After decades of clearing, over-cutting and general mismanagement, many of our native forest and woodland ecosystems have been left fragmented, degraded and in need of protection and restoration. The already serious impacts on our forests and woodlands of reduced rainfall and diseases such as dieback<sup>1</sup>, Armillaria<sup>2</sup> and marri canker are compounded by logging, mining and inappropriate burning.

With comprehensive protection and good management our native forests can form the centrepiece of a World Heritage listing in recognition of their global significance.

In addition to ecological considerations, we must also ensure that Western Australia is equipped to deal with the increased risk of bushfires, due to climate change, to protect lives, homes and communities.

#### **Aims**

*The Greens (WA) want to:*

- end further logging of native forests and woodlands
- achieve international recognition of our State forest
- protect and conserve all Western Australia's remaining native forest and woodland ecosystems
- implement a rapid transition to plantations and farm forestry for the production of timber currently derived from native forests (see also The Greens (WA) [Plantations](#) policy)
- maintain, as far as possible, the ecological integrity and natural heritage values of our native forest and woodland ecosystems through a fully funded, independently refereed and scientifically based research and management program (see also The Greens (WA) [Biodiversity](#) policy)
- review all current thinning practices in native forests
- make ecosystem health and function the foundation of all future native forest management policies and practices

- ensure management of native forests and woodlands take into consideration a drying and warming climate (see also The Greens (WA) [Climate Change](#) policy)
- improve Western Australia's bushfire readiness

## **Measures**

*The Greens (WA) will initiate and support legislation and action to:*

- formulate a World Heritage listing proposal for southwest forest and woodland ecosystems
- fully fund the Conservation Commission of Western Australia with adequate powers and resources to oversee the research, development and implementation of a program to protect and restore ecosystem health
- repeal the Forest Products Commission Act
- better protect native animals and manage or eradicate feral animals (see also The Greens (WA) [Animals](#) policy)
- fully fund the Department of Parks and Wildlife to perform its role of managing forest and woodland conservation
- immediately develop an exit strategy for native forest logging. This exit strategy is to include re-training and other assistance for timber workers and the development of sustainable alternative industries that create long-term skilled jobs in regional communities.
- recognise native title rights, consult local Traditional Owners in the management of native forests and woodlands and support genuine joint management (see also The Greens (WA) [Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander](#) policy)
- support proposal such as GondwanaLink<sup>3</sup> and the Great Western Woodlands<sup>4</sup> and encourage the linking of existing bush.
- promote mallee species and biodiversity planting programs in the Wheatbelt to restore ecosystem linkages between our native forests and woodland ecosystems (see also The Greens (WA) [Biodiversity](#) policy)
- base any prescribed burning of forests and woodlands on ecological principles and independent, peer-reviewed risk assessment incorporating land use planning, residential design and community preparedness into risk reduction strategies.
- investigate the impacts of a drying and warming climate on forest and woodlands in the south west and formulate strategies for adaptive management (see also The Greens (WA) [Climate Change](#) policy)
- oppose the expansion of open cut mining in forest and woodland ecosystems, including bauxite mining in the northern Jarrah forest and mineral sands mining on the Whicher Scarp (see also The Greens (WA) [Mining](#) policy)
- support and develop ecotourism and the associated high-value fine woodcraft sector (see also The Greens (WA) [Arts & Culture](#) policy)

## Bushfire Risks

- establish a fully resourced and trained Independent Rural Fire Service
- increase State Government funding to bushfire mitigation
- develop a comprehensive State Climate Change Risk Assessment and Adaptation Strategy

- improve our bushfire early warning systems, including social media, SMS and telephone alerts

(See also the [Australian Greens Natural Resources](#) policy)

## Glossary

1. **dieback** - *Phytophthora cinnamomi* is a soil-borne water mould that produces an infection which causes a condition in plants called root rot or dieback.
2. **Armillaria** – a fungus that infects trees in temperate and tropical regions. It commonly infects stressed trees that have been weakened by insects, other pathogens and/or climate stresses.
3. **[GondwanaLink](#)** - one of the largest and most ambitious conservation projects in Australia's history designed to protect and restore land across and adjoining the nation's only global renowned biodiversity hotspot, the completed link will be an arc of bushland stretching for 1000 kilometres, from the wet forests in the State's far southwest to the edge of the Nullarbor plain.
4. **[Great Western Woodlands](#)** - nearly 40 million acres (15 million hectares) of native vegetation blanketing one percent of Australia in Western Australia and supporting some of the world's most unique and vulnerable ecosystems.

**Forests & Woodlands policy ratified by The Greens (WA) in 2017**