

The Greens (WA) 2020 policy

Forests & Woodlands

The Greens (WA) recognise the intrinsic value and unique natural beauty of Western Australia's native forests and woodlands, which are rich in biodiversity and have vital roles in sequestering carbon and the protection of clean water and air. We recognise First Nations custodianship of the forests and that sovereignty was never ceded.

We therefore seek to end the logging and clearing of native forests and woodlands and to implement a rapid and just transition of the timber industry to ecologically beneficial plantations and farm forestry.

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

We also acknowledge the increased risk of more intense bushfires and recognise the need to protect both forests and people, by heeding expert advice and working with First Nations fire practitioners and fire ecologists¹, and by improving the design and maintenance of properties and infrastructure.

Aims

The Greens (WA) want to:

- end further logging of native forests and woodlands
- achieve international recognition of our native forests and woodlands
- protect and conserve all Western Australia's remaining native forest and woodland ecosystems
- complete the transition of the timber industry to ecological plantations and farm forestry through a rapid and just transition strategy (see also The Greens (WA) [Plantations](#) policy)
- maintain 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
- end bauxite mining in the jarrah forest

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 Act 2000
- better protect native animals and manage or eradicate feral animals (see also The Greens (WA) [Animals](#) policy)
- fully fund the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions 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, including an expanded farm forestry sector that creates long-term skilled jobs in regional communities (see also the Greens (WA) [Plantations & Farm Forestry](#) policy)
- oppose the use of native forest biomass as a fuel for power generation, including the export of fuels based on native forest biomass, such as pelletised wood, that are intended for power generation
- 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) [First Nations Peoples](#) policy)
- support proposals such as protection for GondwanaLink², Forests For Life³ and the Great Western Woodlands⁴, and encourage the linking of existing bushland
- 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 maximising forest health and resilience (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 high-value fine woodcraft (see also The Greens (WA) [Arts & Culture](#) policy)
- fund and support research into forest pathogens and the spread of diseases towards the development and resourcing of strategies to maintain and restore forest health
- support local governments in their efforts to protect forests and woodlands in their regions

Bushfire Risks

- establish a fully resourced and trained Independent Rural Fire Service
- increase funding and resources for State Government fire fighting equipment and volunteer brigades to develop a comprehensive State Climate Change Risk Assessment and Adaptation Strategy
- improve our bushfire early warning systems, including social media, SMS and telephone alerts
- abandon the annual target that applies to the South West forest region for prescribed burning and instead focus on strategic planning around towns and

infrastructure, and keep fire fighting equipment readily available for rapid suppression

- 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 to risk reduction strategies

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

Glossary

1. **Fire ecologists** - Fire ecology is a scientific discipline concerned with fire in ecosystems.
2. **[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.
3. **[Forests For Life](#)** - a plan to grow 40 000 ha of high value hardwood in strategic locations in association with cropping and grazing for timber, carbon storage, salinity management, water quality and the creation of 860 - 940 jobs in the South West and Great Southern.
4. **[Great Western Woodlands](#)** - nearly 15 million ha 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 2020

The Greens (WA) spokesperson for forests is [Diane Evers MLC](#)