

PREFACE

BACKGROUND TO THE RFA

In 1992, the Commonwealth and State and Territory governments agreed to the National Forest Policy Statement (NFPS) in an attempt to address the ongoing debates surrounding forest use and management. The Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) process was an outcome of this policy statement. The NFPS aims to achieve the shared vision for ecologically sustainable forest management and integrate both environmental and commercial objectives to provide for all forest values. The NFPS goals deal specifically with

- conservation
- wood production and industry development
- integrated and coordinated decision making and management
- private native forests
- water supply and catchment management
- plantations
- tourism and other economic and social opportunities
- employment, workforce education and training
- public awareness, education and involvement
- research and development
- international responsibilities.

The South East Queensland (SEQ) RFA will be an agreement between the Queensland and Commonwealth Governments on how to best manage the native forests in the region over the next twenty years. The RFA aims to:

- protect environmental values in a world class reserve system
- give forest industries the certainty they need to create jobs and opportunities
- ensure that the whole forest estate is managed sustainably for future generations.

The Agreement will be negotiated between the two governments with participation by industry, conservation groups and other stakeholder groups.

In 1995, the Queensland Premier and the Prime Minister signed the SEQ RFA Scoping Agreement which sets out the roles and responsibilities of various State and Commonwealth agencies involved in the RFA process. The process consists of three main stages which lead to the signing of the RFA. The stages are:

- Comprehensive Regional Assessment
- integration of various data
- option development.

The first of these, of which this report forms a part, is the **Comprehensive Regional Assessment (CRA)** of all uses and values of the region's forests. This stage includes an assessment of environmental, heritage, economic and social values of the forests of the region.

Following from this data gathering stage will be an **integration phase**. This second stage will involve integration of the data from all aspects of the CRA in preparation for the third stage of **option development** where possible scenarios for the Regional Forest Agreement will be developed. The following diagram outlines the broad steps involved in the RFA process.

