

**ANNUAL REPORT – JUNE 2000**

**REGIONAL FOREST AGREEMENT**

**for the**

**SOUTH-WEST FOREST REGION**

**of**

**WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

**Commonwealth and Western Australian Milestones**

## **WESTERN AUSTRALIAN REGIONAL FOREST AGREEMENT**

### **JUNE 2000 ANNUAL REPORT**

The Regional Forest Agreement for the south-west forest region of Western Australia was signed by Premier Richard Court and Prime Minister John Howard on May 4 1999.

Attachment 3 of the Regional Forest Agreement establishes milestones that are to be achieved by both governments during the twenty-year life of the Agreement. This report outlines both Commonwealth and State Government obligations under clause 34 of the Regional Forest Agreement for the south-west forest region of Western Australia, whereby the parties to the Agreement are to report annually on the milestones. Only those milestones that are due for completion by June 2000 are reported in detail, although information on significant progress towards future milestones is also provided.

Clause 39 of the Regional Forest Agreement requires the Commonwealth to table in the Commonwealth Parliament the annual reports detailing achievement of the milestones for the first four years of the Agreement.

Following the signing of the Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) in May 1999, a number of developments occurred. In July 1999, the Western Australian Government announced a series of changes to the management of native forest in the south-west. This new course in forest management includes encouraging greater community involvement in decisions about forest management, together with an accelerated program to restructure the timber industry.

Following a report by the Western Australian Ministerial Advisory Group in December 1999, the Western Australian Government announced its commitment to implementing this new forest policy.

The process of developing these changes to Western Australian Government forest policy has involved the commitment of considerable resources that would otherwise have contributed to implementing the commitments in the RFA. Consequently, some of the commitments by Western Australia in the RFA will now take a little longer to put in place.



Clause <sup>1</sup>	Milestone	Timeline	Implementation Action
27	The Parties agree to actively participate in the World Heritage assessment of the Australia-wide Eucalypt theme.	As required	<b>World Heritage Assessment in the RFA process has involved the implementation of a joint process by the States and the Commonwealth with stages implemented by means of a World Heritage Expert Panel providing advice to Governments. An Expert Workshop concerning the possible World Heritage sub-theme of Eucalypt-dominated vegetation was held in March 1999, with a draft report produced in August 1999. All jointly agreed stages have been completed. Any further development of World Heritage assessments of the Eucalypt sub-theme will be subject to bilateral discussions between the States and the Commonwealth and will take place independently of the RFA process.</b>
34	The Parties will provide each other with an annual report detailing their achievement of the milestones for the first four years of the Agreement and then as they fall due and as part of the five-yearly reviews and report.	2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2009 2014	<b>This June 2000 report incorporates progress by both the State and Commonwealth Governments towards the achievement of milestones.</b>
34	Public annual reporting on the achievement of milestones during the first four years will be through a brief statement in the annual report of the relevant agency.	2000 2001 2002 2003	<b>The Commonwealth will:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• report in the AFFA annual report;</li> <li>• table the annual report in the Commonwealth Parliament; and</li> <li>• place a copy of the report on the RFA web site.</li> </ul> <b>Western Australia will include a brief statement summarising this report in the CALM Annual Report 1999-2000.</b>
37	The mechanisms for these five-yearly review/reports will be agreed by the Parties within six months of the date of this Agreement.	November 1999	<b>Mechanisms agreed.</b>

<sup>1</sup> Note - These milestones should be read in conjunction with the relevant clauses and other commitments in the RFA.

Clause <sup>1</sup>	Milestone	Timeline	Implementation Action
42, 95(b) & Attachment 5	Within 5 years of the date of this Agreement, WA will further improve its Forest Management System and processes through the development and implementation of environmental management systems.	2004	<b>CALM formally commenced the process of modifying the existing Environmental Management System (EMS) for native forests to one conforming to AS/NZS ISO 14001 in December 1998. The EMS has seventeen specific elements that must be satisfied. Development is at the stage where the requirements for each element are established and the EMS is complete in a static form. The next phase of development will be its implementation as a dynamic concern and seeking formal accreditation.</b>
50	Western Australia will address the improvements recommended in the Turner Report prior to the development of the next Forest Management Plan.	Prior to the development of the next FMP	<b>In December 1999, draft terms of reference for a proposed independent review of sustained yield within the context of ecologically sustainable forest management were released for public comment together with an invitation to comment on the composition of the proposed independent panel of experts to undertake the review. Public submissions have been analysed and revised terms of reference established.</b>
50	Western Australia will have externally reviewed the sustained yield estimating process and outputs immediately before the commencement of the development of each Forest Management Plan and will incorporate improvements during the Forest Management Planning process.	2004 onwards	<b>In December 1999, draft terms of reference for a proposed independent review of sustained yield within the context of ecologically sustainable forest management were released for public comment together with an invitation to comment on the composition of the proposed independent panel of experts to undertake the review. Public submissions have been analysed and revised terms of reference established.</b>
70(b)	Western Australia will within one year from the date of this Agreement establish new formal reserves under the <i>Land Administration Act 1997</i> (WA).	By May 2000	<b>The Western Australian Cabinet has approved the drafting of a State Forest Revocation and Reserves Bill. The Bill will provide for establishment of the new formal reserves. It is anticipated the Bill will be introduced into the WA Parliament in early 2001.</b>

Clause <sup>1</sup>	Milestone	Timeline	Implementation Action
70(c)	Western Australia will, within 6 months from the date of this Agreement, classify all proposed reserves other than those above as "Forest Conservation Zones" under Section 62 of the CALM Act. Where these areas are State forest or timber reserves; this will be the final classification; or this will be an interim classification prior to classification under the <i>Land Administration Act 1997</i> (WA).	By November 1999	<b>A motion to amend the purposes of Julimar State forest will be introduced to Parliament in the near future. The classification of areas as Forest Conservation Areas will follow this step. It is anticipated the motion will be introduced to Parliament in early 2001.</b>
70(d)	Western Australia will, within three months of the date of this Agreement, initiate the State processes for creation of new formal reserves proposed to be classified under the <i>Land Administration Act 1997</i> (WA), as specified in Attachment 1.	By August 1999	<b>CALM has initiated the process leading towards creation of new Land Administration Act reserves by writing to local authorities and other stakeholders seeking their views on the boundaries of the proposed new reserves.</b>
70(e)	Western Australia will introduce an amendment to the CALM Act into the Western Australian Parliament by 31 December 1999 to require the approval of both Houses of Parliament to revoke Forest Conservation Zones in State Forest which will be created under Section 62 of the CALM Act.	31 December 1999	<b>This amendment is included in the Conservation and Land Management Amendment Bill 1999 that has been introduced into the Western Australian Parliament.</b>
79	The Parties will develop a Memorandum of Understanding for a joint Commonwealth-Western Forest Industry Structural Adjustment Program.	1999	<b>The Commonwealth and Western Australian Governments signed a Memorandum of Understanding (4 May 1999) regarding the operations of the Western Australia Hardwood Timber Industry Development and Restructuring Program (WA FISAP). The Commonwealth committed \$15 million and Western Australia \$23.5 million to facilitate timber industry development and restructuring.</b>

Clause <sup>1</sup>	Milestone	Timeline	Implementation Action
87 & 95(c)	Western Australia will undertake a legislation review of the CALM Act and a review of competitive neutrality applying to CALM's wood-based businesses.	1999	<b>Legislative reviews have been undertaken of the CALM Act and Sandalwood Act. Reviews are underway for the CALM Act Amendment Bill and Forest Products Bill that are currently before Parliament. A competitive neutrality review has been undertaken of plantations.</b>
93	The Parties will lodge archival copies of CRA data.	By November 1999	<b>The management of data between CALM and the Commonwealth is subject to the Data Access Agreement set out in Appendix 12 of the RFA, under which Data Exchange Agreements are required to facilitate the exchange of certain data. Although these are progressing, the lodging of archival copies needs further work to ensure it covers all datasets listed in Schedule 1 of Attachment 12 to the RFA.</b>
Attachment 1, <i>paragraph 5 &amp; 16</i>	Western Australia will finalise reserve boundaries on 1:25,000 maps to enable gazettal.	By October 1999	<b>The process of fine scale reserve design has progressed and at 30 June 2000 was close to completion.</b>
Attachment 1, <i>paragraph 8</i>	WA will prepare interim management guidelines for CALM managed lands within 12 months of the date of this Agreement.	May 2000	<b>The development of interim management guidelines was delayed because of work associated with the changes to WA Government forest policy. Nevertheless, the process has commenced. The process will now be accelerated as additional funds totalling \$250,000 announced in the 2000/2001 State Budget for the twelve new national parks to be established under the RFA will contribute significantly to the planning process.</b>
Attachment 2, <i>paragraph 7</i>	The Commonwealth will complete 1:100,000 maps of indicative National Estate Places within 6 months of completion of the CAR reserve mapping at 1:25,000 scale.	within 6 months of completion of the CAR reserve mapping at 1:25,000 scale (April 2000 – refer Attachment 1, paragraph 5 & 16).	<b>The process of fine scale reserve design has progressed and at 30 June 2000 was close to completion. Discussions on data and process requirements to map Indicative National Estate Places are continuing.</b>

Clause <sup>1</sup>	Milestone	Timeline	Implementation Action
Attachment 2, <i>paragraph 8</i>	Parties will jointly accredit 1:25,000 Maps of Indicative National Estate.	Within 2 months of the above	<b>The process of fine scale reserve design has progressed and at 30 June 2000 was close to completion. Discussions on data and process requirements to map Indicative National Estate Places are continuing.</b>
Attachment 2, <i>paragraph 9</i>	The Parties will recommend to the AHC a complete set of listings on Public Land within the CAR Reserve System or by other mechanisms appropriate to the value.	within 6 months of completing the CAR reserve mapping at 1:25,000 scale	<b>The process of fine scale reserve design has progressed and at 30 June 2000 was close to completion. Discussions on data and process requirements to map Indicative National Estate Places are continuing.</b>
Attachment 4 <i>point 2</i>	Western Australia will consult a peak stakeholder committee, comprising a wide range of interests, on research priorities within CALM.	1999	<b>The Western Australian Minister for the Environment is to make a determination on the future of the Forest Monitoring and Research Committee and a proposed Forest Systems Research Advisory Committee (FSRAC) following a recommendation from the Environmental Protection Authority. Until this occurs, it is not appropriate to set up other committees with terms of reference similar to the proposed new FSRAC.</b>
Attachment 4 <i>point 3</i>	Western Australia will establish scientific advisory committees to facilitate input of external advice to research projects and to aid integration of CALM's strategic research planning with research priorities of other organisations, agencies and institutions.	1999	<b>As above.</b>
Attachment 4 <i>point 4</i>	Western Australia will extend the use of operational planning on a periodic and integrated basis and introduce the opportunity for public examination of "look ahead" plans.	2002	<b>In December 1999, indicative logging plans for the Central Forest Region for the periods 1999/2000, 2000/2001, 2001/2002 to 2002/2003 and the Southern Forest region for the year 2000, were released for public examination and comment.</b>



Clause <sup>1</sup>	Milestone	Timeline	Implementation Action
Attachment 4 <i>point 5</i>	Western Australia will consider publishing medium-term fire management plans which include an outline the ecological basis for burning regimes.	2000	<p><b>A number of initiatives have been undertaken by CALM to make the public aware of the ecological basis for burning regimes in all forest ecosystems.</b></p> <p><b>The topic of "The Sustainability of Current Fire Management Regimes in WA Forests" was discussed at a public forum of the Colloquium on Forest Management hosted by the Scientists for Sustainability in April 2000. This was followed by a field trip involving interested members of the public.</b></p> <p><b>CALM has published and distributed 10,000 copies of a special issue of <i>Landscape</i> magazine containing articles by fire scientists and fire managers, including coverage of the ecological basis of fire management.</b></p> <p><b>Internal workshops have been conducted with CALM fire managers to address the planning and operational requirements for the use of fire to meet conservation objectives and protection objectives.</b></p> <p><b>Commencing in Spring 2000, all Forest Districts will have available for public access annual burning plans and medium-term Master Burn Plans that integrate the requirements for forest and community protection, conservation of biodiversity, silvicultural treatments and harvesting/regeneration plans. These burn plans will include an outline of the critical fire management requirements, including the ecological basis for fire regimes that were considered and integrated in their development.</b></p>
Attachment 5, <i>point 4</i>	Western Australia will introduce into the Western Australian Parliament amendments to the <i>Conservation and Land Management Act 1984 (WA)</i> to remove the Executive Director of CALM as a member of the Lands and Forest Commission and the National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority.	By November 1999	<p><b>This amendment is included in the Conservation and Land Management Amendment Bill 1999 that has been introduced into the Western Australian Parliament.</b></p>

Clause <sup>1</sup>	Milestone	Timeline	Implementation Action
Attachment 5, <i>point 9</i>	Western Australia will give consideration to review the CALM <sub>fire</sub> process at the next review of these processes, in regard to the setting of priorities for the use of prescribed fire and the weighting given to different values.	2000	<b>CALM<sub>fire</sub> has undertaken a pilot study in association with the Fire Emergency Services Authority and local government authorities in the Darling Range near Perth to develop a comprehensive wildfire threat analysis (WTA). The study aimed to develop a WTA that allows fire managers to determine the most appropriate and cost-effective strategies, including prescribed burning, to achieve fire protection and ecological management objectives. The WTA is a decision-support tool that assists managers to quantify the various risks that contribute to the overall risks of wildfire damage and ecological damage to fire vulnerable assets and environmental values. The weightings given to different values were reviewed and modified where appropriate, as a part of this study. It is intended to extend the outcomes of the pilot study to other areas in south-west Western Australia.</b>
Attachment 5, <i>point 10</i>	Western Australia will review the Code of Practice for Timber Harvesting in Western Australia (April 1997), Timber Harvesting in Western Australia (January 1996) with a view to making them easier for field operators and field staff to understand.	2000	<b>The latest editions of these documents were published in March 1999. Their titles are "<i>Code of Practice for Timber Harvesting in Western Australia</i>" and "<i>Manual of Management Guidelines for Timber Harvesting in Western Australia</i>". The documents have been reviewed, and it was concluded that field operators/staff can understand them. However, consideration is being given to the production of a new, short booklet for the general public/students about timber harvesting in WA.</b>
Attachment 5, <i>point 12</i>	Western Australia will develop a system of pre-logging fauna assessment to be implemented by the commencement of the next FMP.	2004	<b>A Forest Fauna Distribution Information System (FDIS) has been developed for predicting the occurrence of vertebrate species in forest blocks where harvest coupes are planned. FDIS uses a table of 50 'fauna habitats' by 297 vertebrate species to enable the prediction of occurrence, based on expert knowledge, of each species within a given area. Whilst the system has been validated on separate data sources, ongoing validation will improve predictability.</b>
Attachment 5, <i>point 13</i>	Western Australia will establish a joint CALM and Western Australian Museum committee to jointly assess priorities for collection of fauna data and to maintain a consolidated database.	1999	<b>A Western Australian Museum /CALM committee has discussed better integration of fauna and flora databases, but the issues of joint priority setting and consolidation of databases are yet to be addressed.</b>

Clause <sup>1</sup>	Milestone	Timeline	Implementation Action
Attachment 5, <i>point 14</i>	Western Australia will develop a formal process to appraise and consider data requirements to support assessment of risks to biodiversity.	2000	<b>A proposed project scope was developed and circulated to a number of stakeholders for comment in December 1999. A detailed project proposal is in the process of development.</b>
Attachment 5, <i>point 15</i>	Western Australia will assess cultural heritage resources and develop databases and integrate the conservation of cultural heritage values into the forest management and planning process.	2000	<b>A project proposal has been developed and sent to Environment Australia for comment.</b>
Attachment 10, <i>point 1</i>	Western Australia will develop formal consultation processes with Aboriginal people about policy and procedures for the protection of Aboriginal heritage values on CALM-managed lands	2000	<b>CALM is part of a Government-wide working group developing guidelines for consultation with Aboriginal people so as to protect indigenous heritage values and sites. CALM has initiated discussions with the Noongar Action Group and six native title working groups with a view to commencing consultation in a more culturally appropriate manner in regard to more effective involvement of Aboriginal people, policy, procedures and protocols, protection of sites, and training and employment opportunities.</b>
Attachment 10, <i>point 2</i>	Western Australia will consult with Aboriginal people on the establishment of mechanisms to enable more effective involvement of Aboriginal people in the protection of culturally significant sites, and the provision of training and employment opportunities.	2000	<b>As above.</b>
Attachment 10, <i>point 3</i>	Western Australia will protect identified Aboriginal sites in accordance with the requirements of the <i>Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972 (WA)</i> and develop protocols for, and linking, the CALM geographic information system with information held by Aboriginal Affairs Department.	1999	<b>Protocols have been developed and CALM's geographic information system has been linked with information held by the Aboriginal Affairs Department. Protection of sites is an ongoing matter.</b>

Clause <sup>1</sup>	Milestone	Timeline	Implementation Action
Attachment 10, <i>point 4</i>	Western Australia will, in consultation with Aboriginal people, establish procedures and protocols, and include relevant expertise in Aboriginal heritage in CALM, to enable the early identification of Aboriginal sites and afford them relevant protection.	2000	<b>In regard to procedures and protocols see the action described under Attachment 10, point 1 above. CALM is developing guidelines to assist in compliance with requirements of the Aboriginal Heritage Act. CALM has been using consultants for site identification but is considering training field officers in site identification techniques.</b>