

<https://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-forestry-plan>

Victorian forestry plan

The Victorian Government has developed the Victorian Forestry Plan to assist the industry as it manages its gradual transition away from native logging.

Over the last ten years, the availability of native timber for logging has decreased by around half, due to bushfires and wildlife protections.

At the same time, consumers and retailer demand has grown for plantation timber products.

The Victorian Government has developed the Victorian Forestry Plan to assist the industry as it manages its gradual transition away from native logging.

Under the long-term plan, a \$120 million package will help make sure workers, businesses and communities have the certainty and support they need.

By providing a long-term plan, we're creating a new, more sustainable future for the forestry industry but just as importantly, we're giving workers the certainty they deserve.

• Workers

In order to assist with the industry's transition away from native logging, the Victorian Government has developed the Victorian Forestry Plan.

Under the plan, and to ensure security of supply, VicForests will meet existing contractual obligations and negotiate new sawlog supply contracts for all mills to mid-2024.

From mid-2024 to 2030 a competitive process will be used for timber allocation, with commercial native timber logging in state forests phased out by 2030.

At the same time, our \$120 million transition package will help make sure workers and their families have the certainty and support they need. This includes:

- training and re-training programs
- case management and employment assistance
- financial support through the Back to Work program
- top-ups to redundancy payments

The same support will be made available to harvest and haulage businesses.

A Consultative Committee with representatives from industry, VicForests, unions, local councils and government will also be established to ensure the transition is managed fairly.

And in recognition of their role as one of Gippsland's largest employers, Australian Paper will be supported to transition to a full plantation-based supply, ensuring it operates until at least 2050 – supporting its almost 1,000-strong workforce and providing stability to its customers.

For more information about the package and support available to workers, please call 1800 571 966.

• Communities

As the industry transitions, the Victorian Forestry Plan includes dedicated support to ensure the continued strength of local communities.

The \$120 million package will help communities adapt with the transition of the industry, including developing new opportunities to support local economies.

That includes grants to grow and create local businesses and jobs, financial support for community projects and funding for local infrastructure.

We're also supporting local businesses, with immediate financial assistance to prepare and plan their response to the transition. This includes assistance to retool in order to switch to plantation timber as well as financial compensation.

A Consultative Committee with representatives from industry, VicForests, unions, local councils and government will also be established to ensure the transition is managed fairly for local communities.

More information about this support is available by calling 1800 571 966.

• Businesses

The Victorian Forestry Plan has been developed to assist the industry as it manages its gradual transition away from native logging.

Under the plan, and to ensure security of supply, VicForests will meet existing contractual obligations and negotiate new sawlog supply contracts for all mills to mid-2024.

From mid-2024 to 2030 a competitive process will be used for timber allocation, with commercial native timber logging in state forests phased out by 2030.

At the same time, a \$120 million transition package will help make sure local businesses and local workers have the certainty and support they need.

For local businesses that includes immediate financial assistance to prepare and plan their response to the transition, with assistance to retool in order to switch to plantation timber as well as financial compensation.

A Consultative Committee with representatives from industry, VicForests, unions, local councils and government will also be established to ensure the transition is managed fairly.

More information about this support is available by calling 1800 571 966.

• Environment

In developing the Victorian Forestry Plan, we've made sure to strike the right balance between the environment and jobs.

That includes the phasing out of all logging in native forests by 2030, while at the same time supporting workers, businesses and communities.

Under the plan, 90,000 hectares of Victoria's remaining rare and precious old growth forest – aged up to 600 years old – will be protected immediately.

The announcement also includes the release of the Greater Glider Action Statement, an important roadmap to protect this iconic species, which was first listed as threatened in 2017.

To protect the future of the Greater Glider – alongside the Leadbeater's Possum and more than 35 other threatened species – a further 96,000 hectares of forest across Victoria will be made exempt from logging.

This habitat has been identified by experts as being critical to the survival of the Greater Glider and a range of other precious flora and fauna – many of which are not found anywhere else on earth.

By acting now, we're protecting our precious natural gifts for future generations.

• GOVERNANCE

Reviewed 08 November 2019