

Silvicultural Systems Trial

What's the best way – the right way
– to harvest a forest?

There are different answers for
different forests.

All the values of a forest are taken into account when selecting the appropriate silvicultural system. The commercial value of the wood resource itself, the safety of people working on the ground and fire management issues are all important factors. As well, foresters consider environmental and ecological values including the impact of the forest operations. In fact, special values such as flora, fauna, soil, geomorphology and

cultural heritage are the first things to be considered and if they are prohibitive, nothing else happens.

In Tasmania, the main types of harvesting methods include a range of partial harvesting systems and the clearfell, burn and sow method.



Clearfell, Burn & Sow

This system is suited to wet eucalypt forests with a dense understorey. All the trees are felled. After the logs are removed, the slash remaining on the forest floor is burned in a controlled but very intense fire (the regeneration burn), which leaves a clear

seedbed, ready for re-sowing with seed collected on-site or from nearby areas of similar forest. The clearfell, burn and sow approach was developed during the late 1950s. The intensity of the regeneration burn mimics the fierceness of wildfire, which removes all the forest-floor debris and exposes mineral soil. The soil heating promotes establishment and growth of seedlings. Seed sown onto burnt ground germinates better, establishes more readily and grows faster than seed sown on unburnt ground.



Photo: Richard Bennett

