

Maintaining Biodiversity



Managing Threatened Species

Modern silvicultural practices aim to achieve a balance between wood production and the preservation of biodiversity in our forests. Foresters and other land managers work together to do this in a variety of ways. In the process, they consider diversity on the wider scale of ecosystems (for example, Tasmania's different forest types); as well as looking at the diversity of species within ecosystems (such as the presence or absence of specific animals and plants).

Biodiversity is protected in perpetuity through Tasmania's extensive network of reserves, established under the CAR system, which ensures that protected areas are Comprehensive, Adequate and Representative. In these places, such as national parks or forest reserves, disturbance of the environment by humans is kept to a minimum.



Production Forests

In the production forests that are managed to provide a sustainable wood resource, forest planners use a variety of strategies to preserve biodiversity and protect threatened species that use forests as habitat.

As an integral part of the planning process under the Forest

Practices Code, foresters factor-in environmental strategies such as the retention of habitat areas, the provision of wildlife corridors and the establishment of streamside reserves. These areas of forest within a defined coupe are set aside from harvesting to protect special values and preserve biodiversity.

A forest is an interdependent community of plants and animals – a living cradle of biodiversity.

Reserves

The Forest Practices Plan protects endangered species through the provision of streamside reserves, which minimise disruption of the aquatic environments that are essential habitat for animals such as Tasmania's giant freshwater crayfish.

A similar system is used to create buffer zones around nesting trees of Tasmanian wedge-tailed eagles. In all forest environments, the richest biodiversity occurs at

and below ground level, where a multitude of invertebrate species – the 'decomposers' of the forest – break down fallen branches, leaf litter and animal remains, returning nutrients to the soil. The same formal and informal reserves that protect fauna such as wedge-tailed eagles and freshwater crayfish also preserve the habitat of these little-noticed but all-important creatures, many species of which have never been identified and described by scientists.