Harvesting & Regenerating State Forests

To Harvest
Reap, collect or gather in

To Regenerate
Breathe new life into; bring into renewed existence

In nature, forests grow, flourish, die or burn, then grow again.

Tasmania's wet eucalypt forests have adapted to a regime of fierce wildfire. In fact, they need fire to regenerate.

The Importance of Fire

The maximum lifespan of eucalypt trees in our wet forests is about 450 years. If no wildfire occurs over that space of time, the trees mature and die and longer-living rainforest species in the understorey take over, because eucalypt seedlings can't grow beneath a shady forest canopy.

But wildfire clears away the understorey and may kill some of the mature eucalypts. Even if the fire kills the tree, it doesn't kill the seeds, which are protected by the woody capsule. Within days of the fire, seed falls into soft ash or fire-heated soil. Following rain, the new crop of seedlings thrives in ideal conditions of exposed mineral soil and full light. The regenerated wet eucalypt forest is born.

Dry Eucalypt Forests & Regeneration

The process is different in dry eucalypt forests, where regeneration can be continuous, as seedlings establish continuously on exposed soil. Regeneration in dry forests also follows a major disturbance such as harvesting or fire. Fire is not essential, but it still helps to reduce fuels and create seedbed for regeneration.

Tasmania's production forests are a natural and renewable resource that can provide useful and much-needed wood products forever – as long as they are sustainably managed.

That means the successful establishment of regeneration after an area of forest has been harvested.

Forest Education Foundation
The stories behind our trees

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