

Harvesting & Regenerating State Forests



How Do Harvesting Strategies Reflect Natural Events?

Before the late 1950s, these natural processes were not clearly understood. But after scientific research into how native forests grow, Forestry Tasmania silviculturalists developed a harvesting strategy for wet forests designed to mimic disturbance by fire. It works like this:

- A mix of seed is collected from the area to be harvested, reflecting the species composition and genetic mix of the trees that were on the site
- The area is clearfelled – prime quality logs go to local sawmills, other logs are processed into woodchips (or more recently, are 'peeled' for plywood and veneer)
- Areas disturbed by logging are restored (eg rehabilitation of tracks and areas impacted by machinery)
- Remaining debris is burned
- Seed is sown on the exposed mineral soil and ash seedbed

Not all Forests are the Same

This harvesting method works well in wet eucalypt forests. But other types of forests need different techniques.

In dry eucalypt forests, which in nature do not rely on intense fire to regenerate, partial harvesting of selected trees is more suitable than clearfelling.

Partial harvesting in dry forests is safer – the trees are not as tall and visibility is much better than in wet forests, where falling big trees among other big trees can kill people. Partial harvesting in dry forests also helps regeneration, because it leaves a partial canopy that provides seed and shelters the growing seedlings from sun, wind and frost.