

# Private Forests Tasmania

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## Consultation – Northern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input into the review of the Northern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy (NTRLUS). Private Forests Tasmania (PFT) has read the State of Play and Strategic Directions Reports and other supporting documents and can provide the following feedback.

PFT is an independent statutory authority established under the Tasmanian Private Forests Act 1994. We work to facilitate and expand the sustainable growth and development of the private forest resource in Tasmania. We do this through providing information to private forest growers, through research collaborations, advocacy, innovation and planning tools. Under our Corporate Plan 2025-28 one of our four goals is to work with policy makers and regulators to improve regulatory efficiency and practical policy settings for private forestry.

As stated in Section 1.1 of the State of Play report, the main purpose of the RLUS's is to implement the Tasmanian Resource Management and Planning System and the Tasmanian Planning Policies (TPP's) at a regional scale, and to guide the preparation of Local Provision Schedules (LPS) in the councils that make up each region.

The current batch of LPS's statewide have been made without the benefit of having the TPP's in place (due to commence 1 July 2026) or the revised RLUS's. As such, many of the LPS's have inconsistently applied zones and codes on land dedicated for forestry purposes. For example, Private Timber Reserves (PTRs), which are areas of private land set aside to establish forests or grow or harvest timber in accordance with the Forest Practices Code, are often zoned such that forestry is a discretionary or in some cases prohibited use. This has caused considerable concern for our private forest owner stakeholders who have PTR's registered over their forests. The zoning of land can influence public perceptions of what is an appropriate use of land, and land dedicated for forestry use that is zoned inappropriately will only cause confusion and is used as an argument by some that the land should be transferred to other land uses, despite the rigorous assessments that led to the dedication.

PTR's are registered on the land title and available on LISTMap, so their locations in the landscape (see Fig.15 State of Play Report) and their purpose as timber production areas are readily available to local government planners when developing LPS's and assigning zones. PFT strongly recommends that the NTRLUS implements the requirements of the TPP's, particularly TPP 4.2 *Timber Production*, to ensure land dedicated for timber production, and surrounding lands, are appropriately zoned and coded. These

areas are not insignificant. The land dedicated to a forestry purpose in the Northern Tasmania Region makes up nearly 423,000 hectares – on public land this is 297,000 hectares of Permanent Timber Production Zone (PTPZ) land, and on private land 126,000 hectares of PTR's. That is 21% of the land area for the entire Region is dedicated to producing timber from sustainably managed plantation and native forest. There are additional areas of private land used for timber production that are not covered by a PTR and therefore not included in these statistics. These significant areas, whilst their primary purpose is timber production, are managed in accordance with the strict requirements of Tasmania's forest practices system and will therefore contain multiple other values – biodiversity, water quality and carbon sequestration and storage values – as well as timber.

The forestry industry is a major employer and economic contributor in the Region. The State of Play Report lists the combined Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sectors in the top 5 employers in all but two of the local government areas in the Northern Tasmania Region. Furthermore, the Report lists the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sectors in the top 5 industries by output in all but one LGA. In most LGA's it tops the list in output. In a separate report specifically focussed on the socio-economic impacts of the forestry sector alone, Schirmer et.al (2018)<sup>1</sup> found that the total annual value of output contributed by the forest industry to the Northern Region was \$458.2 million and which employed a total of 1,897 full time equivalent jobs. This contributed \$114.7 million to household income within the Northern Region alone. These figures from the Schirmer report are from 2015-16 financial year, so the contribution of the forestry sector to the socio-economic wellbeing of the Region would be even greater now.

These statistics clearly show the forestry sector makes a significant contribution to the Northern Region, both historically and now. Yet, in the State of Play Report *Opportunities and Challenges*, and the Strategic Directions Report *Regional Strategic Directions*, there is no mention of forestry at all. In fact, there is a reference in the State of Play Report (p.84) that implies the forestry industry is in decline. This is not the case. Forestry will play a key role in meeting Tasmania's ambitious carbon emission reduction targets as detailed in Tasmania's Climate Change Action Plan 2023-2025<sup>2</sup>. Carbon forestry is emerging as a driver of change, particularly influencing the establishment of new and longer rotation plantations. From 2020 to 2024, over 24,800 hectares of private freehold land was registered for carbon forestry projects in Tasmania under the Australian Government's Australian Carbon Credit Unit (ACCU) Scheme, with activity accelerating from 2022 onward (PFT Annual Report 2025<sup>3</sup>). The forestry sector will also provide the timber to build the 10 000 new social and affordable homes by 2032 as part of Tasmania's Housing Strategy 2023-2043<sup>4</sup>. Total wood production from Tasmanian forests for 2024-25 was over 4.1 million tonnes across all forest product types. Public forests accounted for 1.3 million tonnes while private forests produced 2.8 million tonnes.

Sustainable forestry produces the ultimate renewable material – timber. Timber, through a tree's ability to regenerate and re-grow while sequestering and storing carbon, makes it one of the most important environmental materials of the future. PFT urges the NTDC to recognise the significant role for forestry

in the future of the Northern Region. This should be reflected in the revised NTRLUS. PFT looks forward to making further contributions as the Strategy is developed.

If you have any queries on the points we have raised, please contact me on [REDACTED] or our Policy & Data Officer Murray Root on [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely,



**Dr Elizabeth Pietrzykowski**  
CEO Private Forests Tasmania

<sup>1</sup>Schirmer, J. Mylek, M. Magnusson, A. Yabsley, B. & Morison, J. (2018) Socio-economic impacts of the forest industry - Tasmania. Report prepared for Forest and Wood Products Australia and the Australian Government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources.

<sup>2</sup>Tasmania's Climate Change Action Plan 2023-2025,  
<https://www.recfit.tas.gov.au/what-is-recfit/climate-change/action-plan/2023-25>

<sup>3</sup>Private Forests Tasmania Annual Report 2025, <https://pft.tas.gov.au/annual-reports>

<sup>4</sup>Tasmania's Housing Strategy 2023-2043,  
[https://www.tasmanianhousingstrategy.tas.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0005/600944/230265\\_Homes\\_Tas\\_Strategy\\_document\\_wcag.pdf](https://www.tasmanianhousingstrategy.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/600944/230265_Homes_Tas_Strategy_document_wcag.pdf)