

Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement

TASMANIAN GOVERNMENT IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

DECEMBER 1999

Implementation of the Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) has required work related to several categories:

- ◆ implementation of the RFA milestones;
- ◆ financial assistance package of the Commonwealth;
- ◆ employment and industries development strategy; and
- ◆ parliamentary commitments by the Tasmanian government.

This report fulfils Tasmania's obligations under clause 44 of the Regional Forest Agreement; *"The Parties agree to provide each other annually for the first five years ...with written reports detailing the achievement of milestones."* The milestones are as documented in Attachment 3 to the RFA.

The second purpose of this report is to provide information on the acquittal of RFA funds received from the Commonwealth in the 1998/99 financial year.

1. RFA milestones report.

This is the second RFA implementation report. Milestones due and completed in 1998 were reported in the first report and are not repeated in this report.

The remaining milestones documented in Attachment 3 to the RFA have been sorted in the following table by year. Although only milestones carried forward from the first year or for the second year are required to be reported, information has been included where significant progress has been made towards meeting later milestones. Those milestones which do not require reporting this year, and have not involved significant action to this point of time, have been omitted. Each action milestone is accompanied by a progress report.

Clause	Milestone / Action	Target Date	ACTION IN 1999 YEAR
Milestones due by December 1999			
#24(d)	The State to proclaim remaining new reserves within 3 months of proclamation of the new land classification system	31 July 1999	The new reserve classification system was proclaimed on 30 th April. Recommendations on the new reserve classifications were received from the Resource Planning and Development Commission in May 1999 and are currently being considered by Cabinet. The necessary paper work to facilitate approval of the recommendations by the Parliament and the Executive Council have been prepared.
#39	The State and the Commonwealth to jointly participate in further World heritage assessment of the relevant themes	by 30 June 1998	Tasmania has participated in the development of a draft report by a national expert panel assessing the proposed eucalypt-dominated vegetation theme
#44	The parties to provide each other with written reports detailing the achievements of Milestones	annually for the first 5 years; then 5 yearly	This report fulfils this milestone.
#94	The State to publish and make publicly available compliance audits of the Forest Practice Act and Code and the code of reserve management. See also #Att 11,3	annually: (1998-2017)	Forest Practices Board completed the annual compliance audit as part of its Annual Report process, which is publicly available and tabled in Parliament.
#Att 1. 6.	The State and the Commonwealth to jointly fund and accredit digital maps at 1:100 000 scale of all lands in Tasmania listed on the Register of the National Estate	by 31 December 1998.	1:100,000 digital maps of existing NE areas were produced for the CRA. It has been jointly agreed that further work will be done in conjunction with implementing the revision of NE listings arising from the RFA. Substantial work has been done by EA, DPWIE and FT to progress the identification of new and revised listings in accordance with Attachment 1 of the RFA.
#Att 10. 3.	The State to develop and implement a Threatened Species Protection Strategy	by 31 December 1998	A draft Strategy was released for two month period of public comment on 7 th July 1999. Public comment closed on 10 th September and this is being considered in revising the document.

Clause	Milestone / Action	Target Date	ACTION IN 1999 YEAR
#10. 9.	Implementing as a high priority the mechanisms for improving the transparency and independence of the Forest Practices Board	no target date	Amendments to the <i>Forest Practices Act</i> were passed by Parliament and came into effect on 1/7/99. The changes include the creation of the Forest Practices Board as an independent statutory body. Changes were also made to the membership of the Board, and other matters.
#Att 11. 3.	Relevant State agencies to include in their annual reports a report on outcomes of the compliance audits for codes of practice, and the monitoring of Forest regeneration success and trends.	annually by financial year: (1997/98-2016/7)	The Forest Practices Board has published relevant information in its Annual Report. Changes to the <i>Forest Practices Act</i> from 1/7/99 require certificates of compliance to be lodged with the Forest Practices Board upon the completion of operations. The certificates include reporting on compliance with reforestation objectives as prescribed within Forest Practices Plans. Forestry Tasmania has published regeneration monitoring information in its Annual Report.
#Att 6. 5.	The State to finalise boundaries (of CAR reserves) on 1:25 000 maps to enable gazettal.	by 30 June 1999	Boundaries have been finalised. Reserve proclamations are awaiting approval by Parliament.
#87	The State to review legislation relevant to the allocation and pricing of hardwood logs from State forests as part of the Competition Principles Agreement	before 31 December 1999	<i>Forestry Act</i> has been reviewed to comply with the Competition Policy and the amendments passed by State Parliament.
#91	The State and the Commonwealth to develop a set of appropriate, practical, and cost effective sustainability indicators.	by 1 December 1999	Tasmania and the Commonwealth released a joint discussion paper for public comment on 17 November 1999 which sets out the draft sustainability indicators to be reported against in 2002, when reviewing the performance of the RFA.

Clause	Milestone / Action	Target Date	ACTION IN 1999 YEAR
#Att 9. 8.	The State to introduce, in respect of Private Land, mechanisms to encourage native vegetation retention and management.	by the year 1999	<p>It is planned that this issue be addressed as part of the development of the Tasmanian Biodiversity Strategy (see milestone #Att 10.3 below).</p> <p>A native vegetation retention system is under consideration by the Tasmanian Heads of Agencies Group responsible for environment and resources matters. It is in the process of developing options for consideration by Cabinet. In addition a number of initiatives to encourage native vegetation retention have been progressed. These include a trial accreditation system for environmentally responsible agriculture, protective covenants and management agreements and these linked to property management planning, Land for Wildlife and other National Heritage Trust programs.</p>
#Att 10. 3.	The State to develop and implement a Tasmanian Biodiversity Strategy	by 31 December 1999	Funds have been allocated and the establishment of a Biodiversity Unit within DPIWE has commenced. The State Biodiversity Steering Committee has been formed to oversee preparation of the Strategy. The Committee has 3 government employees and 8 community representatives, including Dr. Bruce Davis as chairperson.
#Att 11. 5.	The State to prepare and release a revised manual for the Management Decision Classification System, including prescription guidelines for special management zones.	by 31 March 1999	The revised manual has been prepared and publicly released.
Other relevant Milestones			
#55	The State to review and publish a report on its resource estimates for deep red myrtle available supply	during first 4 years of the RFA (2001)	Significant progress has been achieved on reviewing resource information.

Clause	Milestone / Action	Target Date	ACTION IN 1999 YEAR
#59	The State agrees to implement a process which will facilitate the voluntary participation by private landowners to protect those values specified in Attachment 8	No date specified	<p>Development work included establishing the parameters and systems to implement the program, procedures for assessing CAR values on private properties, and investigate the possibility of a legislative or an administrative measure to address a significant capital gains tax disincentive issue.</p> <p>158 properties were assessed, two purchases finalised, and a further seven agreed. Negotiations are close to finality with 5 landowners for management agreements including covenants. Negotiations are in progress with 40 other landowners.</p>
#93	The State to develop and implement environmental management systems for forest management.	within 5 years of the RFA date	<p>Forestry Tasmania has commenced a project to develop and implement an ISO 14001 compatible EMS by late 2000.</p> <p>DPIWE is actively undertaking elements to enhance its environmental management system for managing forests through review of the State Policy System, development of a reserve management code of practice, the management planning system, and strategies to improve managing particular environmental themes.</p>
#97	The State to maintain and update the Management Prescription database and the Response to Disturbance database	as necessary	<p>The Management Prescription database has been updated to include prescriptions for forest communities. The majority of the RFA priority species and communities are now included and the balance are being progressively added. These are now available via the WEB and are being accessed for the Private RFA Reserve project, Bushcare and other NHT projects.</p> <p>The Response to Disturbance database is under further development by the RFA CARSAG group (Scientific Advisory Group) for the Private RFA Reserve program.</p>
#Att 6. 17.	Forestry Tasmania to include Informal Reserves in new and revised Forest Management Plans	by the year 2000	FT has incorporated new Informal reserves into the Management Decision Classification system and incorporated them into new and revised Forest Management Plans.

Clause	Milestone / Action	Target Date	ACTION IN 1999 YEAR
#Att 10. 4.	Implementing the <i>Historic Cultural Heritage Act 1995</i>	No milestone date	The Act was proclaimed on 28 Feb 1997. The Heritage Council, Heritage Unit and the Tasmanian Heritage Register have all been established and operating for over two years. The Tasmanian Heritage Register has over 5,500 places listed and is being progressively updated.
#Att 10. 5.	The State to develop new legislation in relation to Aboriginal cultural heritage to replace the Aboriginal Relics Act 1975	no milestone date	A Discussion Paper was printed and released for public comment. Analysis of public comments received is in progress.
#Att 10. 8	Ensure that management plans are implemented for all State Forest and National Parks.	by the year 2000.	FT has completed Forest Management Plans for its Forest Districts which cover all areas of State forest including all Forest Reserves. Three existing plans are being revised to incorporate RFA outcomes. A planning schedule detailing progress for National Park management plans is at Appendix 1. Plans are in place for the Cradle Mountain/Lake St. Clair, Franklin Gordon Wild Rivers, South West, Maria Island and Ben Lomond National Parks.
#Att. 10.11	Develop and implement a code of practice for reserve management	by the year 2000	An inter-agency steering committee has been formed to oversee the project and communications established with a full range of external stakeholders. Drafting of specific sections is in progress.
#Att 10. 13	Ensuring that management plans for Formal Reserve and Informal Reserve elements of the CAR reserve system clearly identify the CAR values identified in the CRA and the actions being taken in each reserve to appropriately manage those values.	No milestone date	Forestry Tasmania's Forest Management Plans have identified CAR values in reserves and the management actions. Draft Management Plans being prepared for reserves under the <i>National Parks and Wildlife Act 1975</i> all identify CAR values and have measures aimed at conserving them.

Progress with National Park management plans – November 1999

National Park	Actual/Projected public exhibition of draft plan	Projected final approval of plan
South Bruny	September 1999	April 2000
Mt. Field	January 2000	July 2000
Strzelecki	February 2000	October 2000
Tasman	February 2000	October 2000
Asbestos Range	February 2000	October 2000
Freycinet	April 2000	November 2000
Savage River	April 2000	November 2000
Mt. William	not proceeded with due to Aboriginal land transfer negotiations	
Rocky Cape	not proceeded with due to Aboriginal land transfer negotiations	

Management plans are in place for the Cradle Mountain/Lake St. Clair, Franklin Gordon Wild Rivers, South West, Maria Island and Ben Lomond National Parks.