



Timber Industry Action Plan

A Victorian
Government
initiative



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Foreword

Long-term security for Victoria's timber industry

I am proud to release the Government's ambitious new Timber Industry Action Plan. The Plan details how we will implement the Victorian Coalition Government's forestry election commitments and assist the timber industry to meet its key challenges.

The Timber Industry Action Plan recognises the significant role the Victorian native and plantation timber industry plays in our State's economy. Employing over 25,000 people, the industry generates more than \$400 million annually in log production and far more in domestic and export oriented value added product. The industry also puts back around \$1.5 billion annually into Victoria's economy through forestry business expenditure, primarily in rural and regional townships.

A central theme of the Plan is that for this important industry to have a successful future, it requires greater policy certainty to deliver a secure investment environment. The Victorian Government is providing leadership in this area.

The Timber Industry Action Plan includes strong, clear actions in line with the Coalition Government's election commitment to provide greater resource certainty for industry and secure long-term access to native timber supplies.

The Timber Industry Action Plan establishes cross-Government cooperation:

- recognising timber plantations as a legitimate 'as of right' crop-raising activity in Victoria's key agricultural zones;
- working with stakeholders to improve access to training and employment; and
- providing greater security to industry against changes in State Government policy that affect timber supply.

I look forward to working with forest industry stakeholders and other Victorian Government departments and agencies in ensuring the Plan is fully implemented.



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Peter Walsh".

Peter Walsh MLA
Minister for Agriculture and Food Security



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Timber Industry Action Plan

Priority 1: A Productive, Competitive and Sustainable Timber Industry

Action 1: Provide long-term access to public native forest timber resources

Action	Intent
1.1 We will continue to maintain and enhance Victoria's world-standard forestry management practices.	<p>Ensure that Victoria's sustainable forest management framework remains world-standard and that timber industry operations comply with standards established in Victoria's policy and legislative framework.</p> <p>To achieve these outcomes the Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement as a priority a new strategic approach to biodiversity management that appropriately balances the conservation of biodiversity with the supply of timber and other commercial forest products to generate socio-economic benefits for Victorian communities.• Review the <i>Sustainable Forests (Timber) Act 2004</i> as part of introducing a simplified legislative system that delivers outcomes of clarity, efficiency, security and sustainability to the State and the native timber industry.• Provide clarification of the respective roles and responsibilities of key Government agencies that are involved in the native timber industry.• Streamline and align the various regulations that VicForests is required to comply with, in order to provide a simplified, linear framework to improve accountability for performance and minimise risk.• Undertake ecological thinning in reserves, parks and water catchments to improve environmental outcomes including water yields.• Review rotation lengths for fast growing native species such as mountain Ash.• Work with VicForests and other key stakeholders, where appropriate, to improve the community's understanding of Victoria's native forest industries.
1.2 We will clearly and transparently identify and map the areas of State forest in eastern Victoria available for timber production.	<p>DSE, in conjunction with VicForests, will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Undertake a complete review and update of forest management zoning in eastern Victoria.

Action	Intent
<p>1.3 We will provide VicForests with a secure basis to maximise the long-term economic returns to Victoria from the harvesting of timber and allow industry to realise a competitive return on investments, support capital upgrades, and drive innovation.</p>	<p>To improve VicForests ability to manage Victoria’s productive forests for long-term sustainability and increase certainty for the Victorian timber industry the Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the <i>Sustainable Forests (Timber) Act 2004</i> and introduce a simplified legislative system to deliver clarity, efficiency, security and sustainability to the State and the native timber industry. • Provide VicForests with the ability and incentive to actively manage the productivity of its timber resources, with the security to realise commercial and other benefits of these activities in the long-term. • Ensure VicForests can utilise sales mechanisms that are appropriate, commercially prudent and enable VicForests to offer long-term contracts (see Action 3.1). • VicForests will still be required to manage its ongoing timber sales in line with prudent commercial practice and appropriate risk management. • VicForests will continue to offer a variety of resource supply tenures to its customers reflecting the risk profile of its timber supply and the nature and scale of industry investments.
<p>1.4 We will strengthen industry confidence by ensuring that changes in State Government policy that affect timber supply, are not unduly afforded force majeure status.</p>	<p>To provide security and certainty to the Victorian Timber Industry the Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise that while force majeure clauses are normal commercial practice, they are not intended here to shield the Government from the consequences of its own actions. • Maintain the position that in the event that any changes in Victorian Government policy relating to native forests restrict or limit the supply or availability of timber resources, VicForests will use its best endeavours to comply with its contractual obligations on equivalent commercial terms. VicForests will only avail itself of the force majeure provision as a last resort. • Where changes in Victorian Government policy relating to native forests prevent VicForests from complying with its contractual obligations in respect to the supply of timber resources, the State will indemnify VicForests against any claims arising from its failure to comply with those obligations. • Explore the use of mechanisms for compensating VicForests’ customers and harvest and haul contractors for impacts on contracts held with VicForests which are a direct result of changes in Government policy.

Priority 1: A Productive, Competitive and Sustainable Timber Industry

Action 2: Improve estimation and communication of sustainable harvest levels from public native forests

Action	Intent
<p>2.1 VicForests will implement improvements to the methodology used to estimate sustainable harvest levels from public native forests in eastern Victoria.</p>	<p>VicForests will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become solely responsible for calculating the volume of timber that can be harvested sustainably from Victorian public native forests. • Determine the location and timing of timber harvesting operations. • In estimating sustainable harvest levels, comply with the sustainable forest management framework to ensure that the variety of uses and values of State forests are maintained and enhanced, and the long-term productivity of these areas is preserved. • Refine the estimated sustainable harvesting level to take into account the impact of the fires that occurred in February and March 2009 • Determine future sustainable harvest levels in an open and transparent manner that reflects best-practice, taking into account bushfire risks by incorporating methods to account for impacts on both quantity and quality of timber yields. <p>As the regulator, DSE will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and enforce VicForests' compliance with Victoria's sustainable forest management framework. • Reconcile the gross area of the coupes harvested by VicForests with the area allocated to it. • Audit VicForests to ensure VicForests' estimation process complies with the framework for sustainable forest management.
<p>2.2 Each year VicForests will hold annual 'Resource Outlook' briefings to provide industry with details on the amount, type and location of timber that is to be available for sale in the coming years.</p>	<p>VicForests to clearly describe future resource availability to assist industry plan for timber purchases and capital investment.</p> <p>VicForests will continue to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct an annual 'Resource Outlook' briefing for industry, Government and community stakeholders, which will provide a forecast of resource availability by type and region for the next 20 years. • Annually release information showing indicative log releases over time. This information will include probable auction profiles for the coming year (e.g. log volumes by grade, species and general location), medium-term resource outlook issues, and implications for the timing and resource availability for future auctions and other competitive sales mechanisms.

Priority 1: A Productive, Competitive and Sustainable Timber Industry

Action 3: Improve the sales system for native timber resource from public native forests

Action	Intent
3.1 We will continue to offer timber resources through a range of transparent commercial processes.	<p>VicForests is required to undertake the sale and supply of timber resources from Victorian State forests on a commercial basis. While the Price Allocation Model (PAM) has been a key mechanism for selling native sawlogs, sales mechanisms other than the PAM may be appropriate and commercially prudent where market intelligence indicates there is a distinct lack of competition for certain resource and that the resource is limited or niche in nature.</p> <p>VicForests will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to sell timber resources from Victoria’s public native forests via a range of transparent commercial processes. • Review the PAM, taking into account the requirements of the VicForests establishing Order in Council, to deliver an improved commercially focused open and competitive sales system. The review will consider incorporating broader objectives into the sales system to promote long term security and sustainable investment in Victoria’s native forest industry, consistent with VicForests charter to maximise long-term economic returns to Victoria. <p>VicForests will consult with the Department of Treasury and Finance and the Department of Primary Industries on these issues.</p>
3.2 We will seek national consistency in the adoption of market-based mechanisms for log sales, governance and cost recovery for timber from public native forests.	<p>Consistent with National Competition Policy principles, the Victorian Government will actively encourage other States (and the Australian Government) to increase market-based price discovery in their pricing of logs from public forests and end administered pricing.</p> <p>This will ensure that Victorian producers are not disadvantaged in the short-term through competing with businesses provided with logs at comparatively low administered prices.</p>

Priority 1: A Productive, Competitive and Sustainable Timber Industry

Action 4: Sustainably develop timber plantations

Action	Intent
4.1 We will continue to recognise timber plantations as an 'as of right' crop-raising activity in the farming and rural activity zones.	<p>The action clarifies timber plantations as a legitimate use of land in Victoria's key agricultural zones.</p> <p>Timber plantation operations that comply with the <i>Code of Practice for Timber Production 2007</i> (the Code) should be able to be established without a planning permit in the Farming and Rural Activity Zones (clauses 35.07 and 35.08 of the Victorian Planning Provisions), consistent with other crop types. The Code is a key regulatory instrument for commercial timber production in Victoria, and compliance is required under the Victorian Planning Provisions. No other broad-scale agricultural activity operates under a legislated code.</p> <p>DPCD amendments to the Victorian Planning Provisions, including the State Planning Policy Framework will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend clauses 35.07 and 35.08 of the Victorian Planning Provisions and any zone schedules in local planning schemes to remove the ability for planning authorities to require a planning permit to use and develop land for timber production in the Farming and Rural Activity Zones (e.g. for plantations greater than 40 hectares). This will achieve equitable regulatory arrangements consistent with other 'as of right' crops in these zones and recognises the Code's role in addressing environmental sustainability requirements. • Amend the Victorian Planning Provisions to ensure that 'ploughing, ripping and mounding works associated with establishing a timber production plantation' are exempt from the permit requirements of overlays. As the Code establishes the environmental standard for timber plantations, permit requirements triggered by overlays for works in preparation for tree planting will, in most circumstances, no longer be necessary. We will continually monitor the requirements of relevant overlays to ensure no duplication or conflict. • Update the existing Victorian Planning Provision Practice Note for 'Timber Production in the Rural Zone', as necessary, to provide further statutory and strategic advice. • Review the planning permit decision guidelines at clause 52.18-4 to ensure no duplication or conflict, as the Code establishes the environmental standard for timber plantations. • Amend the State Planning Policy Framework of the Victorian Planning Provisions (in particular clauses 17.07-1 and 17.07-2) to clarify current policy settings and remove ambiguity and duplication. • Amend clause 66.02-7 of the Victorian Planning Provisions, to remove the mandatory requirement to refer all permit applications for timber plantations to the Secretary of the Department of Sustainability and Environment. Other existing parts of the Victorian Planning Provisions are adequate to determine when a referral may be required.

Action	Intent
	<p>We will work with industry and other key stakeholders, where appropriate, to improve the community’s understanding of Victoria’s productive, competitive and sustainable timber industry. The Victorian Government will assist industry and other stakeholder groups to provide relevant, accurate and up-to-date information about Victoria’s timber industry. Such assistance will typically rely on industry co-investment.</p>
<p>4.2 We will seek a national approach to market-based log sales, governance and cost recovery for timber plantations.</p>	<p>Through national processes, such as updating Australia’s national forest policy objectives, Victoria will encourage other jurisdictions to correct the market distortions created by this situation, and seek a national approach to market-based log sales, governance and cost recovery in the pricing of logs from timber plantations.</p> <p>We will help create a more level playing field for Victoria’s timber plantation sector to compete nationally and improve the long-term viability and international competitiveness of Australia’s timber industry.</p>
<p>4.3 We will offer broad support for Australian Government taxation arrangements that support the comparative neutrality of timber plantations irrespective of rotation length.</p>	<p>The Victorian Government will support Australian Government policy settings aimed at encouraging long-rotation timber plantation investments.</p>

Priority 1: A Productive, Competitive and Sustainable Timber Industry

Action 5: Assist the timber industry to adapt to climate variability

Action	Intent
5.1 We will develop evidence-based, economically efficient and environmentally sustainable approaches to address the impact of land-use change, including timber plantations, on the water resource (quality and yield).	<p>Victoria will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop evidence-based, economically efficient and environmentally sustainable approaches to address any significant impacts of land-use change on water. • Take into account the broader benefits and impacts of plantations when developing the management tools to reflect Victoria’s socio-economic and physical landscape.
5.2 We will develop evidence-based, economically efficient and environmentally sustainable approaches to timber harvesting in Melbourne’s water catchments.	<p>DSE has evaluated various forest management options within the water catchments of Melbourne. This included the impacts of various rotation ages, harvesting regimes and silvicultural practices on water yields and timber resources within the catchments. The 2009 fires have affected a large area of Melbourne’s water catchments and DSE and Melbourne Water are doing further work to explore the effects of these fires.</p> <p>In order to develop improved management arrangements for these areas, the Government will ensure that the following principles are applied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any technical findings must be based on sound and reputable evidence and science. • The impacts of alternative management scenarios will include assessment of the broader socio-economic benefits of such activity to the community (including financial cost). • Any proposals must recognise the joint and complementary nature of timber and water production from forests. • Any changes to current arrangements will not undermine existing log supply commitments to the timber industry, in terms of either quantity or quality.

Action	Intent
<p>5.3 We will respond to major biophysical risks posed by climate variability by improving forest management practices for public native forests and prioritising research and development that aids climate change adaptation in the plantation sector.</p>	<p>As owner and manager of the public native forest estate, the Victorian Government will consider changes to its forest management practices to address areas of most pronounced risk. Measures might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced fire protection and community resilience activities. • Improving efficiency of salvage logging and further developing markets for damaged timber. • Replacing harvested species with alternative species or provenances from areas with climates more like the expected growing conditions. • Thinning regimes to extend the time that species can viably occupy their habitable ranges. <p>Changes to practices will be undertaken when considered to be in the public good; that is they are environmentally sustainable, economically viable and operationally feasible.</p> <p>Successful and profitable enterprises exercise long-term business planning for managing the risks of climate variability. For some adaptive measures, further research and development is required. DPI will work with industry to facilitate this (see Action 10.1), including opportunities for collaboration with the private and tertiary education sectors.</p>
<p>5.4 We will continue to implement fire prevention strategies, and review these strategies in light of the outcomes of the Royal Commission into the 2009 bushfires.</p>	<p>To meet future bushfire challenges, the Department of Sustainability and Environment and its Networked Emergency Organisation partners, including VicForests, have been implementing Living with Fire: Victoria’s Bushfire Strategy. The strategy has introduced significant changes in the way Government and Victorians manage fire.</p> <p>The Royal Commission into the 2009 bushfires has made recommendations to Government about the preparation and planning for future bushfire threats and risks, and existing fire prevention strategies. The Victorian Government has committed to implement all of the 67 recommendations of the Commission.</p>

Priority 2: Develop and support efficient timber markets

Action 6: Improve freight infrastructure and logistics to support the timber supply chain

Action	Intent
6.1 We will work with the Australian Government to develop new infrastructure at a national and regional level that supports sustainable development of the timber industry.	<p>The Victorian Government will continue to develop infrastructure projects via submissions to Infrastructure Australia and will implement a Transport Solutions strategy focusing on reductions to road, rail and port logistical bottlenecks.</p> <p>As the Australian Government, through Infrastructure Australia, seeks to develop a strategic blueprint for Australia's infrastructure needs over the coming years, we will continue to pursue opportunities to develop new infrastructure that realises higher value from Victoria's timber resources.</p>
6.2 We will work with Victoria's local councils to help them access Australian Government funding for strategic local road upgrades to support key industries and communities.	<p>The Victorian Government will work closely with local government and industry in the development of its Transport Solutions strategy. Transport Solutions will provide a framework to improve business and industry competitiveness in regional Victoria by identifying and addressing transport bottlenecks and capacity constraints in logistical supply chains.</p> <p>Transport Solutions will identify, prioritise and provide a strategic basis for future investment in road, rail and port infrastructure across the local, arterial and national land transport corridors to facilitate the development and growth of regional Victoria.</p> <p>As well as planning for the future requirements of the transport network, Transport Solutions will build on existing strategic transport planning already undertaken by the regions to identify short-term initiatives that align with the Victorian Government's objectives and also provide an opportunity for the Australian Government to invest strategically in Victoria's transport infrastructure through programs such as the Regional Development Australia Fund.</p>

Priority 2: Develop and support efficient timber markets

Action 7: Support the commercial development of new and emerging markets for timber and timber-related products

Action	Intent
7.1 We will continue to work with the Australian Government to improve the understanding of schemes designed to reduce carbon emissions and their impact on the Victorian timber industry.	<p>The potential impacts of any scheme designed to reduce carbon emissions on the timber industry need further examination in a number of areas, including long-term soil carbon dynamics and sequestration rates for commercial tree species in Victoria’s plantation estate.</p> <p>Given the existing uncertainties associated with the design and implementation of schemes to reduce carbon emissions, we will continue to work alongside the Australian Government to ensure that Victoria’s timber industry can make informed decisions about participation in such schemes. If any changes in Climate Change policy are likely to affect forestry, further research into implications for the timber industry will be a priority.</p>
7.2 We will continue to advocate to the Australian Government to include carbon stored in timber products in the international Climate Change framework.	<p>Accounting for carbon stored in timber products is a complex issue. Research and development in this area could improve the understanding of available options for accounting for carbon stored in timber products and aid the Australian Government’s negotiations for its inclusion in international accounting frameworks. Such work will be consistent with our research and development priorities outlined at Action 10.1.</p>
7.3 We will continue to support the use of native forest wood waste for energy production.	<p>The Australian Government has announced that as part of its Clean Energy Future initiative it intends to amend the Renewable Energy Target (RET) regulations to ensure that Renewable Energy Certificates are not issued for biomass from native forests.</p> <p>While the Australian Government’s decision to amend the RET will remove any additional incentive that the RET might have otherwise provided to use native forests for bio-energy, it does not prohibit the use of native forests for bio-energy.</p> <p>It remains the Victorian Government’s policy position that, subject to sustainability requirements, native forest wood waste should remain eligible for renewable energy initiatives. Consistent with this principle the Victorian Government will consider all forms of renewable energy as eligible for any research, development and commercialisation projects that may arise.</p>
7.4 We will prioritise research to explore the potential use of wood for biofuel production.	<p>As a sustainably managed and renewable resource, the demand and commercial viability of wood as a potential source of biofuel could increase.</p> <p>To help industry take advantage of new market opportunities, our research and development priorities outlined at Action 10.1 will include research and development into wood-based biofuel production. ‘Second-generation’ biofuels based on pyrolysis and anaerobic digestion are of particular interest.</p>

Priority 2: Develop and support efficient timber markets

Action 8: Support market access and improve biosecurity for sustainable timber production

Action	Intent
8.1 We will only endorse procurement and sustainability policies and guides that recognise international third-party certification as demonstrating a high standard of sustainable forest management.	<p>The Victorian Government currently recognises the third-party certification schemes provided by the Australian Forestry Standard and the Forest Stewardship Council. To support equitable recognition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Victorian Government department or agency will adopt or endorse any position, including in relation to procurement policies, guides or tools, which does not equally recognise third-party certification from the Australian Forestry Standard, Forest Stewardship Council, or any equivalent scheme. • Victorian Government funding or endorsement will only be available to organisations administering sustainability or procurement guides that are consistent with this policy.
8.2 We will develop a forests and timber biosecurity framework.	<p>Biosecurity Victoria is responsible for biosecurity programs that preserve market access for Victoria's agricultural industries. Consistent with the <i>Biosecurity Strategy for Victoria</i>, released in May 2009, Biosecurity Victoria will prepare a forests and timber biosecurity framework.</p>

Action 9: Strengthen governance arrangements for forests and timber production

Action	Intent
9.1 We will improve the administration of VicForests.	<p>The Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF) commissioned a review of VicForests in 2010, in close consultation with the Department of Primary Industries (DPI), other relevant Government departments, unions, industry and community organisations. The review examined whether VicForests is achieving the outcomes sought at its establishment, is fulfilling its commercial remit and its ability to return dividends to the State in the long-term.</p> <p>The review findings identified a range of measures that could improve VicForests performance. The relevant Minister, in consultation with the Treasurer will work with VicForests to ensure the relevant findings are implemented through strategic and operational processes.</p>
9.2 The Minister for Agriculture will continue to be the 'relevant' minister for VicForests.	<p>In April 2010, the Minister for Agriculture was designated the 'relevant' Minister for VicForests through amendments to the Order in Council under the <i>State Owned Enterprises Act 1992</i>. The relevant Minister is directly responsible for Government oversight of VicForests operations. The Treasurer continues to hold responsibilities legislated in the <i>State Owned Enterprises Act 1992</i>, primarily relating to financial oversight of VicForests.</p> <p>Under General Orders for the Administration of Acts made in December 2010 and February 2011, the Minister for Agriculture and Food Security has increased responsibility for timber industry related legislation. These arrangements will assist to more clearly define Ministerial and Departmental responsibilities relating to timber harvesting and sustainable forest management.</p>

Priority 3: Innovative forestry science, technology, and practice change

Action 10: Encourage industry innovation and research and development

Action	Intent
<p>10.1 We will prioritise existing and future research and development efforts in the areas of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • climate variability and adaptation (including water and fire) • biosecurity (including emerging pest and disease risks) • socio-economic impacts (including land-use change) • industry productivity and innovation 	<p>This action focuses on research and development activities that maximise economic value to Victoria from production and processing of timber.</p> <p>The 2008 Future Farming strategy provided an additional \$77 million over four years for research and development in the farming sector, which includes plantation forestry. Investment is guided by the research priorities established under the DPI Agriculture and Fisheries Strategy which is reviewed annually. Part of the Future Farming Strategy or other future Victorian Government investment may be allocated to support research and development in priority areas for the plantation timber industry, while also generating significant non-commercial benefits.</p> <p>In evaluating research and development proposals, we will ensure that the outcomes of key research and development projects are effectively transferred to operational practice, including professional and technical training programs.</p> <p>As described in Action 5.3, we will consider opportunities for collaboration with private and tertiary education sectors when commissioning new research.</p>
<p>10.2 We will consider providing co-funding with industry towards national programs that are consistent with our research and development priorities.</p>	<p>Opportunities will arise for the Victorian Government to co-fund new and emerging initiatives proposed by other parties, such as industry or the Australian Government.</p> <p>The Victorian Government will consider co-funding any new initiatives that are consistent with our research and development priorities.</p>

Action 11: Improve industry occupational health and safety

Action	Intent
<p>11.1 We will encourage improved levels of occupational health and safety compliance through adoption of best practice, consistent with WorkSafe Victoria's industry standards.</p>	<p>Encourage adoption of best-practice in the timber industry, including VicForests, through the integration of WorkSafe Victoria standards and guides into work practices and training. VicForests will continue to require timber purchasers to confirm compliance with Victorian and Australian Government occupational health and safety policies and laws.</p>
<p>11.2 We will ensure the Forestry Industry Council continues to reflect best practice occupational health and safety standards in contract arrangements under the <i>Owner Drivers and Forestry Contractors Act 2005</i>.</p>	<p>Following several independent reviews, the Forestry Industry Council (FIC) was established to provide specialist expert advice on the terms and conditions that should apply to contractors within the forest industry sector. The recommended terms and conditions identified by the council include financial consideration for the adoption of best-practice occupational health and safety standards. This practical approach helps ensure that the standards of occupational health and safety compliance under Victoria's <i>Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004</i> are met.</p>

Priority 4: Strong timber industry communities

Action 12: Build a skilled workforce

Action	Intent
12.1 We will work with the industry to improve coordination of training and skills development for the timber industry.	<p>Coordination and focus are essential for the timber industry to meet its skills development needs by undertaking training including leveraging the <i>Victorian Training Guarantee</i>.</p> <p>Relevant Victorian Government agencies, including research and development providers, will collaborate with Industry Skills Councils, major employers and training providers to identify opportunities to rapidly fill skills gaps, encourage participation, and ensure that training and development meets industry requirements.</p>
12.2 We will work with Indigenous communities, the timber industry and other stakeholders to improve access to training and employment in Victoria's timber industry by Indigenous Victorians.	<p>The previous government endorsed the National Indigenous Forestry Strategy, which promotes cooperation by all levels of Government, the timber industry, Indigenous communities, and the broader community to increase Indigenous participation in the forest and wood products sector in Australia.</p> <p>The intent of this action is to examine a range of initiatives to improve Indigenous access to training and employment, and explore opportunities to support enterprise development for Indigenous Victorians seeking to participate in the timber industry.</p>
12.3 We will ensure that forest industry training courses adopt best practice in line with industry occupational health and safety standards.	<p>Occupational health and safety (OHS) will be a critical aspect in all training provided by VicForests.</p> <p>Training courses will reflect best practice industry-specific OHS requirements to improve OHS compliance and outcomes.</p>

Action 13: Enhance community understanding of the benefits of Victoria's forests

13.1 We will explore options for research into forestry and land-use change.	In line with Action 10.1, we will set priorities for research into socio-economic impacts of land-use change associated with forestry, so that the impacts of such change are understood and managed.
13.2 We will develop a Farm Forestry Plan for Victoria, in close consultation with key farm forestry groups.	In recognition of the various benefits afforded by farm forestry, we will develop a Farm Forestry Plan for Victoria in close consultation with key farm forestry groups, with a focus on forestry practices that best meet individual and community needs.



