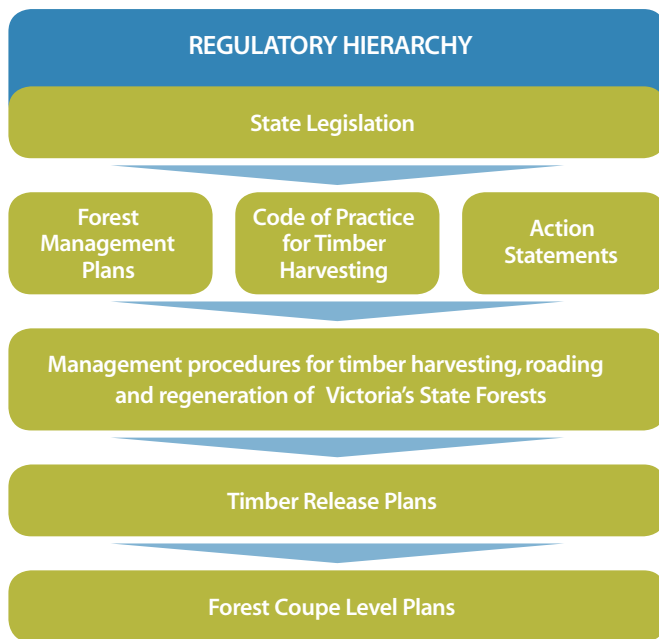


## Forest Management Planning in Victoria

Victoria's public native forests are managed within a comprehensive policy and regulatory framework consisting of a range of policies, agreements, laws, codes, plans and procedures devised and managed by the State Government.



The key regulatory instruments within the Victorian Forest Management framework include:

The **Code of Practice for Timber Production** (Code) is prepared under the *Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987*. It provides direction and guidance to ensure that impacts of commercial timber harvesting on environmental values are avoided or minimised and social and cultural values are maintained, protected and respected. Approved by the State Government, it applies to public and private native forests and softwood and hardwood plantations.

**Forest Management Plans** (FMPs) provide a framework for the management of a geographic forest area for a range of environmental, social and economic uses. FMPs are developed by the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) in consultation with the community and experts in forestry, botany, wildlife biology, catchment management, water resource management, cultural heritage and recreation planning. The FMP covering VicForests' operational areas include East Gippsland, Gippsland, Central and North East FMPs.

The FMP divides the area of State forest into three management zones. Each of these zones have specific restrictions of the types of activities allowed within them:

### *Special Protections Zones (SPZ)*

A SPZ is an area of forest specifically managed for the conservation of flora and fauna. Areas classified as SPZs form a network designed to complement existing conservation reserves. All timber harvesting operations are excluded from SPZs.

### *Special Management Zones (SMZ)*

A SMZ will be declared in order to conserve a specific value, such as a scenic view. Timber harvesting operations can occur, under increased management prescriptions.

### *General Management Zones (GMZ)*

A GMZ will be managed for a range of uses and values, with sustainable timber production a major use.

**Action Statements** are developed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*. Action Statements are species-based management plans developed for threatened and endangered flora and fauna. Action Statements are developed by DSE flora and fauna experts and bring

together all research and survey work undertaken for a particular species. Action Statements often contain additional prescriptions that must be applied to harvesting operations. These prescriptions are applied in addition to the requirements of the Code of Practice and Forest Management Plans.

**Management Procedures for Timber Harvesting, Rooding and Regeneration of Victoria's State forest** (Management Procedures) are developed to specify environmental and operational requirements that apply in addition to the Code of Practice, Forest Management Plans and Action Statements. The Management Procedures offer more detailed direction to VicForests with regard to carrying out harvesting operations and associated activities, including the regeneration process.

### Regulatory Framework Specific to VicForests operations

Developed and managed by DSE, the **Allocation Order to VicForests** (Allocation Order) sets out the forest areas available for timber harvesting and allocated to VicForests for the purpose of harvest, sale and regeneration over a 15 year period.

VicForests develops **Timber Release Plans** (TRPs) from the Allocation Order. TRPs outline proposed harvesting activities for up to five years. Each plan specifies the location, type and timing of timber harvesting. They are amended on an annual basis, following community consultation and known environmental changes, such as the impact of bushfires, and are submitted to DSE for approval.

**Forest Coupe Plans** are prepared by VicForests for all approved operations prior to commencement. These are the specific operational documents under which a harvesting contractor must operate. They outline all management actions identified within the TRP.

VicForests' operates under a **Sustainable Forest Management System** (SFMS) which includes many instructions and controls to ensure our business meets the requirements of the regulatory framework. The SFMS includes internal and external auditing of all VicForests activities to ensure compliance with the Code of Practice, Management Plan, Action Statements and VicForests' own requirements.

VicForests' SFMS is externally certified by the Australian Forestry Standard, aligned to the global Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC), the world's largest forest certification scheme.

