# MANAGEMENT POLICY

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**RESPONSIBLE WOOD CERTIFIED**

**NOT-FOR-PROFIT INCORPORATED ASSOCIATION**

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# PRIVATE FORESTRY SERVICE QUEENSLAND'S MANAGEMENT POLICY

## *1. Planning Background*

Private Forestry Service Queensland's (PFSQ) Management Policy builds on previous business management plans and provides the framework for PFSQ's approach to sustainable forest management. The policy reflects the regional industry, environmental, social and regulatory context in which PFSQ operates.

Private forestry in Queensland, particularly in south-east Queensland, is subject to increasing community interest and scrutiny. Community expectations of forests extend beyond timber production to include carbon sequestration and storage, biodiversity conservation, habitat, property resilience, income diversification, rehabilitation of degraded landscapes, water quality and aesthetic values.

PFSQ recognises that responsible forest management must consider these values alongside the production of timber as a renewable primary resource. PFSQ seeks to demonstrate that forest management can improve the health and productivity of private forests while maintaining and enhancing their environmental, social and economic values.

## *2. Organisational Context*

PFSQ is a not-for-profit organisation overseen by a Board of Management. Its primary function is to support the development and sustainable management of private forestry, particularly in Queensland and adjoining areas of northern New South Wales.

PFSQ provides forest management, forestry consultancy, operational and extension services and undertakes forest management and rehabilitation activities on behalf of forest owners and other clients.

PFSQ's activities include:

- forest management planning;
- forest inventory, assessment and mapping;
- silvicultural planning and implementation;
- forest management operational works;
- harvesting and sale of forest products;
- monitoring and review of forest management practices;
- rehabilitation of degraded forests and landscapes;
- technical advice and extension services;
- natural resource management activities;
- research and industry development projects; and
- stakeholder engagement and provision of forestry information.

PFSQ operates within the applicable legislative, regulatory and certification framework, including relevant Queensland and New South Wales legislation, codes of practice, environmental requirements and the requirements of the Responsible Wood certification scheme based on AS/NZS 4708-2021.

PFSQ is committed to applying currently accepted best management practices and to continually improving its forest management systems and outcomes.

## *3. PFSQ Defined Forest Area*

PFSQ's current Defined Forest Area (DFA) is approximately **10,861.8 hectares** and comprises **eight forest properties** extending from the Grafton region of northern New South Wales to the Gin Gin region of Queensland.

The DFA is predominantly comprised of private native forest, with approximately 100 hectares of plantation forest. The DFA is currently managed principally as native forest and this policy focuses on the sustainable management of those native forest resources.

Seven of the properties are predominantly characterised by dry eucalypt forest types. One property is predominantly characterised by wet eucalypt forest.

The properties within the DFA are owned by **Energy Queensland**, with PFSQ engaged under management contracts to undertake forest management activities.

Each property is managed as one or more Forest Management Units (FMUs), with management activities determined according to the characteristics, condition, values, opportunities and constraints of the relevant management unit.

The DFA is managed as a working forest in which sustainable timber production is integrated with the protection and enhancement of environmental, cultural, social and economic values.

Maps identifying the DFA and relevant forest management areas are publicly available through the PFSQ website.

## *4. PFSQ Scope*

PFSQ has a broad range of private forestry activities, including:

### 4.1 Forest Management and Consultancy

- forest management planning;
- forest assessment and inventory;
- forest mapping and GIS;
- silvicultural planning;
- forest management operational works;
- monitoring and review of forest management practices and their impacts;
- assessment of forest condition and productive capacity;

- financial and operational planning;
- long-term rehabilitation of degraded forests and landscapes; and
- application of currently accepted best management practices.

### 4.2 Promotion of Private Forestry

PFSQ promotes private forestry as a means of supporting:

- farm diversification and landscape restoration;
- income and investment opportunities;
- improved financial resilience;
- increased terrestrial carbon stocks;
- rehabilitation of degraded forests;
- environmental management; and
- natural resource, catchment and regional economic benefits.

### 4.3 Provision of Information and Services

PFSQ provides information and extension services through:

- technical advice;
- social media;
- information products;
- newsletters and publications;
- its website;
- workshops;
- field days; and
- direct engagement with landholders, industry, government and community stakeholders.

### 4.4 Policy and Industry Development

PFSQ contributes to government, industry and regional processes through:

- input into Federal, State and local government processes;
- support for sustainable forest management policies and strategies;
- interpretation of policy and regulatory requirements;
- development of industry and research partnerships;
- engagement with relevant stakeholders; and

- investigation and development of market opportunities.

### 4.5 Timber Harvesting and Forest Products

PFSQ undertakes harvesting and sale of forest products where appropriate and where consistent with the applicable forest management plan, silvicultural prescription, legislation, codes of practice and sustainability objectives.

Harvesting is considered part of the broader forest management cycle and is undertaken where it contributes to the long-term management and productive capacity of the forest.

## *5. Organisational Objectives and Sustainability Targets*

PFSQ's forest management objectives are to maintain and enhance the environmental, social and economic values of the forests under its management.

### Objective 1 – Maintain Forests and Carbon

**Sustainability Objective:**
Maintain or appropriately enhance forest resources and their contribution to the global carbon cycle.

**Targets:**

- Implement organisational practices that reduce the use of greenhouse gas-emitting fuels.
- Restore selected components of the DFA that are degraded or suppressed.
- Maintain sustainable forest management, legislative, environmental, economic, cultural and social requirements through continued Responsible Wood certification.

### Objective 2 – Forest Ecosystem Health

**Sustainability Objective:**
The health of forest ecosystems shall be maintained or enhanced and degraded native vegetation ecosystems shall be rehabilitated wherever and as far as economically feasible, by making the best use of natural structures and processes and using preventive biological measures.

**Targets:**

- Develop partnerships with forest industry to improve sustainable forest management outcomes.
- Support the development of sustainable forest management policies and strategies.
- Work with universities, industry and government agencies to develop and deliver research projects.

## Objective 3 – Biodiversity

**Sustainability Objective:**
The biological diversity in forest ecosystems shall be maintained, conserved and appropriately enhanced.

**Targets:**

- Provide an independent source of advice and support for landholders, industry, government and the community.
- Diversify the range of services offered by PFSQ.
- Provide sufficient resources to achieve organisational objectives and targets.
- Systematically and regularly review forest management policies, procedures, operational processes and accepted best management practices.

## Objective 4 – Soil and Water Resources

**Sustainability Objective:**
The protective functions of forests, notably soil and water, shall be maintained or enhanced.
**Target:**
Minimise soil disturbance and erosion, maintain effective waterway buffers and drainage, restrict machinery operations during high-risk soil conditions and progressively rehabilitate disturbed areas to maintain or improve soil and water quality.

## Objective 5 – Forest Productive Capacity

**Sustainability Objective:**
Forest management shall maintain the productive capacity of forests.
**Target:**
Manage forest operations and access to minimise impacts during wet or otherwise high-risk conditions and support improvements in forest condition, productivity and carbon stocks.

## Objective 6 – Cultural Values

**Sustainability Objective:**
Forest management shall protect and maintain the natural, cultural, social, recreational, religious, spiritual and heritage values and rights of Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

**Targets:**

- Maintain appropriate buffers around identified areas of cultural significance.
- Where appropriate and feasible, utilise the services and knowledge of local Indigenous groups in natural resource management.
- Identify relevant Indigenous community groups as stakeholders in Forest Management Plans where applicable.

## Objective 7 – Social and Economic Benefits

**Sustainability Objective:**
Forest management shall maintain and enhance long-term social and economic benefits.

**Target:**
Undertake appropriate community engagement activities, including field days, workshops and presentations, to promote understanding of sustainable forest management.

### *6. Silvicultural Management*

PFSQ recognises that sustainable forest management requires silvicultural treatments to be tailored to the condition and characteristics of individual forests and management units.

Each Forest Management Unit is assessed and provided with a **tailored silvicultural prescription** that is consistent with the applicable legislation, Queensland Forest Practices Code and other relevant requirements.

Silvicultural prescriptions are based on available forest inventory and assessment information, including:

- forest condition;
- stocking;
- species composition and distribution;
- tree form and size distribution;
- productive potential;
- regeneration;
- habitat tree density;
- fire and fuel conditions;
- environmental values;
- soil and water considerations;
- access and operational constraints; and
- identified management objectives.

Depending on forest condition and management objectives, silvicultural treatments may include:

- selective harvesting;
- thinning;
- commercial and non-commercial thinning;

- chopper rolling;
- regrowth spraying;
- reset silviculture;
- fire and fuel management; and
- rehabilitation and regeneration activities.

The selection and intensity of treatment is determined on a site-specific basis. PFSQ does not apply a single silvicultural regime across the DFA.

The principal rationale for silvicultural management is to maintain or improve the long-term productive capacity, health and resilience of the forest while protecting environmental, cultural and social values.

Silvicultural intervention is not undertaken where the proposed activity is inconsistent with sustainable forest management requirements or where site conditions create unacceptable environmental or operational risks. This may include areas that are excessively steep, eroded, saturated, located too close to watercourses or otherwise constrained by the applicable forest practice requirements.

Harvesting is regarded as one component of the forest management cycle rather than as an objective in isolation. Where harvesting is undertaken, it is planned and implemented to support the longer-term management and productive capacity of the forest.

Rehabilitation of degraded or suppressed forest is an important component of PFSQ's silvicultural approach. Management interventions are designed, where practicable, to improve forest condition and productivity while retaining and enhancing appropriate structural, habitat and biodiversity values.

## *7. Forest Values and Their Management*

PFSQ recognises that forests provide a range of interconnected values. Forest management planning considers environmental, social, cultural and economic values relevant to each Forest Management Unit.

These include:

- forest health and productive capacity;
- carbon stocks and sequestration;
- biodiversity and habitat;
- soil resources;
- water quality and waterway protection;
- cultural and heritage values;
- landscape and aesthetic values;

- recreational and social values; and
- economic and timber production values.

Management measures are developed to provide benefits from these values while minimising potential harm.

Forest Management Plans identify relevant values and management constraints. Where necessary, exclusion areas, buffers and other protective measures are established to protect identified environmental, cultural or social values.

## *8. Forest Management Planning*

PFSQ develops Forest Management Plans following an assessment of the relevant property and management area, including:

- land tenure and boundaries;
- legislative and regulatory requirements;
- forest condition and inventory;
- access and infrastructure;
- environmental values;
- biodiversity and habitat;
- fire management;
- soil and water protection;
- cultural and heritage values;
- stakeholder considerations;
- silvicultural requirements; and
- productive potential.

The Forest Management Plan provides the framework for operational planning and establishes the management objectives, work programs and controls applicable to the relevant Forest Management Unit.

Operational activities are undertaken in accordance with the Forest Management Plan, relevant silvicultural prescriptions, applicable codes of practice, standard operating procedures and other approved management controls.

## *9. Operational Planning and Control*

PFSQ applies a risk-based approach to operational planning and control.

Before undertaking forest management activities, relevant environmental, operational, safety, cultural and social risks are assessed and appropriate controls are established.

Operational controls may include:

- designated operating areas;
- exclusion zones;
- waterway buffers;
- access controls;
- machinery operating restrictions;
- soil condition requirements;
- erosion and sediment controls;
- retained habitat and biodiversity features;
- cultural heritage protection measures;
- fire management requirements; and
- rehabilitation requirements.

Operational performance is monitored to determine whether activities are being undertaken in accordance with approved plans, prescriptions, codes and procedures.

## *10. Monitoring, Review and Continual Improvement*

PFSQ maintains systems for monitoring forest condition, management performance and the environmental, social and economic outcomes of forest management activities.

Monitoring may include assessment of:

- forest condition and productivity;
- silvicultural outcomes;
- regeneration;
- biodiversity and habitat values;
- soil disturbance and erosion;
- waterway protection;
- operational compliance;
- rehabilitation outcomes; and
- stakeholder feedback.

Monitoring results are used to assess performance, identify areas for improvement and inform future management decisions.

PFSQ undertakes systematic and regular reviews of its policies, forest management plans, operational processes and best management practices. The objective is to achieve continual improvement in sustainable forest management performance.

## *11. Stakeholder Engagement*

PFSQ recognises stakeholder engagement as an important component of sustainable forest management.

Stakeholders are identified and engaged in a manner proportionate to the **scope, scale, intensity and potential impacts** of forest management activities.

PFSQ's stakeholder groups may include:

- forest owners and landholders;
- neighbouring landholders;
- local Indigenous groups;
- local, State and Federal government agencies and regulators;
- local research organisations and universities;
- catchment and natural resource management groups;
- forestry industry organisations and processors;
- contractors and service providers;
- environmental and community organisations; and
- other affected or interested parties.

PFSQ maintains a stakeholder register and identifies relevant stakeholders for individual Forest Management Units where appropriate.

Stakeholder engagement may occur through:

- direct meetings;
- field days;
- workshops;
- presentations;
- correspondence;
- social media;
- consultation associated with forest management activities; and
- other appropriate communication channels.

Where operational activities may affect neighbouring landholders or other interested parties, PFSQ will undertake appropriate communication and engagement having regard to the nature, scale and potential impacts of the activity.

PFSQ provides opportunities for stakeholders to raise concerns, provide information or make comments regarding forest management. Complaints and concerns are generally received by email and are considered and managed in accordance with PFSQ's relevant procedures.

PFSQ recognises the interests and rights of Indigenous peoples and will engage with relevant local Indigenous groups where appropriate, particularly where forest management activities may affect cultural or heritage values.

## *12. Public Access to Information*

PFSQ seeks to maintain transparency regarding its approach to sustainable forest management.

The following information is publicly available through the PFSQ website:

- PFSQ forest management policies;
- information relating to PFSQ's sustainable forest management approach;
- information relating to the Defined Forest Area; and
- maps of the Defined Forest Area and relevant forest management areas.

Forest Management Plans contain property-specific operational and management information and are maintained as management documents rather than public documents. Relevant information may nevertheless be communicated to affected or interested stakeholders where appropriate.

Stakeholders and members of the public may contact PFSQ to obtain further information regarding its forest management activities.

## *13. Commitment to Responsible Wood*

PFSQ is committed to the development and maintenance of sustainable forest management systems, procedures and policies that conform to the requirements of the Responsible Wood certification scheme and AS/NZS 4708-2021.

Evidence of Responsible Wood conformance is maintained through PFSQ's Forest Management Plans, operational procedures, monitoring systems and associated records.

PFSQ undertakes forest management activities in accordance with applicable legislation, codes of practice and currently accepted best management practices.

The core principle of PFSQ's sustainable forest management policy is:

**Manage forests in order to maintain or enhance their environmental, social and financial values.**

## *14. PFSQ Forest Management Policy Statement*

Private Forestry Service Queensland Inc. is dedicated to the sustainable management of forests. PFSQ incorporates sustainable forest management throughout its operations by:

- complying with applicable legislative requirements, codes and procedures;
- supporting the development of sustainable forest management policies and strategies;
- taking a systematic approach to environmental, economic, cultural and social aspects of forest management;
- communicating with affected and interested parties;
- considering stakeholder views in proportion to the scope, scale and intensity of forest management activities;
- regularly reviewing forest management policies, processes and currently accepted best management practices;
- providing sufficient resources, including appropriate knowledge, time, finances and equipment;
- applying a risk management approach to forest management activities;
- preventing environmental harm and avoiding unnecessary loss, waste and pollution; and
- seeking continual improvement in environmental, social and economic outcomes.

PFSQ is committed to maintaining an accountable, transparent and scientifically informed approach to sustainable forest management and to managing the forests within its defined forest area for their long-term environmental, social and economic benefit.

## *15. Key Personnel*

**David Menzies – Executive Officer**

Master of Forest Ecosystem Science and Bachelor of Science (Environmental Science).

David has over 30 years' experience in tree arboriculture and forest management, with experience in mapping, GIS, data analysis and forest management planning. He has completed Regional Ecosystem Classification training under the Queensland Herbarium.

**Natasha Scott – Finance Manager**

Bachelor of Commerce – Accounting and Human Resources.

Natasha manages PFSQ accounting, financial administration and project costings.

**Bill Schulke – Extension Officer – Grazing and Forest Land Management**

Bachelor of Agricultural Science.

Bill has extensive experience in grazing land management and previously worked as a senior extension officer with the Queensland Government. His experience includes assisting landholders with management of overstocked regrowth forests.

**Ben Champion – Forest and Plantation Development Officer**

Degree in Environmental Sciences, University of the Sunshine Coast.

Ben has experience in environmental management and sustainable development.

**Harry Low – Forester**

Bachelor of Forestry Science, University of Canterbury.

Harry has experience in forestry and timber-related applications, forest operations, spatial data and technical analysis.

**Stan Rust – Forester**

Bachelor of Forestry Science, University of Canterbury.

Stan has experience in forest operations, plantation management, harvesting, GIS, forest planning and sustainable forest management in New Zealand and Australia.