

# Harvesting and Regrowing



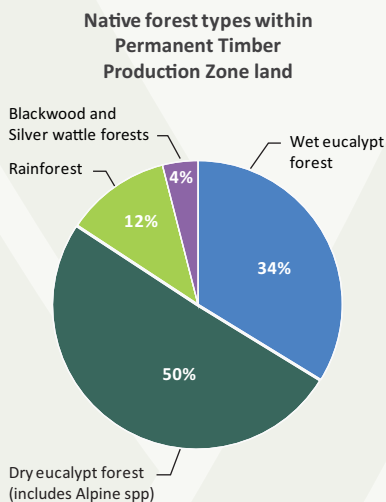
## Key points

- A range of harvesting methods are used in Tasmanian production forests. Broadly, they include clearfelling, partial harvesting and selective harvesting.
- Informed by decades of research, Sustainable Timber Tasmania chooses the optimum harvesting method according to forest types and how they are best regenerated, as well as other important factors such as worker safety.

There are four main types of forests on land designated for timber production in Tasmania. Broadly described as:

- Wet eucalypt forests
- Dry eucalypt forests
- Rainforests
- Blackwood forests.

Sustainable Timber Tasmania uses different methods to grow, manage, harvest, and regrow each forest type, based on their ecology, scientific research and other important considerations, such as worker safety.



## Harvesting in wet eucalypt forests

Wet eucalypt forests generally rely on a large bushfire to regenerate. These bushfires remove the canopy, enable sunlight to reach the forest floor, reveal a mineral earth seedbed, start natural seedfall and allow the seedlings to grow with reduced competition and predation from other species.

Sustainable Timber Tasmania uses clearfelling and aggregated retention to harvest timber from these forests to achieve the best regeneration results.

**Clearfelling** removes most trees and provides the light conditions the eucalypt seedlings require for germination and growth. Sustainable Timber Tasmania then uses a high-intensity burn to create a receptive seedbed, which is then sown with collected seed.

A seed management system is used to ensure all harvested areas are re-sown with eucalypt seed that matches the species mix and provenance of the original forest.

Pesticides and fertilisers are generally not used in the regeneration process.

While clearfelling is generally the preferred method of harvesting in wet eucalypt forests, aggregated retention is used in production forests with special significance.



*Aerial view of an aggregated retention native forest coupe.*

This technique is operationally more difficult but is used to provide greater habitat connectivity between forest edges and the regenerating coupe.

## Harvesting in dry eucalypt forests

Dry eucalypt forests are generally more open and do not have a dense wet understorey. As a result, sunlight can reach the forest floor enabling seedlings to establish to fill gaps in the canopy. These forests do not need to be clearfelled to produce the right conditions to enable regrowth of harvested trees.

Sustainable Timber Tasmania therefore uses a range of partial harvesting methods in dry eucalypt forests. These methods rely on seed falling to the ground from retained trees to regenerate harvested areas.

## Harvesting in rainforests

Sustainable Timber Tasmania only undertakes limited harvesting in rainforest areas, for special species timber such as celery top pine, myrtle and sassafras. Selective harvesting techniques are used in these forests. As rainforests regenerate naturally without major disturbance, regeneration burning is not required.

## Harvesting in blackwood forests

Blackwoods occur in two forest types:

- Blackwood swamps
- Blackwood-rich wet eucalypt forest.

Clearfelling is used to harvest both types of blackwood forests for the same reason as in wet eucalypt forests. Blackwood seedlings regenerate naturally following major disturbance such as bushfire, floods or windthrow. In blackwood-rich eucalypt forests, a high-intensity regeneration burn follows harvesting to provide the best regeneration conditions.

In blackwood swamps, a low-intensity burn may be used, although the disturbance from harvesting alone can also be sufficient for the seedlings to grow. A temporary fence is also used to protect the seedlings from browsing mammals.

### Forest coupe Picton 39A



*Harvested in 1988 for veneer, sawlog and pulpwood. Logging debris was burnt in March 1989. The area was sown with eucalypt seed collected locally.*



*The same forest in 2006.*



*Potential sawlog retention harvest in dry E. delegatensis forest, eastern highlands of Tasmania.*

## More information

[‘Clearfelling’ fact sheet No10](#)

Forestry Tasmania (2010) Native forest silviculture technical bulletin no. 5: [Silvicultural systems for native eucalypt forests.](#)

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