



Regional Forest Agreements

Scenario for Aboriginal Issues - Summary

A preferred Aboriginal outcome for the Eden region, detailed in Chapter 10 of the report, Towards an Eden Regional Forest Agreement, was developed by the Bega, Eden and Merrimans Aboriginal Forest Management Committee (BEMAFMC). This committee includes representatives from the Bega, Eden and Merrimans Local Aboriginal Land Councils, the Yuin Elders Council, the Monaro-Ngarigo-Cherupim Elders Council and the Djirrananj People.

While recognising the need for compromise in the debate over forests, but also recognising the rights of Aboriginal people, the Aboriginal position has been designed to be compatible with all the scenarios and the BEMAFMC considers that its position can accommodate the outcome of a final reserve design for the Eden Region.

A project, *Assessment of Places of Aboriginal Significance in the Eden CRA Region*, has been undertaken in consultation with representatives of the region's Aboriginal communities. This project identifies some of the places of cultural, social and economic significance to Aboriginal people in the region. The project includes a map with GIS data layers indicating these places, as well as a report outlining in detail the rights, needs and aspirations of the Aboriginal peoples of the region.

Another project, A Social Assessment with Aboriginal Communities has also been carried out in the region

The BEMAFMC's position identifies the following four tenure management arrangements which it would wish to have incorporated into the Eden RFA:

1. Areas requiring comprehensive heritage assessment.
2. Areas proposed for Aboriginal ownership without condition (ie freehold title).
3. Areas proposed for Aboriginal ownership with conditions (such as ownership with leaseback to the Crown).
4. Areas proposed for joint management by Aboriginal peoples and the Crown.

Additionally a draft Heads of Agreement document between stakeholders seeking their support for the BEMAFMC position has been presented. It is intended that, if adopted, this will provide the foundation for more specific arrangements to be entered into in the Eden Region in the RFA context.

The BEMAFMC position outlined above will be considered by governments in the finalisation of the RFA.