



Jobs and forest industries

The timber and tourism industries are key contributors to the Eden region's economy. The retail industry and the agriculture, forestry and fishing industries were the region's largest employers in 1996, together providing around 30 per cent of all jobs. Other major employers for the region's population of about 30,000 are motels and other places of tourist accommodation, cafes and restaurants and the manufacturing industry.

For the people and communities of the region, the RFA delivers 20 years' certainty to plan ahead, job opportunities in a new mill and a boost to tourism with the creation of new national parks.

The timber industry

The region's \$65 million native forest timber industry provides around 170 direct jobs, mainly with the two major wood processing companies, Tablelands Sawmills and Harris-Daishowa Australia. Harvesting and haulage contractors and their employees, who live in communities throughout the region, make up the balance of direct timber industry employment in the region.

The industry initiatives outlined below will be given priority for consideration by the NSW and Commonwealth governments. Combined with new jobs associated with managing the new formal reserves, up to 50 additional jobs could be created in the region under the RFA.

Eden recovery mill. Tablelands Sawmills will establish a new 'recovery' saw milling complex at the old Boral sawmill site at Eden, using both allocated quota sawlogs and up to 20,000 cubic metres of recovery or salvage logs. Under previous arrangements these would have been processed as pulp logs and exported as woodchip. The new mill will also use kiln drying and other processes to maximise production of solid wood products, in line with value-adding strategies. It is expected to employ up to 44 people when it opens in mid-2000 and more jobs are expected to be created in later stages of the mill's development.

Commercial regrowth thinning. Expansion in mechanised commercial thinning of fire and logging regrowth will provide five new permanent jobs. Training contractors in the use of new machinery will be integral to this initiative.

Sustainable sawlog production. This initiative extends a State Forests project of early thinning of regrowth stands using brush-cutters and chainsaws to increase the volume and value of future sawlogs and other high-value log products. This labour-intensive project is expected to create 11 new jobs for five years.

Resource inventory. Some timber workers have already started work on this forest resource inventory to monitor the extent and growth of the regrowth timber resource in the Eden region. The inventory will help the local timber industry plan value-adding initiatives by providing a more accurate understanding of the timber resource. Up to four new local jobs are expected to be created through this initiative.

Craftwood and specialty timbers. State Forests of New South Wales will regularly offer, through a competitive process, non-quota specialty sawlogs and craftwood sourced in the Eden region.

This initiative is designed to make more timber available, particularly to low volume users, for further processing and complements the quota and recovery/salvage wood supply arrangements.

Training in environmental management. Forest industry employees and managers in the region are expected to benefit from this program of training courses, which aims to achieve major improvements in forest management.

Tourism

Tourism is also significant to the region's economy. More than half a million visitors to coastal and inland national parks and State forests are estimated to spend between \$10 and \$15 million in the region each year. Fourteen new jobs will be created to manage and upgrade facilities in the national park areas of the region. Under the RFA, tourism also benefits with the addition of 33,000 hectares to national parks, including declaration of the new Yowrie Wilderness area.

Other forest-based industries

Mining, beekeeping, firewood and grazing are among other forest-based industries in the region to benefit from increased certainty under the RFA. Thirteen quarries in the region extract construction materials including hard rock, sand, silica and pyrophyllite. Eden's native forests support a beekeeping industry worth \$272,000 each year and which is valuable for resting bees before using them for pollination. The National Parks and Wildlife Service recognise Apiary Permits on additions to the reserve system, and will continue to renew existing permits. Apiary sites on NPWS managed land will be managed in accordance with NPWS policy, which allows for the transfer of permits when businesses are sold. Firewood accounts for the highest value of minor forest produce in the region, with other products including fencing materials, poles and posts, landscape timber and eucalypt seeds.