

## Ensuring the FMP delivers on the promise to protect at least a further 400,000ha of forests

In September 2021, WA Premier [Mark McGowan promised](#) to end native forest logging by the end of 2023 and to protect at least a further 400,000 ha of forests, bringing the total protected area in the South West forest region to two million hectares.

Two important details in this promise need to be delivered in the next 10-year Forest Management Plan (FMP):

1. At least an additional 400,000ha of forests must be added an expanded conservation system; and
2. The protection across the forests must be secure – ie: formally protected in Class A National Parks and Nature Reserves which afford areas the highest level of protection from logging, mining and other clearing. The commitment to bring the total protected area up to 2 million ha is based on the premise that 1.6 million hectares is already protected. See the table at the end of this document for a breakdown of the 1.6 million ha.

The FMP must clearly commit to the number of hectares to be protected in the expanded conservation system. It must also set out a binding process and timeframe for that protection, supported by Ministerial Conditions to keep the delivery on track for the period of the plan.

### Key and concerning differences between the Draft FMP and Proposed FMP

The [Draft FMP](#) (published October 2022) included the following statements on page 3:

**"At least 400,000 additional hectares of native forests will be preserved** as a result of the decision to cease large-scale commercial harvesting. Over the term of Forest Management Plan 2024-2033 (FMP 2024-2033), new conservation reserves will be created following consultation with traditional owners to ensure permanent protection of high conservation value areas.

**"Existing proposals to create national parks, conservation parks and nature reserves that have yet to be completed from previous FMPs will also be prioritised** during the term of this plan."  
[emphasis added]

It went on to quantify the existing proposals made under previous FMPs:

"For the period of this plan, maintaining and expanding the CAR reserve system through implementing the 320,360 hectares of commitments identified in previous FMPs is a priority. Consultation with the relevant agencies on some of these earlier proposals is in progress, while others are yet to commence." (p56) (emphasis added)

The [Proposed FMP](#) (published May 2023) has been edited to remove the clear statements contained in the Draft FMP (shown above), and new sentences have been added which change the intent and radically reduce the amount of forest planned for protection as follows:

"These three streams of investigations (existing reserve recommendations, indicative areas for increasing protection and remaining State forest) will lead to progressive additions to the conservation reserves system over the life of the plan. Together these processes will lead to a change in purpose with associated improved protection for at least 400,000 hectares of State forest

and timber reserves. Initial priorities for investigation for increased protection are illustrated in Map 13. (p61) (emphasis added)

On page 122, in the final row of the table (line 319), the total indicative areas for new reserves is 535,760ha. But, the footnote for this entry reads:

“a subset of this area will be identified to contribute to the 400,000 hectares of additional reservation announced by the McGowan Government in 2021.”

The ultimate difference between the Draft and the Proposed FMPs, is approximately 320,000 ha of forest and a failure to follow through on the Premier’s commitment. The FMP must be corrected so that it commits to a timebound process for formalising the protection of both the existing proposals for 320,360ha plus the new additions of a further minimum of 400,000ha.

Breakdown of the 1.6 million hectares considered ‘already protected’ in the Premier’s commitment

a. Existing formal conservation (national parks, nature reserves, conservation parks)	1,077,858 ha
b. Proposed additions to formal conservation (awaiting formalisation from previous FMPs)	320,360 ha
c. Informal reserves (eg. stream reserves)	180,254 ha
d. Fauna habitat zones	59,617 ha
e. Two-tiered karri not otherwise protected	9239 ha
f. Old-growth forest not otherwise protected	18,111 ha
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,665,439 ha</b>

Notes on the table:

1. Formalising areas in B leads to a reduction in informal protections in C, D, E and F. Once this is taken into account, the total consolidates to ~1.6 million.
2. Some of the areas in B are moving between formal categories (for example, moving from national park to nature reserve) and don’t count as true formal additions – particularly Lane Poole Reserve. This is why the Beyond 2024 report tally (p.30) has proposed areas at 235,515 ha, rather than 320,360 ha.