



Science tracks forestry outcomes for the long-term

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A program that independently monitors forestry outcomes on NSW coastal state forests has secured a further \$1 million per year over 20 years to fund new science and research. The funding was secured under the NSW Government's 2023 budget.

State forests are used to grow native timber products for building houses and other uses, while also providing habitat for native animals and plants and supporting regional jobs. The NSW Government appointed the NSW Natural Resources Commission to independently oversee a monitoring program with independent scientific experts to ensure environmental and wood supply outcomes are achieved.

The funding will extend an existing monitoring program that has been in place in since 2019. Professor Hugh Durrant-Whyte, NSW's Natural Resource Commissioner explains "this program has already generated important science-based evidence about forest health and biodiversity. Additional funding will build on the valuable baseline data and analyses that researchers have undertaken so far and continue to explore how these forests and their values are changing over time, what is driving these changes, and identify effective management strategies".

Professor Phil Gibbons, from the Australian National University and an independent advisor for the program notes, "fauna baselines established by scientists on state forests and other tenures are the largest and most significant analyses of this type in the history of forest management in NSW. This funding continues to support researchers to analyse more data on state forests so we can measure and predict change over the long-term".

Professor Patrick Baker, another independent advisor from the University of Melbourne said, "This program is a good example of how to implement a complex and multi-faceted approach to forest monitoring. It really is a remarkable collaborative achievement, and one that should be widely acknowledged".

The Coastal IFOA monitoring program has been developed and overseen by a Steering Committee that is independently chaired by the Natural Resources Commission and includes independent scientific experts and agency representatives from the NSW Environment Protection Authority, Forestry Corporation of NSW, Department of Primary Industries, Local Land Services and Aboriginal Affairs. Monitoring and research under the program is carried out by leading academics, expert consultants in their fields, and agency scientists.

Learn more about the funding and results from the monitoring program [here](#).

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