

Summary of DPI Scientific Research on Biodiversity in NSW Forests (since 2000)

Overview

Kavanagh and Stanton (2005) prepared an overview of species responses to logging in northern NSW. They state: “A total of 40 species appeared to be significantly disadvantaged by logging, another 40 species appeared to be significantly favoured by logging, while the remainder (147 species) appeared to be relatively unaffected. Most species were widely distributed throughout both logged and unlogged landscapes, albeit at possibly quite different abundances. While each taxonomic group had some species that were apparently sensitive to logging, the time frame to population recovery following logging disturbance may differ widely between groups depending on their habitat requirements.”

Since that study forestry regulations have evolved and changed considerably as the need for careful management for biodiversity in the State forest landscape became more widely appreciated, including prescriptions designed to mitigate impacts on specific species. These prescriptions and informal reserves were reviewed by Slade and Law (2016) who found: “83% of these [public] forests are set aside in formal or informal conservation reserves. State Forests which comprise ... 30% of the public estate within the coastal IFOA regions in New South Wales are managed for a variety of reasons including timber production, recreation, and conservation. While commonly associated with timber harvesting, 43% (675,717 hectares) of the native State forest estate is set aside for conservation in informal reserves.” Slade and Law (2016) reviewed the effectiveness of these informal reserves for mitigating logging impacts and conclude “there is a considerable body of knowledge supporting their effectiveness at the local level. To date, however, there has been limited investment in extending and testing these findings more broadly across the landscape.”

In 2018, the CIFOA increased the level of informal reserves where harvesting is excluded to 50-60 % of the state forest landscape (DPIRD unpubl. data).

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Management of Tree Hollows and CWD

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