

Private Native Forestry (PNF) Overview

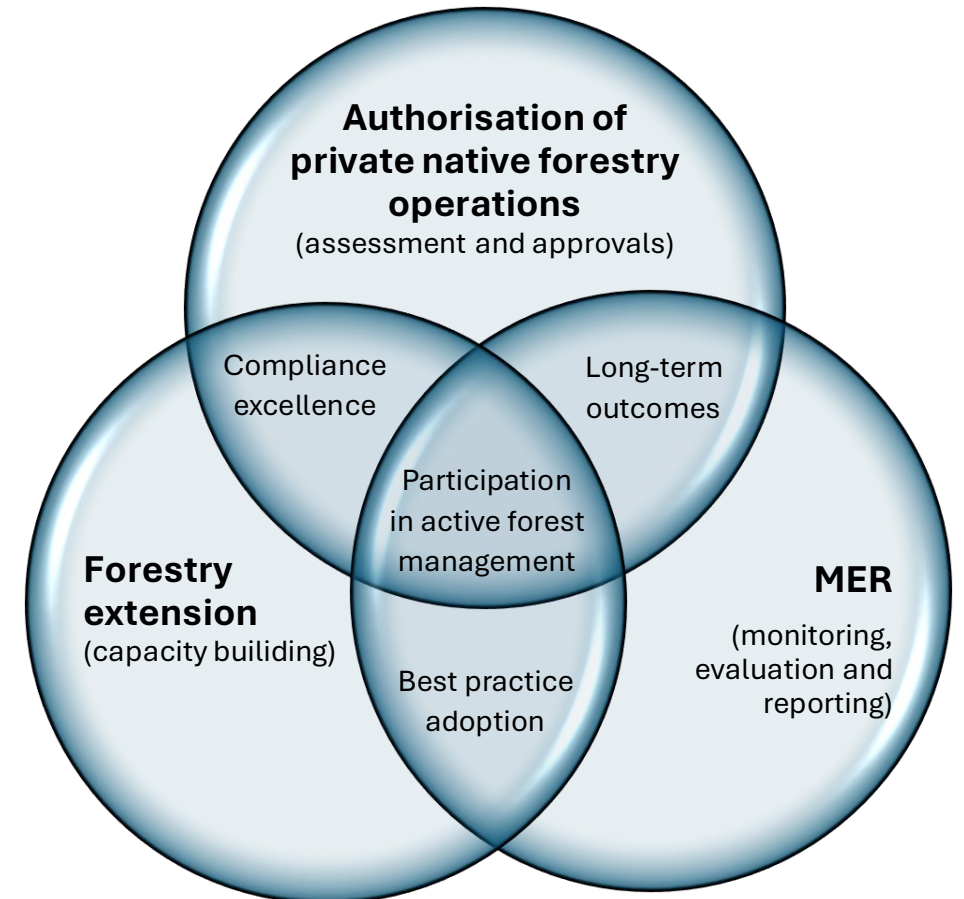
Local Land Services

November 2024

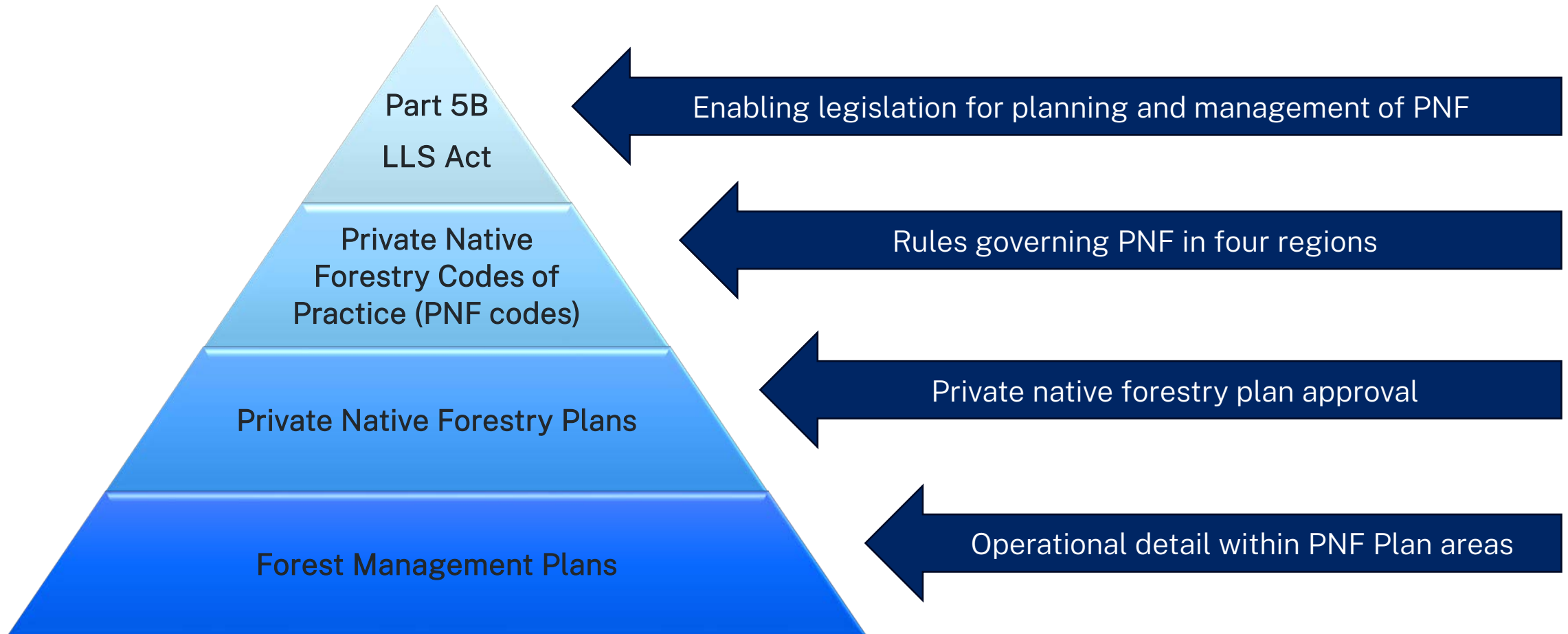


LLS – Farm Forestry program

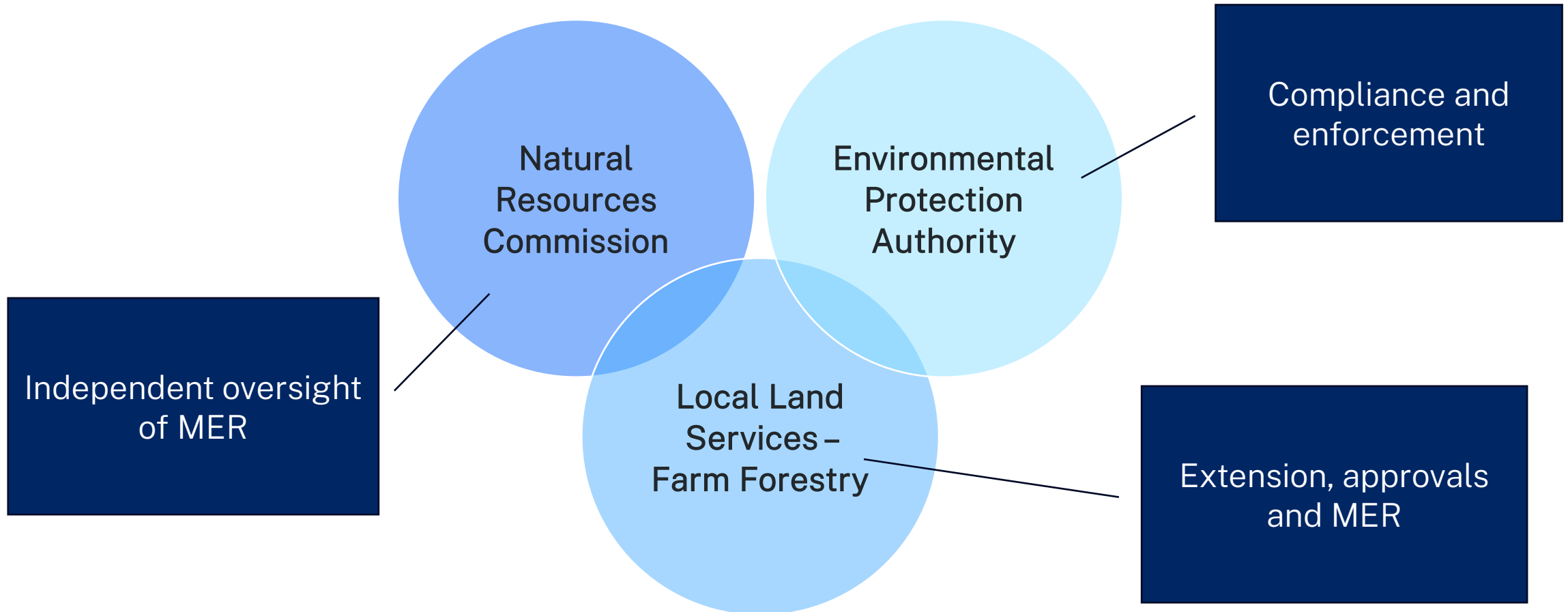
- Local Land Services (LLS) is a NSW Government agency that supports people to make better decisions about the land they own or manage
- Farm Forestry is a team of experienced staff within LLS that provides specialist services for farmers seeking to actively manage their private native forests in line with ecologically sustainable forest management (ESFM) principles



PNF legislative and regulatory framework

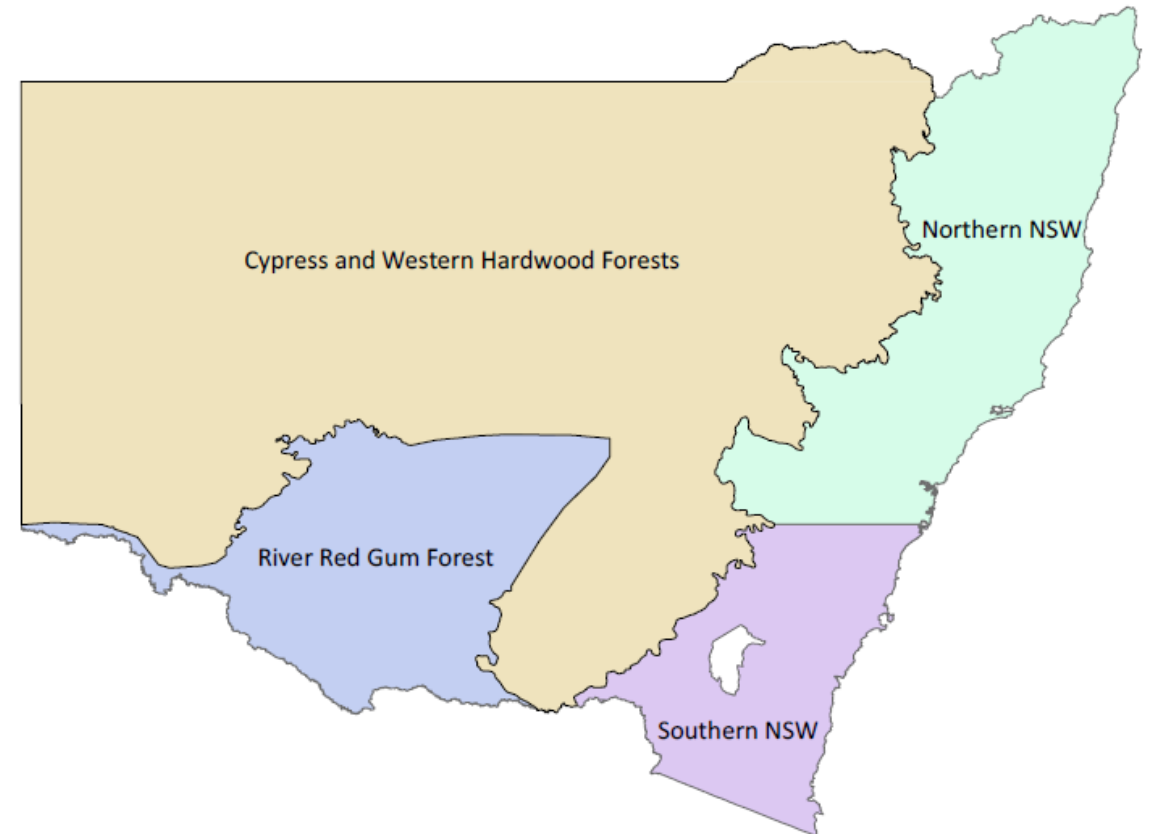


PNF roles and responsibilities



Outline of the PNF Codes

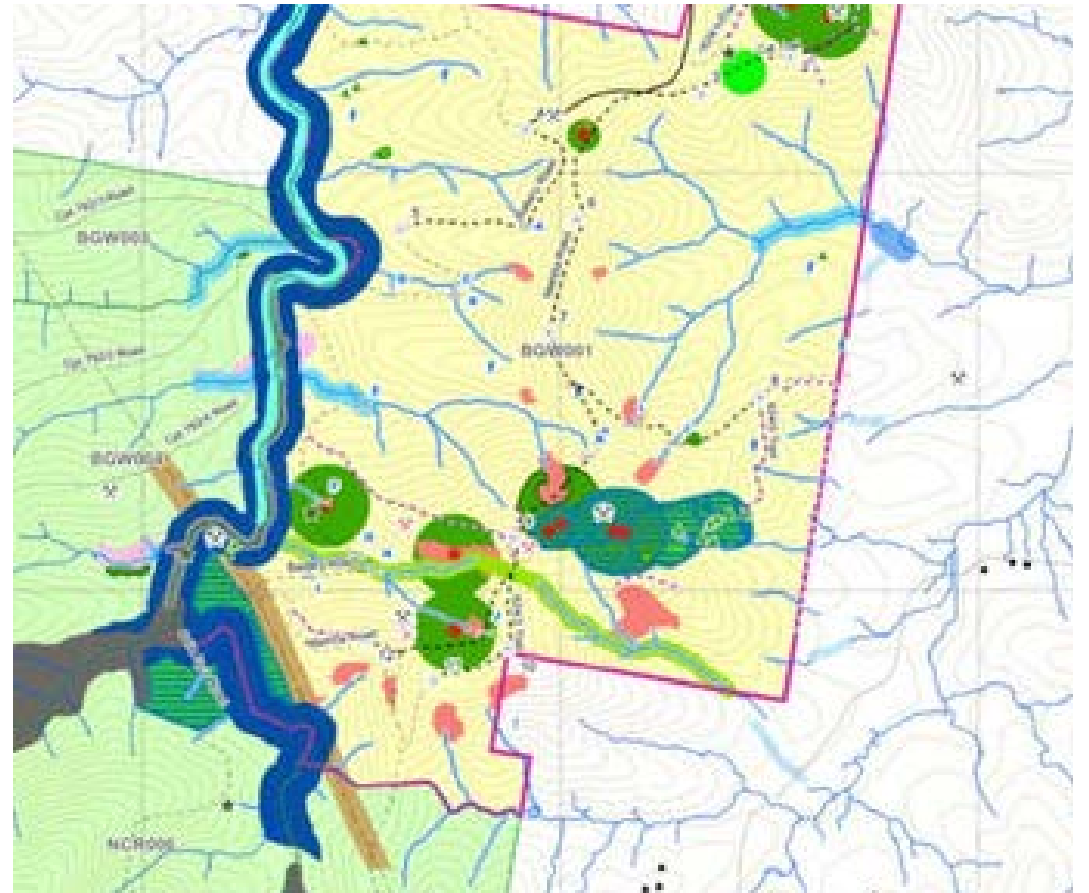
- four new PNF codes commenced in May 2022 following an extensive review
- the PNF codes embody ESFM and contain significant environmental protections
- code application is also influenced by the extent of River Red Gum, Cypress and Western Hardwood Forests in the landscape
- harvesting provides income for farmers, jobs in regions and timber for infrastructure and housing



Forest planning and management

Forest Management Plans (FMPs):

- outline how individual forestry operations will be undertaken within a PNF Plan area
- are prepared by the landholder (or their representative) and must be approved by LLS before forestry operations commence
- contain a detailed operational map showing exclusions and other important spatial information
- provide enforceable details of harvesting and/or other proposed forestry operations



Case study – koala protections

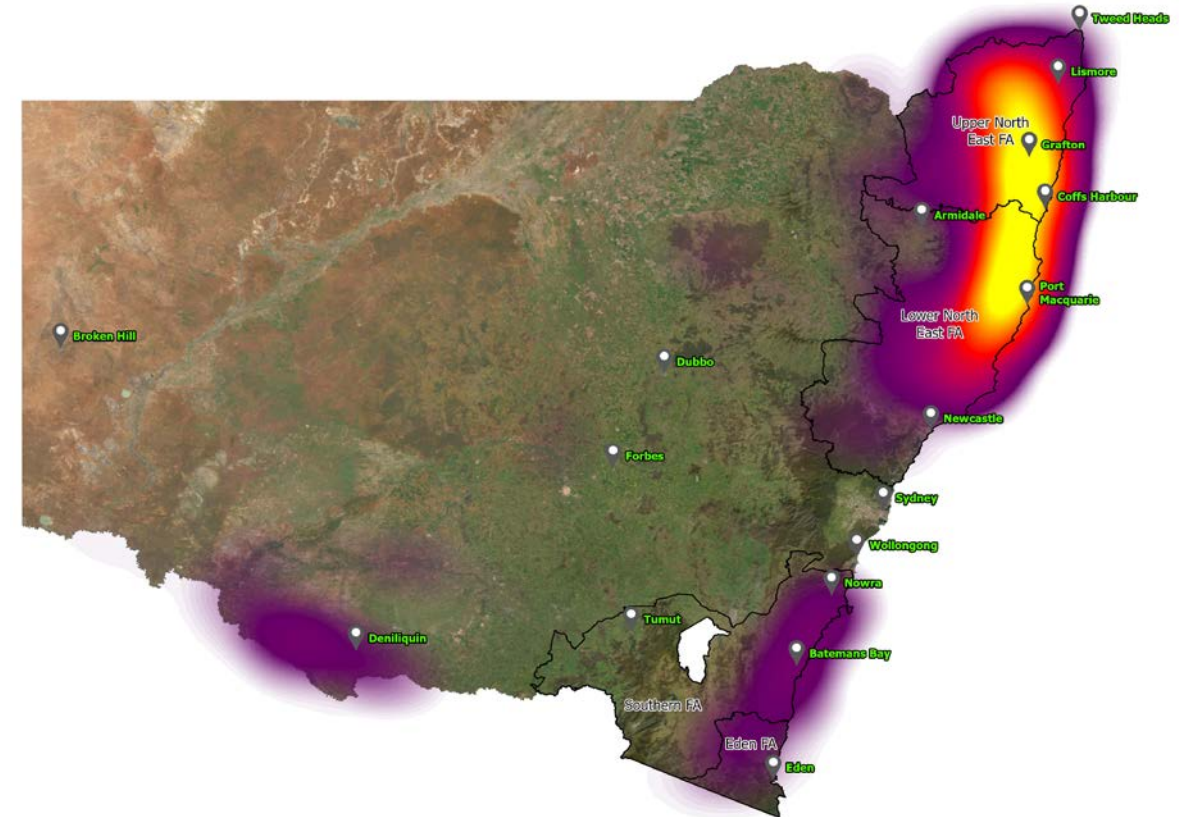
- forestry operations are prohibited from 10,250 hectares of **Core Koala Habitat** in PNF Plan areas
- **koala-specific prescriptions** are applied:
 - to 281,467 hectares of approved PNF Plan area mapped as High Koala Habitat Suitability (87% occurs in the Northern PNF Code region)
 - where there are koala records within 500 metres and one or more koala scats are found
- **general requirements** result in continuous tree cover and 25-50% of gross area in exclusions

Koala-specific prescriptions include to:

- retain ≥ 15 primary koala feed trees and 5 secondary koala feed trees per hectare
- visually assess each tree for koalas immediately prior to it being felled
- retain any tree containing a koala, or any tree beneath which 1-10 koala scats are found
- implement an exclusion zone of 20-50 metres around each tree required to be retained

Authorised private native forestry operations

- forestry operations on private land are authorised by a PNF Plan approval issued by LLS
- an approved PNF Plan:
 - identifies and maps the land on which forestry operations are to be carried out
 - describes the kinds of forestry operations that are authorised to be carried out
 - specifies the period for which the plan has effect (15 years)



PNF Plan Approvals per year — number

Forest region	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Northern NSW	312	285	248	202	306	314	229	216	275	252	223	270	366
Southern NSW	18	28	6	7	13	11	2	12	9	18	41	19	24
River Red Gum	18	26	16	11	18	10	11	9	2	8	19	14	21
Cypress and Western Hardwood	8	9	11	2	2	3	11	11	9	10	4	8	7
Totals	356	348	281	222	339	338	253	248	295	288	287	311	418

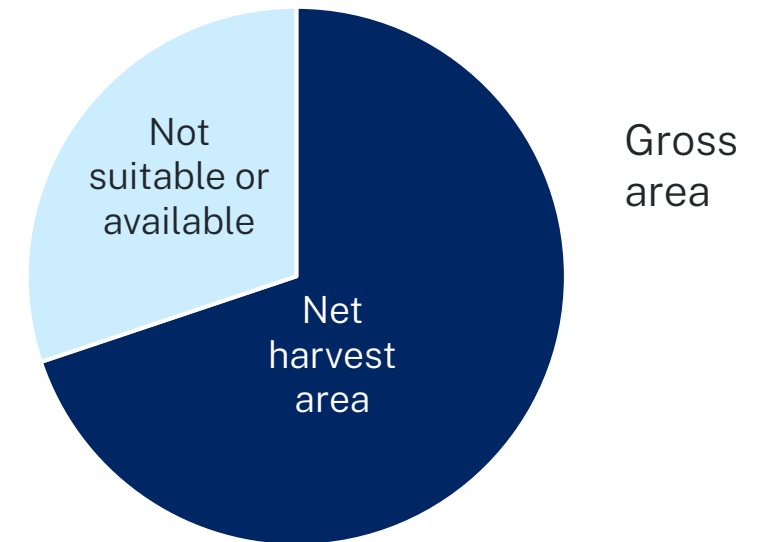
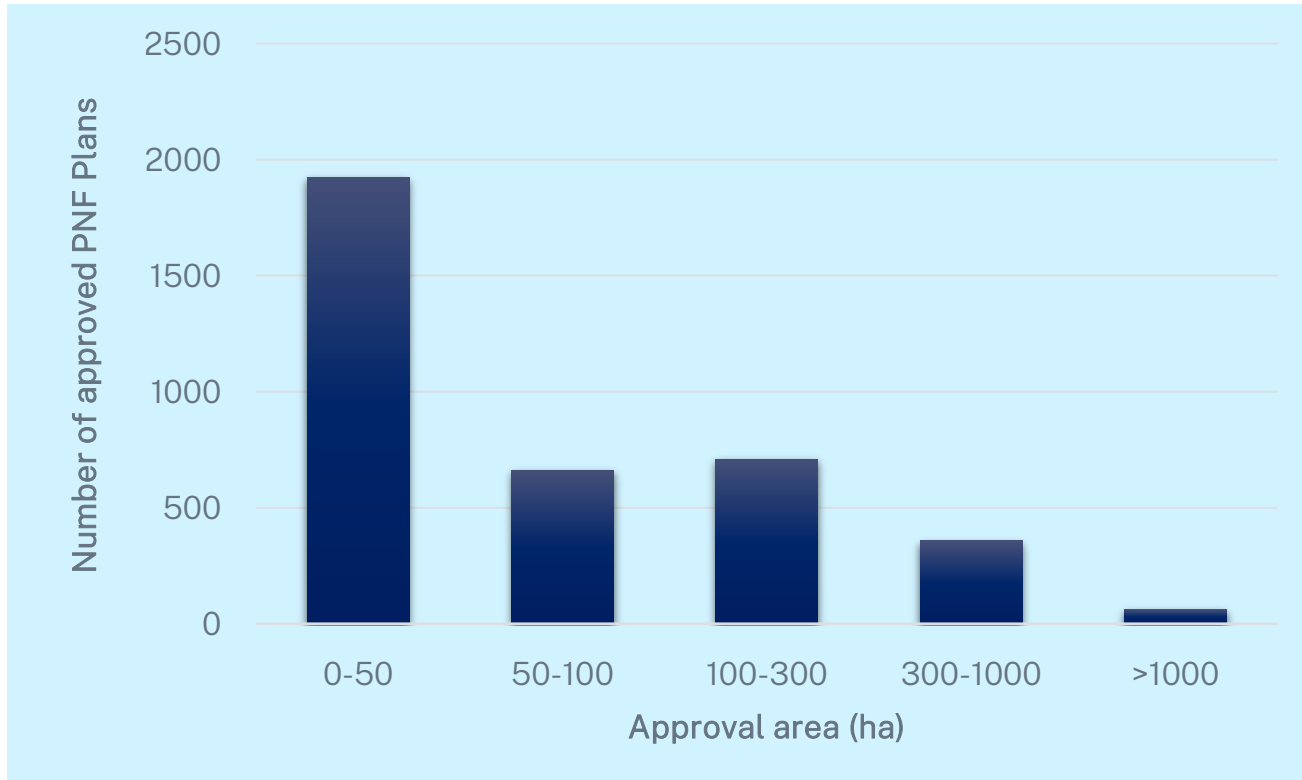
- 2023-24 increase may be due to many factors, including renewal of naturally expiring approvals issued 15 years ago

PNF Plan Approvals per year — area (hectares)

Forest region	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Northern NSW	58,730	43,200	35,190	24,671	41,464	33,177	24,584	24,458	30,738	30,586	22,170	47,800	72,587
Southern NSW	3,093	4,243	494	577	756	701	259	372	426	4,932	6,694	2,220	3,140
River Red Gum	4,664	10,047	1,694	871	7,286	2,416	2,549	4,134	24	3,367	28,292	9,962	6,815
Cypress and Western Hardwood	5,678	3,698	3,521	1,837	2,155	1,892	4,261	4,555	3,248	3,685	674	3,690	2,403
Totals	72,165	61,188	40,899	27,956	51,661	38,186	31,653	33,519	34,436	42,570	57,830	63,672	84,945

- net harvest area allowed under a PNF plan is usually 30-50% less than the gross area approved
- annual reported harvest area is much lower than area approved – less than ~ 2% of area approved
- 2023-24 increase may be due to many factors, including renewal of naturally expiring approvals issued 15 years ago

Customer profile — Northern PNF code



- important farm income source and for resilience (i.e. drought)
- generally low intensity manual harvesting
- participation is voluntary
- compliance is mandatory

Extension to promote compliance with codes

An extension approach that promotes active management and compliance is critical to successful implementation of the PNF Codes. Important considerations that help guide LLS extension services include:

Specific

- Forestry operations require industry-specific equipment, knowledge and capabilities that are usually secondary to a principal farming activity such as livestock grazing.

Complex

- Demanding technical and spatial requirements such as exclusion zones must be marked accurately in terrain that is often difficult to access and traverse.

Irregular

- Cutting cycles 10-15 years apart can challenge landholder knowledge retention. Forestry regulations also change over time.

Penalties

- Penalties are among the highest under Australian environmental law (\$5 million for a corporation and \$1 million for an individual for each offence committed intentionally).

Participation

- Over 4,200 landholders already have a private native forestry plan and many more may consider forestry as an environmentally responsible and profitable land use in future.

Extension to improve best practice adoption

Extension delivered by the Farm Forestry team aims to improve knowledge of forest management practices and standards. A broad range of ESFM activities are covered, including:

- native forest silviculture
- fire management
- biosecurity
- pest plant and animal control
- construction and maintenance of forest infrastructure
- cultural heritage management

In this series of short videos, NSW farmers and landholders share their experiences using private native forestry to achieve environmental and socio-economic goals

[On-ground examples of private native forestry -
Local Land Services](#)

Aboriginal participation

There is a long history of Aboriginal participation in private native forestry:

- 20 Aboriginal-owned businesses with PNF Plans
- two Local Aboriginal Land Councils involved in the Forest Stewardship Pilot

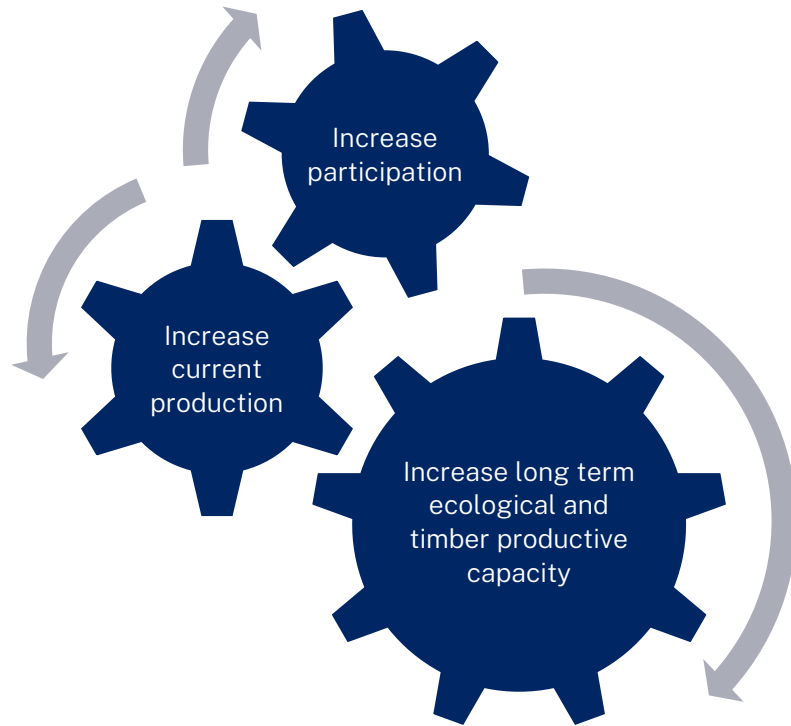
Reasons for participation include:

- reconnecting to country through cultural practices
- economic benefits passed on to communities
- local contacts and relationships with LLS
- genuine co-design

[Intergenerational connections on Country \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)



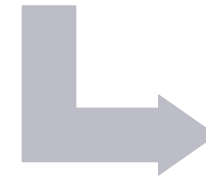
Increasing wood supply and other products and services from private native forests



- Build social license
- Match silviculture to code rules
- Enable regenerative silviculture
- Incentivise participation

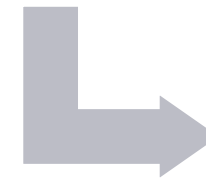
Forest certification

- Group Scheme
- Chain of Custody



Sustainable operations

- products
- services
- volumes
- schedules



Complimentary markets

- biodiversity
- new products
- carbon

Summary

- Private native forestry is planned, managed, monitored and regulated and protects threatened species and landscape features
- Private native forestry provides many benefits in addition to wood supply, such as increased carbon storage, biodiversity, Aboriginal outcomes, income for farmers (including resilience to shocks like drought)
- Increasing participation in private native forestry is a complex socio-economic issue
- Participation is voluntary. Wood flow cannot be scheduled or committed to industry as it is from the public estate
- **Strategic public/private investment combined with stable policy and regulatory settings are required over many decades to increase the supply of products and services from private native forests**

Questions

Director Statewide Programs

Further information : Farm Forestry -
Local Land Services

