

May 2025

Plantations Regulation

Overview of plantation authorisation requirements and available information

This document outlines the requirements for authorisation of plantations (tree plantings) under the Plantations and Reafforestation Act 1999 and access to authorisation information

Introduction

The *Plantations and Reafforestation Act 1999* (the Act) and *Plantations and Reafforestation (Code) Regulation 2001* regulate plantations on private and crown land. The Act and Code are administered by the Plantations Regulation Team of the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) as delegated by the Minister administering the Act and the Secretary of the Department. The Act requires all plantations greater than 30 hectares in area to be authorised and comply with environmental standards for establishing and managing the plantation.

The purpose of the Act is to:

- facilitate the reafforestation of land, and
- promote and facilitate development for timber plantations on essentially cleared land, and
- codify best practice environmental standards, and provide a streamlined and integrated scheme, for the establishment, management and harvesting of timber and other forest plantations,

consistently with the principles of ecologically sustainable development (as described in section 6 (2) of the *Protection of the Environment Administration Act 1991*).

For the purposes of the Act a plantation is an area of land on which the predominant number of trees or shrubs forming, or expected to form, the canopy are trees or shrubs that have been planted (whether by sowing seed or otherwise):

- for the purpose of timber production, or
- the protection of the environment, or

- for any other purpose, but not principally for the purpose of the production of food or any other farm produce other than timber.

Plantation owners or managers have a statutory responsibility to adhere to all requirements of the Act and the *Plantations and Reafforestation (Code) Regulation 2001*.

Public register

The Act requires the Minister (or delegate) to maintain a public register of authorised plantations including the identity of the plantation and description of its location. The Minister may also include any other matters considered appropriate.

The public register of plantations authorisations can be viewed at:

- [DPIRD – Plantations Regulation website](#)

More information about the specifics of a plantation authorisation, including any applicable conditions, can be obtained via the Plantations Regulation Team email address, forests@dpi.nsw.gov.au.

Plantation neighbours

While the Act does not require plantation owners/ managers to formally consult with adjoining land owners, communication with neighbours regarding plantation operations is encouraged. Information about the requirements of the Code can be found on the DPIRD Plantations Regulation website. Neighbours may also contact the local Plantation Assessment Officer for more information or to discuss the plantation operations.

The plantation owner/ manager may choose to inform and/ or discuss with neighbouring landholders the following:

- That an authorisation has been granted by DPIRD and that Local Government has no role in the authorisation process.
- The limits of the owner's responsibilities under the Act and Code.
- Plantation layout and design.
- Estimated timing of plantation operations.
- Location of roads, tracks and fire trails in respect of fire access and access for stock movement.
- Fire protection with respect to maintenance of fire breaks, fire control within plantations and access to water.
- Maintenance of boundary fencing through the life of the plantation, in accordance with the Dividing Fences Act 1991.
- Control of feral pest animals and weeds.

- Opportunities for stock agistment where relevant.
- Chemical and fertiliser applications.
- Potential impacts from noise and dust.

Purchasing land

Information regarding the presence of a plantation on parcels of land to be purchased or adjoining parcels of land can be obtained from the Plantations Regulation Team by contacting your local Plantation Assessment Officer or emailing forests@dpi.nsw.gov.au.

A new plantation owner may seek a plantation certificate for legal certainty regarding the plantation authorisation and infrastructure contribution liabilities if relevant. The application form for a plantation certificate is available on the DPIRD Plantations Regulation website.

Conditions/ standards of a plantation authorisation

All new complying plantations authorised under the Act must be established and operated in accordance with the *Plantations and Reafforestation (Code) Regulation 2001*. The Code sets out limitations and operation standards to protect the environment and manage risks such as soil erosion. Non-complying plantations undergo additional assessment and may have conditions applied to the authorisation for mitigation of any risks. Authorisation of already established plantations may have conditions applied.

The Code contains limitations and conditions with respect of standards for establishment operations and regulation of management and harvesting operations (where applicable).

Standards for establishment of the plantation include standards relating to:

- The protection of soil and water
- The protection of places, objects or items of heritage significance
- The protection of biodiversity
- Bushfire risk mitigation

Regulation of management operations includes:

- Regulation of harvest operations (for timber plantations only) includes:
- Slope limits for harvesting operations
- Regulation of log dumps and landings
- Protection of buffer zones
- Restoration of harvested areas
- Regulation of timber extraction
- Wet weather provisions

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The Plantations Regulation Team work with plantations owners and managers to achieve best practice management of plantation operations. The team also undertake an audit program to monitor and manage compliance with the Code.

Getting help

For further information regarding the Code requirements please contact your local DPIRD Plantation Officer.

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