

**DRAFT FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN 2024–2033**

*Statement by Minister for Environment*

**MR R.R. WHITBY (Baldivis — Minister for Environment)** [1.31 pm]: Today I would like to inform the house of the progress of the draft *Forest management plan 2024–2033*, and its release for public comment. In September 2021, the McGowan government made the historic announcement that large-scale commercial timber harvesting in south west native forests will cease from 2024. This crucial decision was made to guide the shape of the development of the next *Forest management plan 2024–2033*.

Following the 2021 announcement, the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions on behalf of the Conservation and Parks Commission, conducted a range of engagement activities to inform the development of the draft plan. These included meetings with peak bodies, industry groups as well as state and local governments; focus groups with 71 participants from key stakeholders; and a public online survey which received 2 277 responses. The aim was to capture broad insights on forest values and use, forest health and biodiversity, and climate change for the draft plan.

Contributions from this consultation have been considered and, when possible, incorporated. This morning, I announced that the draft plan was available for a two-month public comment period until 18 December 2022. The draft plan outlines how and why we must act now to maintain the precious biodiversity of our south west forests over the next decade. It delivers on the McGowan government’s decision to end native forest logging in our south west. It also commits to the preservation of at least 400 000 hectares of karri, jarrah and wandoo forests. These reserves will be developed following a consultation process with stakeholders, including traditional owners. The only timber to be taken will come from activities that improve forest health and resilience, like ecological thinning, or where there is clearing for approved mining operations.

The final forest management plan will be approved in 2023, so it can be in place for 1 January 2024. I encourage all interested parties and the community to provide comment on the draft plan and the way we manage our forests from 2024. I would like to take this opportunity to recognise the excellent work of the Conservation and Parks Commission, DBCA, and other government agencies in progressing this important work.