

NATIVE FOREST — MANAGEMENT

513. Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS to the minister representing the Minister for Environment:

I refer to *A report on silvicultural guidelines for the 2024–2033 forest management plan to the Western Australian Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions* prepared by an independent expert panel.

- (1) Why does the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions' explanatory note on ecological thinning attached to the report restrict ecological thinning to areas of forest experiencing acute moisture stress?
- (2) Did the minister or the government direct or suggest to the department that ecological thinning should be restricted only to areas of forest experiencing acute moisture stress?
- (3) Will this position, if adopted by the government, reduce the volume of ecological thinnings available from the remaining timber harvest in this state following the government's closure of most of the native hardwood timber industry?
- (4) What will the impact of this position be on the volume of ecological thinnings?

Hon KYLE MCGINN replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question, which I provide on behalf of the Minister for Emergency Services. The following answer has been provided to me by the Minister for Environment.

- (1)–(4) The explanatory note was prepared to provide broad direction for one activity—ecological thinning—to address the threat posed to forest ecosystems by a drying and warming climate in the south west. The note does not restrict potential ecological thinning activities to only areas of forest currently experiencing acute moisture stress, but rather highlights that the selection of areas for thinning in densely stocked even-aged regrowth stands or broader landscapes will need to consider a range of site characteristics, forest condition and values at risk under projected climate changes.