

“Old Forests, New Management”

Conservation and use of old-growth forests in the 21st century

*An international scientific conference to be held in Hobart from the 17th to the 21st of February 2008.
Hosted by the CRC for Forestry, Forestry Tasmania and the International Union of Forest Research Organisations*

Theme

Old-growth forests in temperate and boreal regions are places of great beauty and importance to people. These forests are often managed for conservation and biodiversity value and as an important resource for timber production, so their management has inevitably become subject to a range of societal pressures. Current management practices for old-growth forests are increasingly informed by an understanding of the disturbance events that trigger forest regeneration. Research from several long-term experimental sites now allows a fresh look at ecologically based silviculture in forests managed for wood production.

This conference will bring together researchers from a range of disciplines focussed upon achieving ecologically sustainable management and use of old-growth forests. It will include coverage of modern approaches being developed in the Pacific Northwest, Australia, South America, Scandinavia and Central Europe. The conference will include a visit to the Warra Long-Term Ecological Research site in southern Tasmania, which is partly in a World Heritage Area and also contains a silvicultural systems trial that has explored alternatives to clearfelling of old-growth forests. The visit will provide an excellent opportunity to view tall old-growth eucalypt forests and discuss alternative silvicultural systems for wood production and biodiversity management.

Session themes

Overview and plenary speaker

- Theme 1: Social and historical importance of old-growth forests
- Theme 2: The science of old-growth forests
including structure, biodiversity, genetic diversity & ecological dynamics
- Theme 3: Long-term, multidisciplinary experiments
- Theme 4: Conservation and reserve management
- Theme 5: Towards ecological silviculture
including alternative harvesting methods, safety, economics, & management of coarse woody debris
- Theme 6: Shaping old-growth forest management regimes

Synthesis

Papers from conference proceedings will be published as refereed papers in an appropriate journal.

Conference structure

- Day one: Plenary sessions
- Day two: Excursion to Warra LTER site in Tasmania's southern forests (www.warra.com)
Evening gala dinner at or near conference venue.
- Day three: Plenary/Concurrent sessions (up to three concurrent sessions are anticipated)
Evening dinner excursion
- Day four: Concurrent sessions/Concluding plenary session

Pre and post-conference tours will be offered.

Mailing list

Please contact mark.neyland@forestrytas.com.au

Conference committee

Ms Jayne Balmer, Nature Conservation Branch, Department of Primary Industries & Water
Dr Chris Beadle, CSIRO-Ensis and Cooperative Research Centre for Forestry
Ms Taylor Bildstein, Cooperative Research Centre for Forestry (media coordinator)
Dr Mick Brown, Consultant Ecologist
Mr Fred Duncan, Forest Practices Authority
Mr Mark Neyland, Forestry Tasmania
Professor Brad Potts, University of Tasmania and Cooperative Research Centre for Forestry
Dr Steve Read, Forestry Tasmania (chair)
Associate Professor Alastair Richardson, University of Tasmania
Mr Sean Riley, Forests and Forest Industry Council of Tasmania