

Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement

**Five Year Review
of
Progress with Implementation of the RFA**

Scoping Agreement

**between
The Commonwealth of Australia
&
The State of Tasmania**

July 2001

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1. Preamble

The purpose of this Scoping Agreement is to confirm the arrangements agreed by the Commonwealth and Tasmanian Governments to undertake the first five yearly review of performance against the specified milestones and commitments of the Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) in accordance with the provisions of Clauses 45, 46 and 47 of the RFA.

The provisions of this Agreement are not intended to give rise to legally enforceable rights or obligations between the Commonwealth and Tasmania.

The Commonwealth and Tasmania agree that this Scoping Agreement will be consistent, (including with respect to the definition of terms) with the RFA, the National Forest Policy Statement (NFPS), and other relevant agreements and policies including the National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development (NSED) and the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Environment (IGAE). The Commonwealth and Tasmania recognise that this Agreement cannot impose on a party any obligation that is inconsistent with a law of the Commonwealth or of Tasmania where that law is binding on that party.

2. Background

The State of Tasmania and the Commonwealth of Australia entered into the Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) on 8 November 1997. The RFA provided for the maintenance and development of a vibrant and sustainable forest industry in Tasmania. The duration of the RFA is twenty years.

The RFA is consistent with the National Forest Policy Statement, which establishes the national goals and objectives for management of Australia's forests and forest industries.

The RFA provides for a suite of measures to provide certainty for conservation of the environmental and heritage values of the forest estate. These include the establishment of a Comprehensive, Adequate and Representative (CAR) Reserve System, management systems to ensure sustainable management of the forest industry and a reporting framework to ensure their effective implementation.

The RFA also provides a suite of measures to ensure the efficient and effective development of the forestry and forest based industries to provide for better social and, in particular, employment outcomes in regional Tasmania. It also provides specific measures to ensure security for the mining and tourism industries. It provides for a substantial increase in the net benefit of the forest industry to the Tasmanian economy.

The Commonwealth Government provided significant resources to assist in attaining the conservation outcomes and to assist in achieving the

technological change and industry restructuring required to maximise the benefits of the industry.

An important element of the RFA is the requirement for reporting. The Commonwealth and the State report annually, during the first five years, on a series of milestones identified in the RFA. In addition Clause 45 of the RFA specifically provides for five yearly reviews of performance against the specified milestones and commitments.

3. Australian RFAs under Review

The Tasmanian RFA was the second of a series of Regional Forest Agreements between the Commonwealth Government and the Governments of Victoria, New South Wales, Western Australia and Tasmania. Whilst all the RFAs have their own unique elements they have all been drawn up under the aegis of the National Forest Policy Statement and all have a requirement for five yearly reviews.

There is a need to strike a balance between a consistent approach to five yearly reporting across all the RFAs, the particular provisions contained in each RFA and the particular circumstances pertaining in each of the States.

4. The RFA Requirement for a Performance Review

Clause 45 of the RFA requires inter alia that:

- A review of the performance of the RFA will be undertaken in the fifth year of each five year period to assess progress against the specified milestones and commitments,
- The parties (the Commonwealth and Tasmanian Governments) will appoint a person or body to conduct the review,
- The parties are to agree on the priorities, procedures and funding arrangements for the review no later than six months before the end of each five year period. This Scoping Agreement represents that agreement, and
- the review:
 - will invite and take account of public comments,
 - will use and take account of the sustainability indicators.
The Sustainability Indicators for the First Review in 2002 have been developed as required by clause 91 and are available on the internet at <http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/policy/rfa/>.
 - would be sufficient to satisfy the requirements for the *State of the Forests Report*,
 - should be completed within three months of its commencement,
 - will develop a report detailing the review process and its findings.

The “milestones” referred to in the first dot point above are detailed in Attachment 3 of the RFA (Appendix 2). The “commitments” are outlined in Appendix 3.

5. Principles for Conduct of the Review

The RFA is a twenty year agreement. It explicitly provides for reporting annually for the first five years and thereafter every 5 years. The purpose of this Review is to assess and report on progress achieved during the first five years with implementation of the milestones and commitments specified in the RFA. It is not an opportunity to re-negotiate the RFA.

The Commonwealth and Tasmanian Governments recognise the Tasmanian Government's constitutional responsibility for land and forest management in Tasmania.

In undertaking the Review the parties agree that they are jointly responsible for the Review and undertake to take such measures as are necessary to ensure effective coordination within and between the governments.

The Governments also recognise their responsibility for the efficient management of taxpayers' money. To help the Governments meet this responsibility, the review process will be designed to avoid duplication of process and waste of effort. Therefore, the Review will be consistent with, will draw on and will contribute to other State and national forest reporting processes and requirements.

The Governments recognise their responsibility to the community for accounting for the management of Tasmania's forests under the RFA. Therefore the conduct of the review of progress with implementation of the RFA is to be undertaken in a manner that:

- is open, transparent and equitable;
- provides appropriate opportunities for communication with and input from the community;
- is consistent with other forest reporting requirements; and
- is scientifically based and reliant on agreed data as required by the RFA.

6. Linkages to other Processes

There are a number of processes requiring essentially similar information aimed at reporting on sustainable management of forest ecosystems. These include the Tasmanian and Australian State of the Environment reporting, Tasmanian and Australian State of the Forests reporting and reporting against Montreal criteria and indicators.

The Tasmanian *State Policies and Projects Act 1993* requires that the Resource Planning and Development Commission produce a *State of the Environment Report* every 5 years. The next report is due in December 2002.

The *Forest Practices Act 1985* requires that the Forest Practices Board produce a report on the state of Tasmania's public and private forests by no later than 30 November 2002 and every five years thereafter.

The information from the above Tasmanian reports feeds into the *National State of Environment Report* and *State of the Forests Report*.

In addition, because Australia is a signatory to the Montreal protocol, the Tasmanian and Commonwealth Governments have obligations to report under the Montreal Protocol by December 2002.

7. Timeframe for conducting the Review

The following timeframe for the Review has been agreed

Phase 1 - Preparation

By February 2002:

- A draft *Report on the Sustainability Indicators* prepared; and
- A draft *Report on Progress with Implementation of the RFA* against the milestones (Appendix 2) and the other commitments (Appendix 3) prepared.

Phase 2 - Public Comment

March/April 2002

- Public comment invited on the draft *Report on the Sustainability Indicators* and the draft *Report on Progress with Implementation of the RFA*.

Phase 3 – Review

May/June/July 2002

- The draft *Report on Sustainability Indicators* and the draft *Report on Progress with Implementation of RFA* and the public comment on those *Reports* reviewed;
- A draft report prepared by the Review team; and
- The *State of the Forests Report* prepared by the Forest Practices Board.

By August 2002

- Final *Report on the Review of Progress with Implementation of RFA* presented to Governments.

Phase 4 – Public Reporting and Government Response

By 30th November 2002

- Government response to the Review findings prepared;
- *State of the Forests Report* tabled in the Tasmanian Parliament; and *State of the Forests Report* and *Report on the Review of Progress with Implementation of RFA* published.

8. Arrangements for conduct of the Review

Terms of Reference for the Review Team are in Appendix 1. These may be amended by agreement between the responsible Ministers.

The Parties have agreed to jointly appoint a Review Team to undertake Phase Three, comprising an independent chair supported by two senior representatives from each of the Commonwealth and Tasmanian Governments with expertise and knowledge of the RFA and sustainable natural resource management.

The responsible Ministers identified in section 11 of the Scoping Agreement will approve the appointment of the Review Team by 28 February 2002. Notwithstanding, it is intended to nominate the Review Team as soon as possible. The target date is 30 August 2001.

9. Public Consultation

Public consultation has been integral to the development and implementation of the Regional Forest Agreement. The process and outcomes of this public consultation is detailed in the reports of the Public Land Use Commission and its successor the Resource Planning and Development Commission (<http://www.rpd.tas.gov.au/>).

The public have also been consulted in the preparation of the *Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement – Sustainability Indicators for the First Review in 2002* (<http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/policy/rfa/>). A draft was prepared and released for a two month public comment period.

There is a three month limit on the Review as prescribed in the RFA (Clause 45 (iii) and (vi)). The public will be invited to comment on the documentation on progress with implementation of the RFA to be considered by the Review Team. The Review Team will then have opportunity to consider the public comment as part of the review process. It is expected that the Review Team may address queries to government agencies, to people or to organisations that have provided comment on the draft report to clarify issues raised.

10. Communication Strategy

A communication strategy will be agreed by the parties. The communication strategy will guide the parties in informing the public on the process for the conduct of the Review and their opportunity to comment.

The communication strategy will be completed by 30 June 2001.

11. Governance Issues

The Steering Committee will have responsibility for:

- Day to day implementation of this Scoping Agreement;

- Arrange preparation of the draft *Report on Sustainability Indicators* and the draft *Report on Progress with Implementation of RFA* to be the subject of the Review;
- Inviting public comment on the draft *Reports*;
- Approval and implementation of the communication strategy;
- Oversight of the Review Team; and
- Allocation of resources to assist the Review Team.

The Steering Committee will be chaired by Tasmania.

Ministerial

The parties to the Agreement are represented by:

Tasmania

The Hon Jim Bacon MHA

Premier and Minister for State Development

Commonwealth

The Hon Wilson Tuckey MP

Minister for Forestry and Conservation

The Ministers shall jointly appoint the Review Team.

The Ministers will receive the *Report of Progress with Implementation of RFA* and prior on its publication.

12 Financial Issues

The State and the Commonwealth are to be responsible for all their own internal costs associated with the implementation of this Agreement. The parties will share evenly the agreed additional costs of the Review, including costs of the Review Team preparation and publishing of reports, implementing the communication strategy and any necessary additional data collection required for the Review as agreed by the Steering Committee.

13 Reporting protocols

The Steering Committee shall report to:

- responsible Ministers by 30 July 2001 on progress toward meeting the Phase 1 milestone and on the Communication Strategy;
- responsible Ministers on the recommendations for the persons to undertake Phase Three; and
- responsible Ministers on the Review Team's compliance with the Terms of Reference.

The responsible Ministers shall consider the report of the Review Team and a formal response from the parties with a view to publication of the Review by 30 November 2002.

Appendix 1

Terms of Reference for the Review of Progress with Implementation of the RFA for the Review Team

The Review Team is required to undertake a review of the progress with implementation of the RFA to assess performance and progress against its specified milestones and commitments as required in Clauses 45, 46 and 47 of the Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement 1997. The “commitments” and “milestones” are detailed in the Scoping Agreement (Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement Five Year Review of Progress with Implementation of the RFA, June 2001).

The parties have invited public comment on the draft *Report on the Sustainability Indicator* and the draft *Report on the Review of Progress with Implementation of the RFA*.

Inter alia the Review Team is required to:

- adhere to the Principles that are detailed in the Scoping Agreement;
- review the draft *Report on the Sustainability Indicators*, the draft *Report on the Review of Progress with Implementation of the RFA*;
- consider and take account of the public comment on those draft *Reports*;
- if necessary, address queries to government agencies, to people or to organisations who have provided comment on the draft *Reports* to clarify outstanding issues;
- provide a Report to the parties detailing the Review process and its findings –including an assessment of the performance and progress of the RFA in terms of sustainability indicators (and trends), milestones and commitments; and
- complete and provide copies of this Report to the parties no later than three months from commencement of the Review.

Administrative Arrangements

- The Commonwealth and Tasmanian governments have established a Steering Committee to oversight the Review.
- The Steering Committee shall provide administrative and technical support to the Review Team in undertaking its task.

Appendix 2

RFA Attachment 3 Agreed Milestones

Clause	Milestone / Action	Timeline
#8	The State and the Commonwealth to jointly determine the process for extending the RFA.	as part of the third 5 yearly review of the RFA (2012)
#23(a)	The Commonwealth to prepare a policy outline for RFA legislation, which will include provisions as specified in clause 22.	by 31 December 1997
#23(c)	The Commonwealth to introduce legislation to provide certainty to the provisions specified in clause 22.	by 30 June 1998
#24(b)	The State to proclaim such new reserves having categories provided by existing legislation	by 31 December 1998
#24(c)	The State to introduce legislation to establish required new categories of the revised public land classification system.	by 31 December 1998
#39	The State and the Commonwealth to jointly participate in further World heritage assessment of the relevant themes	commencing by 30 June 1998
#44	The parties to provide each other with written reports detailing the achievements of Milestones	annually for the first 5 years; then 5 yearly
#45	The State and the Commonwealth to review the performance of the RFA.	5 yearly (during the last year) (2002, 2007, 2012)
#55	The State to review and publish a report on its resource estimates for deep red myrtle available supply	during first 4 years of the RFA (2001)
#87	The State to review legislation relevant to the allocation and pricing of hardwood logs from State forests as part of the Competition Principles Agreement	before 31 December 1999
#91	The State and the Commonwealth to develop a set of appropriate, practical, and cost effective sustainability indicators.	by first December 1999
#93	The State to further develop its Forest Management Systems and processes	within 5 years of the RFA date
#94	The State to publish and make publicly available compliance audits of the Forest Practice Act and Code and the code of reserve management. See also #Att 11,3	annually: (1998-2017)
#94	The State to publish and make publicly available independent expert reviews of the operation of its Forest Practices Code and its code of practice for reserve management	5 yearly (2002, 2007, 2012)
#97	The State to maintain and update the Management Prescription database and the Response to Disturbance database	as necessary
#98	The State to review sustainable high quality sawlog supply levels to reflect the changes in the forest inventory and new intensive management forest management initiatives concluded in the RFA.	during first year of the RFA; thereafter at the 5 yearly review (1998, 2002, 2007, 2012)

Clause	Milestone / Action	Timeline
#99	The State to undertake a review—including reporting to Governments—on pricing and allocation policies for commercial government owned forestry operations.	30 April 1998
#Att 1, 6.	The State and the Commonwealth to jointly fund and accredit digital maps at 1:100 000 scale of all lands in Tasmania listed on the Register of the National Estate	by 31 December 1998.
#Att 6, 5.	The State to finalise boundaries (of CAR reserves) on 1:25 000 maps to enable gazettal.	by 30 June 1999
#Att 6, 17.	Forestry Tasmania to include Informal Reserves in new and revised Forest Management Plans	by the year 2000
#Att 8, 2.	The strategic plan for implementing the CAR Reserve System program on Private Lands is to be developed.	no later than 3 months from commencement of the RFA (31 March 1998)
#Att 9, 5.	The State to conduct a formal review of the area of Forest Communities within each IBRA region as part of the 5 yearly review of the RFA	5 yearly (2002, 2007, 2012)
#Att 9, 8.	The State to introduce, in respect of Private Land, mechanisms to encourage native vegetation retention and management.	by the year 1999
#Att 9, 11.	The State to review the policy for maintaining a permanent Forest Estate as part of the ongoing review of the Forest Practices Code	during reviews of the Forest Practices Code
#Att 10, 3.	The State to develop and implement a Threatened Species Protection Strategy	by 31 December 1998
#Att 10, 3.	The State to develop and implement a Tasmanian Biodiversity Strategy	by 31 December 1999
#Att 10, 5.	The State to develop new legislation in relation to Aboriginal cultural heritage to replace the Aboriginal Relics Act 1975	no milestone date
#Att 10, 7.	The State to develop and implement statewide policies across all tenure on fire management, nature based tourism and recreation management, cultural heritage management in Forest, and Forest pest and disease management.	within first 5 years of the RFA
#Att 10, 8.	The State to ensure that management plans are implemented: - for all State Forest and National Parks; and - for all other Formal Reserves	- by year 2000; - by year 2003 or as soon as practicable thereafter
#Att 10, 11.	The State to develop and implement a code of practice for reserve management	by year 2000
#Att 11, 1.	The State to complete and publish silvicultural guidelines for the management of commercial Forest types	by 31 December 1998
#Att 11, 2.	The State to publish a description of the methods of calculating sustainable yield on Public Land, including for special species timber sawlogs	by 31 October 1998
#Att 11, 3.	Relevant State agencies to include in their annual reports a report on outcomes of the compliance audits for codes of practice, and the monitoring of Forest regeneration success and trends. See also #41.	annually by financial year: (1997/98-2016/7)
#Att 11, 4.	The State to release a document describing the Management Decision Classification System	by 30 April 1998

Clause	Milestone / Action	Timeline
#Att 11, 5.	The State to prepare and release a revised manual for the Management Decision Classification System, including prescription guidelines for special management zones.	by 31 March 1999
#Att 14, 2.5	Latest versions of all jointly owned data—listed in Schedule 1 of Attachment #14—to be exchanged.	within 3 months of commencement of RFA (March 1998)
#Att 14, 3.	The State and the Commonwealth to delete all copies of Data which they do not own but were provided for of the RFA Purposes, unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the respective Data owners	not later than one month after RFA is signed (December 1997)
#Att 14, 4.1.	The State and the Commonwealth to list and archive Data used for RFA Purposes.	within three months of commencement of the RFA (March 1998)

Appendix 3

Other RFA Commitments

RFA Clause	Commitment
22(a) (b)	Commonwealth to seek passage of legislation that includes the provision of an RFA
24(a) & 51	<p>The State undertakes to manage areas in the CAR Reserve System identified in Attachment 6, with the exception of Commonwealth owned or leased land, on the basis outlined in that Attachment and in accordance with the relevant objectives set out in Attachment 7.</p> <p>The Parties will take action to establish the CAR reserve system and to manage the CAR values in a regional context consistent with the management objectives specified in Attachment 7</p>
24(d)	Where any new reserves are to be included in a category specified in Attachment 7, which is not already provided for by existing legislation, Tasmania undertakes to proclaim such new reserves.
26	The parties agree to the management of National Estate values as set out in Attachment 1
32	Any new or revised Recovery Plans will be jointly prepared and funded and implemented cooperatively.
33	Multiple species Recovery Plans will be developed where appropriate
34	The Commonwealth will continue to consult with the State on the preparation of Threat Abatement Plans for key threatening processes
35	Commonwealth to adopt a State Recovery Plan where they meet requirements of Commonwealth legislation.
36	National Recovery Plans and Threat Abatement Plans will be prepared jointly with other governments where possible
37	The Parties will consult on the priorities for listing threatening species, Forest Communities and threatening processes and in the preparation of all Recovery Plans and Threat Abatement Plans
40	The Commonwealth agrees that it will give full consideration to potential social and economic consequences of any World Heritage Nomination of places in Tasmania and that any such nomination will only occur after the fullest consultation and agreement with the State.
41	World Heritage Nomination to be drawn from Dedicated Reserve System.
42	<p>The Parties agree:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that before any World Heritage Nomination of any part of the Forest Estate is made all necessary management arrangements, including joint policy coordination arrangements and a statutory management plan under the relevant Tasmanian legislation will be in place; and • that prior to any World Heritage Nomination all related funding issues will be resolved to the satisfaction of both Parties.
48	CAR Reserve System is to established for the purpose of ensuring long term conservation and protection as per Attachment 6 and Attachment 8.

RFA Clause	Commitment
52	The State will consult with the Commonwealth prior to rejecting any recommendations of the Resource Planning and Development Commission in regard to tenure to be applied to those reserves listed in Attachment 6 sections 1.7 and 1.8.
53	All Deferred Forest Lands not included in the CAR reserve system other than those specified in Attachment 6 will be removed from the Register of Deferred Forest Land and added to the Register of Multiple Use Forest Land.
54	The Commonwealth has requested and the State has agreed to postpone any harvesting in the Savage River pipeline corridor. Accordingly the parties agree: to postpone any harvesting and associated forest roading in the area as shown in map 1, and that this area will continue to be included in the calculation of sustainable yield of special species timber; and that uses other than timber production will continue to be managed in accordance with clause 78 of the agreement
56	The Commonwealth agrees that those areas of the Buckland Military Training Area leased by the Commonwealth from the State and not required for the CAR Reserve System will remain available to the State for timber production purposes, including plantation development.
57	The Parties agree that any changes to those elements of the CAR reserve system in informal reserves: will only occur in accordance with this agreement; will maintain the level of protection of identified values at the regional scale; that information on all such changes will be publicly available and provided to the person or body conducting the 5 yearly review described in clause 45 for incorporation into the review process.
58	The State will continue, with respect to Private Land, to (a) ensure that private forest owners comply with the Forest Practices Code for harvesting and regeneration operations (b) develop adequate mechanisms to protect nature conservation and catchment values (c) undertake the initiatives specified in Attachments 9,10 and 11
59	The State agrees to implement a process to facilitate the voluntary participation by private landowners to protect CAR values on private land
60	The State agrees to adopt the Permanent Native Forest Estate policy framework in Attachment 9
64	The State agrees to amend its forest management systems to reflect the undertakings in this Agreement, particularly those in Attachment 10 (taking account of Clause 63)
68	The State agrees to protect the Priority Species listed in Attachment 2 (Part A) through reservation or applying relevant management prescriptions
69	Prior to the first 5 year review, the State will, where practical, assess the species listed in Attachment 2 (Part B) and determine management requirements in accordance with clause 96
70	Management prescriptions or actions in agreed Recovery Plans or Threat Abatement Plans will be implemented as a priority
71	Any changes to the Priority Species in Attachment 2 or altered management prescriptions for Priority Species will be in accordance with processes in clause 96
72	Public reporting and consultation opportunities provided through the processes outlined in Attachment 11 will continue
73	The State will implement the range of reporting and consultative mechanisms in Attachment 11

RFA Clause	Commitment
74	The Parties agree to cooperate in implementing the specified actions in the Employment and Industries Development Strategy (Attachment 12)
77	See Clause 98
79	The Parties recognise that subject to clauses 80, 81 and 82 that mineral exploration and mining can occur in those specified parts of the CAR reserve system which are identified in Attachment 6 .
80	Mineral exploration proposals in CAR reserves to be referred to the Mineral Exploration Working Group
81	All mining activities in CAR reserves will be subject to environmental impact assessment and environmental management conditions
82	In parts of the CAR reserve system with high quality wilderness value measures will be taken to minimise the effects of mining exploration and mining activities on wilderness values. Any rehabilitation will aim to restore the site to wilderness condition.
83	Tasmania will introduce legislation to replace the <i>Aboriginal Relics Act</i> following consultation with the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community
89	Relevant research reports will be made publicly available wherever practical
90	Commonwealth and Tasmania to provide each other with access to data as per Attachment 14.
96	The State agrees that any changes to Priority Species including new or altered management prescriptions will be endorsed by the Threatened Species Scientific Advisory Committee and take note of public comment
100	The Commonwealth will provide \$20 million for the Private CAR Reserve system.
101 (i)	Commonwealth to provide \$57 million for intensive forest management initiatives
101 (ii)	Commonwealth to provide \$13 million for employment and industry development initiatives, as per Att 12
101 (iii)	Commonwealth to provide \$10 million for infrastructure development initiatives, as per Att 12
101 (iv)	Commonwealth to provide \$10 million for protecting conservation values on private land, as per Att 8

Attachment 6 #18	Any changes to Informal reserve boundaries to be in accordance with clause 57
Attachment 6 #20	Management plans with public participation for Commonwealth informal reserves by year 2000.
Attachment 6 #21	Certain communities will be protected on public land outside of reserves
Attachment 6 #22 and #24	Deferred Forest Land not required for the CAR Reserve system to be removed from the Register of Deferred Forest and entered on the Register of Multiple Use Forests.
Attachment 6 #23	Referral of certain Deferred Forest Land to the Public Land Use Commission for recommendations on tenure and management.
Attachment 8 #1-18	A variety of commitments were made with respect to a Strategic Plan, identification of priorities, Advisory Committees, and implementation of the CAR Private Reserves Program
Attachment 10 #1	Implementation of the State Policy <i>Setting New Standards for Water Quality</i>
Attachment 10 # 2	Developing a State Policy on integrated catchment management
Attachment 10#4	Implementing the <i>Historic Cultural Heritage Act 1995</i>
Attachment 10#6	Further develop and apply flexible silvicultural systems on public land to promote the sustainable production of special timbers
Attachment 10 #9	Implementing as a high priority the mechanisms for improving transparency and independence of the Forest Practices Board.
Attachment 10#10	Continue to resource the Forest Practices System and maintain appropriate contributions from industry
Attachment 10#12	Ensure that Forest Practices Plans specify best practice reforestation standards and provide for monitoring Where endangered species have been identified on private land, the plan includes appropriate management prescriptions for those species
Attachment 10#13	Management Plans for Formal and Informal Reserves identify the CAR values identified in the CRA and actions to manage those values