



Good Neighbour Charter for

Commercial Tree Growing in the Green Triangle Region

of South East South Australia and South West Victoria

The Green Triangle Regional Plantation Committee (GTRPC) is a local organisation with representatives from commercial treefarming, farm forestry, community organisations and Government. The Region in which the Committee operates (and to which this Charter applies) is the triangular piece of land which extends along the southern coastline from Kingston (near Robe) in South Australia, to Port Fairy in Victoria and northwards to Bordertown (SA). See map on next page.

The GTRPC has prepared this Charter in order to enhance communication between commercial treefarmers, their neighbours and community groups; to help enable them to work in partnership to address local issues of mutual concern. A number of commercial treefarming businesses in the region are already parties to other national and international systems that recognise the importance of local economic, social and environmental issues. Commercial treefarms are a highly regulated land use. Commercial treefarming activities are required to be conducted in accordance with specialist Codes of Practice, planning laws and policies.

Tree Farm Development

- Treefarms are developed in accordance with State and National policies, and Local Government regulations.
- Your Local Government organisation or the GTRPC can provide information on the regulatory framework which applies to treefarm development within the region (eg. on fuel management practices).

Partnerships with Local Government

- Commercial treefarming organisations communicate regularly with Local Government on a range of issues such as plantation development, infrastructure needs, rating policy, fire prevention planning and management, and planning scheme reviews.
- Commercial treefarmers and the GTRPC welcome opportunities to collaborate with community members or groups in liaison with Local Government.

Heritage and Cultural Issues

- Like all landowners, treefarmers have an obligation to recognise and protect cultural, indigenous and other heritage values of land under their management.
- Commercial treefarmers welcome input from community and indigenous groups over the management of these values and welcome input on their management.

Environmental Care

- Treefarms can have positive impacts on the environment by sequestering atmospheric Carbon; protecting watersheds and improving water quality; conserving soil and enhancing biodiversity assets.
- Treefarming systems may offer opportunities for improved management of sensitive areas such as salinity recharge and discharge zones; rivers, creeks and drainage lines.
- Many tree growers have internationally accredited environmental management systems aimed at continually improving their environmental management, including implementation of relevant Codes of Practice.
- As is the case with all other rural landowners, commercial treefarmers are required to protect native vegetation in accordance with relevant State, Commonwealth and Local Government regulations.

Managing Fire Risk

- The commercial treefarming sector has developed risk management procedures and protocols in relation to fire.
- Most commercial treefarmers in the Green Triangle Region are members of the Forest Owners Conference (FOC). This body collectively manages fire risk relating to the region's commercial treefarms.
- The FOC has a multi faceted approach to risk management including plantation design guidelines, aerial and ground-based fire detection systems, machinery shutdown protocols, treefarm patrols, automatic fire suppression response, provision of aerial fire bombers, and close liaison with emergency service authorities such as the Police, CFA and CFS.
- Larger commercial treefarms provide self funded fire brigades that are registered with the CFA, the CFS or both. These brigades are staffed by trained fire fighters and have been established to manage fire risk in treefarms in partnership with local brigades to provide increased protection from the risk of unplanned fires to local property and the community.

Boundary Fencing

- Like all landowners, commercial treefarmers are required by law to share in reasonable fencing costs.

Weeds and Vermin

- In partnership with the community, treefarmers implement active strategies to control and limit the spread of declared pest plants and animals.
- Commercial treefarmers seek opportunities to integrate their pest plant and animal management activities into collaborative local area programs.
- Like other landowners in the rural landscape, commercial treefarmers must comply with relevant National and State legislation governing the use of pesticides, and voluntarily follow best practice principles.

Employment

- Overall, land use change due to commercial treefarming has a positive impact on the region's social and economic fabric.

Good Neighbour Charter for Commercial Tree Growing in the Green Triangle Region of South East South Australia and South West Victoria

- Commercial tree farms, local timber processing companies and their service industries are collectively one of the region's largest employers, providing a range of professional, technical and semi-skilled job opportunities.
- Commercial tree farms are not prone to the same economic cycles as other agribusinesses and help to buffer the community in the Green Triangle region from the impact of drought and varying agricultural commodity prices.
- Commercial tree farms offer seasonal job opportunities that complement the seasonal work patterns of other agribusinesses in the region.
- Privacy Act provisions can sometimes frustrate land owners ability to identify their neighbours. Commercial tree farmers who are signatories to this Charter do not object to Local Government bodies providing their name and contact details to their adjoining neighbours.

Heritage and Cultural Issues

- Like all landowners, tree farmers have an obligation to recognise and protect cultural, indigenous and other heritage values of land under their management.
- Commercial tree farmers welcome input from community and indigenous groups over the management of these values and welcome input on their management.

Communicating with neighbours

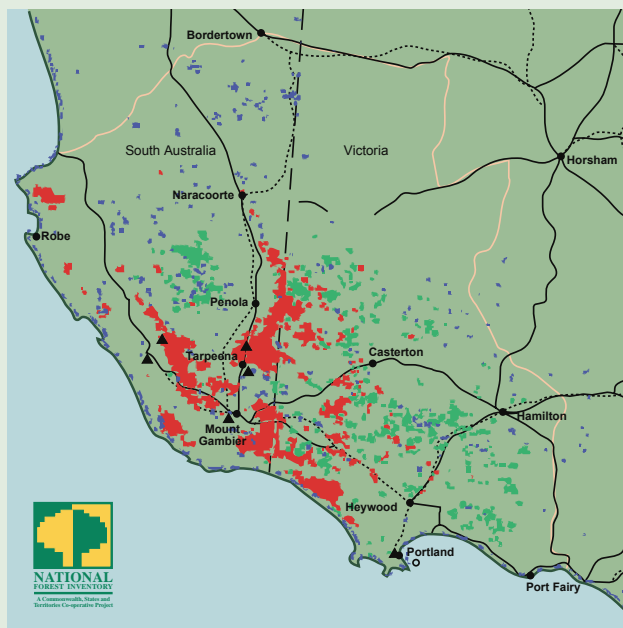
- Many commercial tree farmers are not resident on the land which they manage. They therefore welcome having a close working relationship with their neighbours and other community groups on local land management issues.
- Commercial tree farmers will endeavour to introduce themselves to neighbours when they develop new tree farms, and encourage contact from new neighbours to existing tree farms.
- Ownership and contact details for commercial tree farms are normally communicated via signs erected at strategic points along tree farm boundaries.

How do you find out more?

- Commercial tree farmers, whether industrial or farm forestry, welcome and encourage contact from their neighbours and other community groups on the issues identified in this Charter. Contact details for signatory organisations can be found below.
- Ownership and contact details for commercial tree farms are normally communicated via signs erected at strategic points along tree farm boundaries.
- The GTRPC provides a forum for communication with the tree farming industry as a whole, as well as providing general information on tree farming. Please contact the Officer on the number provided below should you wish to take up this opportunity.

Regional Plantation Committee (RPC)
Telephone: 08 8723 1050 | Mobile: 0417 874 552
www.gtplantations.org

Endorsement of this Charter by the companies below demonstrates a commitment to the principles previously outlined.



Green Triangle Plantation Forestry Region